

NATIONAL TARTAN DAY: REWRITING HISTORY IN THE UNITED STATES

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INTRODUCTION

In May 1997, James Hunter told readers of **Scotland on Sunday** that many people in the United States were infatuated with Scotland to the point of 'obsession'. As if to emphasise Hunter's point, six months later leaflets and letters began circulating within the Scottish-American community requesting that individuals and heritage organisations write to their Senators and ask them to support a US Senate proposal to establish an official 'National Tartan Day'. Subsequently, on 20 March 1998, the 105th US Senate passed a Resolution (No. 155) that declared 6 April to be annually recognised as 'National Tartan Day'. The legislation, tabled by the prominent Republican Party Senator Trent Lott, 'recognize[d] the outstanding achievements and contributions made by Scottish Americans to the United States' (Congressional Record—Senate 1998a: S2373).¹ Since its designation, the

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¹ *Since the early-1990s, individual Provinces in Canada have celebrated Tartan Day on 6 April (see, for example, British Columbia (1992); Saskatchewan (1992)). The United States decided to follow such Canadian initiatives. I will concentrate on the US Senate establishment of Tartan Day in this paper, rather than Canadian examples, for two reasons. Firstly, the US Senate Declaration generated much greater publicity and debate than the Canadian legislation and, secondly, the US Senate proposed an explicit and direct connection between Scottish and United States*

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date has been popular amongst celebrants. For example, the third annual Tartan Day celebration in the United States (April 2000) saw three days of events including a ceilidh and a symposium on 'The Living Legacy of Scotland' held at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC, bagpipers performing in New York's Central Park and Senator Lott, wearing a Buchanan tartan kilt, honoured with the American Scottish Foundation's William Wallace Award (Butters 2000; McCaslin 2000; Peters 2000).¹

In establishing Tartan Day, the US Senate was inventing a tradition, albeit in a manner slightly different to that Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) understand. Hobsbawm (1983, p.1) defines an invented tradition as 'a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past'. For example, much of the pageantry surrounding British royalty was 'invented' in the late-Nineteenth and early-Twentieth Centuries by British political institutions for the purposes of showing British people the strength, longevity and authority of the monarch (Cannadine 1983). Similarly, nation-states commonly recognise certain dates, such as independence days (see Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Billig 1995), but officially commemorating another nation's significant moments is irregular. Yet this is precisely what Tartan Day does. In contrast to Hobsbawm and Ranger's (1983) thesis, Tartan Day celebrations of Scotland have not been invented in Scotland for Scots. Rather, Tartan Day has specifically developed outside of Scotland to serve a diaspora community. The date chosen for commemorative purposes, 6 April, has neither been recognised in Scotland as significant nor recognised as worthy of recognition. According to the Senate legislation, the reason for choosing 6 April over arguably more likely candidates such as St. Andrew's Day (30 November) or Burns Night (25 January), was that on 6 April 1320 members of the Scottish nobility signed the Declaration of Arbroath² and that

history as a rationale for Tartan Day. The Canadian designations made no similar assessment.

¹*Support for Tartan Day in the United States is not universal. In 1998 an Admissions Officer at the University of California at Davis was told to stop wearing his kilt to work and wear trousers instead, sparking an on-campus debate about cultural diversity (Hayward 1998).*

²*The Declaration of Arbroath was a medieval petition written in Latin and sent by members of the Scottish nobility to Pope John XXII requesting that the pontiff*

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this document was the model for the 1776 US Declaration of Independence (Congressional Record—Senate, 1998a).

However minor a piece of legislation the Tartan Day Resolution may be politically, it will influentially shape how Scotland is represented and perceived in the United States in much the same manner as Ireland has long been characterised by St. Patrick's Day (see Marston 1989; Davis 1995; Moss 1995; Byron 1999). It is within this context that I contend the establishment of Tartan Day in the USA is worthy of sustained, critical inquiry. In this examination I argue that National Tartan Day is simultaneously a celebration of Scotland and Scottish tradition and a commemoration of a romantic and traditional vision of the formation of the United States. Further, in establishing Tartan Day the US Senate makes a genealogical appeal to Scottish origins and proposes that the United States nation-state itself has Scottish 'roots'. To achieve this, the Resolution uses two strategies. Firstly, it highlights a historical connection between the United States and Scotland – namely that the 1776 Declaration of Independence was 'modeled' on the 1320 Declaration of Arbroath (Congressional Record—Senate 1998a: S2373). The second way in which National Tartan Day identifies the Scottish 'roots' of the United States is in paralleling the beliefs and behaviours of Fourteenth Century Scots with Eighteenth Century Americans, identifying the medieval Scots signing the Declaration of Arbroath as ancestral relations of the Americans signing the Declaration of Independence.

To investigate these contentions, I conduct an analysis of the discourse and rhetoric of the US Senate's delineation of Tartan Day and in particular assess Senator Lott's orations about National Tartan Day (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997a, 1997b, 1998a, 1998b, 1999, 2000a, 2000b). To interrogate the historical claims made by Senator Lott, I address previous scholarly assessments regarding the origins of the 1776 Declaration of Independence. From this examination I conclude that there is no evidence to support the supposed connection between these two historical Declarations written over four hundred and fifty years apart. Secondly, I argue that the language used throughout the legislative process and subsequent recognition of Tartan Day within the US Senate implies that cultural and political beliefs are static and unchanging, being passed across generations by patrilineal descent. Consequently, I argue that National Tartan Day constructs a traditional vision

recognise Scotland's legitimacy as a kingdom distinct from that of England (see, inter alia, Simpson 1977; Barrow, 1992; Cowan 1998).

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of United States history, albeit through Scottish lens, that places men of European ancestry at the centre of the United States nation-state.

SCOTTISH REACTIONS TO TARTAN DAY IN THE UNITED STATES

Before assessing the legislative process that established Tartan Day, it is useful to briefly review the Scottish reaction to having a commemorative date celebrating Scotland established on the calendar in the United States by the US Senate. In Scotland, where Tartan Day is not formally recognised, the US demarcation of this event gained extensive media coverage. In contrast to the press in the United States, which has either ignored or uncritically reported upon Tartan Day, Scottish newspapers have been rather more vocal. In Scotland, coverage of Tartan Day has been extensive at the national level (see, for example, **The Sunday Times** (Hook 1999a), **The Scotsman** (1998; Aiken, 1998; Barry, 1998; Hall and Doran, 1998; Cornwell 2000), **Scotland on Sunday** (Cochrane, 1998; McArthur, 1998; Young and Macfarlane, 1998; Cowan 2000; Peters 2000) and **The Herald** (Dinwoodie, 1998; Fry, 1998; Hewitson, 1998; Linklater, 1998; O'Hare 1998; Wishart, 1998)), with other articles appearing in regional newspapers such as the Aberdeen **Press and Journal** (e.g. King 2000) and the **Courier and Advertiser** (Dundee) (2000).

There have been three prominent assessments in these reviews of Tartan Day. Firstly, academic critics, for example Colin McArthur (1998) and Andrew Hook (1999a) have argued Tartan Day promotes an out-dated stereotype of Scotland that perpetuates images of haggis, tartan, caber tossing, shortbread and the Loch Ness Monster. It is certainly the case that Tartan Day does reproduce such stereotypical representations, critical assessments of which are extensive and need not be re-examined here (see, inter alia, Nairn 1977; Craig, 1982; Trevor-Roper 1983; Donnachie and Whatley 1992; McCrone, 1992; McCrone, Morris and Kiely 1995). This attitude towards Tartan Day has, however, been dismissed by others in Scotland, for example Ruth Wishart (1998, p.13), as 'very sniffy indeed'.

The second main theme in Scottish newspaper commentaries about Tartan Day is that Scottish business leaders and politicians welcome this event. For example, Alexander Linklater (1998) and Chris Barry (1998) both note the then Industry Minister, Brian Wilson (Labour), utilising the date to ask Scottish-American businessmen to invest in Scotland. Reacting against

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critical opinions like those cited above, Wilson explained that although Tartan Day markets Scotland through kitsch symbols and stereotypical imagery, this is overshadowed by the potential economic benefits of US investment in Scotland (Linklater 1998). Similarly, the Scottish Tourist Board and the Scottish Office welcomed the USA's 'close and warm affinity with Scotland' and insisted, 'this special relationship is a real boost for our tartan industries' (Scottish Office spokesman quoted in Young and Macfarlane, 1998, p.7). Scottish politicians from all parties were also quick to join the plaudits. Upon Tartan Day's designation by the US Senate, Scottish National Party leader Alex Salmond went to the US Consulate in Edinburgh and gave the Consul-General a Tartan scarf (Barry, 1998; Linklater 1998). Salmond also sent a telegram to Washington DC to thank Senators for ratifying the date (Dinwoodie, 1998) and applauded Senator Trent Lott, the author of the Tartan Day legislation, stating, 'I congratulate this move and it reflects the growing, powerful image Scotland has all over the world ... A national Tartan Day in America can only help boost our culture and economy' (Alex Salmond, quoted in Young and Macfarlane, 1998, p.7). The SNP's spokesperson on culture, George Reid, was accompanied to the United States in 1999 by members of the other main Scottish political parties to celebrate Tartan Day with Senator Lott (Hook, 1999a) and, more recently, the then Enterprise Minister Henry McLeish (Labour) travelled to the United States to recognize the date (King 2000).¹

A third group of Scottish newspaper articles, considerably smaller in number, have raised questions about the historical detail enshrined in the US Senate's Tartan Day legislation. Critical commentators have questioned the appropriateness of selecting 6 April as Tartan Day and, in particular, have challenged the Senate's justification for selecting this date. Authorities on Scottish history have identified as problematic the assertion in the US Senate Resolution that the 1320 Declaration of Arbroath was the 'model' for the USA's Declaration of Independence in 1776. For example, in **The Herald**, Michael Fry (1998) finds this linking of the two documents to be troublesome, and Ted Cowan (2000, p.17) believes it to be 'highly dubious'.

From these three main representations of National Tartan Day in the Scottish media, it is the third that I critically assess in this paper. To do this I analyse the legitimacy of the historical claims made in the establishment of Tartan

¹ *McLeish later became the First Minister of Scotland.*

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Day and outlined in the Senate Resolution and Senator Lott's supporting orations.

THE US SENATE LEGISLATION

On 10 November 1997 Mississippi Senator Trent Lott, Senate Majority Leader at the time, introduced legislation proposing National Tartan Day into the US Senate (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b). It was the third attempt by Senator Lott to inaugurate 6 April as Tartan Day and ratify the celebration by passing a Resolution to sign the date into United States law (Young and Macfarlane 1998). Four months later, on 20 March 1998, Resolution 155 was passed and the US Senate declared 6 April to be, thereafter, National Tartan Day (see fig. 1; Congressional Record—Senate, 1998b).¹

In the four months between proposing and ratifying the legislation, twenty-eight Senators assigned their co-sponsorship to Resolution 155 (see fig. 2). This evidences that support for Tartan Day was bi-partisan, drawing evenly on Senators from both major political parties in the United States. The subsequent Resolution passed unanimously with little debate over its content or detail. Indeed, the most extensive articulation of Resolution 155 came from its proponent, Senator Lott. For this reason, it is Lott's orations, alongside the final legislation itself, that form the basis for understanding the sentiment and rationale for National Tartan Day in the United States.

When describing his proposal to delineate National Tartan Day in the United States, Mississippi Senator Trent Lott rhetorically intertwined Scottish and American history. His speech showed that the events culminating in signing the Declaration of Arbroath in 1320 were identical to those occurring in America in 1776. The trajectory envisaged by Lott in relation to Scotland and the compilation of the Declaration of Arbroath replicated popular accounts of the USA's own route towards declaring independence. Implicit throughout the Republican Senator's speech, therefore, was an understanding that modern

¹ *It is interesting to note that in September 1989, Representative James Florio (Democrat-New Jersey) motioned the US Congress to observe that 1 October (not 6 April) was when New Jersey celebrated 'Scottish heritage and traditions ... of one of our Nation's prominent ethnic groups' (Congressional Record—Congress, 1989, E3090).*

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American history repeated Scottish medieval history (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b). Further, rhetoric used to represent events in medieval Scotland propounded by Senator Lott deliberately echoed the language and, indeed, the text of the American Declaration of Independence (McArthur 1998).

Figure 1
Full text of U.S. Senate Resolution 155 declaring 6 April to be National Tartan Day in the United States.

105th Congress, 2nd Session, Senate Resolution 155

A resolution (S. Res. 155) designating April 6th as National Tartan Day to recognize the outstanding achievements and contributions made by Scottish Americans to the United States.

Whereas April 6 has a special significance for all Americans, and especially those Americans of Scottish descent, because the Declaration of Arbroath, the Scottish Declaration of Independence, was signed on April 6, 1320 and the American Declaration of Independence was modeled on that inspirational document;

Whereas this resolution honors the major role that Scottish Americans played in the founding of this Nation, such as the fact that almost half of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were of Scottish descent, the Governors in 9 of the original 13 States were of Scottish ancestry, Scottish Americans successfully helped shape this country in its formative years and guide this Nation through its most troubled times;

Whereas this resolution recognizes the monumental achievements and invaluable contributions made by Scottish Americans that have led to America's preeminence in the fields of science, technology, medicine, government, politics, economics, architecture, literature, media, and visual and performing arts;

Whereas this resolution commends the more than 200 organizations throughout the United States that honor Scottish heritage, tradition, and culture, representing the hundreds of thousands of Americans of Scottish descent, residing in every State, who already have made the observance of Tartan Day on April 6 a success; and

Whereas these numerous individuals, clans, societies, clubs, and fraternal organizations do not let the great contributions of the Scottish people go unnoticed: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates April 6 of each year as 'National Tartan Day'.

Source: Congressional Record--Senate (1998a: S2373)

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Figure 2
Chronological list of Co-sponsors of Resolution 155

Senator	Party	State	Date of co-sponsorship of Res. 155	Cong. Record - Senate ref.
Robb	Dem	Virginia	28 January 1998	vol. 144, S180
Abraham	Rep	Michigan	2 February 1998	vol. 144, S273
Moseley-Braun	Dem	Illinois	2 February 1998	vol. 144, S273
Cleland	Dem	Georgia	2 February 1998	vol. 144, S273
Helms	Rep	North Carolina	3 February 1998	vol. 144, S326
Warner	Rep	Virginia	5 February 1998	vol. 144, S456
Hutchison	Rep	Arkansas	5 February 1998	vol. 144, S456
Bumpers	Dem	Arkansas	10 February 1998	vol. 144, S587
Snowe	Rep	Maine	12 February 1998	vol. 144, S770
Hatch	Rep	Utah	12 February 1998	vol. 144, S770
Feingold	Dem	Wisconsin	25 February 1998	vol. 144, S1015
Kohl	Dem	Wisconsin	27 February 1998	vol. 144, S1162
Akaka	Dem	Hawaii	27 February 1998	vol. 144, S1162
Faircloth	Rep	North Carolina	2 March 1998	vol. 144, S1206
Mack	Rep	Florida	3 March 1998	vol. 144, S1262
Reid	Dem	Nevada	3 March 1998	vol. 144, S1262
Allard	Rep	Colorado	3 March 1998	vol. 144, S1262
Inouye	Dem	Hawaii	4 March 1998	vol. 144, S1352
Murray	Dem	Washington	4 March 1998	vol. 144, S1352
Moynihan	Dem	New York	5 March 1998	vol. 144, S1463
Torricelli	Dem	New Jersey	6 March 1998	vol. 144, S1533
Cochran	Rep	Mississippi	9 March 1998	vol. 144, S1569
Hutchison	Rep	Texas	9 March 1998	vol. 144, S1569
Coverdell	Rep	Georgia	10 March 1998	vol. 144, S1702
McConnell	Rep	Kentucky	16 March 1998	vol. 144, S1996
Thompson	Rep	Tennessee	18 March 1998	vol. 144, S2221
Burns	Rep	Montana	18 March 1998	vol. 144, S2221
Coats	Rep	Indiana	20 March 1998	vol. 144, S2368

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Firstly, Lott explained that like their American counterparts over four centuries later, Fourteenth Century Scots 'enumerated a long list of grievances against the English king of the day' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12478).¹ Lott then characterised the Scots as struggling against centralised rule from London and royal command that, far from the metropolis, was perceived to be unjust (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12478). The Scots at Arbroath thus demanded, according to Lott, 'independence in no uncertain terms' and 'claimed that they, the people of Scotland, had the right to choose their own government' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12478). Lott proceeded to explain that on 6 April 1320, the Declaration of Arbroath was written and signed, before poetically arguing that this Declaration comprised, 'daring words ... in dangerous times. Violence ruled the world ... But the Scots who met on that cold April day, perhaps in the rain, were not fighting for property or conquest or estates ... These Scotsmen were claiming liberty as their birthright' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12478). To make the implied connection between events in Fourteenth Century Scotland and Eighteenth Century America explicit, Lott turned to directly address the Declaration of Independence. On a 'hot, steamy day,' Lott explained, 'a group of men stood in a building in the British colony of Pennsylvania ... debating and then signing their own declaration of independence. They used the Arbroath Declaration as the template for their own thoughts, their own words' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12478-S12479). The contiguity that Lott's discourse builds between the two events nearly five hundred years apart is remarkable. Subsequently, Resolution 155 explicitly stated that rationale for establishing 6 April as National Tartan Day was 'because the Declaration of Arbroath, the Scottish Declaration of Independence, was signed on April 6, 1320 and the American Declaration of Independence was modeled on that inspirational document' (Congressional Record—Senate 1998a, S2373).²

¹ *This is certainly the case, but the syntactical structure of these grievances in Declaration of Arbroath is unlike that in the Declaration of Independence, the latter much more closely following the style of the English Bill of Rights, 1689 (see Schwoerer, 1981; Lucas, 1989).*

² *Of scholars examining the connections between Scotland and America, only Hewitson (1993) briefly mentions that the Declarations of Arbroath and Independence are similar. Even then, however, Hewitson (1993, p.viii) merely notes*

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A second rhetorical technique used by Lott was to make repeated calls to 'liberty' as the underlying principle of both the Declarations of Arbroath and Independence. In an April 1997 speech that identified Tartan Day but did not directly promote its legislative designation, Lott never said the word 'liberty' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997a), yet six months later Lott focuses on this term. The word 'liberty' occurs eleven times in Lott's short speech in support of Tartan Day (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b) and a further seven times in his brief commendation following the passing of Resolution 155 (Congressional Record—Senate, 1998b). For example:

National Tartan Day is about *liberty*. It is about the demand of citizens for their freedom from an oppressive government ... By honouring April 6, Americans will annually celebrate the true beginning of the quest for *liberty* and freedom ... Arbroath and the declaration for *liberty*. (Congressional Record—Senate, 1998b, S2564: my emphasis).

With such appeals to 'liberty', Lott's orations serve the purpose of drawing a direct parallel with the American Declaration of Independence's (1967

*this in an initial chronological sketch of the historical period covered by his work and that 'many elements' are shared by these proclamations. It is highly likely that the explicit connection between the two documents utilised by the US Senate Resolution originated in **The Mark of the Scots** (Bruce, 1998, pp.39-43). This text compares excerpts from the Declarations of Independence and Arbroath, highlighting words that appear in both documents as evidence of linkages between them. Bruce (1998, p.41) also provides evidence of this connection by noting the US Declaration of Independence is 56 lines long compared to the Declaration of Arbroath's 39 lines, and that somebody named 'Ross' signed both. Currently an influential member of the Scottish-American community, Bruce's writing claims thousands of people to be of Scottish descent. He recovers 'Scots' as unlikely as Russia's Romanov monarchy, Napoleon, Charles de Gaulle and Lech Walesa. Further, Bruce (1998) identifies a medieval Scottish expedition to North America that landed in Nova Scotia in 1398 a full century before Columbus entered the Caribbean and states that US President George Washington is a descendent of Scottish King Malcolm II (c. 954-1034). Amongst a number of similarly grandiose claims, Bruce (1998, p.240) demands that Scots are responsible for developments in every aspect of communications, transportation and 'The entire development of Western popular music'. The connection between Bruce's **The Mark of the Scots** and Lott's speech is evidenced throughout by their similar discourse. For example, Bruce (1998, p.31) describes 'the steamy days of Philadelphia's summer of 1776' and Lott also describes Philadelphia as 'steamy' in July 1776.*

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[1776]) celebrated phrase, 'Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness'. Further, Lott explains that not only is National Tartan Day a celebration of 'liberty' it is also important, 'so that we may never forget, so the world, in some small way, may never forget, *the beginnings of freedom* in far-away, long-ago Arbroath' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12479: my emphasis). The United States, it seems from Senator Lott's statement, is taking upon itself the duty to commemorate a moment in Scottish history for the good of the world. It also implies that before the concept was initiated at Arbroath in 1320, people had no experience or comprehension of 'freedom'. Such an assumption is problematic, as historians examining medieval Scotland have shown there was some understanding of the meaning of 'freedom' before the Declaration of Arbroath (see, for example, Barrow, 1992; Cowan 1998). Yet pursuing this theme of 'the beginnings of freedom', Lott elevates the Declaration of Arbroath to global significance. National Tartan Day, he states, is 'not only to recognize the outstanding achievements and contributions made by Scottish-Americans to the United States, but to better recognize an important day in the history of *all free men*, April 6' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12478; my emphasis). Further, Lott claims that those at Arbroath were themselves 'born free men - and no king, no baron, no landlord with his troops could take this liberty from the men in Scotland' (Congressional Record-Senate, 1997b, S12478: my emphasis).¹ Lott implies that the 'free men' at Arbroath were neither barons nor landlords and were actually in opposition to such authorities. This is historically inaccurate as those affixing their seals to the Declaration of Arbroath were members of the nobility and primarily comprised Lords, Earls and Barons.

Erroneous assumptions and historical claims did not hinder the progress of Lott's National Tartan Day bill. The legislation was passed by the Senate Committee on Judiciary on 19 March 1998 without amendment or written report, and was agreed to by the US Senate on 20 March 1998, again without alteration. Although somewhat more formal than Lott's oration in favour of the Resolution, the final text of the Tartan Day Resolution is similar in tone and historical understanding. The final version of Resolution 155 makes it clear that the major actors in establishing the United States were Scots

¹ *In the Declaration of Arbroath, the English word 'freedom' appears three times as translation of the Latin, 'libera,' 'libertate' and 'libertatem.' The word 'liberty' does not appear in the most common English translation (see Declaration of Arbroath (1997 [1320]). In the Declaration of Independence the word 'liberty' appears only once (Declaration of Independence (1967 [1776]).*

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(Congressional Record—Senate, 1998b; fig. 1). Whereas Lott's initial speech affirmed that three quarters 'of all American presidents can trace their roots to Scotland' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12479), the Tartan Day Resolution declares, 'Governors of 9 of the original 13 States were of Scottish ancestry' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1998a, S2373). Reproducing the powerful and authoritative rhetoric of Senator Lott's November 1997 introductory speech that invites conflation of Scotland and the United States, Resolution 155 implies that if those signing the Declaration of Arbroath were 'daring' and living in 'dangerous times', so too were those who put their names to the Declaration of Independence (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12478). A seemingly ancient and unchanging Scottish tradition of opposition to tyranny and public demands for 'freedom' and 'liberty' persists across time and space. This is also attested to by the Resolution's observation that 'almost half' of those signing the Declaration of Independence 'were of Scottish descent' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1998a: S2373). Indeed, two years later Lott increased the figure to 'a little more than half' of those signing the American document 'actually had Scottish ancestry' (Congressional Record—Senate, 2000a, S2029).¹

The Tartan Day legislation therefore proposes that those signing the US Declaration of Independence in 1776 were apparently acting upon centuries old Scottish impulses, courageously committing themselves to pushing for independence. Indeed, like the American Declaration, the 1320 Declaration of Arbroath lists names of eminent leaders that can still be read from the original document. Both the medieval Scottish nobility and the 'Founding Fathers' of the United States, therefore, outlined their intent to fight for 'liberty' and 'independence' in these revolutionary Declarations. The histories of Scotland and the United States blur together and, when finally ratified on 20 March 1998, the Tartan Day Resolution identified the Declaration of Arbroath as 'the Scottish Declaration of Independence' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1998a, S2373).

¹ Again the influence of Bruce's *The Mark of the Scots* (1998) is apparent. Bruce (1998, p.32) initially identifies 38% of those signing the Declaration of Independence as having Scottish ancestors, but then disregards the representatives from Massachusetts, Maryland and Connecticut to state that 'almost half of those who risked their lives, fortunes and sacred honor, were of the Scottish nation'. Bruce (1998) also claims 10 of the 13 State Governors in 1776 to be of Scottish descent.

HISTORICAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE DECLARATIONS OF ARBROATH AND INDEPENDENCE

To contest the historical claim made by Resolution 155, namely that the Declaration of Arbroath begot the Declaration of Independence, it is necessary to review two aspects of this contention. To this end I shall first assess contemporary Scottish reactions to American independence in the Eighteenth Century to see if they recognize any parallels with Arbroath and, secondly, I will consider studies that have meticulously examined the historical precedents for, and influences upon, the Declaration of Independence to see if they identify the Declaration of Arbroath to be significant.

Eighteenth Century Scottish Reaction to the Declaration of Independence

Examinations of Scotland's relationship with American colonies during the revolutionary period of the Eighteenth Century fail to connect the Declarations of Arbroath and Independence. Although Fagerstrom (1954) and Haws (1976) suggest Scottish opinions on the issue of the American colonies were mixed, a majority of historical commentators agree that, in the late Eighteenth Century, Scottish popular opinion on the American question was almost wholly opposed to the calls by Jefferson and his colleagues for independence (Hook 1975, 1976, 1999b; Edwards 1976; Rice 1976; Swinfen 1976). However, none of these studies mention the Declaration of Arbroath as an influence on the Declaration of Independence. Indeed, Fry (1998, p.19) comments that in 1776, 'Scots reviled Americans as verminous traitors to King and Empire. The compliment was returned with interest.' Contemporary Scottish accounts of the Declaration of Independence challenge this document rather than applaud it as the historical culmination of Scottish political ideals formulated centuries previously (see, for example, **Scots Magazine**, 1776; reprinted in Ginsberg 1967, pp.6-8). In this context, at the time of the US Declaration of Independence, few, if any, Americans were looking back over four hundred years to inspiration from medieval Scotland. Further compounding the lack of historical connection between Arbroath and Philadelphia, Hook's (1975) examination of contemporary sources shows that Americans opposed to Britain's North American policy often recognised prominent Scottish parliamentarians as the authors of the most unpopular measures, not as the originators of 'liberty' and 'freedom' which the Senate legislation establishing Tartan Day expounds.

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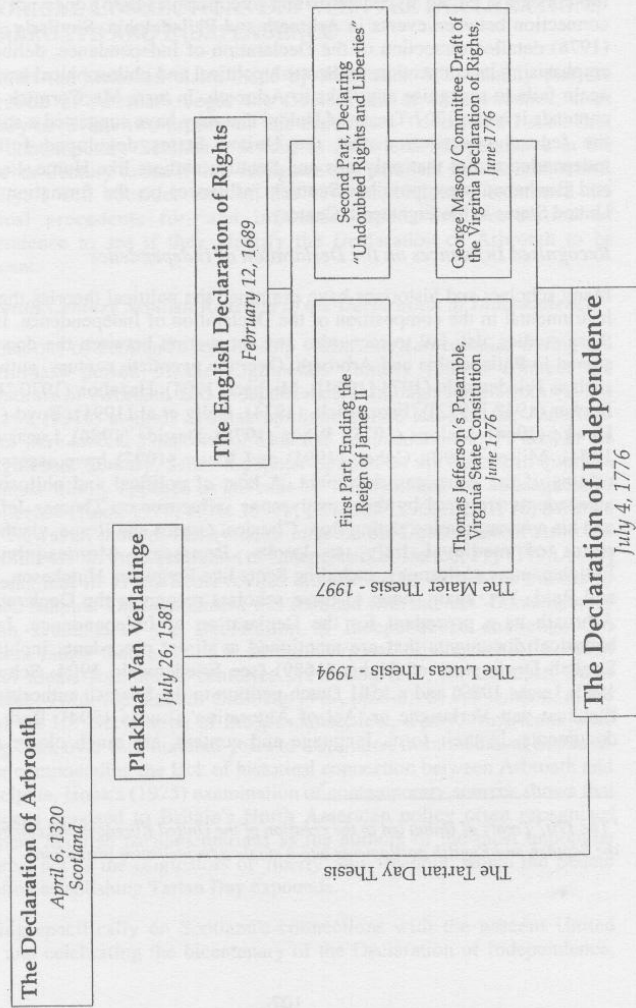
Focusing specifically on Scotland's connections with the nascent United States and celebrating the bicentenary of the Declaration of Independence, the collection edited by Edwards and Shepperson (1976) does not draw a connection between events in Arbroath and Philadelphia. Similarly, Wills's (1978) detailed dissection of the Declaration of Independence, deliberately emphasising its connections to Scottish political and philosophical traditions, again fails to recognise any links to Arbroath. In turn, MacCormick (1992) contends it is the 1707 Treaty of Union¹ that may have suggested a shape for the federal constitution that the United States developed following independence, but that only this and Scottish authors like Hume, Ferguson and Buchanan were possible Scottish influences on the formation of the United States in the Eighteenth Century.

Recognised Influences on the Declaration of Independence

Many scholars and historians have examined the political theories that were instrumental in the composition of the Declaration of Independence. In sum, these studies also fail to recognise any connection between the documents signed in Philadelphia and Arbroath. Over the twentieth century, authorities such as Friedenwald (1974 [1904]), Michael (1904), Hazelton (1970 [1906]), Becker (1942 [1922]), Fitzpatrick, (1924), Kelly et al (1991), Boyd (1945), Hawke (1964), Malone (1975), White (1978), Derrida (1986), Lucas (1989, 1994), Miller (1990), Cohen (1995) and Maier (1997) have assessed the origins of the American document. A host of political and philosophical antecedents are cited by these analysts as influences on Thomas Jefferson and his contemporaries, dating from Classical Greece and Rome, via the city-states of medieval Italy, to Locke, Rousseau, Montesquieu and Enlightenment philosophy, including Scots like Ferguson, Hutcheson, Hume and Reid. Yet, again, none of these scholars recognise the Declaration of Arbroath as a precedent for the Declaration of Independence. Indeed, historical documents that are mentioned as direct precedents include the English Declaration of Rights (1689) (see Friedenwald 1904; Schwoerer 1981; Lucas 1989) and a 1581 Dutch petition to the Spanish authorities, the Plakkaat van Verlatigne or 'Act of Abjuration' (Lucas 1994). Both these documents, in their form, language and content, are much closer to the

¹ *The 1707 Treaty of Union led to the creation of the United Kingdom and combined the Scottish and English parliaments into a single administrative institution.*

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Declaration of Independence in style, structure, syntax, design and sentiment than is the Declaration of Arbroath, as is the Constitution of Virginia, authored early in 1776 by Jefferson's colleague George Mason (Fitzpatrick 1924; Maier 1997; see fig. 3).

Gorgoglione's (1996) collection makes no connection between the Declaration of Independence's demand for freedom and that made at Arbroath (for similar assessments see, Hamowy 1979; Carey 1982). Indeed, Bearce's (1996, p.41) specific examination of the principle of freedom enshrined in the Declaration of Independence demands that this 'fundamental assertion' of the document was developed solely from eighteenth century North American colonial experience. Bearce (1996) is, however, being a little too patriotic in citing only American origins of the Declaration of Independence's concepts. The influence of Scottish Enlightenment philosophy upon Jefferson's document is generally agreed upon (see Boyd 1945; Hawke 1964; Hook 1975; White 1978; Wills 1978; Miller 1990; MacCormick 1992). Similarly, Becker's (1942 [1922]) contention that much of the Declaration's political theory and philosophy 'was thoroughly English,' being primarily that of Locke, is widely accepted (see also Lucas 1989).

A final source for assessing whether the Declaration of Arbroath was the 'template' for the Declaration of Independence, as the Tartan Day legislation asserts, is to refer to the two signers of the Declaration of Independence who were born in Scotland, John Witherspoon and James Wilson (Michael 1904). Although Wilson is little discussed in any role other than a signatory, Witherspoon's influence on political thought in colonial America in this period is extensive. As president of the College of New Jersey, later Princeton University, Witherspoon not only shaped the educational system through which those signing the Declaration of Independence passed, he also taught some of them (Cant 1976; Miller 1990). Indeed, such was his fame and importance to American politics that, during the late-Eighteenth Century, contemporaries in Scotland denounced him for inciting the American Revolution (Miller 1990). Witherspoon was largely responsible for introducing Scottish Enlightenment philosophy to the American intelligentsia, but again there is apparently no reference to the Declaration of Arbroath in his recorded teachings or available writings (e.g. Witherspoon 1990).

From this brief analysis of historical investigations outlining the connections between Scotland and the United States and their respective political and philosophical traditions, in particular in relation to the Declaration of

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Independence (1776), it is evident that the sources of the political ideas represented within the Declaration of Independence have long been a matter of political and historical debate. This debate has resulted in a position where it is now generally accepted that 'the ideas of the Declaration of Independence cannot be traced to any single, political, intellectual, or philosophical source' (Lucas 1989, p.125). There was, indeed, some influence upon Jefferson and his contemporaries by the writing of Scottish thinkers of the period and knowledge of precedents for petitioning monarchs such as the 1689 Declaration of Rights, but the Declaration of Arbroath is conspicuous only by its total absence from historical assessments of the concepts enshrined in the Declaration of Independence. Indeed, it is widely agreed that Jefferson originally condemned 'Scotch and other mercenaries' in his original draft of the Declaration, later deleting this passage (see Friedenwald 1974 [1904]; Becker 1942 [1922]; Shepperson 1954; Hawke 1964; Wills 1978). Scots and Scotland, therefore, were not considered by the authors of the Declaration of Independence to be an ancient people and nation to look towards for either heroic inspiration or political ideals of liberty and freedom.

Consequently, I argue that the contention that 'the American Declaration of Independence was modeled on' the 1320 Declaration of Arbroath is erroneous (Congressional Record—Senate 1998a, S2373). Having no historical grounds for making this link, critical questions must be asked as to why the Declaration of Arbroath emerged as the symbolic representation of Scotland around which to envisage Tartan Day, and it is to this I now turn.

ENVISIONING SCOTLAND AND THE UNITED STATES: REASSERTING MASCULINE HISTORIES?

That Scottish thought influenced the American Declaration of Independence is, in itself, not under contention. Both Hook (1975, 1976, 1999a, 1999b) and Wills (1978), for example, have outlined the importance of Scottish Enlightenment philosophy to the Declaration's author Thomas Jefferson. However, the Senate Resolution on Tartan Day identifies a wholly different Scottish influence on the American document, the Declaration of Arbroath.¹

¹ *Criticising Tartan Day*, McArthur (1998) notes that both in his speeches and Resolution Senator Lott ignores the connections between Scottish Enlightenment philosophy and the Declaration of Independence, and omits the fact that those signing the latter were extensively engaged with the literature of the former.

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Although such an assessment of the origins of the Declaration of Independence is historically questionable to say the least, I argue that the author of the Senate Resolution to create Tartan Day, Trent Lott, is making an explicit ideological move, namely to reassert a traditional version of American history and present it as a direct culmination of events that began almost five hundred years previously on the east coast of Scotland.

Utilising the conduit of celebrating Scotland, I believe that Tartan Day is simultaneously celebrating the formation of the United States and reasserting a traditional, romanticised view of this event. Rather than accept the more balanced examinations of the Declaration of Independence that recognise the Eighteenth Century influence of Scottish educators and philosophy on universities and the intellectual elites of North America (e.g. Hook 1975, 1976, 1999; Cant 1976; Wills 1978; Miller 1990), Senator Lott's speeches and subsequent legislation build a genealogical connection between the American and Arbroath Declarations. America's state governors and the signatories of the Declaration of Independence are depicted as replicating the activities of their forefathers, almost, it seems, acting on deeply held Scottish political and cultural instincts for writing petitions demanding independence, liberty and freedom. Describing the writing of the Declaration of Independence, Lott states:

They used the Arbroath Declaration as the template for their own thoughts, their own words. This was *natural* – many of the men in that room in Philadelphia, almost half, were of Scottish ancestry. The draftsman of the document was Thomas Jefferson – one of his ancestors had signed the Arbroath Declaration, all those centuries before
(Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12478-S12479: my emphasis)

Lott's rhetoric implies that a Scottish precedent for the American Declaration of Independence was all but biologically predetermined. It was 'natural' that the thoughts of these men should turn to Scotland. Indeed, Lott's speech also envisages the sentiments of the Declaration of Arbroath to be embedded in the landscape: 'These were words that endured, like the mountains, hills and stones of Scotland' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12478).

Thomas Jefferson, the primary author of Declaration of Independence, did have 'remote Scots ancestry' but was 'conspicuously ignorant of Scots' contributions to America' (Shepperson 1954, p.164). Yet Lott's version of Jefferson's genealogy is very different. Singling out this Eighteenth Century

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statesman for specific praise, the Senator affirms Jefferson was carrying on a family tradition: 'one of his ancestors had signed the Arbroath Declaration' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12479). The genealogical connection between those present in Scotland and in America is further emphasised by Lott's determination to build a line of patrilineal descent directly from Arbroath to Philadelphia. As well as outlining that a majority of state governors supporting independence for the United States were descended from Scots, and that 'many of the men in that room in Philadelphia ... were of Scottish ancestry', throughout his speech and subsequent legislation, Lott refers continuously to Scots and Americans as 'men'. Of the seventeen Scottish-Americans other than Jefferson named by Lott in his November 1997 speech supporting Tartan Day, only one is female, Elizabeth Taylor.¹

The importance of Scottish masculinity is heightened because the Declaration of Arbroath's commitment to 'fight for liberty alone' is said by Lott to comprise 'Words that have lived inside men, unspoken, as they marched to Yorktown, as they lined up quietly behind the cotton bales in New Orleans, marched to Mexico, sailed to Cuba and the Philippines, and Europe and the Pacific and Korea and the Persian Gulf' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12479).² Lott thus emphasises the importance of the national military and its soldierly masculinity to the existence of the United States, stating explicitly that fighting for liberty was the task of 'our veterans' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12479). According to Senator Lott, for hundreds of years the Declaration of Arbroath has inspired men of the United States to fight for freedom and liberty (see Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, 1999, 2000b). Further centring masculinity, the organisations praised in the Tartan Day Resolution for maintaining Scottish traditions in the United States are 'fraternal' – a brotherly relationship (Congressional Record—Senate,

¹ *In contrast, Lott's April 1997 speech four of the twenty-three prominent Scottish-Americans listed were women – Julia Child, Katherine Hepburn, Grandma Moses and Elizabeth Taylor (Congressional Record—Senate 1997a).*

² *This refers to, respectively, the Revolutionary War period (1775-81); the War of 1812 (1812-1814); the US-Mexican War (1846-48); the Spanish-American War (1898); WWI and WWII; the Korean War (1950-53) and the Gulf War (1991). Conspicuous by their absence in this otherwise comprehensive and chronological list of US military engagements are the US Civil War (1861-65) and the Vietnam War (1964-75).*

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1998a, S2373).¹ As if to emphasise this relationship Senator Lott, further bending the historical record, shifts from discussion of 'Scots' in the first half of his speech in support of Tartan Day to make continuous reference to 'clansmen' at its climax: 'The Scottish *clansmen* who met on that cold day and declared their independence were our *clansmen*, no matter what nation we hail from. They were our *brothers*' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12479; my emphasis). In this vision of Scottish and American histories there are, it seems, no female Scots.

Not all Scots, medieval or otherwise, were 'clansmen' but this perception of Scottish family life and social organisation remains particularly strong in the United States where there are hundreds of clan societies and heritage groups, and more being founded each year (US Scots 1995).² Reference to 'clansmen' and invocation of the Scottish 'clan' again asserts the importance of genealogical connections between Scots and Americans. The two nations, their inhabitants and their respective 'Declarations of Independence' are part of the same family. By the end of Lott's November 1997 oration the Declarations of Independence and Arbroath have merged into one apostolic message about 'liberty' and 'freedom'. In this and subsequent speeches Lott builds an all but incontrovertible, almost spiritual, bond between Scotland and the United States (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, 1998b, 1999, 2000b). The Declaration of Arbroath, in Lott's words and National Tartan Day Resolution, is wholly divested of context and becomes a statement that exists outside of the realm of space and time, in much the same way as the US Declaration of Independence has been represented since the mid-nineteenth century (Wills 1978).

Following the successful adoption of Tartan Day, Senator Lott explained to the US Senate that 'By honouring April 6, Americans will annually celebrate the true beginning of the quest for liberty and freedom' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1998b, S2564). The Tartan Day Resolution thus establishes a permanent, singular and identifiable point of origin of the very notions of

¹ *Some prominent St. Andrew's Societies in the United States remain men-only institutions, for example, Washington DC.*

² *That Highland clans and Highlanders have come to represent all Scotland and Scots is now widely held to be an appropriation stimulated by James Macpherson's Ossian (1760), the nineteenth century vogue for 'noble savages' and Walter Scott's novels (see Chapman, 1978; 1992; Trevor-Roper 1983; Womack 1989; Pittock 1991; McCrone 1992; McCrone et al 1995).*

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freedom and liberty. Indeed, Senator Lott's speech understands these political ideals as originating in medieval Scotland and that these 'words and thoughts of those long-ago Scottish patriots live on in America' (Congressional Record-Senate, 1997b, S12479). These political ideas were, Lott explained, 'passed ... down for generations' before finally being realised in the formation of the United States (Congressional Record—Senate, 1997b, S12479). Coupling the supposed genealogical connections between those politicians founding the United States and those nobles signing the Arbroath Declaration with the effectuation of fourteenth century Scottish political ideals in eighteenth century America, Senator Lott, I argue, is rhetorically establishing direct heredity, both politically and demographically, from medieval Scotland to the modern United States.

TARTAN DAY'S REPRESENTATION OF SCOTTISH-AMERICANS

In addition to making inviolable connections between Scottish and American political ideals, the US Senate's Resolution regarding Tartan Day constructs a specific representation of Scottish people in the United States. It describes Scottish people as contributing 'outstanding' and 'monumental achievements', making 'invaluable contributions' to America, and playing a 'major role' in the foundation of the United States (Congressional Record-Senate, 1998a, S2373). This Scottish participation has led to the 'preeminence' of the United States in a host of scientific, artistic and cultural pursuits (Congressional Record—Senate, 1998a, S2373). As such, the Resolution constructs Scottish-American life as an endless chain of successes that shaped the United States. Scottish-Americans are constructed as heroic, pioneering and indomitable. In short, they are the embodiment of the United States itself. Indeed, I suggest that Resolution 155 depicts the United States in a manner that places Scottish heritage and people at the core of American society.¹

According to the Tartan Day Resolution, Scottish people form the historical essence of the United States and the legislation makes it clear that Scottish-Americans remain key contributors to the United States. The Resolution recognises that 'numerous individuals' of Scottish ancestry are 'residing in

¹ *The influence of Bruce (1998) is again apparent as his book claims Scottish originators for almost every scientific, artistic, literary and political development in world history.*

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every state' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1998a, S2373). It identifies the hundreds of heritage organisations that 'honor' Scottish contributions to the United States and thus the Senate is compelled to do the same. The legislation implies that the Senate had long failed to recognise the importance of Scotland to the United States. In 1998, however, this was no longer the case. Establishing Scotland as central to the foundation, development, growth and 'preeminence' of the USA, Tartan Day will mean that the Scottish contribution to the USA will never again 'go unnoticed' (Congressional Record—Senate, 1998a, S2373).

I am contesting neither that Scottish-Americans have played a prominent role in US history and national development, nor that they do not deserve recognition. Rather I argue that Tartan Day's interpretation of American history, as evidenced through Resolution 155 and Lott's speeches, prioritise Scotsmen and Scottish culture within the US, thus valorising a singular Scottish identity as a core of the United States.¹ Such constructions by-pass legitimate claims to having influenced the United States made by women and people of other nationalities. Further, in fixing the genesis of the political concepts of freedom and liberty in medieval Scotland, Tartan Day effaces myriad other sources of such ideas. Consequently, National Tartan Day

¹ *Senator Lott's selective and romantic vision of Scotland and Scottish history echoes that of Angus L. Macdonald, the Canadian politician and former premier of Nova Scotia. McKay (1992) shows that Macdonald saw Scottish innovation, education and political instinct as behavioural traits that had been handed down, intact, across generations and oceans. Throughout his political career, Macdonald worked to elevate the Scottish ancestry of Nova Scotia and Nova Scotia's population to preeminence, a position that, McKay (1992, pp.6-7) argues, cannot be sustained:*

To claim that Nova Scotia is Scottish in origin (and therefore is in some sense essentially or foundationally Scottish) is to commit oneself to three hazardous procedures going well beyond the empirical evidence: first, that of explaining why the 'original' peoples should not be considered to be those who were in the area first (namely the native peoples of the region); second, that of arguing that a 'New Scotland' which was more ephemeral than Acadia and of less economic significance than the Basque presence in the fisheries should still be considered the most 'foundational' European presence; and third, that of attempting to construct a post-17th-century pattern of Scottish continuity from empirical evidence of stark discontinuity.

Michael Vance (2000) is also engaged in analysing the construction of Scottishness in Nova Scotia.

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constructs the USA's political systems and ideologies as having developed genealogically, exhibiting an uninterrupted Scottish lineage since 1320. In setting the 'template' for the Declaration of Independence and thus for the United States itself, Resolution 155 also pushes the inspiration for a United States founded on 'liberty', 'freedom' and 'independence' back to before Columbus even reached the American continent in 1492. National Tartan Day's establishment and Lott's speeches in support of it thus specify a spatial relocation of the political inspiration for, and origins of, the United States. They shift the political model for the USA away from North America and locate it firmly within Europe. Again, however, this spatial fixity is distinctly identified. Rather than the United States emerging from an Eighteenth Century Imperial dispute within the British Empire or from appeals for 'democracy' and 'equality' being made by members of an increasingly influential middle class and Enlightenment scholars, the Senate resolution names Scotland in the fourteenth century as the model for the USA. This implies that the historical depth and geographical basis of the political ideas underlying the United States and the people that effectuated them have the same genealogical ancestry originating in medieval Scotland.

The US Senate's 1998 recognition that the 'template' for the Declaration of Independence came from Scotland in 1320 also builds a specific representation of Scotland beside its rewriting of American history – a Scotland of **Braveheart**. The influence of this movie, released in 1995 three years before the Tartan Day Resolution passed, cannot be over-estimated. Lauded by Senator Lott's Republican Party colleagues like former presidential candidates Bob Dole, Pat Buchanan and Steve Forbes, **Braveheart** depicts warfare between Scotland and England that immediately preceded the Declaration of Arbroath (Geier 1996; Hague 2000). Indeed, the central character William Wallace, played by Mel Gibson, delivers battlefield speeches that focus on demands for 'freedom' deliberately echoing calls made in the Arbroath Declaration written around twenty years after the period depicted in the film. The Scotland understood by **Braveheart** is heroic, indomitable, courageous, militarily cunning and struggling against the odds. It represents Scotland as resisting the imperialistic expansion of England and challenging Scotland's status as a colony of England. The American Revolution of the late-Eighteenth Century is popularly understood in

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precisely the same manner in the United States.¹ In his acerbic assessment of Tartan Day, Colin McArthur (1998, p.13) contends that Senator Lott's oration in support of Resolution 155 'sounds like the script of **Braveheart** for that execrable film and the constituting of Tartan Day inhabit the same ideological universe'. This ideology, McArthur (1998, p.13) proceeds to explain, 'imagines Scotland as pre-modern, highland/agrarian rather than urban/industrial, and ethnically homogeneous rather than racially and culturally diverse'.

CONCLUSION

In 1992 the Scottish National Party (SNP) produced an election broadcast depicting George Washington on 3 July 1776 pondering whether or not to sign the Declaration of Independence (Hague 1994). The SNP's message was clear: America chose independence and, by voting SNP, Scotland can too. This broadcast did not mention the Declaration of Arbroath as a precedent for the American document, yet, in the post-Braveheart glow of the late-1990s, this medieval petition written by members of the Scottish nobility and clergy has been revitalised in the United States as the inspiration for its own Declaration of Independence, which was, incidentally, neither signed on July 4 nor by George Washington (Becker 1942 [1922]; Hawke 1964; Malone 1975; Wills 1978). Indeed, when Wills (1978) contended that Scottish Enlightenment philosophy had influenced Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence, he was initially ridiculed, particularly by America's political right (e.g. Hamowy 1979; Carey 1982). These critics thought it, 'simply a joke to suggest that anywhere as obscure as Scotland could possibly have had any influence on America's great men' (Hook 1999b, p.16). Yet twenty years later, Scotland is venerated in the US Senate by one of the major voices of America's political right, Senator Trent Lott, as the source of both the ideals and personnel that called for American independence in 1776. This signifies a dramatic reversal of the position of Scotland in the popular and political imagination of the United States and resulted in Senator Lott's third, and successful, attempt to legislate National Tartan Day in 1998.

National Tartan Day on 6 April each year may develop to become a commemoration to rival the USA's ebullient recognition of Ireland and St.

¹ Gibson's subsequent film, *The Patriot* (2000) made this view of US history clearly evident.

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Patrick's Day as Senator Lott hopes (Congressional Record—Senate, 2000b). Those in Scotland will likely continue to welcome the attention and the business opportunities from the US and cringe as the shortbread tin stereotypes are again wheeled out. Yet, as I have argued, the premise of Tartan Day has an erroneous historical connection as its foundation. Envisioning a continuous political lineage from the Declaration of Arbroath to the Declaration of Independence, one embodied by generations of 'clansmen' and their Scottish-American descendents, Senator Lott's legislation constructs a political and philosophical genealogy that spreads across thousands of miles and hundreds of years. Alongside formally recognising Scottish-American contributions to the USA, the US Senate legislation establishing National Tartan Day reasserts and celebrates a traditional, romantic, Eurocentric view of the formation of the United States. It conceptualises the development of the USA in genealogical terms, as a nation that can trace its ancestral 'roots', both demographically and politically, to medieval Scotland. Arguably, therefore, Tartan Day is neither as minor nor as apolitical as it perhaps initially appears.

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