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The Morality of Scottish Independence

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THE MORALITY OF SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE

By
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A Thesis submitted to the faculty of the University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

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In September of 2014, Scottish citizens will have the opportunity to vote for Scottish independence from the United Kingdom. The present research uses the work of philosopher Allen Buchanan to judge the moral arguments for and against Scottish independence. Preferences of Scottish people were gathered through interviews with two professors of Politics and Governance at the University of Edinburgh, as well as members from every major party at the Scottish Parliament, and over sixty citizens from across Scotland. The interviews were qualitative in nature and were analyzed with Buchanan’s assessment of arguments for secession. The most prominent justifications concerned enhancing efficiency, the nationalist argument, escaping discriminatory redistribution, and rectifying past injustices. According to Buchanan, the strongest strong arguments here are the last two. This research shows that Scotland does have reasonable arguments, which, if not addressed, could be cause for secession. Scotland has not yet met Buchanan’s criteria, however, as it has not exhausted every possible avenue to achieve its goals as a member of the UK. Therefore, Scotland does not currently have sufficient moral justification for secession.

1 Throughout this research, secession will be used interchangeably with independence
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the Treaty of Union in 1707, which unified the English and Scottish parliaments in London, Scotland has legally been joined with England. Over three hundred years later, Scotland formed a parliament, which set Scotland on a path of devolution with an unclear future (“The Scottish Parliament – Past and Future”). The Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) which first won a majority in the parliament in 2011 reached an agreement in 2012 with UK Prime Minister David Cameron to hold a Scottish independence referendum in the autumn of 2014 (Callaghan).

The present project seeks to understand the motivations behind Scotland’s push for independence. Economics is not the only factor in the fight for independence, but the SNP’s YES campaign, which is the official movement for independence, argues for autonomy almost entirely in terms of financial well-being. For instance, they claim that Scotland generates 9.9% of UK taxes while receiving only 9.3% of UK spending (“Firm Foundations”). The guiding questions for my project are these:

1) What are the key conditions sufficient to justify political separation
2) Do Scottish citizens, leaders, and scholars offer justifications which meet these key conditions?

Through my research, I found that there is no single dominant justification for independence that Scottish citizens and political leaders use to argue for or against independence. However, there were several themes that were repeated consistently and it was these themes that I examined in terms of morality. Based on Allen Buchanan’s analysis of secession arguments, Scotland does not currently meet the conditions necessary to secede from the United Kingdom, but they will have a much stronger argument if their current demands and grievances are not addressed through increased devolution in the future. This research also recognized some of the weaknesses in a traditional understanding of secession because Scotland's case demands an understanding of what the cumulative effect of many small justifications has on the overall morality of secession. I came to this conclusion by comparing previous understandings of the morality of secession and union with extensive interviews that were conducted over the summer of 2013.

I first became acquainted with the Scottish independence movement during a 2011 fall internship in the Scottish Parliament. I worked for Stewart Maxwell, a member of the Scottish Parliament from Glasgow and a member of the Scottish National Party. He was an avid supporter of Scottish independence and I was amazed at his ability to make every political issue one that could be resolved or improved with Scottish independence. For example, if the Scottish economy were doing poorly, I knew he would say that this is partly due to the fact that Scotland was not in control of its financial system. If the Scottish economy was performing
well, I would expect him to argue that the economy could be even better if Scotland were independent. Though it is hard to imagine that every part of Scottish life could be improved with an independent Scotland, it was clear to me that independence was something Mr. Maxwell believed in wholeheartedly. It was his convictions that inspired me to stay sometimes well after the Scottish Parliament closed in order to hear him explain why Scottish independence was necessary.

Scottish independence at the parliament was by no means a widely accepted policy. Though the nationalists were and are in the majority, many of my fellow interns worked for pro-union members who felt just as strongly about Scotland staying a member of the United Kingdom. I was left wondering how to assess independence. Scottish citizens were always curious to know what I thought of independence and I could do little more than defer to the opinions of my boss, Mr. Maxwell, and say that I thought he made some valid points. As an accounting major, I naturally tended to draw conclusions about independence based on the perceived economic outcome, but I found that I was never able to untangle the economic argument from other issues like social justice, issues that, in many Scots’ and politicians’ minds went hand in hand. Independence could be judged many ways including the amount of wealth it brings into a nation or the level of freedom the new country would offer as opposed to the previous union, but all these arguments seemed to me to be so separated from other issues that they did not offer a comprehensive examination of independence arguments. I decided to assess the moral arguments for and against independence because it seemed to be the most holistic way of judging Scottish independence. It must be noted that none of this
research could have been conducted without the generous support of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College's Barksdale Award for which I am grateful. In order to get a full understanding of the issues surrounding Scottish independence, I wanted to speak with the citizens and leaders who were there, a task that would have been impossible without a benefactor. With the Barksdale Award, I was able to spend three months over the Summer of 2013 in Scotland travelling, researching, and interviewing those to whom independence meant the most.

In this project, I first outline the theories of justifications for and against independence. For this, I primarily look at the philosopher Allen Buchanan’s *Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce from Fort Sumter to Lithuania and Quebec*. I will then summarize a brief history of Scotland’s relationship with England in order to provide a background for the current independence debate. Next, I will outline the current arguments given for and against independence by analyzing interviews with different members of Scottish society.

In the summer of 2013, I conducted qualitative interviews with over 60 Scottish citizens, Scottish political leaders, and professors at the University of Edinburgh. The purpose of those interviews was to understand what are the primary justifications that Scots use to support or oppose independence. The citizens interviewed were distributed geographically across Scotland’s eight political regions based on Scottish Parliamentary elections. The interviews with political leaders included six members of the Scottish Parliament who supported independence, nine members who supported continued union with the United Kingdom, and a researcher in the pro-independence *YES* campaign. The citizens and
political leaders are analyzed in two distinct groups while the interviews with two professors provide a background and professional opinion of the current situation. Through the interviews, I found common themes in the reasons for and against independence and I compared these ideas with Buchanan's assessment of morally sufficient and morally insufficient justifications for independence.
INTRODUCTION

There are two themes that help me contextualize my research in Scotland. The first is secession and the theories of unity and disunity that surround it. The second is the history of Scotland. Even as I explore the political history of Scotland, I hope to begin connecting Scotland’s history with theories of unity and disunity.

My understanding of secession was informed in large part by Allen Buchanan’s *Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce from Fort Sumter to Lithuania and Quebec*. This book not only discusses the moral theories of secession, but also shows examples of how the theories of secession have played out in history. Other primary texts in my study included Will Kymlicka’s *The Rights of Minority Cultures* and Plato’s *The Republic*. I want to understand what are the predominant justifications for disunity.

In looking at the history of Scotland, I will place an emphasis on understanding the political past of Scotland since its inception as a nation early in the last millennium. My primary goal will be to outline the varying levels of
sovereignty that the nation has exhibited in its long history, mainly as it relates to England. I will also discuss the recent history of the inception of the Scottish Parliament and the upcoming Scottish independence referendum. Magnus Magnuson’s *Scotland, the Story of a Nation* will define most of the history of the last 1,000 years of Scotland except for the recent history. For the last 100 years of Scotland’s relationship with England and the UK, I will study *The Independence of Scotland: self-government and the shifting politics of Union* by Michael Keating and *Scottish Government and Politics* by Peter Lynch.

**Theories of Secession**

The thesis of Allen Buchanan’s *Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce from Fort Sumter to Lithuania and Quebec* is that there does exist a moral right to secede. However, this does not mean that a group has the moral right to secede in every situation. Buchanan offers a list of 11 justifications for secession, some he believes to be stronger than others (e.g. see Table 1). Possible justifications include *protecting liberty, furthering diversity* by creating a world with more nations, *the limited goals of political association, making entry easier* for those who wish to become citizens of a nation, *escaping discriminatory redistribution, enhancing efficiency, the nationalist argument, preserving cultures, self-defense, rectifying past injustices,* and *consent.* He claims the two greatest arguments for secession are to rectify past injustices and escaping discriminatory redistribution.
Two important points about secession must be made before we can look at the arguments for and against secession. The first is that secession can deal with something called *group rights* that exist apart from the simple sum of individual preferences in the group. Group rights are important because secession movements always involve groups who seek secession as a group. Buchanan builds his secession theories upon this assumption but it is most clearly defended in Will Kymlicka’s *The Rights of Minority Cultures*. Those who do not believe that groups should have rights include Rousseau, who argued that individuals should be responsible for voicing their personal opinion and only that opinion (Kymlicka 36). It is easy to imagine how group rights taken too far would indeed inhibit the voice of individuals, but Kymlicka defends group rights as an extension of the individual. He gives several examples of the use of group rights in history. Thomas Jefferson famously defended secession through the Declaration of Independence by describing the colonies as ‘the people’ (Kymlicka 37). In British colonies, different
peoples (like British, Asian, and African) were each given a single vote in community decisions (Kymlicka 39). A final point that Kymlicka makes is that pure individualism gives the dominant group an advantage because the preferences of the dominant group influence decisions like elected positions more unevenly (Kymlicka 50).

The second note that must be addressed before looking at the arguments for and against secession is a brief understanding of what secession involves. Definitions of secession are in agreement that to secede is to withdraw from an already established group, in this case, a nation. We must note that if this were all that secession involved, secession could be brought about by emigrating to another country. Secession in the sense of this research involves more than simply leaving a nation. It also includes a claim to the property that the nation owns (Buchanan 11). This distinction is important because the secessionists must be able to make a moral claim not only to leave a country, but to take part of its property with them.

Buchanan refers to the broadest justification for secession as the Pure Self-Determination or Nationalist Argument. He describes the normative principle of nationalism upon which this argument is based as the belief that every ‘people’ has the right to their own state. The normative principle means that political and cultural boundaries should coincide (Buchanan 50). This general idea finds outright support from the United Nations which declared in a 1966 General Resolution that “All peoples have the right of self-determination” and the right to “freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development” (“International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights”).
There are several problems with a morality that seeks to offer statehood to any ‘people’ which defines itself as a culture. First, there is never a fixed number of ‘peoples.’ True adherence to such a principle would create ever-moving boundaries and endless political fragmentation. There would at least need to be some agreement on the minimum size of an accepted group and a clear idea of who could constitute a people (Buchanan 49). It would be hardest to implement in a place like the United States where there is no clear beginning and end to cultural boundaries.

Buchanan criticizes this never-ending political fragmentation but there are others who find the idea, at least in a broad sense, to be a powerful justification for secession. In his essay *National self-determination and national secession*, Simon Caney uses what he calls the ‘Rousseauean’ argument which “maintains that self-government and secession are legitimate because they create an association in which people’s ‘autonomy is furthered’” (Lehning 152). He says that such an ideal is in accordance with John Rawls and Joshua Cohen’s ideal of a ‘well-ordered society’ in which “the state enacts principles that are widely endorsed by its citizens” (Lehning 170). He argues that the closer a state is to the people it represents, the more likely it is that the state will actually represent the people. Although Caney’s argument might fit into a world where there really are clearly defined ‘peoples’ who do not inhabit overlapping spaces, it provides no simple people-defining formula for the complex world we inhabit.

Buchanan essentially rules out pure self-determination as a justification for secession, but he does make two important notes about this. First, self-determination usually implies some other recognition, goal, or compensation that a
people seeks. For instance, a large religious group may say they want their own nation for the sake of nationalism or self-determination, but it is possible that what they really seek is more religious freedom. Because of this, Buchanan suggests that the goals one seeks through a nationalist movement might very well be met within the existing condition. He says that secession is not justifiable if the people can have their specific demand met within the current state (Buchanan 51).

It is important to emphasize Buchanan’s point that one might be seeking to secede without the sole purpose being the desire for total autonomy. Though such self-determination is an inescapable outcome of secession, it is not necessarily the highest goal. The best justifications for secession only imply self-determination as an outcome of escaping a situation that is ‘unjust.’

Some might confuse the nationalist argument with the argument of *preservation of culture*. In this argument, Buchanan offers the idea that culture can have such a value that it enhances the lives of those who identify with it. He states that “the culture serves to connect what otherwise would be fragmented goals in a coherent mutually supporting way, offering ideals of wholeness and continuity” without which, the value of life might be diminished (Buchanan 53). While recognizing the importance of culture in the lives of individuals, Buchanan gives five conditions he believes must be met in order for the preservation of culture argument to justify secession:

“1. The culture in question must in fact be imperiled.

2. Less disruptive ways of preserving the culture must be unavailable or inadequate."
3. The culture in question must meet minimal standards of justice [unlike groups like Nazis and Khmer Rouge]

4. The seceding cultural group must not be seeking independence in order to establish an illiberal state.

5. Neither the state nor any third party can have a valid claim to the seceding territory.” (Buchanan 54).

It is the last condition that Buchanan consistently returns to as a reason that secession is often not justified. The only escape he offers for those who have no justification for taking the land is that the land may not belong to the national government in the first place. If one believes that land in a nation is really the compiled ownership of those who live in the nation, then there exists a slightly stronger argument for taking the land, which is that part of the seceding group owns at least a proportional amount of the land in the nation already.

Buchanan cites the protection of liberty as another weaker argument for secession. Using the harm principle, he offers the idea that people should be free to stay in or leave a state as they desire if they are not causing harm to other people. In defining the Harm Principle, he says that “harm... is not just a setback to an interest but a setback to an interest that causes the violation of a right” (Buchanan 29). This protection of liberty that a people would enjoy if only the harm principle were used means that the burden of proof is on the group from which this people is leaving to demonstrate that harm is being caused by the secession. Perhaps the greatest hole in the protection of liberty argument is that it gives no defense of a seceding group to take land. If liberty were all that mattered, the seceding group could simply move
to another country without harming the resources of the state in which it currently lives (Buchanan 31).

Closely related to the protection of liberty is the consent argument. This states that if consent is a necessary part of political obligation, then when a group no longer consents to the nation in which they are members, they may secede. Buchanan cites Harry Beran who says that secession must be implied when a group no longer gives consent (Buchanan 70). Like the argument for protection of liberty, the consent argument finds the same problem with the seizure of territory. If a group can freely leave the country and move to a better situation then this argument (and the protection of liberty argument) is nearly nullified. If the group only has the opportunity to move to a location in which they would either be equally oppressed or at least not be willing to give consent, then one might be more justified in looking at the costs of seceding.

Buchanan spends little time explaining self-defense as a right to secede from another nation. Perhaps this is because the argument is so clear. Certainly in a case of a genocide where a nation tries to eradicate a group within that nation, the group being assaulted has the right to escape by secession. Buchanan spends more time explaining how self-defense should be considered more as a reason to resist secession. Buchanan states that secession may be “forcibly resisted if it is incompatible with the continued independent existence of the remainder state” and it may be “forcibly resisted if it would undermine the economic viability of the remainder state” (Buchanan 92). Buchanan means that not only should secession be resisted if the remainder state could not be independent other wise, it should also
be resisted if the economic state of the remaining country would be significantly worse.

One of the more unique arguments for secession is the limited goals of political association argument. The American colonies organized themselves as a single body in order to defeat the British during the American Revolution. For some, the war with the British might have been the only motivation for the colonies to join. In such a situation in which sovereign nations unite in order to complete a specific goal and the goal is explicitly expressed, there is a greater justification for a group to leave this coalition when the task is complete. In theory, Buchanan says, the American colonies could have only stayed together as long as it took to win their independence and then would have had the right to go their own ways (Buchanan 35). Like contracts, once a purpose is fulfilled, the contract by its very nature is ended. This argument is most clear when three conditions have been met:

1. “Political union was undertaken for a specific goal.
2. The contract or clearly expressed this limitation.
3. It is clear that the political goal has been secured.” (Buchanan 36)

The kind of goal-oriented argument for secession is also present in the enhancing efficiency argument. This argument simply states that the nation should seek the most economically efficient way of governing even if this means making two nations from one. An important point in this argument is that it does not necessarily rise from a clear problem. Rather, it takes what could be a very stable situation and seek to improve upon it (Buchanan 45).
Perhaps the weakest argument for secession is furthering diversity. This is the argument that secession is good because it increases diversity among nations. Buchanan compares this argument to an ecosystem because when an ecosystem has a wide diversity, they are able to handle disasters better. The problem with this argument is that this argument might just as easily be used as a reason to have different cultures living within a single nation (Buchanan 33).

The making entry easier argument is not as much about the right to secede as it is about creating the right to secede. Buchanan suggests that when creating the constitution for a nation, it might be wise to include a clause allowing any joining member to secede because it might make the union more enticing. He looks back at Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s unwillingness to join the European Union and explains that her fears might have been assuaged if the UK were given a right to secede from the EU (Buchanan 37).

Rectifying past injustices may be a justification for secession if secession is the only way to sufficiently remedy a past injustice. The clearest need for rectificatory justice is when a group is unjustly annexed into a nation. However, the degree of injustice need not be so strong. Buchanan even lists England’s past economic transgressions towards Scotland as noteworthy. This argument is only acceptable under certain circumstances. First, since historical grievances fade with time, the right to secede fades with time as well. Buchanan says that the wrongdoings must have been committed against people who are still alive. Another important issue to consider is the impact of this rectification of injustice on people who were not originally involved. If the rectification of a past injustice harms a third party that did
not cause the injustice, the rectification might be an injustice itself (Buchanan 88). Rectificatory justice is closely related to Buchanan’s most persuasive argument for secession, which is to remedy distributory injustice.

It is difficult to say when *distributory injustice* has occurred to an extent that would justify secession but there are several signs that it could be happening or be perceived to be happening. A central government could be implementing economic and taxation schemes that “systematically work to the disadvantage of some groups, while benefiting others, in morally arbitrary ways” (Buchanan 40). Buchanan suggests that the American Revolution was based upon such discriminatory redistribution. It could also be carried out in the ways a government gives out contracts. For instance, the London Parliament might only offer defense and energy contracts to companies based out of London. It might even be the case that this injustice is not intended. For instance the government in London might choose London businesses as contractors because that is the most effective manner of handling government business. Discriminatory redistribution implies a perception that one group is receiving another group’s benefit, a perception that Plato discouraged. He states that “the best-ordered State” is one “in which the greatest number of persons apply the terms ‘mine’ and not ‘mine’ in the same way to the same thing” (Plato 201). Citizens’ perceptions about how closely they are related to other members of the society will determine their willingness to redistribute wealth.

Margaret Moore, in *National Self-Determination and Secession*, raises serious doubts about Buchanan’s injustice arguments. She places moral justifications of
secession into three broad categories: (1) choice theories, (2) just-cause theories, and (3) national self-determination theories. Buchanan's theory of rectificatory justice and discriminatory injustice fall in the category of just-cause theories. Her argument is that these justice arguments only offer an arbitrary and unclear way of measuring justice. Injustice is not easily measured so secessionist movements and the states from whom they wish to secede will measure the arguments how they will. The other problem with the idea of escaping an injustice is that one assumes that the new leadership will be more just. Is it fair to assume that the new leaders will necessarily be more just in their governance? (Moore 6) Moore’s argument is difficult to accept because she offers no solution to discriminatory injustice except to suggest that it may be inevitable or that whatever the solution is, it must not be secession. By offering no alternative solution to distributive injustice or rectificatory justice, her argument lacks weight.

Buchanan offers few specific situations in which these different moral arguments for secession might hold up or fail. He leaves us only with the suggestion that secession could be moral in certain situations. He claims that the two arguments that completely fail are consent and nationalism and the two strongest arguments are rectificatory justice and discriminatory injustice.

Scottish History

This section highlights the changing nature of Scotland’s sovereignty throughout its history, especially in relation to England and the rest of the UK based on three major periods. First I will explore Scotland’s continuous struggles with
England until the Union of the Crowns in 1603. Second, I will discuss the Union of 1707 until the formation of the Scottish Parliament in 1999. Third, I will look at the nature of Scotland’s relationship with the United Kingdom since the formation of the Scottish Parliament and the current push for independence.

**Scotland Before Union**

In Scotland’s earliest days, it is sometimes difficult to discern truth from folklore, but even the fiction gives us insight into Scotland’s formation as a nation. What is a Scot? Where did they come from and when did Scotland become a country? These questions are not only important from a historical perspective, but also for the idea of national identity and sovereign rights. During the 1290s, King John Balliol of Scotland announced a lineage of Scottish kings that dated back to immigrants from Egypt. According to his proclamation, Scotland had been a nation with its own sovereign monarchy for nearly two thousand years by the time he had begun his reign (Magnusson 42). It was this type of falsified or often exaggerated inspiration that Balliol and others have used throughout Scotland’s history to define themselves as a nation, especially in their times of greatest struggle.

In his book, *Scotland: The Story of a Nation*, Magnus Magnusson suggests that the first king of ‘the embryo realm of Scotland’ was Constantin II. Constantin ruled in the first half of the 10th century AD; a time when the factions fighting for the land of Scotland included Norsemen, Northumbrians, and Britons. Although Constantin’s empire was much smaller than modern-day Scotland, he is credited with being the real first king of Scotland. Eventually, Malcolm Canmore ascended the throne 1058,
marking the beginning of Scotland's boundaries looking much as they do today (Magnusson 61). It is in this time that we see evidence of the often porous cultural boundaries between the south (England) and the north (Scotland). Queen Margaret, who married Malcolm, was a Saxon from the South. She is credited with the ‘Anglicization’ of the royal court. Although Anglican ideas and customs drifted upwards from England, Malcolm made more than one attempt to expand his kingdom southwards by attacking what was at the time Northumbria, a land located in the borderlands of modern-day Scotland and England. It was such aggression that caused King William of England to briefly penetrate into Scotland in 1072 (Magnusson 66). William’s march was the first full-scale assault on the land of Scotland since the Romans. It ended with Malcolm surrendering to William, though it is unclear whether Malcolm simply surrendered the disputed lands or actually made himself a vassal of King William.

David I, the next king of Scotland, was actually raised in England. He adopted many of the ways of the South including the idea of knighthood and the international nature of kingship (Magnusson 74). During the reign of David, which lasted from 1124-52 AD, it was once again the Scots who sought to gain territory southwards. This time, David led a large army of Scots against the English in northern England, taking advantage of the fact that England was embroiled in a civil war (Magnusson 77). The difficulty with interpreting these events is understanding whether Scotland was taking lands that had once belonged to them (in which case they could claim a type of self defense) or whether they were taking as much land as they could while the English were feuding. Regardless, the Scots lost the crucial
battle but they were granted more territory southwards. Magnusson cites an English chronicler who described the nature of King David’s troops from the English perspective:

_They cleft open pregnant women, and took out the unborn babe; they tossed children upon the spear-points, and beheaded priests upon the altars . . . There was the screaming of women, the wailing of old men; groans of the dying, despair of the living’_ (Magnusson 78).

We can only hope that this was an exaggerated account of the barbarian nature of the Scots but it shows the perceived differences between the English and the Scots. When Sir Walter Scott, one of the most famous writers from Scotland, wrote of English influence into Scotland, he always saw English influence as bringing culture and education to the barbaric Scotland (65).

England’s subjugation of Scotland is perhaps the most well-know part of Scotland’s history, especially with films like _Braveheart_ that glorify Scotland’s struggle to break free from the oppressive bonds of English rule. This era began in 1157 when a twelve-year-old Scottish King Malcolm, grandson of King David I surrendered disputed lands to King Henry II of England in exchange for a gift of Earldom. This made King Malcolm a vassal of England, an advantage Henry used when he brought Malcolm to fight with him under his banner in France (Magnusson 78). The subjugation did decrease over time so that by 1289, a treaty was signed that promised Scotland would remain ‘separate and divided from England according to its rightful boundaries, free in itself and without subjection’ (Magnusson 111).
The famous *Braveheart* conflict came about after the death of the Scottish king Alexander III in 1286, which resulted in no less than 13 men vying for the crown. This was a time of constant skirmishes between Scotland and the English King Edward I. When the dust had settled after much bloodshed and internal and external warring, Robert the Bruce took the throne in 1320. It was after his final battle against the English that one of the most famous independence documents in Scotland's history was written, the Declaration of Arbroath. It included the famous line stating that “as long as but a hundred of us remain alive, we shall never on any conditions be subjected to English rule” (Magnusson 188). It was in 1326 that Robert the Bruce formed the Scottish Parliament. Prior to this, the Church and nobility decided most policy issues. Robert I added this third part of Scottish government by requesting representatives of the burghs come to Edinburgh (Magnusson 193). Robert the Bruce is considered by many to be the greatest king of Scotland because in his reign, both England and the Pope recognized Scotland as an independent nation (Magnusson 196).

Total independence was not to last and for the next three hundred years, Scotland and England remained in consistent conflict. Upon Robert the Bruce’s death, his son David II ascended the throne when he was only a child. King Edward III of England organized an army of Scottish dissidents whom Robert the Bruce had relieved from power, led by John Balliol, a Scot who had always tried to claim the crown for his family (Magnusson). A recurring theme in Scottish fights for the crown was the use of international assistance. Sometimes, it was those like Balliol who used English backing to come to power and other times, the French were more
than willing to help Scotland against England in order to weaken their longtime enemy. When Balliol came to power with English assistance, King David II, still a child, fled to France for seven years under the safekeeping of French King Philippe VI (Magnusson 199). David II eventually reclaimed the throne, but only briefly because during a battle in 1346, he was captured by Edward the III (who happened to be his brother-in-law) and taken to London where he was held captive for ten years.

It was in 1371 that the first of the Stewart dynasty in Scotland came to power under the nephew of David II. Fighting continued in the borderlands of Scotland and England but this was often carried out on a small scale by the local families looking to increase their lands. In 1385 Scotland, with the help of French forces, Scotland invaded northern England (Magnusson 215). This was yet another unsuccessful mission to which the English responded with a greater retaliation.

In 1406, a young Scottish prince and only heir to the Scottish throne, named James, sought to exert more power in the south and was taken prisoner by the English. After being held in an English prison for 18 years, James I was finally released from English prison after Scotland promised to pay a substantial ransom guaranteed by the imprisonment of several Scottish lords until the money was paid (Magnusson 237).

After James, many of the skirmishes between England and Scotland came at times when one nation saw the other as weak. For instance, in 1460 during an English civil war, King James II attacked formerly held Scottish cities of which the
English were in control. Unfortunately for James II, one of his own cannons exploded next to him and his crown passed to his son, James III.

How can one summarize these first five centuries and why is it important? First, it is important to understand that the idea of Scottish sovereignty was often in question and the boundaries of Scotland were not clearly defined from the outset. In the time after the 11th century when Scotland was organizing itself as a nation, the land that it was fighting the English over seemed to be a no-man's land that was once claimed to be Northumbria. Therefore, it is difficult to say who had a ‘right’ to the land. In the broadest terms, we can also see that Scotland’s infrequent invasions southward were usually for the purpose of gaining more borderland. England on the other hand showed not only an interest in the land, but also in subjugating Scottish rule, especially under Edward I. These details might offer no moral justifications for secession, but it is certainly possible that such ideas about past injustices might affect Scottish views of identity and sovereignty.

By the middle of the 16th century, the idea of uniting the crowns of England and Scotland seemed a real possibility. King Henry VIII of England made serious efforts to wed his son, Prince Edward, with Mary Queen of Scots, which would have finally brought about the unification of the two kingdoms. There were many variables involved in the failure of this union but one that Magnusson notes was that “many Scots began to have second thoughts about closer relations with an England which was still thinking in terms of Scottish subjection, not equal partnership” (Magnusson 321). Scotland also maintained an important relationship with England’s longtime enemy, France.
It was in response to Henry VIII’s failed marriage proposal that England launched what was called the ‘Rough Wooing.’ This was an unsuccessful attempt on Henry’s part to exert strong military and political pressure on Scotland to unite with England. During this time, Mary Queen of Scots fled with her mother to the French royal court where she remained until 1561. Mary eventually returned from France to rule Scotland for a time but the English Queen Elizabeth, her cousin, eventually imprisoned her in England. Although Elizabeth kept Mary in a London prison, it was no secret that Mary’s son, James VI, was the closest heir to the throne of Scotland and England. After Queen Elizabeth had Mary executed, James became king of Scotland, but was so young that there were other leaders actually making decisions on his behalf.

The Union of the Crowns

Upon Elizabeth’s death in 1603, James assumed the crown of the unified England and Scotland. Though raised in Scotland, he was welcomed without issue in London. In his coronation, he entreated his subjects, “Hath not God first united these two Kingdoms both in language, religion and similitude of manners? Yea, hath He not made us all one island, encompassed with one sea, and of itself by nature so indivisible as almost those that were borders themselves on the late Borders, cannot distinguish, nor know, or discern their own limits?” (Magnusson 401) James treated the total unification of Scotland and England as a top priority but fears from both English and Scottish leaders prevented a full unification. England feared a diluted
power in their own parliament whereas Scotland was afraid of losing its identity against such a large power (Magnusson 401).

The 1603 Union of the Crowns by no means made Scotland and England an assimilated nation. The tenuous relationship of the 17th century was defined mostly by the religious differences between the two nations. Both Scotland and England were considered protestant nations but the national churches of each were very different. England had an Anglican church that looked from the Scottish perspective to be very similar to the Catholic Church. In 1638, many of the religious and political leaders in Scotland gathered to sign what became known as the National Covenant. This document upheld Presbyterianism, it listed the statutes of the church, and it pledged its signatories to defend the Reformed faith from the likes of King Charles I (who was actually raised in Scotland and was the son of James VI) and anyone else (Magnusson 424).

In a very short time, thousands of Scots from across the nation had signed the covenant. As Magnusson writes, “The Covenant did not simply indicate opposition to the king and distrust of England; it showed that the Scots were looking to their national Kirk as the surest and purest repository for their national identity” (Magnusson 424). When Charles I moved armed forces into Scotland to put down this rebellion, Scottish leaders gathered their own trained army, which became known as the Covenanters. In a stunning turn of events, the Covenanters captured King Charles and accepted money for sending him back to England where the London Parliament voted to execute him (Magnusson 449). The London parliament voting to execute their own king shows that the relationship between Scotland and
England was never two totally united nations fighting one another. Their relationship was often defined by each other's internal conflicts as well.

When the Westminster Parliament voted to execute King Charles, they not only beheaded the English monarch, but the Scottish monarch as well. The Union of the Crowns in 1603 made Charles the King of Scotland and England at the same time. Magnusson points out that although the Charles I battled the Covenanters in Scotland, Scotland's leaders had never wanted the 'disagreement' to end in their own king's death (Magnusson 449). In response to the execution, Scotland chose to call Charles I's son, Charles II, from abroad and crown him king of Scotland. Since he also had the claim to the English throne, the Covenanters essentially forced him to follow their will and they soon made for England, which was being led militarily by Oliver Cromwell (Magnusson 457). Cromwell took control of Scotland when Charles II moved into England and Charles was eventually forced to escape to Holland. Cromwell, taking military control of Scotland, once again united the kingdoms. Upon Cromwell's death, Charles was invited back to become king of both England and Scotland (Magnusson 473).

The next major point in Scotland and England's history was their political union in 1707. Magnusson argues that in 1707, Scotland was not an independent country. When James VI moved to London in 1603 to assume the dual kingship of Scotland and England, Scotland lost control of its foreign policy and was at the mercy of England's much more imperialistic foreign policy. Scotland seemed to receive only a worse situation from the Union of Crowns in 1603 because it was still the victim of very high customs due on Scottish goods shipped to England "at a time
when England was becoming the single most important Scottish market” (Magnusson 537).

The Union of 1707 was passed by a vote in both the Scottish and English parliaments. The agreement fully united the two parliaments in London and preserved the civil law and church organizations of the two nations (Magnusson 545). Professor Michael Keating writes that although the Scottish Parliament approved the Union of 1707, “it was hardly a voluntary compact between equals... observers are agreed about the hostility of the population” (Keating 18).

Magnusson agrees that most Scots did not support the union. Keating goes on to state that the benefit to Scotland was only to stop English invasions and to end exclusion from other markets. The English, though in name giving up their parliament, essentially were able to keep their parliament by adding a few Scottish seats to in London (Keating 19).

Once Scotland and England formally united, the process of assimilation was to begin. Keating states that by the end of the 18th century, those in the intellectual class of the Scottish Enlightenment were in almost total support for the union. This assimilation continued until increasing government at the end of the 19th century caused Scotland to reassert itself in the union.

Modern Scotland and Independence

The idea of Scottish “home rule” had devout followers at the beginning of the 20th century but it was not until the second half of the century that a nationalist movement became a powerful force in UK politics. The Scottish National Party was
formed in 1934 because, although other political parties were willing to endorse a Scottish legislature, none were willing to prioritize it (Lynch 9). By 1949, 1.7 million Scots had signed the National Covenant, which stated “reform in the constitution of our country is necessary to secure good government in accordance with our Scottish traditions and to promote the spiritual and economic welfare of our nation” (Lynch 9). Even then, there was not the kind of dedicated support to make a clear move for what was then called a Scottish Assembly.

The first referendum on a Scottish Assembly in 1979 proposed a weak assembly with no taxation powers. This referendum failed because although it garnered 51.6% support among at the election, the rules required that 40% of the total possible electorate vote for it in order to pass (Lynch 10). The second serious attempt for a Scottish Parliament came in the September 11 referendum of 1997. The Scottish National Party, who saw a Scottish Parliament within the UK as a Conservative ploy to temper the desire for total Scottish independence, did not originally support this. Eventually though, they joined with the Labour party to support the measure. The referendum asked Scottish voters whether they wanted a Scottish Parliament and whether this parliament should have tax powers. At the referendum, support for the parliament was 74.3% and support for tax powers was 63.3%. After receiving approval from the Westminster Parliament, the Scottish Parliament was formed in 1999.

The new Scottish Parliament opened on the first of July 1999 with 129 members from across Scotland. Rather than stating what powers the Scottish Parliament should have, the Scotland Act of 1998, passed by the Westminster
Parliament, lists the policy areas that are reserved for the Westminster Parliament. All other powers are implicitly given to the Scottish Parliament. The new parliament legislates on domestic issues like civil law, criminal law, education.

Nearly all of the powers of the Scottish Parliament are powers that were once run out of the Scottish Office. As Peter Lynch points out, “Devolution... did not involve new powers for the Scottish Parliament, but rather different institutional arrangements for designing and implementing these powers” (Lynch 16). Devolution is “the act or process by which a central government gives power, property, etc., to local groups or governments” (“Devolution”)

What has the formation of the Scottish Parliament to do with Scottish independence? For some, like the Conservative party in the 1960s, it was a way to silence the Scottish National Party by giving Scotland a greater element of autonomy (Lynch 10). For others, like politician Sir Tam Dalyell, devolution is a slippery slope to Scottish independence that cannot be avoided (Lynch 4). Neither of these groups knew how the parliament would actually be set up, which may have changed both their opinions. The elections of the Scottish Parliament are run in such a way that nearly ever party or independent candidate who receives a sizeable number of votes in one of Scotland’s eight regions will have representation in the parliament. Such a system was meant to force a coalition government unlike the single-party government of Westminster (Lynch 1). This was successful in the first election of 1999 when six parties and one independent won seats in the parliament. Perhaps the most unexpected turn of events in the Scottish Parliament so far has been the 2011 victory of the Scottish National Party (SNP). The SNP won 69 of 129 seats, an
outcome that the formers of the parliament had hoped to avoid. While the SNP has made significant attempts to increase the powers of the Scottish Parliament through legislation like the Scotland Bill of 2012, their greatest test yet will come in the scheduled 2014 Scottish independence referendum. The referendum in September of 2014 will ask Scottish citizens, “Should Scotland be an independent country? Yes or No” (Scotland’s Referendum).

In his book, “The Independence of Scotland,” Michael Keating discusses many of the different storylines that are running throughout the national movement for independence. He spends little time looking at the morality of secession except to make a point that I believe to be crucial for my research. He first states that “Almost everybody would concede that a separation mutually agreed between two parts of a state is morally permissible” (Keating 79). He goes on to explain how this might be the case in which Scotland finds itself. Although Scotland did not have an explicit right to secede in the Treaty of 1707, British prime ministers have nonetheless allowed that this is an implicit right. Margaret Thatcher stated that “As a nation, they (the Scots) have an undoubted right to national self-determination; thus far they have exercised that right by joining and remaining in the Union. Should they determine on independence no English party or politician would stand in their way, however much we might regret their departure” (Keating 81). This implicit agreement was further made clear by Prime Minister David Cameron signing an agreement in 2012 stating that the UK government would respect the Scottish Government holding a referendum on independence in 2013 (“Historic Agreement on Referendum Signed”).
CHAPTER III

SURVEYING SCOTTISH CITIZENS, LEADERS, AND SCHOLARS

Introduction

Buchanan’s *Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce from Fort Sumter to Lithuania and Quebec* (1991) establishes what this research will continue to use as an assessment of the moral strength of arguments for secession. The next step is to examine Scottish voters’ perceptions of the current condition of Scotland, and in that way, compare Scotland’s condition to Buchanan’s moral justifications for political separation. My research will admittedly not come close to a full picture of Scotland, but will seek to understand some of the leading views for independence and for continued union that voters and political leaders hold. Rather than trying to state what *would* justify Scottish independence or union and then looking to see if this or these scenarios exist in Scotland, I will look at why certain groups are seeking independence or union and will examine the moral validity of their arguments.

The three groups I interviewed for my research were Scottish Citizens, Scottish political leaders, and scholars of Scottish governance. I conducted 65 brief, qualitative interviews with Scottish citizens. The interviews were conducted across
the eight major political regions of Scotland using a quota system based on age, education level, and the region in which they live. Sixteen qualitative interviews were carried out with leaders from the four major political parties in the Scottish Parliament and a researcher for the pro-independence “YES” campaign. The purpose of the interviews with citizens and political leaders was to understand how they understood and justified continued union with or independence from the United Kingdom. I also interviewed two professors at the University of Edinburgh School of Governance in order to better understand the context of the current independence debate.

The first interviews were carried out at the end of May with Scottish citizens. Though I continued to interview Scottish citizens while interviewing the political leaders and scholars, speaking first with a number of citizens helped contextualize my research and prepare for the interviews with those leaders and scholars. After interviewing several political leaders, I interviewed the two professors and then interviewed the additional leaders. Through this recursive process of interviewing the professors in the midst of interviewing the political leaders and citizens, I used an emergent design methodology in which later interviews were informed by earlier ones (Creswell).

With these interviews, I hoped to identify and understand the main arguments offered for and against secession. I did not attempt to examine whether these arguments are factual. For instance, the claim that an economy will be better or worse after independence is a matter beyond the scope of my project. What is more important to this research is what people perceive to be the condition of
Scotland, rather than what the condition actually is. Once I demonstrate the argument or arguments that people hold for and against secession in Scotland I draw conclusions about whether the arguments for or against secession meet Buchanan's criteria of justification.

**Scottish Citizens**

*Explanation of Questions*

I conducted 65 qualitative, semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with voting-aged Scottish citizens across the eight different political regions of Scotland. The purpose of these interviews was to understand voters’ primary justifications for independence and union. I intended to use these justifications as part of my analysis of the morality of secession in Scotland.

Interviews were usually carried out in city streets, parks, and malls, and town centers. Prior to the interviews, I had no contact with the interviewees. They were usually chosen based on their perceived age in order to satisfy the quotas for each age group. Interviews were usually carried out standing up, or a public bench. Due to IRB restrictions, the transcriptions of the interviews are not listed in this research, but the recordings have been kept.

I planned to ask the following nine questions to each citizen with whom I spoke:

1. *When deciding your position on the Scottish independence referendum, what issues are most important to you?*
This first question is the key to my research. It is through his question that I hoped to understand why voters justify voting for or against Scottish independence. Questions two, three, and four are intended to illuminate responses to question one. I often had to adjust the presentation of these questions in response to the way the first question was answered. Therefore, the coding that I used to collate voter responses only relates directly to question one. It was often the case that voters revealed their primary reason for voting for or against the referendum with the prompt of questions 2-4. They essentially answered question one further into the interview.

2. *Could you explain why this issue is so important to you or what about the issue is so important to you?*

3. *Has this issue caused you to take the position that you now hold on the referendum? If so, how?*

4. *Is there something about this issue that would cause you to change your position?*

The last six questions were demographic questions, three of which I used in a quota system for sampling to acquire a broader possibility of responses.

5. *Have you completed a degree at a university?*

6. *What is your line of work?*

7. *Are you currently employed in that line of work?*

8. *Do you reside around this area? If not, could you tell me where you are from?*

9. *What is your age?*
**Protocol**

I used a nonprobability purposive quota sampling technique in order to get a sample of the population that offered the opportunity for a high variation of responses even though it was not representative in terms of proportion (Daniel 66-81). Three variables defined the samples from which I wanted to draw: geography, education level, and age.

In Scottish Parliament elections, Scotland is divided into eight geographic regions for the purpose of representation in the Scottish Parliament ("Region Maps") (Figure 1). I used these eight geographic regions as the eight different areas from which I wanted to draw samples. The regions are Central Scotland, Glasgow, Highlands and Islands, Lothian, Mid Scotland and Fife, North East Scotland, South Scotland, and West Scotland. The regions are based on population size and are drawn along the lines of 71 smaller constituency areas. I used the same regional map that was used in the 2011 Scottish Parliament elections. It was my goal to interview at least six voters who resided in each region as I sought to encompass as much regional diversity in opinion as possible. This meant I needed to collect at least 48 interviews from across Scotland. There were several occasions in which I interviewed a citizen in a region in which that citizen did not reside. In such a case, I considered his or her data not for the region in which I conducted the interview, but in which the subject resides. I only considered the voters’ current residence and not
their region of origin. This was important because it allowed me to include Scottish citizens who were born and/or raised in a location outside of Scotland.

**Figure 1.** 2011 Scottish Parliament Regional Election Map ("Scottish Parliament")
Education level was another variable I used in my research. I only drew a distinction between those who had completed college or university educations and those who did not. Research indicates that differences in political attitude exist between those with and without such an education (Morton, Tyran, and Wengstrom), and I expected this would be especially the case in the issues that were most important to the citizens. Consequently, I attempted to interview at least three citizens with college or university educations and three without such training in each region.

Age was the last variable that I considered when forming my quota system as opinions and attitudes frequently vary by age (Macnab). I used three different age groups: 18-38, 39-59, and 60+. I set about to interview at least two citizens for each of these criteria in each region. I expected different age groups to offer different responses for the independence referendum with the older citizens caring more about economic issues like pensions and younger citizens caring more about issues like education and job opportunities.

I used interlocking quotas in collecting my research (Daniel 81-125). That is, I collected at least one interview for each possible combination of the three variables. This meant that I at least needed to collect 48 interviews. Because it was impossible to identify whether an interviewee met a needed criterion before I interviewed him or her, it was inevitable that I had to collect more interviews than the stated quota until I was able to find the 48 necessary combinations.

The primary purpose of the interviews was to understand voters’ justifications in deciding whether to vote for or against Scotland’s independence
from the United Kingdom. I used a series of nine questions to guide my interviews but it was often the case that I had to adjust the questions based on the interviewees' responses.

When I first made contact with the subjects, I used an IRB approved script introducing the interviewee to the topic of research (Appendix). Upon receiving permission to interview the citizens with the use of a recording device, I proceeded to ask a variation of the nine questions I listed above. A variation was necessary because the voters often chose to avoid the first question or answer it in such a way that asking the next questions verbatim would have been illogical. For instance, if a voter said the primary issue was that Scotland should be independent, it would have been illogical to ask if that belief caused them to hold the view they currently did on the independence referendum. In such a case, it was more clarifying to ask why the voter came to that opinion.

*Anticipated Coding*

I understood the first question to be the key to understanding the justification for independence or union. I expected that the most important issue or issues for a voter indicate what the voter uses to justify their position. For example, if a voter said that the economy was the most important issue, I expected that he or she believed the morality of secession is based on economic outcomes. The second question is simply a clarification of the first. I created a coding system in anticipation of the justifications for and against independence. I intended to use this list to organize the responses into categories of responses. I expected that the
categories I created would be sufficient to cover all responses but if necessary, I was willing to add categories that would address responses for which I had not prepared. As I will show later in the research, the categories I created did cover all responses, but it was helpful to add subcategories as well.

I intended to use Allen Buchanan's 11 justifications for secession as my primary way of coding responses. These seemed to be a comprehensive list of the possible justifications for secession. This categorization requires a good deal of discernment on the part of the researcher because it was often the case that an interviewee gave more than one reason for secession. In such an instance, I planned to only use the justification that mattered the most to the citizen. I did not expect this to be problematic because I directly asked what was most important to the citizens and I was prepared to ask follow-up questions if their response was not clear. The eleven justifications are as follows:

1. Protecting liberty
2. Furthering diversity
3. The limited goals of political association
4. Making entry easier
5. Escaping discriminatory redistribution
6. Enhancing efficiency
7. The nationalist argument
8. Preserving cultures
9. Self-defense
10. Rectifying past injustices
11. Consent (“Secession”)

This is a list of possible justifications for secessions. It was often the case that
the interviewee made clear that they were voting no on the independence
referendum. Although such a disclosure was helpful in my understanding of the
debate, it did not necessarily mean that their issue of most importance could not be
categorized with the justifications for independence. For instance, if an interviewee
said that they would vote no on the referendum because it was economically
unviable, I still categorized their response along with anyone who would support
independence because they thought precisely the opposite about economic viability.
As has been stated before, this report seeks not to determine an issue like the
economic viability of Scottish independence, but rather it seeks to establish that
people use economic viability as a way of judging the morality of independence.

After conducting the interviews, the coding process was fairly
straightforward because in nearly all of the interviews, interviewees were very clear
and concise in explain what was most important to them. The citizens never
explicitly used the coding terms like “enhancing efficiency,” but it was clear that
their responses aligned with the justification. For instance, if a citizen stated that he
wanted to vote for independence because he thought they thought the Scottish
economy would be healthier, this clearly was a preference based on ‘enhancing
efficiency.’ Although Buchanan’s arguments were justifications for independence, it
was not difficult to apply the pro-union responses to the codes as well. For instance,
someone who cared most about the economy would fall under the enhanced
efficiency category whether he or she supported independence or union. Even the
nationalist argument can be applied to the pro-union argument because it may be that citizens view the primary reason for staying in the union as an issue of United Kingdom identity.

_Coding as Implemented_

On the whole, the planned coding was a good system with which to categorize the interview responses. However, there were some minor problems in respect to the demographic selections and the application of the codes to the responses. Interviewees were approached with only a reasonable guess as to which of the six demographic groups he or she belonged. This meant that some demographic groups were interviewed unnecessarily more than once in an attempt to find an uninterviewed group. It was sometimes the case that a single demographic group within a give region could not be found. The interviewed totals when combing all the regions were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>No Degree</th>
<th>Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39-59</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table 2)

Of the 48 demographic possibilities, six are not represented in this study (Appendix II). The unintended multiples were used in the research because the goal of the demographic distribution was not to obtain an accurate, proportional representation of the population, but to allow for the greatest number of different responses. Results were not disaggregated based on the different variables.
The initial plan to code only with the 11 given justifications for independence was successful, but because the justification “enhancing efficiency” was by far the most used justification, it was helpful to have smaller categories within this justification. These extra categories were financial, size, education, leadership, and other. These were necessary because it became clear that respondents might use the enhancing efficiency but judge it in very different ways like through the betterment of the economy or the betterment of the education system.

Results

The interviewees showed a surprising unanimity in how they justified secession or union with 50 of the 65 choosing ‘enhancing efficiency’ (Table 3). It almost always became clear through the interview if the citizen supported union or independence and the enhancing efficiency argument as used for both. None of the respondents actually used the specific term ‘enhancing efficiency’ but discussed how they used some type of measuring system to decide whether Scotland would benefit, which shows that they use the enhanced efficiency justification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justifications</th>
<th>Enhancing Efficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing Efficiency</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalist Argument</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Entry Easier</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furthering Diversity</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rectifying Past Injustices</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Relevant Feedback</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix of First three</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Independence and Union Justifications
Twenty-nine (45%) of the respondents defined enhanced efficiency in terms of economics only. That is, they stated that the most important issue with the referendum was whether or not Scotland would be better financially or at least no worse. Respondents were sometimes very specific in the way they would judge the financial outcome of independence. For instance, four interviewees stated that the most important fiscal issue to them was pensions. Two stated that they would care most how the price of housing would be affected. Three of these 29 ‘financially enhanced efficiency’ respondents indicated that they planned to support independence, 19 indicated opposition, and seven were undecided.

Seven respondents indicated negative opinions of leadership either in London or Edinburgh that caused them to choose a position. For instance, one respondent from the Glasgow region expressed frustration that the Westminster government does not represent her interests. Such a frustration fit best in the enhanced efficiency justification because her implication was that the government would run more efficiently (and represent her interests better) if it were run by the Scottish government. Respondents were sometimes specific in the leaders that caused them to vote against the referendum, mentioning names like Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond.

Enhanced efficiency also included seven interviewees who believed that Scotland would be better run if it were either its own nation or a part of the UK simply due to size. Two respondents referred to the phrase “united we stand, divided we fall” to justify staying a member of the UK. Others expressed that a smaller nation that was closer to the people would run more efficiently. Of the
seven who named the pros and cons of size as the most important issue, four did not support independence and three did.

Also within the category of enhanced efficiency were two interviewees who cared most about the future of education in Scotland. Three interviewees only used very vague enhanced efficiency justifications. These respondents did not actually offer a way to measure whether Scotland would be better, they only expressed that they would vote for independence if it would be better and they would vote against it if the situation would be worse. Only two respondents actually named more than one important issue. These two named finances, education, and leadership as equally important.

Eight interviewees used the nationalist argument. Three respondents supported independence because they identified themselves as being more Scottish and one supported union because he felt more British. Three respondents supported independence by arguing that Scotland is a nation and so should run itself. One respondent with the nationalist argument stated that the union should not be broken but gave no reason other than to emphasize the importance of the union.

Rectifying past injustices, increasing diversity, and making entry easier were each used by only a single respondent as the most important issues. Four of the respondents said that they had either not thought enough about the referendum or showed a lack of interest in the referendum. Below are the coded results:
Scottish Leaders

The Scottish Parliament, which was formed in 1999, comprises 129 members. Of the four major parties in the parliament, the Scottish National Party commands a majority of the seats with 69 members. The Scottish Labour Party, the Scottish Conservative Party, and the Scottish Liberal Democrats have 27, 15, and 5 seats respectively as of the 2011 Scottish Parliament election. The Scottish National Party has led the efforts for an independent Scotland, while the other three major parties have formed the opposition.

During the course of my research, I interviewed members of parliament from each of the four largest political parties to gain a better understanding of what matters most to citizens and politicians when they decide how they will vote.

I initially expected that I could, at best, be able to interview two members of parliament who supported independence and two who did not. In light of this, I emailed approximately one third of the Scottish Parliament at the beginning of July. I sent out emails alphabetically based on each party. When I received a far better response than I was expecting, I did not send any further emails and only pursued those who responded to the emails I had already sent. Interviews were carried out over the phone or in person, based on the preference of the interviewees. Three interviews were conducted at the Scottish parliament. Two more were conducted at local offices in Glasgow. The rest were via phone. This is because during my time in Scotland, the Scottish Parliament was mostly in recess. Interviews were carried out from June to August. The interviews were recorded but not transcribed in their
entirety. Pieces of the interviews appear below and the recordings of the interviews have been kept.

The coding process for these interviews was much more ambiguous than for the citizens because the politicians rarely gave a clear answer using one code. They often referred to several codes, and gave each one varying levels of importance. Because these interviews were longer than the voter interviews and with more questions, it was not unexpected that the officials might offer more elaborate responses that would use several of Buchanan’s justifications. This section is organized into pro-independence and pro-union sections and the purpose is to understand what politicians and political organizations find to be the key justifications for or against Scottish independence. The leaders interviewed are listed in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pro-Independence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leader</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alasdair Allan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Adam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marco Biagi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart Maxwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Allard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margo MacDonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuart MacDonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.* Political leaders interviewed.
Pro-Independence Leaders

In order to understand the pro-independence debate from those professionals who work much on the issue, I interviewed six pro-independence members of the Scottish Parliament and one researcher at the YES Scotland campaign. The YES Scotland campaign is not a part of the Scottish National Party, but is recognized as the official campaign for Scottish independence ("About YES Scotland"). Five of the pro-independence MSPs interviewed were members of the Scottish National Party: Alasdair Allan of the Western Isles, George Adam of Paisley, Marco Biagi of Edinburgh Central, Stewart Maxwell of West Scotland, and Christian Allard of North East Scotland. I also interviewed Margo Macdonald, an independent from Lothian.

After explaining to the interviewees the purpose of the research, they were asked what if any issue was the most important in deciding how the interviewee or the general public would vote in the referendum. This type of question was intended to immediately reveal how these leaders justified independence. Among these seven interviewees, there was no clear consensus on a single primary reason or justification for independence. However, there was a significant amount of agreement on a set of the most important justifications for independence.

There was a clear chain of reasoning that all used to a greater or lesser extent. The chain of reasoning looked like this:

1. Scotland is a nation.
2. Scotland would better represent its own interests if it had a sovereign government.
3. Westminster does not represent the interests of Scotland.

4. There are certain policies or aspects of Scottish life that can and should be improved.

Every pro-independence professional not only mentioned all of these themes, but most of them mentioned these statements in the order above. This is a significant departure from the interviews of citizens where what seemed to matter most was specific issues like the economy. The professionals typically used specific policies as an example of why statements 1-3 are justified.

For instance, SNP MSP Alasdair Allan said that “In terms of reasons for independence, the primary one is a democratic one... obviously Scotland has a sense of its own identity historically and culturally. We’ve been an independent country. We have many of the institutions of an independent country, but what we don’t have all the time is a government that we elect and the primary benefit, I suppose, of independence is that you get the government that you elect every time” (Allan).

Mr. Allan follows the aforementioned chain of reasoning. First, he states his view that Scotland is clearly a nation. He then suggested that the best way that Scotland could be run is if it had the government it elected every time (i.e. sovereignty), especially due to the fact that Scotland does not always get the government it elects in Westminster. During the course of the interview, he mentioned specific policies that needed improving upon; something that he claimed could come as a result of independence. These policy arguments were given mostly in terms of economics. He said, “There’s a sense that the best people to use the economic levers for Scotland’s benefit are the people in Scotland.” He noted that
there are certainly times in which the UK government has not acted in Scotland's best interest when he referred to the “demolition” of Scotland’s heavy industry and the selling out of much of Scotland's fishing interest. Policy issues did not only deal with national policy. It also applied to the global scale. Mr. Allan stated that most in the fishing industry would like to see Scottish leaders around the table at the EU rather than a UK contingency representing their fishing interests.

Mr. Allan’s argument began with the idea that Scotland was a nation and ended with the argument that there are many policy issues that would be better addressed through independence. What does this say about his justifications for independence? We can assume that because in his introductory remarks he only mentioned Scotland’s nationhood and the importance of self-determination that these are his primary justifications for independence. It was only upon his clarifying the importance of these two issues that he brought up specific policy goals and grievances. Therefore we can assume that nationhood and the desire for better representation are his primary reasons for independence. It is important to note here that there may not be a single reason why someone supports independence. It is even possible that no single argument, in the mind of the leader, would be enough to justify independence. Only when there are a given number of justifications might they say that independence is the proper course of action.

In order to understand a context for the current debate, I asked the members of the SNP party if the justifications for independence are the same as they have always been in its history. SNP MSP Stewart Maxwell went the furthest in explaining the evolution of the independence justifications within the Scottish
National Party (Maxwell). He argued that support for independence in the SNP was initially based on what would clearly be Allen Buchanan’s ‘Nationalist Argument.’ He said, “The debate about independence has gone on for, inside the SNP, for the last 80 odd years. For most of that time, I would suggest, it was based on a backward looking view of the world. It was based on what Scotland used to be. So it was based on a kind of slightly kind of fantasy of a Scotland that never existed.” Upon the discovery of Scottish oil in the 70s, he said that the justification was mostly about the idea that Scotland could be rich if it were independent. Now he says:

[Independence is a] much more sensible argument about responsibility and about taking your own decisions. It moved completely away from being on the right of politics to being on the center-left of politics because it moved away from that idea of nationhood to the idea that we currently have which is not about if you’re born here but if you’re committed to being a part of this country.

Speaking of the early SNP fight for independence he said, “It was a 2-dimensional view of what being a nation was about. People thought, in a sense, independence was the objective. That was the endgame. The endgame now is not independence. Independence is the tool.”

Mr. Maxwell talked about how independence is no longer then endgame, but does that mean that independence is now about specific policies that should be
implemented in a new Scotland? According to Mr. Maxwell, it seems that the answer depends on whom you ask. He said:

We’ve now got a reason for independence that is beyond independence itself. I think that’s where the argument has shifted inside the party and that’s part of the reason I think where it’s much more accessible to other people. Cause if you were a die-hard nationalist, if you just instinctively believed in independence, then for you, it’s blindingly obvious. Why should we be independent? Because we should! I mean it’s just bloody obvious. Why would you think otherwise? Now I hold that view. Of course we should be independent. Why shouldn’t we be independent?

But people who are not interested; that don’t come around to this argument from the same point of view say ‘why should we be independent’ and what they want to hear is not ‘because we should.’ They want to hear ‘because it will be better for your children, you’ll have more opportunities for better employment, that you’ll be protected in your old age, we won’t waste money on nuclear weapons, they want to hear these kind of reasons for independence.

In this quote, we see Mr. Maxwell identifying two broad categories of pro-independence supporters. There are those who would support independence primarily based on the idea that Scotland is a nation and therefore should be independent. The second group is those who would support independence mainly
because they see it as the best way to achieve certain goals that aren’t independence. Of course, this second group might choose one or many of a large group of policies to support independence, but it does seem that they all don’t begin with independence as their goal, but rather see it as a good solution to a problem.

There exists a third reason for independence that many interviewees mentioned that often relates to both of the above justifications, which is the idea that the government in the UK does not represent Scotland in the way that most accurately represents the wishes of the Scots. This is a subtle difference that says more than Scotland should rule itself. It says Scotland should rule itself because it is not being ruled well at present. Several of the interviewees were asked if there was a sense of wrongdoing from the UK. This would give an indication as to what kind of role Allen Buchanan’s notions of discriminatory redistribution and past injustices might play into the justifications for independence.

Most of the interviewees were careful not to say they agreed with the terms ‘discrimination’ or ‘injustice.’ Rather, it was usually a matter of Scotland and the UK’s interests not aligning well. Stuart MacDonald from the YES campaign said, “It’s not necessarily the policy decisions made by Westminster are bad in themselves. It’s just if you have one policy for London and the same policy for Lewis [northwest Scotland], it’s just so broad sweeping it doesn’t make sense.” SNP MSP Marco Biagi put this into a historical context:

*Scotland has been diverging in political terms with the UK since the 60s at least. You can argue that we weren’t really congruent with the UK in*
politics before that as well. The more it diverges, clearly the more policies pursued in London on one-size-fits all basis with the UK are going to jar in Scotland. You see that right now with welfare reform. 10 years ago it was the Iraq War.

Mr. Biagi went on to explain that Scotland was nearly unanimously against sending forces into the Middle East after 9/11 but they were at the mercy of Westminster's decision on the issue, which did support America in the Middle East.

SNP MSP George Adam was critical of Scotland's financial connection with the UK. “Instead of us actually using our wealth to balance the books in Westminster it's probably my view would be for us to actually gain it and use it to invest in the future and ensure Scotland can become part of the world again.” Mr. Adam also defined the economic problematic relationship between Scotland and the rest of the UK in terms of economic priorities. “There is a massive difference in attitude between Scotland and those that live in the South of England. We tend to believe more in community and looking after each other, ensuring that we can actually build for the future, whereas there is more of an attitude of just me, just the individual, make it on your own kind of thing in the south.”

Mr. Maxwell provided the most thorough explanation of how, if at all, injustice and discrimination play in the justification of independence.

It’s not that they’re being bad to us in that sense [of discriminatory redistribution]. It’s just that they concentrate their efforts in trying to
ensure that the Southeast of England is healthy because that’s the priority for them. They want to see the city of London do tremendously well. They want to see the southeast of England boom... but that creates a very imbalanced economy in the UK. So you have all this overheating in the southeast. House prices are completely out of control. It’s ridiculous. And other bits of the UK, not just Scotland... Wales and Northern Ireland... are suffering disproportionately because the UK government chose an economic model which suits the southeast of England and yet another bit of the country, Scotland, is much more manufacturing based. Exports are much more important to us. If you’ve got a financial sector as your biggest thing then you’re going to choose policies and taxation policies particularly, which help that. They don’t necessarily help the country that exports.

Stewart Maxwell hit on what might be the key to understanding how a leader in the Scottish National Party might justify independence earlier when he said that he himself believed that independence was the obvious right future for Scotland aside from all of the policy arguments that he continued to use which would show that Scotland would be a better nation. It appears from these interviews that those who are most involved in the pro-independence movement find more of their justifications for independence from the idea that Scotland is a nation and therefore has the right to have complete sovereignty over its affairs.
The argument that Scotland is a nation and has the right to self-determination simply for the sake of self-determination is not an argument that the interviewees used without evidence for why Scotland is a nation in the first place. Marco Biagi says a lot about why Scotland should be independent.

*The UK was set up as an agreement in perpetuity between Scotland and England, two countries, to form a United Kingdom... I think as well when you’re the center of what used to be an empire that was granted self-determination where you’ve seen former colonies, slave colonies, conquered colonies, possessions like India get their self-determination and move on, find their own course in the world, it’s very hard to object. But there’s also Canada, Australia, New Zealand; countries that were largely... offshoots very much of the homelands, for want of a better term, just reach the point where they wanted to be self-governing... that’s a path that Scotland seeks to follow.*

Stewart Maxwell said:

*It’s not that I no longer want Scotland to have any relations with England. But fundamentally we have a separate church, a separate legal system, a separate education system, and a different history. Pretty much, that’s a separate country. It’s just that our political masters are in London. Rather than the policies of a country being*
decided by a government elected here. So there’s an absolute there that says if you can recognize a country, it probably is a country.

Upon making the assertion that Scotland as a nation had the right to leave, I asked Mr. Maxwell the question that Allan Buchanan raises about the right of a seceding country being able to take the land on which it sits away from the country, which it is leaving. He said:

That’s fundamentally the wrong starting point. We’re not leaving the country... we’re bringing the UK to an end. So effectively, in our view, the United Kingdom was formed in 1707 when England and Wales and Scotland joined together in a political union. Before, of course, we were a Union of Crowns... but the UK is basically, fundamentally, a coalition formed by the Act of Union. What we are doing is saying that that act of parliament should be dissolved and what will happen is not that we will leave but that the act of parliament will be dissolved and two new, if you want to put it, two new nations will emerge from that. Two new entities will emerge, but it’s in fact the two old entities that have always been there will reemerge.

Mr. Maxwell agreed that if Scotland were leaving the UK then Scotland would have no right to the land, but he says that is not what is happening. This argument is very similar to the limited goals of political association.
Allan Buchanan makes a point that if a seceding group can gain what it argues for within the union then it has no right to leave. I asked several of the leaders what they could not achieve in a more devolved situation. Stewart Maxwell said:

*Anything short of independence means that Westminster... remains sovereign so even all of the things that, even under devomax, if we passed the powers for everything barring defense and foreign affairs, they ultimately would still have control over everything, not just defense and foreign affairs but over everything... What responsibility do you have if, fundamentally, somebody standing over your shoulder who can say ‘no you’re wrong’ and force you to change. That’s not individual responsibility.*

Stewart Macdonald and Margo Macdonald both agreed with Mr. Maxwell that Scotland could not have control of foreign affairs and defense in a devolved situation (MacDonald, Stuart)(MacDonald, Margo).

Mr. Maxwell discussed that there were arguments that do not justify independence in and of themselves but are still necessary in order to be discussed in order to build support for independence. He said that at the beginning of the YES campaign, one of the keys to the campaign is to convince voters that independence, if not creating a more prosperous, would at least be economically viable.
Is this about money? Of course it’s about money. At the end of the day it’s all about money, but for me, the question of independence isn’t about the economics of independence, but you’ll never get people to vote yes if they don’t believe economically we’ll be ok. You don’t have to prove to them that we’ll be wealthier than Saudi Arabia but you have to prove to them that it won’t be worse.

As evidenced above, the pro-independence position among political leaders cannot easily be summarized in a single phrase. There are still some clear takeaways. Specific policy issues are not as primary to the justifications of politicians as they are to citizens. Pro-independence members of the Scottish Parliament tended to argue for independence based on Scotland’s inherent nationhood, the misrepresentation of Scotland in its current state, and policies that could be improved upon in that order. These would best be coded as the nationalist argument, discriminatory redistribution, and enhanced efficiency in that order of importance.

Pro-Union Leaders

In order to understand what could be the most important reasons that citizens and politicians choose to vote ‘no’ in the Scottish independence referendum, I interviewed Scottish Parliament members from the three largest political parties that oppose Scottish independence. The Labour members interviewed were Michael McMahon of Uddingston and Bellshill, Drew Smith of Glasgow, Jackie Baillie
of Dunbarton, Neil Findlay of Lothian, and Ken Macintosh of Eastwood. The Liberal Democrats interviewed were Liam McArthur of Orkney and Tavish Scott of Shetland. Tavish Scott was the leader of the Liberal Democrats in the Scottish Parliament from 2008-2011. The Conservative MSPs interviewed were Alex Fergusson of Upper Nithsdale and Galloway and Murdo Fraser of Mid Scotland and Fife.

The pro-union interviewees on the whole approached the question of independence with a different measure of the justifications for independence. Where the pro-independence interviewees used began with more theoretical justifications for independence, pro-union interviewees were more interested in justifying union more in terms of policy direction from the outset.

The most repeated policy issue was the economy. Tavish Scott stated that, “If you’re people like me, you probably do it [decide how to vote] on the hard nose realities of economics and finance.” MSP Michael McMahon said:

> The most important thing for me is the economy. If I thought it was in Scotland’s interest to become independent; if I thought that the economy would benefit and people’s jobs and opportunities and well-being of the country would benefit from Scotland being independent, I would support independence. I genuinely don’t believe that Scotland would be a more prosperous country as an independent state.
He went on to say that one important measure that he had for a better economy was that it should demonstrate more economic equality. He said that there is no evidence that such equality could be gained in a more independent Scotland. Equality in the economy was echoed by Neil Findlay as well who said, “For me, the main thing about the referendum is that we build a progressive Scotland and a progressive UK...” He went on to say that this would be more difficult if Scotland were independent because it would split the powerful voice of the working class (Findlay).

Alex Fergusson said that he saw the economy as the most important issue as well (Fergusson). When asked if people measured the economy in terms of finances, he responded by saying:

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\text{I think people are starting to think a bit deeper than that and start to try to drill down into some of the real answers that they want to have to the questions they've understandably got like would we automatically become a member of the EU because a huge part of our trade depends on business being done within the European Union... like weather or not we would become automatically members of NATO, like whether we do want to become a small, fairly insignificant member-state within Europe or remain part of a fairly powerful member-state within Europe as we are at the moment.}
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He said issues like the EU are principally economic issues.
MSP Jackie Baillie said, “The economy is probably my most important issue. I just think we’ve had an economic union that has benefited all parts of the UK very well over the years. We have quite strong social unions in the sense that what affects a working man in Glasgow is the same thing that affects working men in Manchester or Birmingham or Newcastle” (Baillie).

While these members expressed the economy as the primary issue, this does not necessarily mean that if it was proven that Scotland would be better off independent in terms of finances that they would support independence. Alex Fergusson stated:

I would put forward the economy as the major argument. It’s not the only one and there are all sorts of other things one has to take into account as well... I could never see myself personally voting for independence. I believe very, very strongly in increased devolution... and I believe there is a very, very strong place for Scotland within the United Kingdom on that basis. I also think that the United Kingdom would be a hell of a lot weaker without Scotland being an integral part of it.

Not all of the pro-union members interviewed were willing to list the economy as an issue that is more important than others. Drew Smith, a Scottish Labour MSP from Glasgow stated that because the issue of independence affects every part of Scottish life, it is difficult to claim that one issue matters more than all
the others. Mr. Smith stated that he decided how to vote on the referendum in much the same way that he would go about deciding how to vote on any other policy issue (Smith):

Constitution [independence] politics is different from a lot of the rest of politics but I suppose from my point of view, my concerns would be the same. So as somebody would describe themselves as of the left and of the Labour party then my concerns would be around working people and the impact that it would have on people at work and people’s prospects for improving their own lives.

Ken Macintosh agreed that there is no single issue that is most important in the debate (Macintosh). However, he went on to say:

I suppose the one issue would be the concept of nationalism and independence doesn’t appeal to me at all. I view myself as an internationalist and I think we live in an ever connected world so I don’t see myself as a separatist and I don’t view myself in terms of my identity either. I don’t view politics in terms of identity... Now, I believe in devolution, which is about everybody having as much control over their own affairs as possible. Independence is a totally different creature. Independence is not seen as devolution at all. It’s about separation. It’s
about separating away from the UK but it's also about centralizing power in Edinburgh.

The problem of centralizing Scotland was also an issue that was mentioned by Tavish Scott. He said that the SNP has proven by their six years of leadership in the Scottish Parliament that they generally do not devolve power beyond Edinburgh and this is a great weakness of the independence campaign.

Liam McArthur said that he believes that Scotland should stay in the Union (McArthur). He went on to explain that he has held this view based on the notion that:

While I have been a lifelong advocate of the establishment of the Scottish Parliament and for devolution, not just to Scotland but within Scotland... I recognize that increasingly we need to work collaboratively. It reflects the support I have long held for the development of the European Union and the UK’s involvement in a host of international organizations. He went on to say that “we are far stronger together as part of the United Kingdom..."

Most of the members like Mr. McArthur were clear to say that they were supporters of the benefits that devolution might offer. He said that it was counterintuitive to seek more national independence, but it does make sense that decisions of Scots would be closer to Scots.
MSP Murdo Fraser’s justification was the farthest removed from the rest of the members. He said that the main issue was identity.

Speaking both personally and from my experience of talking to a great many others, I think the biggest factor is going to be identity. People who consider themselves to be British or even Scottish and British to a degree are overwhelmingly going to vote to stay in the UK. People who believe themselves only to be Scottish in the main I think will vote for independence...From my own personal perspective, even if there were a convincing case that Scotland would be better off independent, I still don’t think I would vote for it. I still believe we are part of a family of nations (Fraser).

Though he said the economy was important, he said that the debate about whether the economy would be better in an independent country cannot be answered in a way that convinces everyone.

There did not seem to be a clear difference of justifications based on party lines. Tavish Scott agreed with this by saying,

I think profoundly, those of us who believe in the UK probably share the same broad reasons as to why we think the United Kingdom is in Scotland’s interest because there’s more to be lost by getting out of it when, for all its faults and problems, there’s a lot of positive reasons to
be part of it and I think those are probably the same irrespective of which part of the political spectrum you’re on whether you’re a liberal, a socialist, or a free market Tory (Scott).

As a whole, the primary justification for union with the United Kingdom was based upon the enhanced efficiency. Leaders believed that Scotland would benefit more from staying a part of the UK than becoming independent. This was usually argued in terms of economics. Murdo Fraser’s justification of identity and Ken Macintosh’s justification based on his views of internationalism might best be coded as nationalism. Ken Macintosh’s views fit into the justification of internationalism because he points to an inherent superiority of an international focus that he believes to be self-evident.

Scottish Scholars

I interviewed two professors at the University of Edinburgh Institute of Governance. Dr. Eberhard Bort is a professor who has published multiple articles on Scottish Culture and Politics. He also runs the University of Edinburgh Scottish Parliament internship program. Dr. David McCrone currently writes full time on issues of Scottish politics. Dr. McCrone was also a member of the Consultative Steering Group on the Scottish Parliament in the late 1990s, which was formed in order to recommend a governing system for the Scottish Parliament.

These professors were chosen because of their expertise in Scottish Politics. I was also a student of theirs during my time interning in the Scottish Parliament.
The interviews were not transcribed in their entirety. Pieces of the interviews appear below and the recordings of the interviews have been kept.

When asked broadly how Scots decide their position on Scottish independence, the two professors gave different but not incongruous answers. Dr. McCrone responded:

> *Issues of economy are important, issues of pride and country are important, issues of identity are important…they [citizens] would juggle them up.* Later in the interview, he returned to this question.

> *Underpinning all these practical things like controlling the economy…people judge the issues [by asking] ‘what is good for Scotland. Which party works best in Scotland’s long-term interests* (McCrone).

When asked if they measure their interests in terms of economics, he said,

> *Well, they produce a calculus of many things: of economics, politics. They don’t partition it down, of course, because all of these things are in people’s heads.*

Dr. Bort first said that there were three major groups of opinion.

> *You have those who are absolutely died in the wool independence, whatever the outcome. Real nationalists would never ask about economic benefits or things like that. They would just say ‘look, it’s Scotland’s birthright to be independent and sovereignty is the highest good and of course we have to strive to be independent… Then you have*
those people who are on principle unionists and say 'look we have
pragmatically lived in this union for 300 years. Like the campaign says,
we’re ‘better together.’ We have the backing of a strong member-state of
the European Union we have a seat at the Security Council. Simply the
benefits outweigh the romantic ideas of independence or sovereignty.
Scotland is better off in the United Kingdom not only economically.
We’re living on an island. We have to live together anyway.

Independence will not change the geography or the demography of this
island so let’s work together and most would then say with a devolved
parliament with substantial power, perhaps more powers than it has at
the moment (Bort).

“These two camps are not looking at the same thing in a way, but then you
have people who are undecided.” He said this undecided group could be 16-19% of
the population. He also quoted a study in which people responded by over 60% that
they would vote for independence if they would be 500 pounds better off every year
and the support for independence dropped below 20% if they would be 500 pounds
worse off every year. Of this study on the impact of money, he says, “it seems to be
the argument that is most important for those who are undecided or not totally
ideologically lumped into one of these two camps seems to be the economic
argument. And that of course is speculative because nobody can... guarantee you
that an independent Scotland would be either better off or worse off or the same.”
He suggested that whoever can offer the best argument has a chance of winning more votes, though it might not be enough to win the referendum.

Recognizing the fact that this referendum is a war for the undecided voters, Dr. McCrone discussed the ways in which the yes and no camp would appeal to voters. The ‘No’ campaign, he says, has thus far built their campaign around warning of the dangers of independence. “They’ve been criticized, I think not unreasonably been criticized, for kind of claiming, you know, fear, doom, and gloom. They’re more depressing and ‘oh you couldn’t possibly do this. It’s a terrible risk.’”

Dr. Bort explained that one issue that the No campaign has yet to clarify is whether voting no means any further devolution or not. The YES campaign, he says, has yet to reveal their true strategy, which they intend to reveal on 30 November 2013.

Perhaps it is because the YES campaign has not yet begun its official campaign that explains why Dr. Bort suggested that “there is the lack of a big theme, a game-changing theme... None of them [the current issues] prove to be of a game-changing quality.” He marveled that the support for independence has not changed greatly over the past twenty years. Because so much has happened in the past years that one would think would have affected people approval of independence, it is difficult to imagine what is yet to come that could cause a change in public opinion.

Dr. McCrone also pointed out that one of the great difficulties of the referendum is that there is a large part of the electorate that would rather have the option to vote for a more devolved government in Scotland than an up or down vote on Scottish independence. He claims that Scots’ beliefs about independence are on a spectrum, not yes or no. He reckoned that there is a 1/3 split between those who
want Scottish independence, those who want a more powerful parliament in the Scotland, and those who do not believe the Scottish government should have any more power.

Dr. Mccrone was asked to comment on several of the justifications for or against independence. This was done in order to understand what role each justification might play in the minds of Scottish citizens. Dr. Bort was not asked about the justifications directly, but some of his comments on these issues are presented below.

Rectifying a past injustice – Dr. McCrone saw this as an issue of representation. He believes that the greatest injustice felt by citizens is that since the 1950s, Scotland and England have separated electorally. “The fact that Scotland from the last 50 or 60 years has voted differently from England but always got a government that England determined because England is the bigger party. It’s ten times bigger. Then that’s perceived as an injustice.” He also acknowledged that there are many nationalists who say that England has had evil intent on Scotland for 700-800 years.

When asked if an issue like the poll tax in the 80s played a large role in people’s vote on independence, Dr. Bort said, “I am absolutely sure that that is still residual in the Scottish psyche and when we look at September 2014, I think the result will be influenced, I’m not saying decisively influenced necessarily, but it will be influenced by the state of play at that time.” Dr. Bort said that the state of play might involve the aftermath of the upcoming European elections in which the Conservative party might make some sort of political agreement with the UK
independence party (UKip). UKip hopes to leave the European Union. "The prospect of another Tory government from 2015 onwards would certainly swing some Scots and make them more prone to vote for independence." If however, it looked like the Conservative party will likely lose the 2015 election, that would cause more to vote for the Better Together campaign says Bort. Of this disdain for Conseratives, Dr. Bort says:

"That’s a historical thing. That’s the lesson of Margaret Thatcher and John Major of a period when they [Scots] thought that the Tories, even the Scottish Tories, were an English party and that London did not really care for Scotland and the example that is always wheeled out is of course the poll tax: thought up by the Scottish Tories but implemented by the Thatcher government in Scotland ahead of the rest of the UK… Whether it’s true or not, it really created that lasting image and thinking that Scotland was used as a guinea pig for a very unpopular tax for which practically nobody voted in the public in Scotland."

Limited goals of political association – Dr. McCrone called this theory the marriage of convenience:

"There was a very practical set of reasons. Now this could just be rereading history, but really clearly there were practical reasons that we didn’t lose our institutions that really mattered like law, religion,"
education, all those sorts of things. We were still self-governing after
the union. We lost our parliament and in those days (beginning of the
18th century), parliaments didn’t really matter. They weren’t
democratically elected... If one reads it as a program of action that
suited Scotland or England for a limited time... but it’s no longer, then,
keep the metaphor of the marriage, what do you do? You either leave
the home and go somewhere else or go out one your own, find a partner,
or you come to a new understanding of living together or you just
knuckle down and get on with it but I don’t think that is probably an
option.

Enhancing efficiency – “governments close to the people, at least in theory,
have a better chance of being responsive to the electorate. That sort of pragmatic
reasons certainly do [play a role in people’s thinking].”... “There’s a perfectly
practical set of reasons why you would want Scotland to be independent to run
things more efficiently." However, Dr. McCrone also points out how this argument
can cause an infinite regress where lower and lower levels of government demand
autonomy. The desire for more power for local authorities is strongest in the
islands (the Western Isles, Shetland, and Orkney) because their needs are the most
unique.

Dr. Bort confirms this infinite regress:
For the past three months or so, Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles have come up and said ‘hey hang on. This is a one-dimensional debate here. You take Scotland as a whole wants to be independent, self-determination but what about us? We want to be recognized as well and we want either devolution from that independent Scotland. Actually, whether Scotland becomes independent or not is nearly negligible for us. What we really want in Orkney, Shetland, and the western Isles is more autonomy for ourselves under any regime.’

Because of this issue, he talked about how international organizations claim to support devolution but they are unwilling to support new nation-states. He said the debate is also a good reminder that there are many diverse regions in Scotland:

There is also a feeling that this [Scottish] government has been very centralizing and that it is very strange that you have a government that rejects all the demands that it itself makes for itself... The idea that you say ‘we need full fiscal powers for the Scottish government, but at the same time taking away the fiscal powers of local government by freezing the council tax... and no intention whatsoever, recognizable at the moment of reforming the council tax.

Preserving culture – Dr. McCrone discussed how culture was clearly not lost with the Union of 1707 so it is unlikely to see how it could lose its culture now.
However, it has been clear that devolution has brought a resurgence of culture, regardless of whether it was the SNP or the Labour party that was in power in the Scottish Parliament.

Discriminatory redistribution – The argument for discriminatory distribution, Dr. McCrone said can be seen from several angles. “There is a political economic debate about the Barnett Formula and identifiable public expenditures on one side. The claim is that Scotland gets more than its fair share per capita of its spending to the order of 20%.” The problem with this claim, says Dr McCrone is that the Barnett formula is meant to be a “convergent formula so that England and Scotland and indeed Wales will end up getting similar amounts of money and not less.” A flaw in the argument that he saw is that when Conservatives argue that Scotland should stay in the union because they are receiving more than their share of public expenditures, they are essentially bribing Scotland to stay in the Union.

Dr. Bort commented on discriminatory redistribution by saying:

*I think that, generally speaking, David Cameron and his government have been relatively prudent and circumspect in that sense [of not using discriminatory redistribution]. They were relatively quick and decisive in saying ‘Ok, the SNP has a mandate for the referendum and let’s have negotiations about it. Let’s make it watertight that it is on a sound legal footing.’ That all ended with the Edinburgh agreement last October so there is relatively little there that you can say there is grievance ... but certainly the general argument stays that the London government will*
look after England or after the UK, which is mostly England in terms of population, in terms of economic power, etc. And that Scotland despite an absolute majority of Scottish MPs voting against things like the Bedroom Tax, the Bedroom Tax is introduced in Scotland so the democratic deficit argument: .... They [Scottish members of Parliament in London] can vote against the government every day of the week [against the majority Conservative government] and it will not change policy being implemented in Scotland and that is certainly an argument... that there is an inbuilt grievance of saying it doesn’t depend on the vote of Scottish MPs. It is the London government. It is the English MPs.

In order to have a discussion about whether discriminatory redistribution is occurring, there must be a belief that the situation might be better in a different circumstance. Dr. McCrone addressed this:

In a way, the economic argument ‘where would Scotland stand in terms of its economic position if it became independent and Unionists have a tendency to say ‘Oh it’ll be terribly worse’ and nationalists say ‘oh well it’s all going to be milk and honey’ and actually, practically, while not an economist, it’s somewhere pretty well where we are at the moment.
He said there would be complicated negotiations about who gets what in the aftermath of a vote for Scottish independence in terms of assets and debt. Dr. Bort adds to this conversation, saying that the future of Scotland’s economy is often judged several decades forward, especially in relation to oil revenues. Predicting so far into the future can be especially difficult given the number of variables. Even in the immediate aftermath of the referendum, there would be significant confusion in the business market waiting to see what kind of economic system the Scottish Government would establish. He points out that it is actually difficult to make statements about immediate benefits or losses of independence because it would take time to even implement independence. He says the SNP claims 16 months at least between the vote and independence.

Dr. McCrone said:

*There is a sense of injustice that decisions are made in Westminster about levels of spending and taxation over which Scotland has no control. Now, the more the nationalist cause and the YES campaign focuses on that ‘we’re being badly treated. Decisions are being made about welfare and about whatever it would be and that’s not our way’ or ‘the UK Government increasingly wishes to leave the European Union. That’s not in Scotland’s interest. Therefore we want to have the say over what’s right for Scotland’...There’s something deeply pragmatic about Scotland’s relationship to the rest of the United Kingdom and it goes back to our marriage of convenience thing again. And it is a rationalist. It’s*
not an emotive. Of course, it’s got emotion tied in it, but these are rational calculations about where we stand... The English system has with regard to health and also education has become highly deregulated, liberalized, market driven. Of that there’s absolutely not a shred of doubt... That’s their choice... but it’s not Scotland’s choice. Scottish opinion, rightly or wrongly has a different view of these things and that is reflected in the dominance of the two main competing political parties, the Scottish National Party and the Labour Party.

He discusses how the Conservative party, which makes most of the deregulation policy is not relevant in Scotland and such policies are accepted as not being the “Scottish way.”

Dr. McCrone mentioned another problem in the discussion of the morality of independence and that is that independence now very difficult to define, especially with Scotland. He said that Scots have always wanted self-government:

*The question is how much?... The question it seems to me is not ‘if Scotland became independent, but when?’ It’s a when question, frankly, because it’s a question of moving along a spectrum. How would Scotland know if it was independent? The world is no longer populated by autonomous, autarchic, independent states. Every state, including the US is dependent on others so the world is an interdependent place,*
which is not an argument for having one global government... Therefore it has to do with degrees of self-government.

Dr. McCrone also discussed what the nationalist argument looks like in Scotland:

If one is a nationalist, he’d say, ‘Well, it’s my country, what could be more obvious?’ It’s the big picture; it’s the big global picture. It’s almost a kind of quasi-religious thing… It’s not really possible to prove the existence of a god for the sake of argument. It’s a belief and nationalists, nationalist politicians, have a belief and that’s perfectly fine and you cannot attack people’s belief… because that’s what they believe. It’s a truth held to be self-evident as you say in your constitution and what could be plainer than that?… It has to do with a belief in Scotland… it’s the existence of the prior nation. Nationalists believe there are things called nations that have the right to self-determination and that’s been a belief going back certainly 200 years. It doesn’t always work out because it implies that the world is like a big jigsaw puzzle and if you only get the pieces to fit then it will all just neatly fit together but it doesn’t work because there are parts of the world where you just cannot reconcile. However, it is a belief that the nation has the right to self-determination… you could then ask them what is the nature of a nation and how you got there and what’s the bits and pieces and the
pragmatics of it which is what we’ve been doing but that’s the prior belief. That’s it; that there is a thing called the Scottish nation and it has the right of self-determination. That’s why people are members of the SNP. Although being very astute, they can partition it down into various arguments because they have to convince people who are not [nationalists], who do not see it as a self-evident truth. If only a third of people believe in independence, you can’t simply speak to the people who believe in it.

He said that it is both emotional and logical. It is an ideological, rhetorical position. “That’s probably a better thing to say than emotional because emotional can imply that it’s somehow crazy, mad, lunatic kind of stuff and it’s not that. It is a belief held to be self-evident by nationalists wherever you are.” He says that in anthropological terms, it’s almost a sacred belief. “The thing about sacred beliefs in religious anthropological terms is you cannot disprove it. It’s just something you hold to be self evident and unarguable. So it is that. It has to do with words like soul... which are embedded in the nature of nationalism and the nation’s right to exist and the nation’s right to prosper.”

Dr. McCrone concluded that the question is not simply “do you believe in nationalism?”

It’s never as straightforward as that because it’s not a yes or a no...It’s a spectrum of belief and what convinces a lot of people about the right of
independence is not that they are nationalists in... let's call it a fundamentalist belief... but it's very basic and you could ask believers about their beliefs and they will justify but that will not necessarily convince you... but they know that they have to have a set of arguments to convince the partial believers or the pragmatics that if Scotland had greater power or indeed independent power within the existence of the modern world it would be better off. It would be a better, happier, richer place. Which is a perfectly reasonable extrapolation of the ideological belief but you cannot hit people over the head. [In] modern politics, you have to convince people and you have to convert them either into true believers or indeed sufficient believers in something to go with it and the trick is to convert the pragmatists into supporting independence rather than simply treating it as a theological divide.

Dr. Bort agreed that views are on a spectrum.

The problem with the referendum is that the favored option of most Scots according to practically all opinion polls is not on the ballot paper.

That, I think, is a real problem; a real democratic problem... you basically force Scots to choose between two options that are minority options... The question really then is 'is it possible despite the fact that the most favored option of the Scots, increased devolution, is not on the ballot to make that a proxy as it were.' Now the SNP has tried over the
past year and a bit to minimize the impact of independence, or at least
to minimize the fear of impact of independence by saying ‘look, we keep
the pound, we keep the queen, we stay in NATO, we keep the welfare
benefits system at least for a transitional period’... which is a dangerous
path because you have in that fundamental, rock-solid independence
camp, you have a few who only want independence because there’d be
radical change and if you can tell them you can vote for independence
but nothing will change really, they cool off pretty quickly... for the
better together campaign, the question is ‘can they present credibly not
just a model for further devolution... but also a path towards it
following a no vote in 2014.

Interview Analysis

The interviews with citizens, leaders, and scholars did a great deal to shed
light on the independence debate, but they did not demonstrate a single clear
justification for or against Scottish independence. Rather, there were a number of
justifications given by individuals, and interviewees sometimes even indicated that
they themselves used a number of justifications when making their decision. As Dr.
McCrone stated, “They [citizens] produce a calculus of many things.”

What is interesting about the difference between the justifications between
leaders and citizens is that they uniformly used different justifications. The
overwhelming majority (75%) of citizens used some type of enhanced efficiency
argument while pro-independence leaders used the nationalist and injustice
arguments. Nevertheless, pro-union leaders, like citizens, did use enhanced efficiency arguments, which were almost always based on the economy.

Because about 75% of citizens and five out of seven pro-union politicians used the enhancing efficiency argument, this was clearly the greatest justification given in the course of the interviews. The other two major justifications used were the nationalist argument and the injustice arguments (escaping discriminatory redistribution and rectifying past injustices). Eight citizens (12%) used the nationalist argument to either justify independence or union. All pro-independence leaders used the nationalist argument, but they were also the interviewees most likely to give more multiple justifications for independence. Two pro-union leaders used the nationalist argument as well, but in support of the UK and more international relations. The rectifying a past injustice argument was mentioned by only one citizen and though politicians shied away from using the words injustice or discrimination, they used arguments that fall into this category. For instance, Mr. Maxwell said, “It’s not that they’re being bad to us in that sense [of discriminatory redistribution]. It’s just that they concentrate their efforts in trying to ensure that the Southeast of England is healthy because that’s the priority for them.” This clearly is an example of discriminatory redistribution.

The professors offered several themes that helped contextualize the research. First, both professors discussed the spectrum of independence. Citizens are not all totally for or against independence. Their beliefs rely along a spectrum. In fact, the largest preference of citizens would be further devolution and pro-union and pro-independence camps are both looking for justifications that appeal to these
citizens. They also suggested that the enhancing efficiency argument will perhaps be the most important factor for those between the two poles of thought, and that the efficiency argument will not be based solely on economic benefit.

They both also shed light on how the political events of the past decades affect voters’ perceptions of the debate. Dr. Bort, for instance, was ‘absolutely sure’ that the perceived injustice of the poll tax in the 1980s still has an affect on Scots when they decide how they will vote in the referendum.

Dr. McCrone’s explanation of the definition of a nationalist was one of the most helpful parts of the interview. He explained how the nationalist belief is unique from other arguments because it is more of a belief in something that nationalists see as ‘self-evident’ and therefore is difficult to be argued with.

Especially in longer interviews with leaders and scholars, it was clear that there are and endless number of factors in the debate for independence but three justifications was used the most. Those were enhancing efficiency, the nationalist argument, and the injustice arguments.
CHAPTER IV

ASSESSING THE MORALITY OF SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE

The purpose of this chapter is to compare the justifications given by interviewees with the justifications that Allen Buchanan lists for secession and to determine the morality of Scottish independence based on these interviews. Among all interviewees, including citizens and politicians, the most often used justifications for independence were *enhancing efficiency*, the *nationalist argument*, and a light form of *discriminatory redistribution* and *rectifying past injustice*.

The first part in judging the morality of secession on Buchanan's terms is to understand if the justifications that citizens and leaders use are ones that Buchanan says are worthy of using to consider secession. Buchanan tells us that the best arguments for secession are to *rectify a past injustice* and to *escape discriminatory redistribution*. Surprisingly, only one Scottish citizen referred to secession in order to rectify a past injustice and none mentioned escaping discriminatory redistribution. It was the pro-independence politicians who used such arguments most. These politicians shied away from using a word as strong as ‘injustice,’ but several of their justifications for independence did fall into these two categories. For instance, George Adam discussed injustice in the sense that Scotland has clearly
different social values that they are not allowed to implement because they are such a small voting part of the United Kingdom. In fact, having such little power in the Westminster Parliament was a major problem that pro-independence politicians had with staying a member of the UK. Dr. McCrone agreed that some Scots felt an injustice in being a part of a system where so many government entities like health were becoming “highly deregulated, liberalized, market driven. Of that there’s absolutely not a shred of doubt... That’s their [England’s] choice... but it’s not Scotland’s choice.” Though it may be the choice of England, Scotland is still tied to most of its decisions because England is such a large part of the UK.

The situation of the American South before the Civil War, as Buchanan exclaimed, has many similarities with Scotland in the way it views discriminatory redistribution. Buchanan describes a feeling in the South that it was being led legislatively by such a larger power (the North) that it was forced to face policies that were only to the benefit of the North, though they were not illegal outright (Buchanan 43). Buchanan considers such a situation a stronger argument for secession. He never speaks of these justifications in totally positive or negative terms but he says that the injustice and redistribution arguments, properly applied, provide the best moral basis for secession.

The most popular justification for independence was by far the enhancing efficiency argument. 50 of the 65 citizens interviewed used this type of reasoning and all but one pro-union politician did as well. Though these interviewees might use different measures of well being like education or economics in order to decide how Scotland would benefit, it was clear that their justification was based on how
Scotland would benefit. The flaw with basing the morality of independence on how Scotland would benefit is that it does not take into account the rest of the United Kingdom. With the exception of two citizens who argued for union by saying ‘united we stand, divided we fall,’ no citizens, whether arguing for or against independence, ever mentioned how the well-being of the rest of the UK may be affected by independence. The pro-union politicians did frequently refer to the pro-union campaign slogan “Better Together,” which does imply a care for how all members of a union will be affected. Buchanan recognizes that such issues about enhancing efficiency can be important in the independence debate, but he says that these issues must play a subordinate role. Even if it were more efficient for Scotland and the rest of the UK to separate, there is still the problem of UK citizens and organizations who do not live in Scotland but own land in Scotland and vice versa. As Buchanan states, “If a person or a group has a property right in something (say, a piece of land), then that person has the moral power or authority to alienate it (through sale, exchange, gift, etc.) or to continue possession of it, regardless of whether he would be better off alienating it” (Buchanan 47)(Emphasis in original). Perhaps such a problem could be avoided for citizens if the land can still remain in their possession in an independent state. By itself, he says the enhancing efficiency argument is not strong enough to justify independence.

Two comments must be made on the account of the enhancing efficiency argument. First, since it is clear that Scots use many different justifications for independence, the enhanced efficiency can play an important role in the independence debate, albeit a subordinate one. Another important note is that
when interviewing Scottish citizens who said that they thought Scotland would be better off in ways such as economics, leadership, and education, the citizens were not asked why they would be better. I assumed that when people stated that they would be better off economically or in other ways, they meant that they would be better off simply because Scotland would run more efficiently or because Scotland had greater wealth. What I was not able to account for was the possibility that Scottish citizens might have thought they would be better off financially because they felt an underlying sense of injustice or discrimination in the way Scotland was being treated in the Union. The enhancing efficiency argument can certainly be used in the independence discussions. However, if it were true that Scottish citizens who used enhancing efficiency really wanted to escape some sort of injustice, their arguments for independence would be much stronger.

The weakest argument that was used frequently in interviews was the nationalist argument. Eight citizens and most pro-independence politicians leaned heavily on this justification. Buchanan says that independence based on the idea of nationhood is untenable. In fact, he argues that the nationalist argument is almost always a placeholder for other justifications, the greatest of which he believes is probably discriminatory redistribution and preservation identity (Buchanan 50). The difficulty is understanding what the other justifications behind the nationalist argument could be. For MSP Stewart Maxwell, there did not appear to be one. He acknowledged that the debate within his party is no longer about independence for the sake of independence and he was pleased with that but he also said, “...if you were a die-hard nationalist, if you just instinctively believed in independence, then
for you, it’s blindingly obvious. Why should we be independent? Because we should!... Now I hold that view. Of course we should be independent.” Dr. McCrone explained the independence argument as more of a belief than anything else; a belief that cannot be proven. He called it a self-evident truth. Even if Scots did use a pure nationalist justification that was not a placeholder for another justification, Buchanan still argues that it does not amount to a moral justification because an unlimited nationalist argument could be an argument for an infinite number of nations. Though Buchanan never discusses how the nationalist argument might be applied to those who would want to stay in a union, he claims that the nationalist argument by itself is not a strong argument for independence (Buchanan 74).

Allen Buchanan repeatedly states in his book that secession should only be pursued if those wishing to secede cannot achieve their goals within the union, usually through devolution. Even then, there are certain justifications that can hardly ever justify independence. We have established that Scotland does have grievances that should be addressed, but there is still a burden of proof placed on Scots wishing to secede that they not only have good justifications, but proof that those justifications cannot sufficiently be addressed through continuing union with the UK. It is on this second issue that nationalists find their argument for independence moot, for now.

At least in theory, most of Scotland’s protests could be addressed within union with the UK through further devolution. This would not be a perfect solution because some grievances mentioned, like issues of foreign affairs, could only be resolved with independence. For instance, MSP Marco Biagi was outraged that
Scotland had to fight in the Iraq War when its people were overwhelmingly opposed to involvement (Biagi). Also, MSP Alasdair Allan discussed how the Scottish fishing industry was hurt by the UK’s international policies on fishing. Though these two issues would be nearly impossible to address within a devolved state, they did not seem to be primary reasons why most citizens and politicians sought independence.

Scotland has certainly been given more self-governing powers within the past 15 years, most notably with the creation of the Scottish Parliament in 1999. The question is, what keeps Scotland from achieving the goals that could technically be achieved in a more devolved state like more control over the type of social policies it wants to institute? If they have come this far in the devolution process, what prevents further devolution, the likes of which might prevent a split of the United Kingdom? Most pro-union politicians who were interviewed endorsed more devolution. Even UK Prime Minister David Cameron has stated that he would be “very open” to further talks on devolution if Scotland remained a part of the United Kingdom after the independence referendum in 2014 (“David Cameron open to ‘further devolution talks’ after referendum”). If there is a possibility of further devolution that could satisfy many of the concerns of the Scottish people, then Allen Buchanan would suggest that this avenue must be fully tried first before independence is sought. This study is not meant to cover the ways in which Scotland should go about addressing Scottish concerns through devolution. What this study does show, however, is that there was little mention made through the course of the justifications given in this study about failed or thwarted efforts Scotland has made to devolve certain powers. This would seem to suggest that
these efforts have not been great. Such a small record of trying to address their
grievances is a far cry from a movement like the one led by Martin Luther King who
listed a very long account of his movement’s unsuccessful attempts to address their
grievances given in *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* (King Jr.). It should also not go
unnoticed that both Dr. McCrone and Dr. Bort suggested that many Scots who would
be inclined to vote for stronger devolution will have to choose only between
independence and union at the referendum, leaving what may be the prevalent
preference for Scottish citizens unrepresented.

Scottish citizens’ and politicians’ justifications for or against Scottish
independence are numerous and vary from individual to individual. The most
prominent justifications were enhancing efficiency, the nationalist argument, and a
light form of escaping discriminatory redistribution and rectifying past injustices.
According to Buchanan, the strongest arguments here are the last two. This
research shows that Scotland does have reasonable arguments for secession, which,
if not addressed, could be cause for secession. Scotland has not yet met Buchanan’s
criteria, however, as it has not exhausted every possible avenue to achieve its goals
as a member of the UK. Therefore, this paper concludes that Scotland does not
currently have sufficient moral justification for secession.
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Smith, Drew. Personal interview. 17 Jul. 2013
APPENDIX
Appendix I

University of Mississippi IRB Approval

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
The University of Mississippi
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University, MS 38677
Office (662) 915-7482
Fax (662) 915-7577

May 15, 2013

Mr. Hunter Nicholson
Public Policy Leadership
University, MS 38677

Dr. Eric Weber
Public Policy Leadership
University, MS 38677

Dear Mr. Nicholson and Dr. Weber:

This is to inform you that your application to conduct research with human participants, *The Price of Freedom: Looking at the Morality behind Scottish Independence (Protocol 13X-258)*, has been approved as Exempt under 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2). The requirement for informed consent from subjects does not apply to this research.

Please remember that all of The University of Mississippi's human participant research activities, regardless of whether the research is subject to federal regulations, must be guided by the ethical principles in *The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research*.

It is especially important for you to keep these points in mind:

- You must protect the rights and welfare of human research participants.
- Any changes to your approved protocol must be reviewed and approved before initiating those changes.
- You must report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or others.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (662) 915-7482.

Sincerely,

Ashley E. Burch
Coordinator, Institutional Review Board