

Community, Heritage, Identity:
constructing, performing and consuming
Welsh identities in the US

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Thesis L8889

Submitted in fulfilment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

July 2008

Abstract

This thesis examines relationships between community, heritage and identity in a diasporic context, exploring how national identities are imagined, expressed and sustained outside the nation. It is based on case studies of four Welsh American community heritage sites in the US, which involved detailed surveys with visitors to the sites, interviews with curators and managers, and in-depth analyses of their collections, exhibitions and events. The thesis starts from the assertion that heritage is a cultural and social communicative process (Dicks 2000a, 2000b; Smith 2006). It investigates how and why self-identifying Welsh Americans use community heritage sites to construct, perform and consume a range of personal and collective identities. Narratives of Welsh identities expressed by visitors are analysed using theories of symbolic ethnicity (Gans 1979) and elective belonging (Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst 2005). It is argued that the construction, performance and consumption of Welsh identities in the US are sustained by social groups and networks. The case study sites are further maintained to belong to a transnational heritage network incorporating a variety of community, academic and professional stakeholders from Wales and the global Welsh diasporic community. This challenges the division found in much museological theory between community initiatives in the “official” and “unofficial” heritage sectors. This thesis suggests that community heritage initiatives in both sectors are influenced by a mixture of “bottom-up” community and “top-down” professional interests and agendas. Acknowledging the inter-relationships between these sectors prompts a re-examination of processes of production and consumption. Rather than a linear continuum of performer/audience (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998) or self/other (Dicks 2003), this thesis argues that processes of production and consumption are more usefully conceptualised as a network. It develops an audience network model as a means through which to create a better understanding of the variety of different ways in which individuals can engage with heritage narratives.

Acknowledgements

This research was made possible by support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), who funded the first three years of this study through their doctoral awards scheme. I would also like to acknowledge Newcastle University's research council postgraduate research student submission support fund, for helping to support the writing up year of this project.

I would like to thank the groups and sites that formed the basis of this research project: the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh; the Welsh American Heritage Museum in Oak Hill, Ohio; and the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association (WNGGA), managing organisation of the North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW). In particular, I am grateful to the following individuals: in Pittsburgh, Kathy Horstmann, Jack Owen, Marty Powell, Dale Richards, and Dave Williams and his family; in Oak Hill, Mildred Bangert, Evan and Elizabeth Davis, Tim Jilg, and Roy and Jo Moses; and from the WNGGA, John and Karen Ellis. Thanks are also due to Alissa Caprood, Garratt Riggs, Peter Williams and Mary Lou Willits, as well as to all the individuals who participated in interviews and surveys at the case study sites.

I have benefited enormously from the knowledge, support and advice of my supervisors, Rhiannon Mason and Andrew Newman. I would also like to thank the staff and research students of the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies (ICCHS) at Newcastle University, who have provided such a stimulating and varied learning environment. Particular thanks to my colleagues Arwa Badran, Aruna Bhaugeerutty and Han-Yin (Elly) Huang, for mutual encouragement, moans, understanding and friendship. Finally, special thanks are due to Ned Chapman, Carole Willis, Daniel Chapman and Matt Smith, without whose unwavering support and endless patience this thesis would not have been completed.

Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Contents	iii
List of Figures	viii
List of Tables	x
Introduction	1
Community, Heritage, Identity	3
<i>Heritage and national identities</i>	6
Ethnic Heritage in the United States.....	8
Aims.....	14
Thesis Structure.....	16
Introduction to the Case Study Sites	20
<i>North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW)</i>	23
NAFOW 2005	26
NAFOW 2006	31
<i>Welsh Nationality Room</i>	34
<i>Welsh American Heritage Museum</i>	40
Chapter 1. Constructing and Consuming Identity: Theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches	47
Rooting and Routing Identities	50
Globalisation, Identity and Belonging	55

<i>Ethnic identities in the United States</i>	58
<i>“Glocalisation” and elective belonging</i>	61
Heritage and Identity	63
<i>Heritage industries</i>	66
<i>Heritage for everyone</i>	68
Research Methodology	69
<i>The circuit of culture</i>	71
Production	74
Consumption	74
Representation	75
Regulation	75
<i>Methods of data collection</i>	76
Interviews	76
Audience surveys	77
<i>Application of data collection methods to the case study sites</i>	80
Chapter 2. The Welsh beyond Wales	83
The Historical Context of Welsh Emigration	86
<i>When did the Welsh emigrate?</i>	88
<i>Why did the Welsh emigrate?</i>	89
<i>Where did the Welsh emigrate?</i>	93
Australia	94
Canada	95
Patagonia	96
United States	98
Welsh Identity in the United States	102
<i>First-generation Welsh culture and society</i>	102
<i>Assimilation and decline</i>	106

Welsh American identity	108
<i>Revival</i>	111
<i>Conclusion</i>	116
Chapter 3. Defining Welshness.....	119
Is Wales a Nation?	121
How Many Wales? How Many Ways of Being Welsh?	126
<i>North and South</i>	128
<i>“Romantic” and “Industrial” Wales</i>	131
<i>The “Three Wales” model</i>	136
<i>Contemporary Wales</i>	142
<i>Conclusion</i>	146
Chapter 4. Community Heritage Networks	149
Museums and community	152
Key stakeholders at the Welsh American heritage sites	159
<i>Stakeholder group 1: community</i>	161
Community Stakeholder Motivations	165
<i>Stakeholder group 2: academic</i>	167
Academic Stakeholder Motivations	171
<i>Stakeholder group 3: professional</i>	173
Professional Stakeholder Motivations	177
Negotiating Community and Identity at Welsh American Heritage Sites.....	178
<i>Community Cultural Centre or Academic Resource?</i>	179
<i>“Museum of Welsh Heritage” or Themed Teaching Classroom?</i>	183
<i>Focus for the Welsh Community in North America or Ambassador for Wales?</i>	188
<i>Conclusions</i>	193

Chapter 5. Doing Heritage: Constructing, performing and consuming

identity at heritage sites 195

Heritage Narratives of “Self” and “Other”202

Remembering self, remembering ancestors..... 205

Memories of the adult- or child-self 206

Memories of the ancestor-self 209

Viewing the “other” 213

Beyond the self/other continuum 215

Cultural Producers, Cultural Consumers217

Community involvement and audience skills 221

Consumer 222

Fan..... 224

Cultist..... 226

Enthusiast 228

Petty Producer 229

Beyond the audience continuum 231

Audience Networks234

Conclusion 240

Chapter 6. Claiming Welshness at a Distance: Identity and belonging

amongst self-identifying Welsh Americans..... 244

An Occasional Identity: Symbolic Ethnicity.....246

Choosing identity 250

Identity symbols 258

Performing identity 264

Summary 270

Agency and Identity: Elective Belonging271

Biography and belonging..... 274

<i>Attachment to place</i>	283
<i>"Born and bred" vs. elective belonging</i>	289
Summary	294
<i>Conclusion</i>	295
<i>Chapter 7. Conclusions</i>	299
Heritage Networks	300
Heritage Processes.....	302
Welsh identity and Welsh American community heritage: issues and implications	304
The institutionalisation of Welsh heritage in the US?.....	307
Final thoughts	312
<i>Postscript: Reflections on the Research Project</i>	316
Mapping the aims and objectives	316
Reflections on the methodology	317
Opportunities for further research	321
<i>Appendix A: Visitor Survey Questions</i>	324
<i>Appendix B: Interview Questions</i>	328
<i>Appendix C: Basic Data on Survey Respondents</i>	330
<i>Appendix D: Fieldwork Schedule</i>	332
<i>Appendix E: Consent Form</i>	333
<i>References</i>	334

List of Figures

Figure 1 Disney’s Contemporary Resort in Disney World, Orlando, Florida,
 venue of the 2005 North American Festival of Wales (photo E. Chapman) 27

Figure 2 Distribution of Welsh National Gymanfa Ganus by state and province
 (1929-2007) 28

Figure 3 Floor plan of the conference facilities at the Contemporary Resort,
 Disney World, venue of the 2005 North American Festival of Wales (Disney
 n.d.) 29

Figure 4 The Welsh marketplace at the North American Festival of Wales 2005
 (photo E. Chapman)..... 30

Figure 5 The Hilton Netherland Plaza hotel, Cincinnati, Ohio (Hilton Hospitality,
 Inc. 2007)..... 32

Figure 6 Floor plan of the fourth floor of the Hilton Netherland Plaza Hotel,
 Cincinnati, venue of the 2006 North American Festival of Wales (Hilton
 Hospitality, Inc. 2007b)..... 33

Figure 7 The Hall of Mirrors, venue of the National Gymanfa Ganu at the 2006
 North American Festival of Wales (photo E. Chapman) 33

Figure 8 The Cathedral of Learning, University of Pittsburgh (photo E. Chapman) .
 35

Figure 9 Plan view of the Welsh Nationality Room (Design Alliance Architects
 2006) 36

Figure 10 Elevation views of west and north Wales of the Welsh Nationality Room
 (Design Alliance Architects 2006)..... 38

Figure 11 The Welsh American Heritage Museum (photo E. Chapman)..... 41

Figure 12 Looking towards the dais from the entrance to the Welsh American
 Heritage Museum (photo E. Chapman)..... 42

Figure 13	Interior of the Welsh American Heritage Museum, looking towards the rear wall from the dais (photo E. Chapman)	44
Figure 14	Interior of the Welsh American Heritage Museum, showing the entrance door and one display area (photo E. Chapman)	45
Figure 15	The Circuit of Culture (du Gay <i>et al</i> 1997).....	72
Figure 16	Adapted model of the circuit of culture for use in this project	73
Figure 17	Number of total population claiming Welsh ancestry in the US, Canada, Australia and Patagonia, 2000-2001	84
Figure 18	Worldwide Welsh emigration	93
Figure 19	Main areas of Welsh settlement in the US during the nineteenth century (based on Knowles 1997).....	101
Figure 20	Topographic map of Wales (G.A Williams, 1985: 1).....	129
Figure 21	The “Three Wales” model (Osmond, 2002: 81).....	137
Figure 22	Results of the 1997 Referendum (Osmond 2002: 83).....	139
Figure 23	The relationships between different stakeholder groups at a Welsh American community-based heritage site.....	160
Figure 24	Self/other relations set up in heritage displays (Dicks 2003: 127)	203
Figure 25	The Audience Continuum (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998: 141)....	218
Figure 26	The audience continuum as a circuit (after Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998)	235
Figure 27	The audience continuum as a network (based on the circuit of culture developed by du Gay <i>et al</i> 1999).....	235
Figure 28	Community Heritage Audience Network model (CHAN)	236
Figure 29	Age range of survey respondents (n=284).....	257
Figure 30	Survey responses to the question “What does Wales mean to you?” (n=284)	261

List of Tables

Table 1	Aims and Objectives	15
Table 2	Data Set	80
Table 3	Characteristics of the Audience Continuum (after Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998: 138, 144)	220
Table 4	Survey respondents' connection to Wales (n=284)	251
Table 5	Responses to the question "Which of the following best describes how you see yourself?" at sites B, C and D based on the Moreno scale (n=196)...	254
Table 6	Results of the "Moreno Question" included in the Welsh Assembly Election Survey 1999 (n=1256) (Paterson 2002).....	256
Table 7	Ways in which survey respondents perform Welsh identity (n=284) ..	266
Table 8	Responses to the question "How would you define Welsh identity? What makes someone Welsh?" (n=284)	279
Table 9	Aims and objectives in relation to the thesis structure.....	317

Introduction

Our heritage continues to remain important. We're all Americans, we haven't kept ourselves separate, but we keep the Welsh identity alive.

(Respondent 36, North American Festival of Wales 2006)

Heritage is a widely used term with multiple meanings, uses and producers. In the above quote, "heritage" refers to a cultural identity (Welsh) which a diasporic community wishes to preserve, to "that part of the past that we select in the present for contemporary purposes" (Graham *et al* 2000: 17). It is, in effect, everything that this community group wants to save, whether in the form of tangible objects, sites, places and other "things", or in the form of intangible memories, cultural practices and traditions (Howard 2003). As such, heritage is intimately bound up with processes of identity construction, negotiation, representation and consumption on both personal and collective levels. Heritage sites and museums represent spaces in which the tangible and intangible cultural markers of the past can be collected, displayed and interpreted, helping to give a physical reality to the elusive concept of identity.

Such sites have become particularly associated with the construction and legitimization of narratives of national identity, reflected by the extensive museological literature that address and investigate these issues (Boswell and Evans 1999; Crooke 2000; Duncan 1995; Prösler 1996; Bennett 1995; McLean 1998; Kaplan

1994, 2006; Fladmark 2000; Mason 2007, McLean and Cooke 2000, 2003). The public museum and the modern nation-state both emerged in the late eighteenth century, and museums were quickly adopted by national governments as a means through which to help forge a sense of a common cultural heritage, identity and belonging to a national community (Macdonald 2003). A national museum “can be regarded as a place where the nation tells its story to itself and others” (McLean and Cooke 2000: 147), constructing and representing narratives of national identity, history and culture for consumption by its citizens and by outsiders. However, links between heritage and identity are equally potent at heritage initiatives operating at other levels of community.

This thesis addresses the complex nexus of relationships between community, heritage and identity, investigating processes of identity production, performance and consumption at four selected Welsh American community-led heritage sites in the US. Welsh Americans are a diasporic group, made up of the descendents of Welsh immigrants to the US. Their continuing identification with Wales and Welshness is an example of the deterritorialisation of national identities that has occurred as a result of globalisation. They possess transnational identity attachments as both American and Welsh, claiming and performing a Welsh identity outside the geopolitical borders of Wales. These transcultural expressions of Welsh national identity are constructed, negotiated, claimed, performed and consumed in part through the community heritage sites that form this project’s case study.

This thesis investigates how and why Welsh American community groups choose to engage in heritage-based activities as a means of expressing their

identities, focusing on processes of production, representation, regulation and consumption. Such an analysis of the construction and performance of Welsh identities within the diaspora is particularly interesting in the wake of partial political devolution in Wales in 1997 and the creation of the Welsh Assembly Government in 1999. Today, Wales fits the traditional definition of a nation-state more closely than ever before. How might this affect expressions of Welsh identity in the US? What role(s) could the Welsh American community potentially play in shaping public perceptions of Wales and Welshness on a global stage?

Community, Heritage, Identity

Relationships between community, heritage and identity are a “hot topic” in contemporary museological theory and practice. A great deal of recent debate, research and published literature addresses the various ways in which museums seek to engage with community groups or, conversely, why and how some community groups are choosing to create their own heritage collections and displays (Karp, Kreamer and Lavine 1992; Clifford 1997; Bennett 1998; Witcomb 2003; Karp, Kratz *et al* 2006; Crooke 2007b; Watson 2007). This reflects New Museological agendas, with their focus on the social and educational role of museums and the “political dimensions of museum work...Quite often this political dimension is encapsulated in a call for a greater focus on the relationship between museums and communities” (Witcomb 2003: 79). As indicated above, this relationship can be considered in two main ways. The first approaches the issue from the “top-down”, looking at the rise of community agendas within the official heritage sector: local and

national museums, advisory bodies, and public and government policies. The second explores the issue from the “bottom-up”, focussing on heritage initiatives and projects that have emerged from within and are led by community groups: what might be termed the “unofficial” heritage sector (Crooke 2007b). Each of these ways of considering relationships between heritage and community address issues of identity, belonging and community development.

The ways in which museums, galleries and heritage sites interact with the various communities they profess to serve, together with the role played by such sites in constructing and representing identities, are explored in the edited volume *Museums and Communities: the politics of public culture* (Karp, Kreamer and Lavine 1992). With its companion volume, *Exhibiting Cultures: the poetics and politics of museum display* (Karp and Lavine 1991), it has become one of the standard texts in the growing field of museum and heritage studies. It is made up of a number of case studies, the majority of which are from the US, which explore and analyse the potential benefits, pitfalls and implications of community involvement in the development of museum exhibitions. Broadly, it argues that there is a need for dialogue between museums and the communities they seek to represent, and that museums should consider the character, needs and demands of these communities. It also addresses issues of insider/ outsider and self/ other, discussing how certain narratives of identity become inscribed onto objects within an exhibition and how these narratives may change over time, depending on who is telling the story.

In *Museums and Communities*, the museum is seen as an element of government and civil society, whilst “community” is defined as existing separately

from and outside government, and is commonly used to refer to socially excluded groups and ethnic minorities. This perceived opposition between museums and communities has been challenged by Tony Bennett (1998) and James Clifford (1997). Bennett argues that the distinction drawn between the museum and the community is a false one: museums not only represent communities but are also sites at which communities are shaped and regulated: “the community can no more function as an outside to government than government can be constructed as community’s hostile other” (1998: 203). Thus, far from being opposed, the interests of museums and communities will coincide. He further argues that the importance of issues of community and social inclusion in the contemporary heritage sector is a result of their prominence within government policies and agendas. Clifford also challenges the perceived dichotomy between museums and communities, arguing that the museum should not be understood as an objective or neutral body, but rather as a community in its own right, with its own culture, or way of doing things (1997: 192). Clifford develops the idea of the museum as “contact zone” as a way in which to conceptualise relationships between museums and community: here, the museum represents a space in which a cross-cultural encounter takes place between two communities (the museum and the target community).

The cultural historian and curator Andrea Witcomb applies these two contrasting conceptualisations of the relationship between museums and community to an analysis of two community heritage initiatives in Australia with which she was involved. She argues that, while Bennett’s emphasis on the museum as a site of cultural production is valuable, her curatorial experiences did not support what she sees as his assertion that the aspirations and agendas of museums and community

groups will coincide. As curator of an exhibition about the Portuguese immigrant community in Perth, Witcomb encountered difficulties in producing a “notion of community that could be recognised by all but which was also attentive to the cultural work it would do – to explain a group of people to outsiders as well as themselves” (2003: 85). She found that her understanding of the exhibition’s goals and purposes was very different from those expressed by members of the Portuguese community. Witcomb argues that Bennett’s theory effectively dismisses community, reducing it to being merely an effect of government. As such, she feels, his approach ignores the existence of the different cultures of museums and the communities they seek to represent (2003: 88). Overall, Witcomb found that Clifford’s concept of the museum as “contact zone” more closely reflected her experiences: the museum exhibition became a space for dialogue and mediation between the Portuguese community and the museum community, through which the culture and traditions of both communities were discovered and articulated (2003: 101).

Heritage and national identities

The above studies address the relationships between heritage and community through the investigation of community projects run by public museums and through exhibitions and museums established and run by the communities themselves. In this literature, “community” tends to refer to specific groups tied to a single geographic location, such as the Portuguese in Perth. However, it is important to remember that communities operate at a variety of geographic levels, including local,

regional, national and even global. The nation has been famously described by Benedict Anderson as an “imagined community”:

[I]magined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion...it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. (2006: 7)

Much research has been done on the role museums play in shaping, representing and negotiating national community identities, the vast majority of which focuses on national museum sites. This literature falls into three main groups. The first investigates the intertwined histories of the public museum and the modern nation-state in Western Europe since the late eighteenth century (Boswell and Evans 1999; Duncan 1995; Bennett 1995). The second group traces the role played by national museums in claiming and asserting nationhood, with a particular focus on stateless or under-stated nations in Europe, such as Scotland or Wales (Fladmark 2000; Mason 2005b, 2007; McLean and Cooke 2003a, 2003b; Crooke 2000), and on issues of postcolonialism, first nations and aboriginal peoples (Kaplan 1994). The final group addresses the challenges facing contemporary national museums in the light of globalisation, multiculturalism and postnationalism (MacDonald 2003; Prösler 1996; Kaplan 2006). A more detailed analysis of the literature on national museums can be found in Rhiannon Mason’s recent study *Museums, Nations, Identities* (2007).

Taken as a whole, the literature on museums and communities (whether local, regional or national communities) illustrates an implicit assumption that the identities

of national communities are addressed at national museums, while community museums or exhibitions focus on the identities of local community groups, such as ethnic minorities or the socially excluded. Very little research has been done on the role played by community-based museums and heritage sites in the construction and representation of national identities. This gap in the literature is particularly evident in relation to the Welsh American community heritage initiatives that form the basis of this study. These initiatives, sites and events are engaged in the construction, representation and performance of community at multiple levels, simultaneously addressing narratives of both local Welsh American community identities and Welsh national identities. Through an investigation of processes of production and consumption at selected Welsh American community heritage sites, this thesis will provide an analysis of role played by community museums in the shaping and display of national identities, focussing on how self-identifying Welsh Americans use these sites to construct, negotiate, perform and consume Welsh identities.

Ethnic Heritage in the United States

The Welsh American community and its associated heritage initiatives are an example of contemporary Americans choosing to identify with the cultural heritage of immigrant ancestors often three or more generations removed from themselves. This trend, which has its roots in the 1960s, is commonly referred to as the “ethnic revival”. Much research has been published on this increase in ethnic heritage and identification in the US. Of particular relevance to this study is Richard Alba's research into ethnic identification and expression amongst white Americans of

European descent in New York State (1990). Alba found that while two-thirds of his respondents claimed an ethnic identity (1990: 292), for most this represented a relatively “shallow” attachment, a “desire to retain a sense of being ethnic but without any deep commitment to ethnic social ties or behaviour” (1990: 306). He argues that while such white ethnic identities and origins remain subjectively important to individuals, as a means by which to differentiate and define themselves from the general American population, they no longer have any objective significance. An individual’s ethnicity, for example, does not affect where they live, their occupation or their level of education (Alba: 290). As such, in Alba’s view, identifying as ethnic in the US today is a personal choice: ethnic identities, such as Welsh American, are voluntary, fluid and malleable. Individuals can choose to identify with the ethnicity with which they feel the greatest connection from amongst a range of ancestral ethnicities available to them, and this identification can be expressed in a variety of ways. Alba rejects the concept of an “ethnic revival”, arguing that the late twentieth century has rather seen the “privatisation of ethnic identity”. His study found that ethnic identities are predominantly expressed within the private and family sphere, for example through the celebration of ethnic holidays, consumption of ethnic foods, knowledge of family history, or membership of ethnic social groups or friendship networks (1990: 296).

Alba’s study is useful in that it provides a broad overview of white ethnic identification in the US, highlighting key trends in why people feel ethnic or choose to claim ethnic identity, and how they perform that identity. It does not however focus on any one ethnic group, or provide comparative analyses of any differences in the production and consumption of different white ethnicities. It is also interesting that

Alba seems to define ethnic social groups and friendship networks as examples of private expressions of ethnic identities (1990: 166). While such networks could be defined as “private” in the sense that their membership might be mono-ethnic, drawn from just one ethnic group, they arguably still represent a public and collective way in which ethnic identities are constructed, performed and consumed. The findings of this thesis further suggest that such communal expressions play an important role in creating and sustaining ethnic identities such as Welsh American.

Numerous studies of ethnic identification and expression amongst specific white European ethnic groups have also been done (see for example Bankston and Henry 1999; Basu 2001; Bishop *et al* 2003; Ray 2001; Panagakos 2003; Knottnerus and Loconto 2000). This literature can be divided into two main groups: firstly, those which explore expressions of ethnic identity and heritage in general; and secondly, those which investigate these expressions at particular heritage sites and events. This account focuses on those studies of most relevance to the current project: those that address the expression of Celtic American identities and heritage, specifically Welsh and Scottish. A trio of papers from the Centre for Language and Communication Research at Cardiff University investigate expressions of Welsh cultural heritage and identities in the US (Wray *et al* 2003; Bishop *et al* 2003; Garratt *et al* 2005). Wray *et al* explore the adoption of aspects of Welsh identity by members of the Green Mountain College choir in Vermont (2003). The college is situated in an area in which large numbers of Welsh immigrants settled during the second half of the nineteenth century. Wray *et al* argue that through participation in Welsh cultural practices (singing Welsh songs and hymns), members of this choir – most of whom possessed no Welsh ancestry – “manifest what is apparently a living Welsh heritage”

and come to identify with certain aspects of Welsh identity (2003: 66). They propose a model of social identification made up of three linked concepts: knowledge, subjectivity and practice (Wray *et al*: 51-52).

This model is also used by Hywel Bishop, Nikolas Coupland and Peter Garrett in their investigation of how Welsh identities are experienced and articulated by members of the Welsh diaspora in North America (2003). They argue that knowledge about Wales and Welshness is an important “identification resource for feeling Welsh and increasing a sense of affiliation with Wales” (2003: 45). Echoing Alba’s argument, Bishop *et al* stress the subjectivity of Welsh identities in North America, identifying the wide variety of ways in which individuals can claim and experience a sense of Welshness, including through the possession of a Welsh surname or Welsh ancestry, or through sensory experiences (2003: 49). Of particular relevance to this study is the authors’ emphasis on the important role cultural practices and social networks play in helping to bridge the geographical and chronological gap between self-identifying Welsh individuals within the diaspora and the homeland, Wales. They argue that Welsh societies are a “crucial networking resource... [providing] a cultural infrastructure where various forms of Welsh culture and linguistic practice are made available” (2003: 53). The same authors have also investigated visual representations of Wales in *Y Drych*, a Welsh American newspaper, between 1948 and 2001, exploring how diasporic groups use visual imagery as a resource to construct and perform identities (Garrett *et al* 2005). Once again, they stress the important role played by social networks, such as those represented by *Y Drych* and various Welsh societies and community groups, in helping to both connect self-identifying Welsh Americans and Canadians together to

forge a diasporic community, and in linking this Welsh diasporic community to the ancestral homeland, Wales (2005: 559).

Taken as a whole, these three studies of the ways in which Welsh identity and heritage are articulated and performed in North America highlight a number of key issues that this thesis will address. The most important of these is their analysis of the role played by communicative and social networks in the creation and sustaining of Welsh identities within the diaspora. However, as indicated earlier, these studies do not investigate the articulation and performance of Welsh identities at specific heritage sites and events but address the topic of Welsh heritage in North America more generally. This thesis will build on their arguments and conclusions through detailed case studies of processes of identity production, representation, regulation and consumption at selected Welsh American heritage sites.

In terms of existing literature on the articulation and expression of diasporic identities at heritage sites, two studies are of particular relevance to this research project. Both focus on Scottish American identities. In "Hunting Down Home: reflection on homeland and the search for identity in the Scottish diaspora" (2001), Paul Basu investigates how Scottish Americans and Canadians use, interpret and relate to heritage sites and landscapes in the Scottish Highlands. He argues that these sites and landscapes can be understood as representing a network of sites of memory, sources of identity and shrines of self (2001: 338). As such, such sites represent cultural resources through which diasporic Scots construct and articulate narratives of family heritage and personal identities. Celeste Ray similarly explores contemporary expressions of Scottish identities within the diaspora in her book

Highland Heritage: Scottish Americans in the American South (2001), though her focus is on heritage sites and events in the US. Specifically, she explores Scottish Highland Games in the Carolinas and the “public rituals, symbolic costume, social organisations, and beliefs that fortify ethnic identities and their revival” (2001: 1). Ray provides an anthropological and ethno-historical analysis of how and why Americans claim and perform Scottish identities, and of how expressions of Scottish identity vary across generations. She stresses the importance of selected traditions, such as the Highland Games and the associated dominance of Highland and Jacobite versions of Scottish identity, in signifying and reinforcing “the themes and symbols of a perceived common past that shapes group identity” (Ray: 204). She argues that these group identities change and evolve over time, renegotiated by each generation in a changing temporal and social context. Once again, Ray emphasises the important role played by heritage sites and events in the enabling collective constructions, articulations and performances of ethnic identities. For Ray, the ethnic revival and heritage movement in the US does not represent an escapist and romantic nostalgia for the past, but “an act of remembering for the improvement of the present” (2001: 207). She argues that ethnic heritage sites and events within the diaspora, and the articulation and expression of ethnic identities by diasporic individuals, reflect the contemporary needs, aspirations and desires of today’s Americans.

While a number of texts exist which examine Welsh American identities, there are no studies that focus specifically on the construction, performance and consumption of these identities at heritage sites in the US. The closest comparable study to this research project is therefore that of Celeste Ray, as discussed above.

This thesis seeks to achieve a similar level and depth of analysis as Ray within a Welsh American context. However, it takes a more sociological or cultural studies approach, focussing on an analysis of processes of identity production, performance and consumption by stakeholders at the four selected community heritage initiatives.

Aims

A detailed breakdown of the aims and objectives of this study can be found overleaf in Table 1. The first aim of the thesis is to examine the ways in which community groups use heritage as a means of expressing community identities and forging a sense of belonging. This will be explored through analysis of the motivations, aspirations and agendas behind selected Welsh American community groups' decisions to engage in heritage-based activities such as collections, displays or exhibitions. Linked to this, the ways in which Welsh identities are constructed and represented at selected Welsh American community heritage sites will be analysed. Finally, an analysis of why and how some Americans choose to claim and perform a Welsh identity completes this aim.

The second aim is to investigate processes of production and consumption at community heritage sites, identifying the various stakeholders who are involved in the construction, negotiation, performance and consumption of narratives of Welshness at each of the case study sites. It seeks to analyse whether Welsh identities in the US are created and sustained from the "bottom-up" or the "top-down", or by a mixture of the two. This aim also explores how self-identifying Welsh

<i>Aim</i>	<i>Objective</i>
1. To examine the ways in which community groups use heritage as a means of expressing community identities and forging a sense of belonging.	1a. Why do some community groups choose to engage in heritage-based activities?
	1b. How and why are transnational identities such as Welsh American constructed and represented at community heritage sites?
	1c. Why and how do some Americans choose to claim and perform a Welsh identity?
2. To investigate processes of production and consumption at community heritage sites.	2a. Who is involved in the construction, negotiation, performance and consumption of narratives of Welshness the case study sites?
	2b. Are Welsh identities in the US created and sustained from the "bottom-up", the "top-down", or by a mixture of the two?
	2c. How do self-identifying Welsh Americans use and interpret the case study sites?
	2d. What factors affect how self-identifying Welsh Americans use and interpret the case study sites?
3. To test the hypothesis that processes of production and consumption at community heritage sites may be best understood in terms of a network of relationships.	3a. What is the nature of the relationships that exist between different stakeholders at each of the case study sites?
	3b. What is the nature of the relationships that exist between the case study sites themselves?
	3c. What is the nature of the relationships that exist between the case study sites and other Welsh-themed heritage initiatives in the US, Wales, or elsewhere?
	3d. What is the nature of the relationships that exist between community heritage projects in the "official" and "unofficial" heritage sectors?

Table 1 Aims and Objectives

Americans use and interpret the case study sites, investigating the factors affecting these uses and interpretations.

The third and final aim tests the hypothesis that processes of production and consumption at community heritage sites may be best understood in terms of a network of relationships. It seeks to trace and analyse the relationships between individuals, groups and institutions that shape and affect processes of production and consumption at each case study site in four contexts. Firstly, it investigates the ways in which the different stakeholders at each site interact. Secondly, it examines the relationships that exist between the sites themselves. Thirdly, it explores whether the case study sites possess any links or connections with other Welsh-themed heritage initiatives in the US, Wales or elsewhere and, if so, what form these connections take. Finally, it considers the ways in which community heritage projects within what might be termed the “official” and “unofficial” heritage sectors can become interlinked. In this respect, this thesis makes a new contribution to our understanding of the complex and intertwining nature of relationships between community, heritage and identity.

Thesis Structure

The remainder of this chapter provides an introduction to the four Welsh American community heritage sites that have been selected as case studies for this research project. It gives an overview of their creation and development over time, focussing on the motivations, goals and aspirations of the community groups responsible for

their management. This is followed by a detailed description of the sites' physical appearances: their layouts, displays and exhibitions, and the various activities and events with which they are associated.

Chapter one discusses the theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches taken by this study. It examines some of the key theories and concepts which have shaped the analysis of processes of identity production, representation, regulation and consumption at the case study sites, in particular those relating to diaspora and globalisation, ethnic identities in the US, and heritage and identity. This chapter also provides an overview of the methods of data collection used at each site and how this data will be analysed.

Chapter two explores how national identities operate outside the geopolitical boundaries of the nation through a discussion of the worldwide Welsh diaspora which investigates where, why, when and in what number the Welsh emigrated. Its focus is on Welsh immigration to and settlement in the US as it seeks to trace the roots and routes of the contemporary Welsh American community. This chapter provides an overview of contemporary Welsh American cultural and social activities, examining the ways in which Welsh identities have been and are (re)created and sustained in the US.

Chapter three explores the question "[h]ow many Wales? How many ways of being Welsh?" (Day and Suggett 1985: 96). It identifies and analyses some of the key competing versions of Welsh identity that have dominated public perceptions since the late eighteenth century with a view to addressing how and why particular versions of Welshness have come to dominate Welsh American perceptions.

Contemporary Welsh American identity is compared with the dichotomous pairs of north/ south, “Romantic”/ “Industrial” Welsh identities, the “Three Wales” model (Balsom 1985), and contemporary postcolonial and multicultural reimaginings of Welshness. This chapter argues that Welsh American identity is not merely a reflection or poor imitation of Welsh identities in Wales, but should rather be understood as a separate and distinct cultural identity, constructed and shaped in a different geographical, temporal, social and cultural context.

In the next three chapters, attention turns to processes of production and consumption at the selected Welsh American community heritage sites, investigating what people do at these sites, why they visit, and what Wales and Welshness means to them. Chapter four focuses on processes of production, which are analysed through an investigation of the network of relationships that exist between the various stakeholders at the case study sites. This chapter questions the perceived and presumed division between the official and “unofficial” heritage sectors, arguing that no community heritage site can ever be solely “bottom-up” or community-led. It traces the variety of external, “top-down” factors that influence the operation and activities of the case study sites. It further argues that these sites are part of a larger Welsh heritage network that incorporates a range of community-based, academic and professional stakeholders in the US, Wales and beyond.

In chapter five the intertwined nature of processes of production and consumption at the selected Welsh American heritage sites is examined through an investigation of how visitors use, interpret and relate to these sites. It argues that the identities, meanings and values produced and consumed by visitors are shaped by

their personal knowledge, experiences and interests, in particular their biographical proximity to the heritage narratives on display at the sites (Dicks 2003) and their level of active engagement with and involvement in the “object of attachment”, in this case Wales or the Welsh American community (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998). A new Community Heritage Audience Network model (CHAN) is developed, incorporating the range of different ways in which visitors use and interpret the sites, and highlighting the relationships between these different audience positions.

Chapter six explores how and why some Americans choose to claim and perform a Welsh identity, analysing contemporary expressions of Welsh identity in the US using the theories of symbolic ethnicity (Gans 1979, 1994) and elective belonging (Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst 2003). It argues that Welsh American is both a personal and a collective identity position. Although in many ways it is based on a voluntary and personal decision to identify as Welsh, and is performed in symbolic ways and at symbolic times, with little effect on other areas of life, it relies on social groups and networks in order to function. As such, this chapter argues that the case study sites represent important spaces in a Welsh American community network in which individuals can come together to construct, perform, validate and consume Welsh identities.

The final chapter (chapter seven) draws together the arguments and conclusions from the previous chapters, identifying key findings, discussing their broader relevance to the field of heritage studies and developing several possible avenues for further research. Its discussion is framed around three key themes that emerged over the course of this research project. The first addresses relationships

between heritage and community, highlighting the overlapping and intertwined relationships between community initiatives in both the official and unofficial heritage sectors. The second examines processes of production and consumption at community-led heritage sites, focusing on their role as spaces in which narratives of Welsh identity can be externalised, (re)negotiated and (re)constructed through performance, and then re-internalised. The third theme examines the ways in which the concept of the network provides a useful means through which to analyse and understand processes of production and consumption at the case study sites.

Introduction to the Case Study Sites

Three Welsh American community-led heritage initiatives have been selected as case studies for this research project. The first is the North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW), an annual peripatetic four-day event celebrating Welsh culture and identity in North America held in a different city in the US or Canada every year. The second is the Welsh Nationality Room, a themed teaching classroom that will represent a Welsh nonconformist chapel of the late eighteenth century, currently under construction at the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The final case study is the Welsh American Heritage Museum, a local community museum in the village of Oak Hill in south east Ohio.

These three community-led heritage sites and events share several common characteristics. They are all grass-roots heritage initiatives, initially established by and, to varying degrees, managed by members of Welsh American community

groups rather than by heritage professionals. All three sites also share a common goal to preserve, display and celebrate the cultural heritage of the Welsh diaspora in North America. A key difference between the sites is the scale of their activities. The NAFOW, as its name suggests, takes place on a North American scale: its trustees, officers and visitors are drawn from across the self-identifying Welsh populations of the US and Canada. In contrast, the Welsh Nationality Room and the Welsh American Heritage Museum are more local in character, role and purpose, being organised and managed by and primarily for members of their local Welsh American communities. Taken together, these three case study sites will enable me to investigate and analyse the production, representation and consumption of Welsh American identities and community at local, regional and national levels.

The NAFOW has been selected as a case study site for two main reasons. Firstly, the fact that its audience is drawn from across North America means that it provides the means to sample and analyse perceptions of Welshness by a broad range of self-identifying Welsh Americans¹. Secondly, the NAFOW and its organising body, the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association (WNGGA), as an “[e]thnically based...organisation”, offers “an arena where the idiom of ethnicity – the sentiments, concerns and outlooks that distinguish members of a group from others and contribute to the sense of a bond among them – can be developed and preserved”

¹ Although the NAFOW has a North American remit and audience, the vast majority of respondents surveyed at the 2005 and 2006 NAFOW were from the US: just 12 individuals identified themselves as being Welsh Canadians (see appendix C). It must also be noted that this study is focussed on the analysis of Welsh American identities and heritage initiatives, and does not address the Welsh Canadian case.

(Alba 1990: 209). As an event, the NAFOW is in part designed to (re)unite the geographically scattered North American population and (re)forge their sense of shared identity and membership of a common community. It is an arena in which Welsh Americans and Canadians can celebrate, perform and reinforce a sense of their Welsh identity. As such, it presents an ideal opportunity through which to develop an understanding of the contemporary Welsh community in North America as a whole and to explore links between the various smaller, localised communities within this, and how those links are preserved.

The second selected case study site, the Welsh Nationality Room offers an opportunity to carry out a detailed investigation of the production of a heritage site by a Welsh American community group. Currently under construction, it will form part of the University of Pittsburgh's Nationality Rooms Program, a series of almost thirty themed teaching classrooms which represent and celebrate the culture of various immigrant groups that have settled in the Pittsburgh area. However, the fundraising campaign and project to establish the Welsh Nationality Room has been led by a local Welsh society, the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh. The Society has made several previous attempts to raise funds for the construction of a Welsh Nationality Room at the University, all of which have failed (Williams, D. pers. comm.). The success of the project now, in comparison to these previous aborted attempts, is particularly interesting, illustrating as it does an increased interest in and commitment to Welsh American cultural heritage. Despite the fact that the Welsh Nationality Room was not yet in physical existence when this research project began, it was felt that the many and varied activities of the St. David's Society of

Pittsburgh would provide an excellent source of data regarding contemporary expressions and perceptions of Welsh identity by self-identifying Welsh Americans.

The third case study site, the Welsh American Heritage Museum, was selected because it is the only Welsh American museum in the US (Barton 1997: 52). As such it is an obvious and important site at which to investigate the production, representation and performance of Welsh identities in the contemporary US. The continuing strength and variety of Welsh American activity in the area, and the central role played by the museum and its officers in many of these activities, is a second reason why the site has been selected as a case study.

This next section discusses the creation and development of each case study site in turn, focussing in particular on their mission statements or goals, the ways in which they are managed. It then provides a detailed description of each site's appearance and activities.

North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW)

The North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW) is an annual four-day event held over the Labor Day weekend (the weekend prior to Labor Day, the first Monday in September) at a changing location across the US and Canada. For example, the two NAFOW at which data was gathered, the 2005 and 2006 festivals, were held in Orlando, Florida and Cincinnati, Ohio respectively. The first NAFOW took place in Vancouver, British Columbia in 2003 (Ninnau 2003) but its central event, the National Gymanfa Ganu, dates back to 1929 and has been held annually ever since,

excluding the war years 1943 to 1945 (Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association n.d.). The National Gymanfa Ganu is held on Sunday, the final day of the festival, and comprises a non-denominational church service, followed by two hymn singing sessions during which “the participants sing thirty to thirty-five of the Welsh hymns in parts led by a conductor and accompanied by an organist or pianist, and often a choir” (WNGGA 2003). A wide range of events are held over the first three days of the festival (Thursday to Saturday) including: seminars on various aspects of Welsh history and culture; a Welsh marketplace at which a diverse range of imported and Welsh-themed goods and services can be bought; a film festival; an *eisteddfod*; and musical performances by choirs and musical groups from Wales. The NAFOW is attended predominantly by people of Welsh ancestry from across the US and Canada, but some visitors come from Patagonia, Australia or Wales itself.

The NAFOW and its central event, the National Gymanfa Ganu, are managed by the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association (WNGGA), a non-profit organisation established in 1929. Its mission is to:

...preserve, develop, and promote our Welsh religious and cultural heritage and our religious and cultural traditions, including but not limited to the Gymanfa Ganu and to do all things necessary and proper to accomplish and enhance the same. (WNGGA 2007)

The WNGGA is managed by ten elected officers and a board of trustees. Over the 2004-2005 period there were twenty trustees serving on three committees: nine representing the eastern US, six the western US and five representing Canada (WNGGA 2004). The ten elected officers comprise a president, vice-president,

executive director, secretary, treasurer, chair, the immediate past president and three *ex officio* vice presidents: the presidents of the National Welsh American Foundation; Women's Welsh Clubs of America; and Cymru A'r Byd (Wales International). These ten officers are commonly elected from amongst the members of the board of trustees. The board of trustees and officers, together with a team of local volunteers, are responsible for organising and managing every NAFOW. On the WNGGA website they are described as "the unifying force that provides the institutional memory, selects sites for the annual *cymanfaoedd*, provides general guidance and supervision, and assures that the desired cultural and religious standards are maintained" (WNGGA 2007). The WNGGA and its activities are supported by membership fees, investment, donations and memorial contributions, and by the sale of publications and CDs.

Each NAFOW shares a common overarching structure, beginning on a Thursday evening with an opening ceremony and folk music concert, generally featuring a folk group from Wales. A seminar programme and film festival take place during the day on Friday and Saturday, and address a variety of aspects of Welsh culture and history. A Welsh marketplace is held throughout the festival, at which a range of organisations and businesses from Wales and the US promote and sell imported and Welsh-themed goods and services. A grand banquet takes place on Friday evening which includes the presentation of the National Welsh American Foundation's annual heritage medallion award to an individual who has made an outstanding lifetime contribution to Welsh cultural life in North America. The *eisteddfod* is held during the day on Saturday and includes contests for both adults and children. On Saturday evening a grand concert is held, at which a male voice

choir from Wales perform. Sunday, the final day of the Festival, is dedicated to the National Gymanfa Ganu. Following an Anglican Eucharist and non-denominational religious service at which flowers are laid for departed members, two back-to-back Gymanfa Ganu sessions are held. Participants are led in the singing of around thirty Welsh hymns over the two sessions, some sung in English and others in Welsh. Arguably, “[i]t is at these sessions that the essence of the Festival surfaces. Christianity and Welsh Wales mixing again in a way they rarely do these days at home [Wales]” (Finch 2005/2006: 64). The Festival concludes with a closing ceremony at which “Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau” (Land of My Fathers), the Welsh national anthem, and “God Be With You 'Til We Meet Again”, the Festival’s unofficial anthem, are sung, and the badges of office transferred to the planning committee of next year’s event.

NAFOW 2005

The 2005 NAFOW was held at the Contemporary Resort in Disney World, Orlando, Florida, a “huge futuristic hotel with a monorail running through its centre, and the Magic Kingdom, fairy castle and fireworks right outside the windows” (Finch: 63, see also Figure 1 overleaf). This was the first time that the NAFOW or the National Gymanfa Ganu had been held in Florida, or indeed in any south eastern US state. The vast majority of National Gymanfas (fifty-three events or 70%) have taken place in the north east region of the US, while over half of all National Gymanfas (thirty-nine events or 51%) have been held in Ohio, New York or Pennsylvania, the

traditional heartlands of Welsh settlement and Welsh American activity (WNGGA 2003, see also Figure 2, overleaf).



Figure 1 Disney's Contemporary Resort in Disney World, Orlando, Florida, venue of the 2005 North American Festival of Wales (photo E. Chapman)

However, Florida also possesses a substantial self-identifying Welsh American population: in the 1990 US Census over 100, 000 individuals claimed Welsh ancestry or ethnicity, making it the state with the fifth largest concentration of Welsh Americans² (Madog Center n.d.). Disney World was perhaps chosen as the Festival venue to encourage younger generations to attend: “[c]ome for the festival, but take advantage of the low airfare and specially discounted festival hotel rates to extend your stay to visit the theme parks and attractions of Central Florida. Bring the

² In descending order, the top four states in 1990 were: California; Pennsylvania; Ohio; and New York.

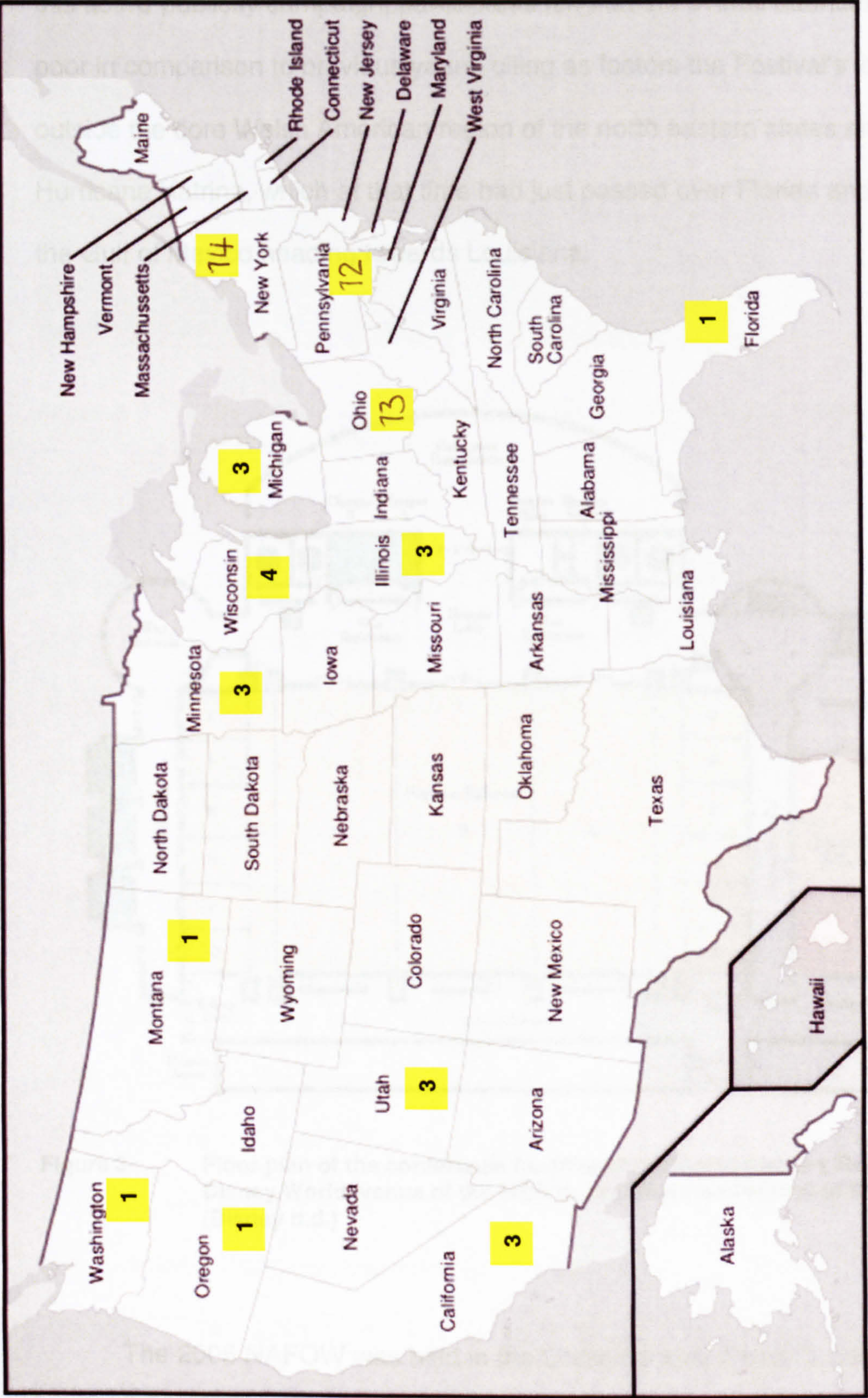


Figure 2 Distribution of Welsh National Gymnfa Gaus by state and province (1929-2007)

Other states: District of Columbia (US) 2; Ontario (Canada) 6; British Columbia (Canada) 3; Quebec (Canada) 1

family! Bring the grandchildren!” proclaimed a promotional article in *Hwyl*, the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association newsletter (2005: 1). Despite this active publicity campaign, participants felt that the overall attendance was poor in comparison to previous years, citing as factors the Festival’s location outside the core Welsh American region of the north eastern states and Hurricane Katrina, which at that time had just passed over Florida and was in the Gulf of Mexico heading towards Louisiana.

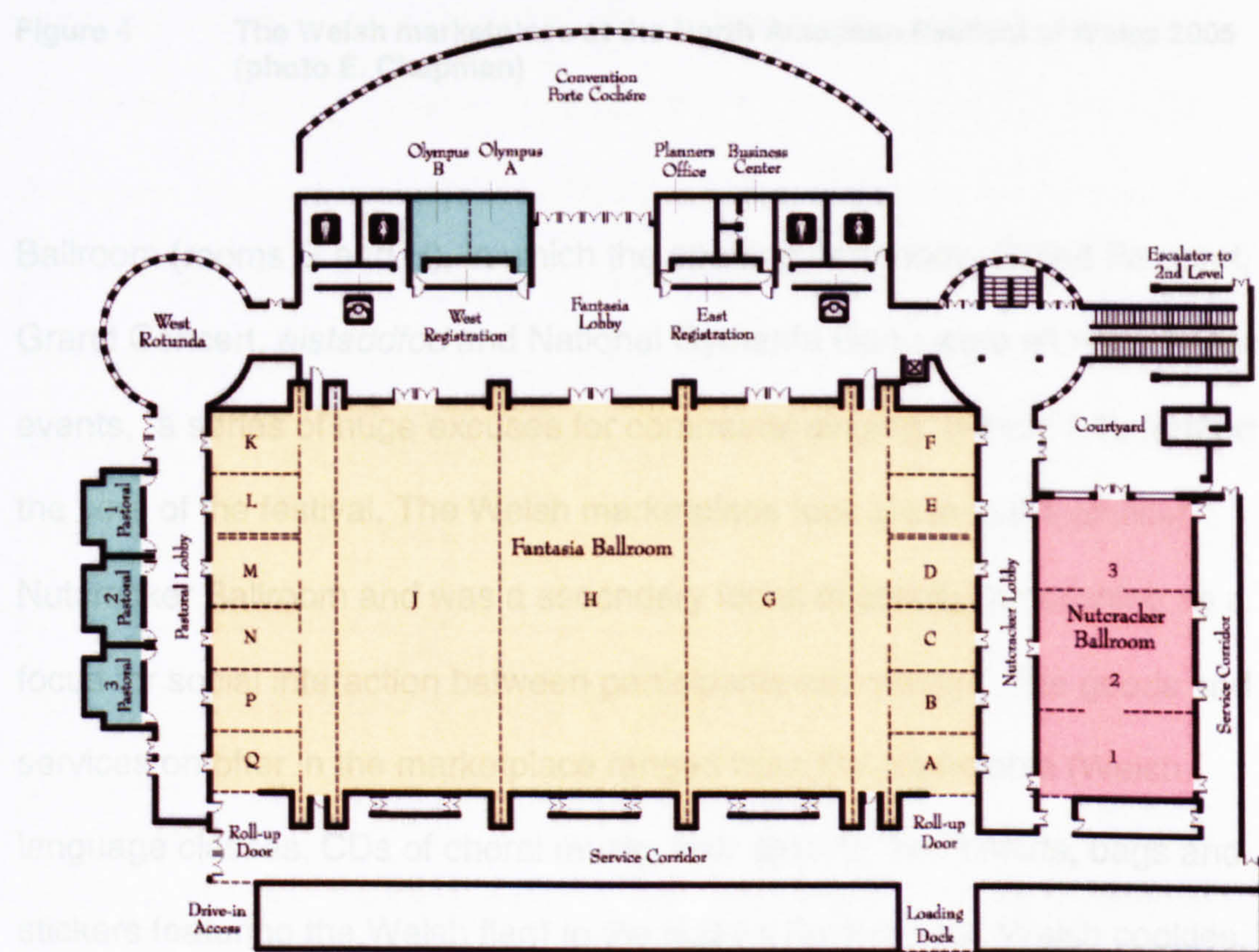


Figure 3 Floor plan of the conference facilities at the Contemporary Resort, Disney World, venue of the 2005 North American Festival of Wales (Disney n.d.)

The 2005 NAFOW was held in the Contemporary Resort’s conference facilities (see Figure 3, above). Its events were focussed around the Fantasia



Figure 4 The Welsh marketplace at the North American Festival of Wales 2005
(photo E. Chapman)

Ballroom (rooms G and H), in which the opening ceremony, Grand Banquet, Grand Concert, *eisteddfod* and National Gymanfa Ganu were all held. These events, “a series of huge excuses for communal singing” (Finch: 64), formed the core of the festival. The Welsh marketplace took place in the smaller Nutcracker Ballroom and was a secondary focus of activity, functioning as a focus for social interaction between participants and visitors. The goods and services on offer in the marketplace ranged from the predictable (Welsh language classes, CDs of choral music, love spoons, and t-shirts, bags and stickers featuring the Welsh flag) to the bizarre (Welsh teas, Welsh cookies, Welsh tartans and “*cilts*”). The seminar programme and film festival were held in smaller venues (Fantasia rooms A to F and K to Q) on either side of the main Fantasia Ballroom. Seminar topics included “Owain Glyndŵr in Welsh Tradition”, “The Fighting Choirs of the Land of Song” and “Real Cardiff”, while films shown included *The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but*

Came Down a Mountain (1995), a romantic comedy starring Hugh Grant and Tara Fitzgerald, and *Star-Spangled Dragon*, a documentary charting the impact of Welsh settlers on the development of the United States.

NAFOW 2006

The 2006 NAFOW was held at the Hilton Netherland Plaza hotel in the centre of Cincinnati, Ohio. The hotel was built in the 1930s in the art deco style and is now a National Historic Monument (see Figure 5, overleaf). Cincinnati is located in the north east of the US, the region with the highest concentration of Welsh-identifying individuals: in the 1990 Census almost half of all self-identifying Welsh Americans. Twelve previous National Gymanfas have been held in Ohio, second only to the fourteen that have been held in New York State (Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association 2003). Attendance was noticeably higher than at the 2005 Festival, perhaps as a result of the location of this NAFOW in the Welsh American heartland and its greater accessibility to a larger number of Americans and Canadians. The hotel website asserts that it is “within one hour’s drive of 60% of the United States’ population” (Hilton Hospitality, Inc. 2007a).

As in 2005, the festival was held in the hotel’s conference facilities, comprising a mixture of ballrooms, large function room and smaller seminar rooms (see Figure 6, page 33). The core events of the NAFOW were divided between two impressive ballrooms: the Pavilion, the hotel’s largest ballroom and an ex-nightclub, which was the venue for the opening ceremony and Grand Banquet; and the Hall of Mirrors, a two storey room lined within marble

and golden mirrors, the venue for the Grand Concert and the National Gymanfa Ganu. The *eisteddfod* and marketplace were held in two large function rooms on either side of the Hall of Mirrors: the *eisteddfod* and the marketplace in the Rosewood and Rookwood suites respectively. The marketplace was very similar in feel to that of the 2005 Festival, as a social space offering a wide range of Welsh-themed goods and services for sale. There were more stalls at the 2006 Festival than at the 2005 one, further evidence of the higher level of attendance at this Festival. The seminar programme and film festival took place in Salons D to I and Caprice 1 to 4 off the Hall of Nations, and were again presented by a mix of speakers from Wales and the US.



Figure 5 The Hilton Netherland Plaza hotel, Cincinnati, Ohio (Hilton Hospitality, Inc. 2007)

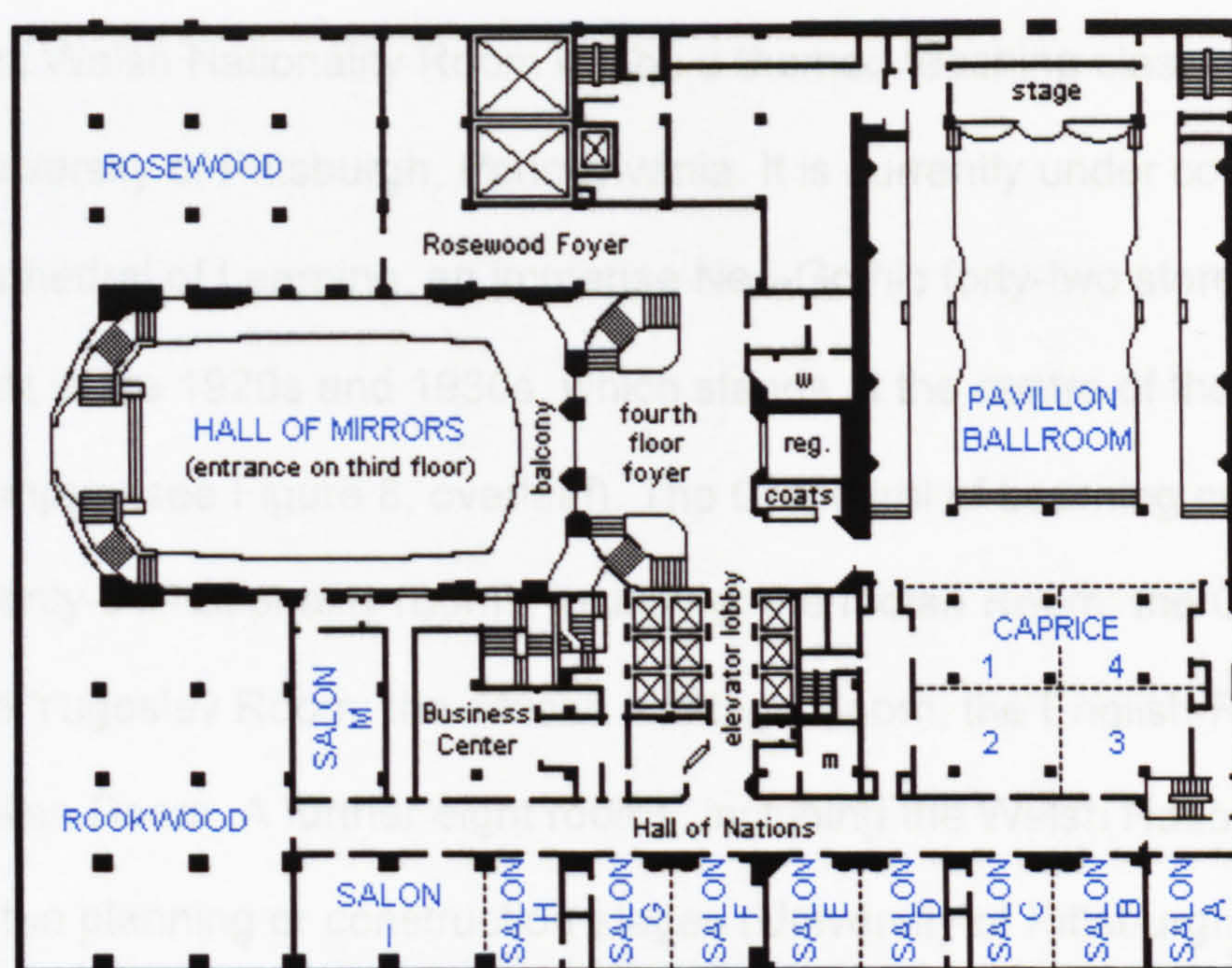


Figure 6 Floor plan of the fourth floor of the Hilton Netherland Plaza Hotel, Cincinnati, venue of the 2006 North American Festival of Wales (Hilton Hospitality, Inc. 2007b)



Figure 7 The Hall of Mirrors, venue of the National Gymanfa Ganu at the 2006 North American Festival of Wales (photo E. Chapman)

Welsh Nationality Room

The Welsh Nationality Room will be a themed teaching classroom at the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It is currently under construction in the Cathedral of Learning, an immense Neo-Gothic forty-two storey skyscraper built in the 1920s and 1930s, which stands at the centre of the University campus (see Figure 8, overleaf). The Cathedral of Learning currently houses twenty-six nationality rooms, including: the Indian Room; the German Room; the Yugoslav Room; the African Heritage Room; the English Room; and the Italian Room. A further eight rooms, including the Welsh Nationality Room, are in the planning or construction stages (University of Pittsburgh 2006). The purpose of the nationality rooms is to celebrate the various national and ethnic groups who have settled in the Pittsburgh area:

These beautiful rooms...are a very real and important part of education at the University of Pittsburgh. They are classrooms that are in themselves teachers...They represent the best and noblest heritage of the nationality groups which have helped make Pittsburgh an industrial and cultural capital of the world. (Alan Magee Smith (1957), quoted in the Nationality Rooms guidebook)

The nationality rooms are primarily used as themed lecture and seminar rooms by the University of Pittsburgh. All incorporate a blackboard or whiteboard, a lectern and seating for between ten and thirty students into their design. They are also a popular tourist attraction. Each nationality room represents the distinctive culture and architecture of a particular nation in or before 1787, the year in which the US Constitution was ratified. Some examples include: the English Room, which uses elements of Gothic and Tudor architecture; the Greek Room, which draws on Classical Greek



Figure 8 **The Cathedral of Learning, University of Pittsburgh (photo E. Chapman)**

architecture of the fifth century BCE; and the French Room, which is set during the Napoleonic period of the late eighteenth century. The construction of each nationality room has been funded by individuals and organisations associated with each respective national or ethnic group.

The project to create a Welsh Nationality Room has been led by the St David's Society of Pittsburgh. Following several previous unsuccessful attempts to raise the funds needed during the 1980s and 1990s, the Society began a fundraising campaign in 2001 and by March 2006 \$375,000 had been raised, as Jack Owen, co-chair of the Society's Nationality Room committee, stated (pers. comm.). These funds have been donated by Welsh American individuals and organisations from across the US. The target sum of

been meeting in secret in the barn area prior to the Act of Toleration of 1669, which granted freedom of worship to nonconformists in Britain. After this Act was passed the barn and farmhouse were converted into a chapel and attached residence for the minister, as the project architect, Kathy Horstmann explained (pers. comm.). The architectural design of the Welsh Nationality Room draws on two buildings at St. Fagans: National History Museum, one of the National Museums Wales sites, as the principal architect, Marty Powell explained:

Fundamentally what we're trying to do here is take a longhouse like Cilwent Farm, that house at... St. Fagans and, ah, turn it into a chapel with an attached residence so that the barn is the chapel and the farmhouse becomes the parsonage... The room is big enough – also, it's the same scale and layout as the Pen-Rhiw chapel at St. Fagans, that was really great in terms of the design. (pers. comm.)

The room will be entered through the “minister’s residence”, which will resemble a kitchen and living area, complete with fireplace, cast iron pots and kettle, and dining table, which will double as a study area for university students. A half-timbered wall will separate this area from the “chapel”. The chapel area will be dominated by the “pews” to which tablet arms for notebooks have been added so that they double as student seating, facing the “communion table” and lectern, with a whiteboard hidden behind wooden panelling in the wall behind. In front of the room’s window there will be a platform with a “pulpit” and benches for the chapel deacons, which double as an extra seating area for students, will stand in front of this bay window (see figure 10 overleaf).

directors. Their design must meet the requirements of both the University and the Society, a fact which has presented some challenges, as Kathy Horstmann explained (pers. comm.). Not only must the design of the Welsh Nationality Room be set before the cut-off date of 1787, the year the University of Pittsburgh was founded, but it must also conform with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act 1990 (the ADA) and incorporate various technologies used in modern teaching, including a data projector and whiteboard. The architects emphasised the difficulties they had faced in developing a design that was evocative of Wales and acceptable to both the St David's Society and the University of Pittsburgh. The principal architect, Marty Powell, explained that the cut-off date of 1787 proved particularly problematic as he felt that there was very little architecture in Wales at that time that was truly Welsh (pers. comm.) Many of the various design concepts proposed during the early stages of the project including a castle, cathedral and manor house were felt to be too English, as Marty Powell explained:

In that the initial cathedral was too English and the manor house was too English, the people who lived there would have been mainly English. So, what was really truly Welsh was this chapel and if there was a way that would connect with song and voice and literature of the time it would be early chapels... (pers. comm.)

While the primary function of the Welsh Nationality Room will be as a classroom, the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh also views it as a museum of Welsh heritage, as the president of the Society, Dave Williams explained:

I feel... [the Welsh Nationality Room] will be very important to local Welsh Americans. The Welsh played a major role in the development of the state of Pennsylvania, including much of the industry in the Pittsburgh area... There has never been an enduring monument to remind us... of the pioneering role that Welsh immigrants have played. This will be that monument – a permanent museum of Welsh heritage. (pers. comm.)

Welsh objects and memorabilia will be displayed in the room, including items of “Welsh” furniture such as a Welsh dresser and preacher’s chair, which are to be sourced from antiques dealers in Wales. Together with the other nationality rooms, the Welsh room will be decorated in national style for the annual Christmas Nationality Room open house, during which the St. David’s Society will put on a series exhibits and talks. The Society also plans to use the room for meetings, Welsh language classes and to celebrate Welsh festivals such as St. David’s Day.

Welsh American Heritage Museum

The Welsh American Heritage Museum was established in 1971 and is housed in a building that began life as the Welsh Congregational Church in the village of Oak Hill in south eastern Ohio (see Figure 11, overleaf). This region, particularly the counties of Jackson and Gallia, saw high levels of Welsh immigration during the nineteenth century. In the 1850 Census, 74% of the population of Jackson County and 57% of the population of Gallia County had been born in Wales (Struble and Wilhelm 1992: 79). Today, there is still an active Welsh American community in these counties, illustrated not only by the existence of the Welsh American Heritage Museum but also by the Madog Center for Welsh Studies at the University of Rio Grande, several Welsh

societies and clubs, and a wide range of events throughout the year including an annual St. David's Day dinner and *cymanfaoedd canu* (hymn singing festival). The Welsh American Heritage Museum is an independent non-profit making organisation, supported financially by donations and membership fees from the Welsh American Heritage Museum Society. It is managed by an elected board of trustees and run on a day-to-day basis by volunteers. The curator, Mildred Bangert (a member of the board of trustees who performs this role on a voluntary basis), stated that the museum's mission is "[t]o preserve the traditions and cultures of the Welsh people in the area, and try to keep in touch with Welsh people in Wales" (pers. comm.).



Figure 11 **The Welsh American Heritage Museum (photo E. Chapman)**



Figure 12 Looking towards the dais from the entrance to the Welsh American Heritage Museum (photo E. Chapman)

The single-storey brick building which houses the museum began life as the Oak Hill Welsh Congregational Church, built in 1868 to replace a smaller timber-frame church. Following a significant decline in congregation sizes, the Welsh Congregational Church closed in 1962 and the building was sold to the local (non- Welsh) Baptist Church. When the Baptist Church moved to larger premises in 1971 the building was once again put up for sale. Members of the local Welsh American community formed the Welsh American Heritage Museum Society and campaigned successfully to raise the \$10,000 necessary to purchase the old church because: “we were afraid it might be torn down or used for something we didn’t approve of – a parking lot or something...we wanted to preserve it” (Bangert, pers. comm.). The museum was formally opened in 1972 as space for the collection, preservation and

display of material related to the history of Welsh settlement in south eastern Ohio (Barton 1997: 51).

Few changes have been made to the building since its rebirth as a museum: a small extension has been constructed, housing a storage area and toilets, and an air conditioning system and electric strip lighting have been installed. The pews and dais of the old church remain; indeed, the building is still used for religious services on occasion (Bangert, pers. comm.). There are two entrances to the museum, another relic of its history as a church, when men would enter through one door and women through the other. Today only one door is used. Upon entering the museum you find yourself at the rear of the building, facing the dais with eight rows of pews in front of you (see Figure 12, overleaf). These pews take up most of the museum's interior, and therefore the majority of its collection is displayed in the open space between the entrance and the first row of pews, or on the raised dais at the front of the building. This collection can be loosely grouped into three main themes: religion, home and family, and working life. It includes:

Religion

- The architecture and internal layout of the building itself, as an ex-church
- A large number of bibles, in both Welsh and English, dating back to the early nineteenth century
- Hymnals and hymn sheet music, again in both Welsh and English
- Published histories of various Welsh churches in Ohio
- Photographs and images of local Welsh churches, their congregations and ministers
- A lectern and communion table

Home and family

- Numerous photographs of family groups and individual portraits
- The genealogical records of members of the local Welsh American community, often compiled by themselves
- Photographs and paintings of landscapes and scenes from Wales
- Various items of furniture and furnishings, including chairs, tables, a spinning wheel and several harmoniums
- Items of costume, including a christening gown and robe (1890s), a wedding dress (1860s) and an US Army dress uniform (1940s)
- Ornaments and ephemera with a Welsh theme: Welsh Lady dolls; a china Welsh dragon; commemorative cups and plates; a Celtic cross; coal carvings; love spoons, etc

Working life

- Various occupational tools and equipment, including carpentry tools horse collars, a shepherds' crook and dentists' tools
- A model of the Welsh-owned Jefferson Iron Furnace in Oak Hill (operational 1853-1916), together with a model of the first American ironclad warship, the USS Monitor, built with iron from the Jefferson Iron Furnace in 1862
- Objects from the Jefferson Iron Furnace and other local industrial site, including examples of iron ore, coinage issued by the company shop and various tools
- Several group portraits of the employees of local Welsh-owned industries and businesses

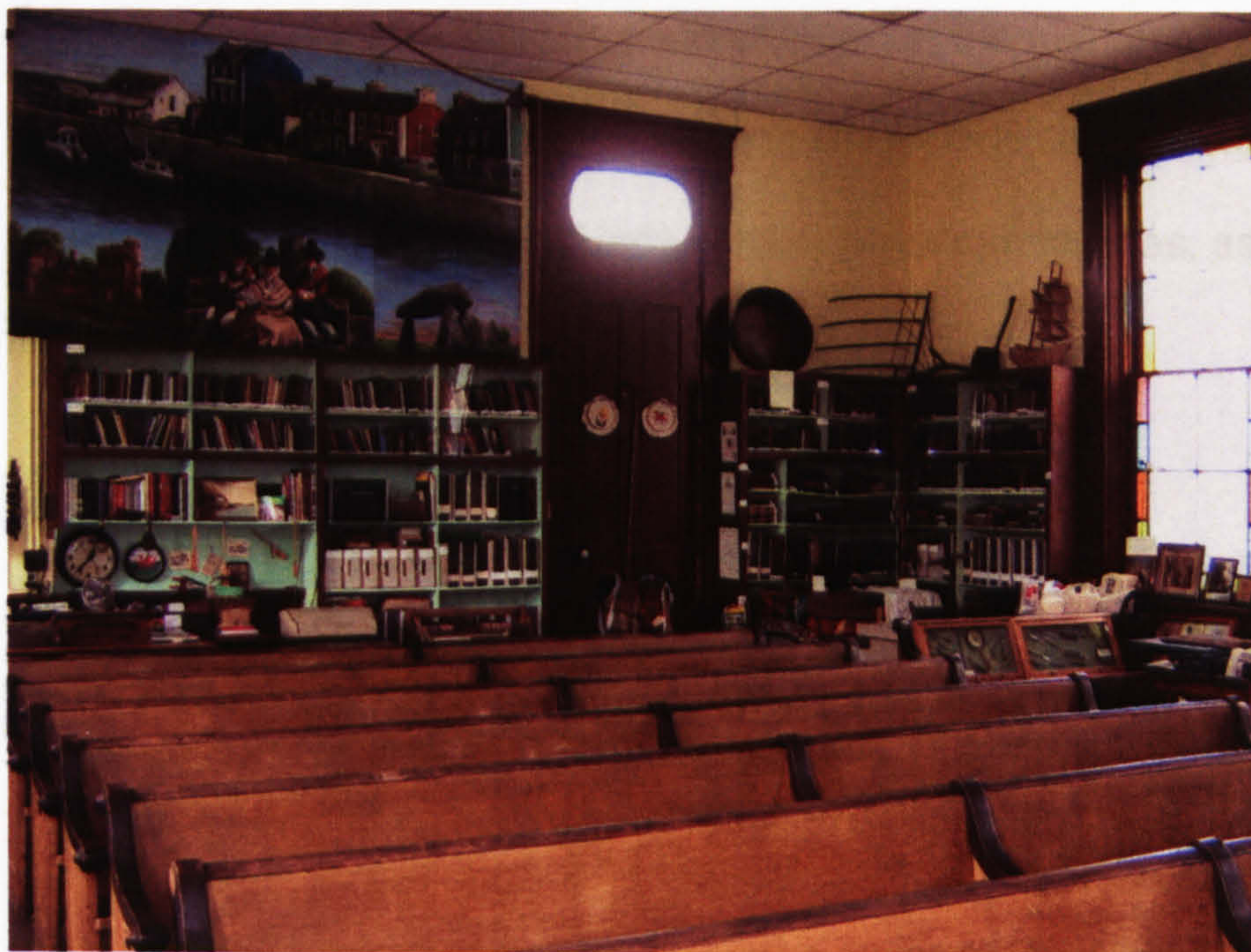


Figure 13 Interior of the Welsh American Heritage Museum, looking towards the rear wall from the dais (photo E. Chapman)

museum and two other old Welsh churches in the area every three years. This is a *cymanfaoedd pregethu* (a preaching assembly) rather than simply a *cymanfaoedd canu* (singing festival). In many ways the museum is a focus for Welsh American community life in Jackson and Gallia counties, providing a venue for events and meetings. As well as hosting the *gymanfa pregethu* once every three years, its trustees are also involved in organising the annual St. David's Day banquet and Christmas carol service. Many of the museum's trustees are also heavily involved with the organisation and management of other Welsh American events and groups in the area; indeed, the overlap is so great that committee meetings of the museum, Gymanfa Ganu association and local Welsh club have been combined (Bangert, pers. comm.).

This chapter has outlined the parameters of this study, identifying the research question, aims and objectives, and introducing the four community-based heritage initiatives that form the case study sites. In the next chapter the theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches that have shaped the development of this research project are discussed.

CHAPTER ONE

Constructing and Consuming Identity

Theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches

This study takes as its starting point the argument that identity is a social construct, "...a production which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within representation" (Hall 2003: 234). Such a constructionist approach sees identity, whether personal or collective, as something that is produced, mediated and performed through interactions between individuals and the society in which they live: between agency (who we think we are, how we wish others to see us) and structure (structures and institutions outside our control that affect how others perceive us, such as gender, ethnicity, age, etc). This approach is very different from the essentialist model of identity as something fixed, coherent and continuous, comprising the inner core of a person or collectivity: the "real you" or the "true essence" of a nation. As a social construct, identity is inherently multiple and strategic, constantly in the process of being reimagined and contingent upon the political, social, economic and cultural contexts in which it is constructed. An individual performs different personal identities in different situations: for example, I can variously identify myself as daughter, sibling, cultural and heritage studies student, doctoral researcher, Welsh, British, swimmer and theatre-goer. In terms of collective identity, Dai Smith's oft-quoted assertion that "Wales is a singular noun but a plural experience" (1984: 1) similarly reflects the existence of multiple and competing versions of Welsh national

identity, illustrating the diverse range of political, economic, social and cultural contexts experienced by the population of Wales (this topic is discussed in detail in chapter three).

Perceived as a social construct, identity becomes something that must be actively produced, performed and consumed, rather than something that we are born with. It is a “process of becoming rather being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we come from’, but rather what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves” (Hall 1996: 4). Identity is performative; it is a “discursive practice which enacts or produces that which it names”, constructed by the very expressions perceived to be its results (Butler 1993: 13). An individual becomes a Welsh American in part through the performative act of identifying himself or herself to others as a Welsh American. Identity is actively rather than passively consumed. The perception of consumption of an active process is an aspect of postmodernism. It has been argued that we construct our identities through consumption: we are what we buy (Baudrillard 1988). We consume and display cultural goods that symbolise our membership of a particular group or collective identity via the meanings with which they have been inscribed (Mackay 1997).

This concept of the intertwined process of identity construction and consumption is particularly relevant to this study’s investigation of how and why heritage sites are used by self-identifying Welsh Americans to construct, perform and consume Welsh identities. This study will demonstrate how these individuals engage in “Welsh identifying at a distance” (Bishop *et al* 2003: 53),

claiming and performing a Welsh identity at a temporal and spatial distance from Wales.

This chapter will discuss some of the key theoretical approaches to the investigation of how and why identities such as Welsh American are constructed, consumed and used by individuals and groups. It begins by addressing the linked theories of diaspora and postcolonialism, exploring ideas of transnational and hybridised identity positions, the roots and routes of identity and trans-generational attachment to the homeland and its cultural heritage (Clifford 1997; Bhabha 1994; Cohen 1997; Hall 2003; Radhakrishnan 2003). Secondly, it investigates ideas of globalisation and belonging, focussing on the seeming paradox of the resurgence of national, ethnic and local identities in the face of ongoing political, economic, social and cultural globalisation. Various arguments regarding the occurrence of an “ethnic revival” in the late twentieth century are discussed (Smith, A. 1981; Alba 1990; Halter 2000; Glazer and Moynihan 1970), with a particular focus on the American case and the concept of “symbolic ethnicity” (Gans 1979, 1994), which addresses the increase in ethnic identification amongst white European Americans. Issues of local belonging in a global world are further addressed through an analysis of the concept of “elective belonging” (Savage *et al* 2005). Thirdly, this chapter moves on to address the relationships between heritage and identity. It discusses theoretical responses to the ongoing heritage boom that began in the 1980s: those which critique what they see as the nostalgic and reactionary drive of the “heritage industry” (Hewison 1987; Wright 1985; Lowenthal 1985); and those that focus on heritage sites as spaces for cultural communication and biography, mobilising “discourses of local identity,

belonging, place, environment and...constructs of people and community” (Dicks 2000: 62; see also Dicks 2003; Bagnall 2003; Urry 1996; McCrone *et al* 1995; Smith 2006). Ideas of the audience member or museum visitor as active, simultaneously cultural producer, performer and consumer are also addressed in relation to visitor motivations (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998; Bagnall 2003; Fyfe and Ross 1996; Urry 1996). Finally, this chapter provides an analysis of the evolution of this study’s methodology, drawing on the theoretical perspectives discussed earlier. The way in which the “circuit of culture” model (du Gay *et al* 1997) informed the initial development of research methodology, data gathering and analysis techniques is also discussed.

Rooting and Routing Identities

Theories of diaspora and postcolonialism offer an important angle from which to investigate the construction and consumption of Welsh identities at Welsh American community heritage sites. Both stress the fragmented, multiple and performative nature of all identities, whether individual or communal (Cohen 1997; Bhabha 1994; Clifford 1997). The important role played by an often mythologized concept of the ancestral homeland or golden age of the nation in anchoring identities is also dealt with in theories of postcolonialism and diaspora (Hall 2003; Radhakrishnan 2003).

Diaspora is a problematic term with multiple, often conflicting definitions. The traditional definition of a diaspora is of a forced migration or exile from the homeland of a group of people who maintain a strong collective identity, do not

fully assimilate into the culture and society of the country in which they settle and maintain a myth of eventual return to the ancestral homeland (Clifford 1997: 247). The archetypal example is that of the worldwide Jewish Diaspora. However, there are numerous other types of diaspora, including victim, labour, trade, imperial and cultural (Cohen 1997: x). The worldwide Welsh diaspora is best defined as an economic diaspora, typified by migration in search of job opportunities, higher wages and a better standard of living (Jones, B. 2003; see also chapter two of this text). This study defines a diaspora as a group living in one country and looking across time and space to another country, to which they feel an inescapable link and sense of a shared cultural identity.

Postcolonialism originated as a literary theory, analysing texts by authors from ex-European colonies, but has since grown to incorporate historical, political and cultural analyses. Debates around theories of postcolonialism have generated two main ways in which the term can be used and understood. The first, “post-colonial”, denotes the historical period immediately following the end of a country’s rule by a colonial power or empire. The second, “postcolonial”, refers to the variety of “representations, reading practices and values” that circulate “across the barrier between colonial rule and national independence”, challenging colonial ways of understanding and knowing the world (McLeod 2000: 5). Postcolonial analyses address “the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority” (Bhabha 1994: 71). A key focus is upon the ways in which white European colonial powers engaged in the “othering” of their colonised subjects, justifying their rule through binary oppositions between “self” (European colonisers) and “other” (colonised

peoples of Africa, Asia, etc): superior/ inferior; civilised/ barbarous; culture/ nature (Said 1985). Postcolonial arguments have been applied to the study of Wales and Welsh identities (Aaron and Williams 2005; Bohata 2004). However, while Wales can be perceived as representing England's subordinated and peripheral "other" for much of its history, strictly speaking Wales's post-colonial period – if there was one – occurred in the period between 1282, when Edward I asserted his control over the territory with the Statute of Rhuddlan, and 1536, when the first Act of Union legally and politically incorporated Wales into England (Williams 2005: 5). Postcolonial approaches, with their emphasis upon the constructed nature of cultural identities and the central role played by language and other forms of representation in both reflecting and constructing identities, are particularly relevant to this research project.

The term diaspora implies multiple and transcultural attachments to the identity of both the ancestral homeland and that of the country in which the diasporic population now resides (Cohen 1997: 135). National and ethnic identities are thus neither discrete nor exclusive; an individual can, for example, identify simultaneously as both Welsh and American. This concept is also central to postcolonial theory, which critiques the traditional binary division between "self" and "other" and argues that the boundaries between cultures are permeable and shifting, or "fuzzy". The overlapping space created by these fuzzy boundaries is referred to as the "third space", a fluid area in which cultural identities become hybridised (Bhabha 1994: 125). Welsh American is an example of such a hybrid and diasporic cultural identity: most

self-identifying Welsh Americans are descended from Welsh immigrants who settled in the USA during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The identity position “Welsh American” represents an Old World cultural identity that has been reimagined, reconstructed and re-contextualised in the New World, transformed and translated by its journey across time and space (Chambers 1994: 26). Contemporary Welsh American cultural identity draws on aspects of both Welsh and American culture in its construction, and therefore differs from the cultural identity of contemporary Wales in a number of ways. A question applied to an analysis of Indian American identity is equally applicable to the Welsh American case: “[i]s the ‘Indian’ in Indian and the ‘Indian’ in Indian-American the same and...interchangeable? Which of the two is authentic and which merely strategic and reactive?” (Radhakrishnan 2003: 123). There is perhaps a tendency to perceive Welsh as the authentic identity, constructed as it is within the geopolitical territory of Wales. In contrast, Welsh American (or Welshness at a distance) can be seen as less authentic, merely a nostalgic imitation of Welshness. However, theories of postcolonialism and diaspora would argue that Welsh and Welsh American – or Welsh Canadian, Welsh Australian or Welsh Patagonian – are multiple versions of the same identity: each is equally constructed, strategic and reactive: “neither distance nor proximity guarantees truth or alienation” (Arjun Appadurai, quoted in Radhakrishnan 2003: 126).

In common with other diasporas, narratives of the ancestral homeland play an important role in maintaining a sense of common identity amongst the self-identifying Welsh American population. Possession of a real or putative

ancestral homeland provides diasporic populations with a set of collective memories and myths, with a sense of roots, belonging and continuity with the past (Cohen 1997: 184; Hague 2002: 144). It connects them to their ancestors and provides a focus for the construction, performance and consumption of personal and collective identities. Diasporic perceptions of the “old country” are commonly uncritical, idealised and nostalgic. The diasporic gaze often does not take into account the political, economic and social realities of the contemporary homeland; its focus is on a homeland of the past, often as it was during the period of emigration or in a cultural golden age (Radhakrishnan 2003: 128). This is evident in the Welsh American case: an analysis of visual representations of Wales in the primary Welsh American newspaper *Y Drych* (the Mirror) reveals the portrayal of a “rural, timeless and traditional place”, with few representations of urban, industrial or twenty-first century Wales (Garrett *et al* 2005).

The homeland is therefore temporally as well as spatially distant from the diasporic population. Although many diasporic groups possess a myth of return, a future permanent or temporary journey back to the ancestral homeland, this temporal distance means that although the geographic territory defined as the place of origin may be visited, members of a diaspora can never “go home”. In an analysis of Caribbean identities, Stuart Hall argues that Africa, the ancestral homeland, is an imagined concept to Jamaicans. While it represents their place of ethnic origin (roots), they have been changed and it has been changed by the experiences of diaspora (routes): Africa signifies something very different to people living in the Caribbean than it does to those living in Africa (Hall 2003: 241). This is to be expected: the homeland

plays a different role in diasporic identities than it does in homeland identities. As Garrett *et al* argue in reference to the Welsh American diaspora, “Wales ‘from afar’ might need to be antithetical to a busy, populous, urban, ‘modern’ America” (2005: 559).

It has been argued that in the contemporary globalised world, all cultures and identities are to some extent hybrid and diasporic. The vast majority of contemporary states contain ethnically heterogeneous populations, with ancestries drawn from across the globe. Similarly, the increasing ease of movement of people, goods, information, images and cultures across geopolitical borders has produced a variety of new possibilities and positions of identification on which individuals and groups can draw. It has been argued that national identities are becoming deterritorialised, the relationship between a national cultural identity and a geographically-bounded nation state weakening as a result of the ongoing processes of globalisation (King 1991; Hall 1991a).

Globalisation, Identity and Belonging

The perception of identity as a social construct is arguably a product of the processes of globalisation. Major structural changes taking place in modern society, particularly in the late twentieth century, have caused a fragmentation and decentring of collective social identities. These changes include: economic restructuring, with many Western states experiencing a shift from industrial to service economies; the rise of powerful transnational corporations; development of new technologies of transport and

communication; and increasing international interdependence (Hall 1991b: 44). Such global flows challenge the traditional boundaries of collective social identities. What were previously perceived to represent stable foundations to and markers of identity, such as class, nationality, ethnicity and gender, are now increasingly seen as fluid, positional and contested. There has been a shift away from the idea of an essential and unchanging core to identity, and towards a perception of identity as a construct, plural and constantly in the process of change and reconstruction (Weedon 2004; Hall 1992). Processes of globalisation and a resulting uncertainty and insecurity about social identities are a major factor in the current prominence of issues of identity in contemporary society, media and research. As Homi Bhabha explains: "culture [and, by extension, identity] only emerges as...problematic at the point at which there is a loss of meaning in the contestation and articulation of everyday life, between classes, genders, races, nations" (1994: 34).

Processes of globalisation might be predicted to herald the imminent disappearance of nation-states and a steep decline in cultural differences between societies, resulting in the emergence of a homogeneous global mass culture (Ohmae 1995; Albrow 1996). However, "in every continent and practically every state, ethnicity has reappeared as a vital social and political force" (Smith, A. 1981: 12): processes of globalisation have arguably strengthened ethnic and national identities. The second half of the twentieth century in particular has seen a proliferation of ethnic movements, conflicts and rivalries, from campaigns for autonomy in Wales, Scotland, Quebec and Catalonia, to intense ethno-national conflicts in the Middle East, Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Many of these interethnic tensions have their roots in the

nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, but became increasingly active and visible in the later twentieth century (Smith, A. 1981: 21). For example, the roots of a Welsh ethnic revival can be traced back to the late eighteenth century, which saw the creation of numerous Welsh literary societies and the (re)construction of the *eisteddfod*, a medieval musical and literary competition (Morgan 1983). A political dimension developed in the late nineteenth century, with the establishment of a campaign for Welsh autonomy by Cymru Fydd (Young Wales) in 1886, and Plaid Cymru, the national party of Wales, was founded in 1925 (Davies, J. 2007). However, the latter part of the twentieth century marked a new stage in this ethnic revival, in which significant gains were made: Plaid Cymru won its first parliamentary seat in 1996; the devolution of partial political autonomy to Wales was voted for in the 1997 Referendum; and in 1999 the Welsh Assembly was established (Davies, J. 2007).

There has also been there has been a significant increase in ethnic identification in the US since the 1960s (Glazer and Moynihan 1970; Gans 1979; Alba 1990; Halter 2000). This is particularly noticeable amongst white Americans of European descent, the vast majority of whom are three or more generations removed from their immigrant ancestors. European immigrants to the US, particularly Protestant immigrants from northern Europe, have traditionally been perceived as assimilating easily and rapidly into American society and culture (Alba 1990: 4). There is an ongoing debate regarding whether this increase in ethnic identification represents the revival of a “genuine” ethnic culture and identity, or is merely evidence of a desire to feel ethnic. This desire to feel ethnic manifests itself in the form of a symbolic

ethnicity: a “nostalgic allegiance to the culture of the immigrant generation or that of the homeland; a love for and a pride in tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated in everyday behaviour” (Gans 1979: 9).

Ethnic identities in the United States

Since the 1960s there has been a significant increase in levels of ethnic identification amongst white Americans of European descent. In the 2000 census, 80% of respondents specified a particular ethnic ancestry, and of that group just 7% claimed a solely American ancestry (Brittingham and de la Cruz 2004: 1). This trend challenges the traditional concept of the US as “the great Melting-Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming” (Israel Zangwill, quoted in Joppke 1999: 147). The idea of the melting pot has been replaced by the concept of cultural pluralism, which accepts the continued existence of the ethnic cultural identities of immigrant groups rather than their complete acculturation, assimilation and absorption into the dominant American cultural identity. A host of new metaphors for the American experience have emerged to replace that of the melting pot, including those of the mosaic, salad bowl, rainbow, symphony and kaleidoscope (Fuchs 1990: 276).

Various causes of and factors in the increasing levels of white ethnic identification in the USA have been proposed. The so-called ethnic revival has been argued to be a response to the Civil Rights and Black Power movements of the 1960s and 1970s, rejecting the idea of a homogenous white racial group and asserting cultural difference and ethnic heterogeneity (Alba 1990:

316). Another factor is the publication in 1976 of African-American author Alex Haley's *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*, a semi-fictionalised and extremely popular account of his family history reaching back to the west coast of Africa in the mid-eighteenth century, which caused a major growth of interest in genealogy and ancestral heritage amongst the American population (Halter 2000: 83). The revival of interest in ethnic cultural heritage amongst white European Americans has also been ascribed to its decayed nature by the 1960s and 1970s as a result of assimilation and the decrease in significant levels of new immigration from European countries (Gans 1979). The point at which a culture has declined so far that it is on the brink of extinction often sees an outburst of interest in it and self-conscious attempts to preserve it (Bhabha 1994: 34). A shift in the nature and degree of attachment to the culture of the ancestral homeland has been identified between that of the original immigrant generation and that of their grandchildren or great-grandchildren: "what the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember" (Marcus Hansen 1938, quoted in Alba 1990: 28).

There is continuing debate regarding the nature of the American "ethnic revival". In *Beyond the Melting Pot* (originally published 1960) Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan argue that the melting pot effect did not happen, that full assimilation of the various immigrant groups into a standardised, uniform American culture and society was impossible. Instead, immigrant ethnic groups and their cultural identities "were transformed by influences in America, stripped of their original attributes... [and] recreated as something new" (Glazer and Moynihan 1970: 13). Ethnic identities are constructed and reconstructed in each generation, shaped by that generation's experiences in

the US, their concerns and issues. While the nature and attributes of an ethnic identity in the US may differ significantly from its homeland version, it remains a recognisable and distinct group identity (1970: 17). Glazer and Moynihan present ethnic identity as a new social form in mid-twentieth century America, replacing occupational identity as a key factor in self-definition and definition by others (1970: 16).

In contrast, the sociologist Herbert Gans rejects the existence of any kind of ethnic revival in the US, arguing that the increased levels of interest in ethnicity since the 1960s represent a new stage in the ongoing processes of acculturation and assimilation (1979: 1). He calls this stage symbolic ethnicity. Gans argues that for the third generation “ethnics” and beyond (the grandchildren of the original immigrants), ethnicity is about “feeling or being identified with a particular ethnicity, but without either participating in an existing ethnic organisation (formal or informal) or practising an ongoing ethnic culture” (1994: 578). This feeling of ethnic identity is constructed and consumed symbolically, in easy and intermittent ways such as the celebration of ethnic holidays and rites of passage (Gans 1979: 10). Symbolic ethnicity is also a voluntary ethnicity: individuals choose if and how they identify with a particular ancestral ethnicity (Gans 1979: 7).

The theory of symbolic ethnicity is an influential one and has been supported by several studies of ethnic identification amongst white Americans (Alba 1990; Waters 1992; Bankston and Henry 2000). Alba and Waters also advance alternative hypotheses as to why ethnic identities continue to be important to Americans three or more generations removed from the original immigrants: ethnicity may provide a sense of belonging and a feeling of

community; or it may be a means by which to assert distinctiveness as not simply an American but a Welsh, Irish or German American (Alba 1990: 300; Waters 1992: 88). The theory of symbolic ethnicity has also been critiqued, particularly in studies of contemporary Jewish American identity, which formed one of Gans's main case studies (Conzen *et al* 1992; Winter 1996; Rehbun 2004). Conzen *et al* argue that ethnicity is an active and ongoing collective process of construction and negotiation, rather than the private and symbolic consumption suggested by Gans (1992: 4-5). Winter and Rehbun counter Gans's argument that ethnic identification does not require functioning groups or networks, arguing that communal religious observances play a central role in expressions of Jewish ethnicity (1996; 2004). Based on these debates, it is clear that whether the increase in levels of ethnic identification amongst white Americans of European descent indicates an ethnic revival, or is merely a penultimate stage in ongoing processes of assimilation, an interest in ancestral roots, genealogy and ethnic culture represents a major social trend in the contemporary US.

“Glocalisation” and elective belonging

The so-called ethnic revival in the modern world can be seen as a response to the weakening relationship between nation-states and national cultural identities as a result of globalisation: an attempt to recreate and reconstruct “imaginary, knowable places in the face of the global post-modern which has...destroyed the identities of specific places, absorbed them into this post-modern flux of diversity” (Hall 1991a: 35). An alternate approach focuses on

new forms of connection and mobility created by processes of globalisation, arguing that the global has not transcended the local, but has rather transformed it (Castells 1996; Lash and Urry 1994). Localised identities are now exposed to and able to draw on a diverse range of cultural forms, traditions and symbols, as a result of the increased ease of movement of people, goods, information and images across the globe. The local is therefore to be understood through its network of global relationships, through processes of “glocalisation” (Robertson 1995). As John Urry argues: “the global and the local are inextricably and irreversibly bound together through a dynamic relationship” (2002: 84).

Through processes of globalisation, the idea of historically rooted local communities has become increasingly problematic. The ease with which people can move between areas, regions and even nations, coupled with the rapid social and cultural changes villages, towns and cities have experienced over the last fifty years means that “attachment to place is detached from historical communal roots in that place” (Savage *et al* 2005: 52). An example of this can be found in Savage *et al*’s investigation of the nature of local belonging and identity within four residential areas of Manchester, in North West England (2005). They found that feeling a sense of belonging to these localities was not restricted to those “born and bred” in the area but was also felt by local residents possessing no prior ties to that area. These “elective locals”, people who have chosen to move to and settle in an area, feel what Savage *et al* define as an “elective belonging”. Their sense of belonging is based on their ability to link their personal biographies to the locality in which they have chosen to live, on telling “stories that indicate how their arrival and

subsequent settlement is appropriate to their sense of themselves” and thus constructing a tie between themselves and their surroundings (2005: 29).

At its root, the concept of elective belonging conceives of belonging as fluid rather than fixed. Savage *et al* move away from the old idea that a community is a fixed entity with closed boundaries to which one either belongs or does not belong, without any middle ground. In elective belonging, places are sites in which to perform and actively claim an identity and sense of belonging through an individual’s ability to link their personal biography to their place of residence (Savage *et al* 2005: 29).

Heritage and Identity

Heritage sites and museums play an important role as spaces in which a variety of personal and collective identities can be claimed, constructed, performed and legitimated. Heritage is a signifying practice, a “cultural and social process that engages with acts of remembering that work to create ways to understand and engage with the present” (Smith 2006: 2). It is an active process through which individuals, communities and institutions construct, negotiate and communicate identities, meanings and values. Heritage sites and museums represent two of the spaces in which the process of heritage takes place. They preserve, display and interpret the material and intangible remains of the past. They are symbols of identity, public institutions with the power and authority to legitimate particular versions of the past, memories and identity.

Heritage is argued to be “symptomatic of much-discussed ‘turn to the past’ in contemporary society” (Dicks 2003: 119). Europe and North America have experienced a so-called “heritage boom” since the 1980s which has seen a significant growth in the size of heritage audiences and in the number and variety of museums, heritage sites and displays. An example of this is the famous claim that a new museum was opening every fortnight in Britain during the 1980s (Hewison 1987, Urry 2002). The same period has also seen a change in the techniques of display used by museums and heritage sites, away from traditional forms, such as the glass display case and interpretive label, and towards “living history” techniques such as costumed, first-person interpreters and reconstructed or replica period rooms, buildings or street scenes (Dicks 2003: 122-125). Four key trends have been identified as factors in the heritage boom. The first is that of the postmodern cultural shifts in contemporary society: processes of globalisation, postcolonialism and diaspora have caused a transformation in our understanding of cultural and social identities, which are seen as increasingly fluid and relational (Hall 1996, Woodward 2004). The expansion of heritage sites and events can be seen as a response to these changes, representing a desire for the geographically bounded place identities of the past (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge 2000: 76). Secondly, economic restructuring, such as the swift decline of heavy industry in Britain during the second half of the twentieth century and the shift to a post-industrial or service economy, created a desire both to collect and preserve the material heritage of a disappearing way of life, and provided an audience for the display of such industrial heritage (Urry 1996: 58). Linked to this trend, the third factor is a perception of heritage as a marketable

commodity, representing a potential source of income, employment and economic regeneration, particularly in areas previously dominated by heavy industry, such as south Wales (Dicks 2000b). Finally, the heritage boom can be seen as a symptom of the increasing democratisation of history and the rise of “bottom-up” or unofficial heritage activities, through which community groups are seeking to preserve and display element of their local history (Samuel 1994; Crooke 2007).

Academic responses to and interpretations of the heritage boom take one of two main forms. The first sees the growth in museums and heritage sites as a symptom of economic and social decline (Hewison 1987, 1988; Lowenthal 1985; Wright 1985). In this interpretation, our increasing obsession with the past represents a loss of confidence in the present and the future. The increasing commodification of the past is criticised, and the “living history” techniques used by many heritage sites to display and interpret the past are perceived to be historically inaccurate and therefore inauthentic. In contrast, the second academic approach focuses on the role of heritage as an active process of cultural production, consumption and communication through which we can develop a greater understanding of the present (Dicks 2000b, 2003; Smith 2006; Samuel 1994; Urry 2002). Academics who take this approach stress the need to investigate how visitors interact with and make sense of the representations of the past offered to them by heritage. Both approaches warrant further discussion and are addressed in turn in the following sections.

Heritage industries

Critics of the “heritage boom” argue that it is a symptom of economic and social decline, a turning away from the concerns and issues of the present in favour of a nostalgic gaze on an idealised past (Hewison 1987, 1988; Lowenthal 1985; Wright 1985). In *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*, Robert Hewison argues that the growth in museum numbers in the UK during the 1980s “points to the imaginative death of this country...viewed together they present a picture of a country obsessed with its past and unable to face its future” (1987: 9). He criticises nostalgia as a rose-tinted view of the past which filters out its unpleasant aspects, creating an inaccurate and distorted representation of history. Similarly, Patrick Wright argues that our contemporary obsession with heritage is a reactionary and conservative force that seeks to (re)create the perceived security of the more bounded social and cultural identities of the past (1985). For such critics, the heritage boom effectively represents contemporary society’s inability to cope with or respond to the challenges posed by the rapid economic and social changes it is experiencing.

Hewison describes the growth in museums, heritage sites and other forms of heritage display as a “heritage industry”. This heritage industry, he argues, uses the past as an economic resource, “shaped and moulded to the needs of the present and in the process filtered, polished and drained of meaning” (1987: 99). New museums and heritage sites are being created as a solution to economic decline, particularly in areas previously dominated by heavy industry, manufacturing and trade such as the south Wales valleys, Liverpool and Tyneside. Such “trafficking in history” (Wright 1985), is argued

to result in the construction and representation of inauthentic narratives of the past by sites such as the Rhondda Heritage Park, the Albert Docks and Beamish. It is also seen as illustrative of contemporary society's failure to face the challenges of the present: there is, Hewison argues, a widespread perception that "there is nothing else that can be done with the building except turn it into a museum; there is nothing else to be done with the people except temporarily employ them as museum attendants" (1987: 104).

Critics of heritage draw a negative comparison between heritage and history. History, David Lowenthal argues, "explores and explains pasts grown ever more opaque over time" while heritage "clarifies pasts so as to infuse them with present purposes" (1998: xv). History is presented here as being objective, scholarly and disinterested, seeking to preserve, study and understand the past. In contrast, heritage is perceived as subjective, constructed, inauthentic and self-serving, exploiting the past for economic profit. Hewison is particularly critical of the changing nature and role of museums: "the original purpose of having a museums, which is to preserve and interpret in a scholarly manner a significant number of objects, has been almost entirely displaced by the desire to give the visitor some kind of...pleasurable 'experience'" (1988: 6). New museums and heritage sites, he argues, rather than focussing on the dissemination of historical knowledge, present an emotional and sensory experience of the past. The new techniques of display and interpretation used at sites such as Beamish, Wigan Pier and Blists Hill, including reconstructed or replica period buildings and interiors and the use of costumed first-person interpreters, are, Hewison argues, ultimately false.

Heritage for everyone

This rather negative view of heritage as reactionary and inauthentic is increasingly being challenged by theorists and practitioners within the field of cultural and heritage studies. Laurajane Smith, for example, argues that heritage is an active “cultural process that engages with acts of remembering that work to create ways to understand and engage with the present” (2006: 44). Similarly, Bella Dicks argues that, rather than representing a retreat from the present, the “heritage boom” is stimulated by the needs, desires and issues of the present (2003: 131). In particular, Dicks emphasises the role played by our contemporary obsession with issues of identity in the “heritage boom”: “gaining a sense of one’s past becomes integral to...the project of claiming an identity for the self – hence the boom in popular practices of genealogy, archaeology and collecting” (2003: 121). The emergence of vernacular heritage sites, telling the stories of ordinary people’s lives in the past using “living history” techniques, such as replica buildings, period rooms and costumed first-person interpretation, gives visitors a three-dimensional, immersive “real” experience and the opportunity “of meeting people and walking through environments that would have comprised, one imagines, the past world of one’s own, ordinary self” (Dicks 2003: 125). For Dicks then, the “heritage boom” does not represent a nostalgic desire to return to the past but rather a way in which to experience “in-betweenness”, to gaze upon the past as if it still physically existed in order to gain an understanding of how the world has changed and is changing.

Heritage critics’ portrayal of visitors to heritage sites as passive, uncritical consumers of inauthentic narratives of history has also been

challenged. Processes of consumption are now widely accepted to be active rather passive. Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst, for example, argue that the nature of audiences is changing (1998). They argue that contemporary society is increasingly performative: everything is a performance and as such, we are all simultaneously performers and consumers (1998: 75). In this respect, the use of “living history” interpretive techniques at museums and heritage sites can be seen as an example of the ways in which performance is leaking out from its traditional venues (theatre, cinema, etc) and into everyday life. Similarly, visitors to such sites are simultaneously cultural producers and cultural consumers, actively engaged in the performance of reminiscence by drawing connections between the narratives of display and their own personal memories and experiences (Bagnall 2003). Gaynor Bagnall argues that this “ability to reminisce is engendered by the embodiment of consumption” (2003: 93): in other words, that the physicality of the heritage experience offered by “living history” displays enables visitors to make connections between wider historical narratives and their own personal and family stories.

Research Methodology

This research project began life in September 2004 as a comparative study of the representations and uses of Welsh identities at four selected cultural heritage sites in Wales and four corresponding sites in the US, exploring their similarities and differences and addressing if and how their representations of Welshness had changed over the twentieth century. The sites were selected

to give four comparative pairs of sites, one in Wales and one in the US. These pairs were: the Welsh American Heritage Museum (Oak Hill, Ohio) and the National Museum Cardiff; the Welsh Nationality Room (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) and St. Fagans: National History Museum near Cardiff; the Slate Valley Museum (Granville, New York) and the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea; and the North American Festival of Wales and the National Eisteddfod of Wales. The Welsh American Heritage Museum and the National Museum Cardiff were paired because both seek to represent a narrative of Wales and Welsh national identity. Similarly, the Welsh Nationality Room and St Fagans: National History Museum each represents Welshness through (re)constructions of typical Welsh buildings, architectural styles and interior furnishings. The Slate Valley Museum and the National Waterfront Museum are both concerned with industrial history and issues of immigration, whether in a local area (the Slate Valley Museum) or of an entire nation (the National Waterfront Museum). Finally, the North American Festival of Wales and the National Eisteddfod of Wales are each annual festivals celebrating Welsh culture and heritage.

However, over the course of the first year, it became increasingly obvious that the size of such a project was beyond the limited scope of a PhD in terms of both time and resources. The main research interest of the project also became increasingly focussed on the four Welsh American sites and how self-identifying Welsh Americans used the sites to construct, perform and consume a range of personal and collective identities. Pilot studies were carried out in summer 2005 at one pair of comparative cultural heritage sites: the National Eisteddfod of Wales, held at Y Faenol near Bangor in north

Wales, and the North American Festival of Wales, held at Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Following a preliminary analysis of the material collected at these events, it was decided to remove the four case study sites in Wales and focus solely on the Welsh American sites. This enabled a fuller and more detailed level of investigation and analysis to be achieved, developing a greater degree of interpretive depth regarding the production, representation and consumption of Welsh identities at these sites.

The circuit of culture

From the beginning, this project focussed on the ways in which social identities are produced, represented and consumed at museums and other heritage sites. Such an understanding of heritage as a circuit of production and consumption, of encoding and decoding was used by Bella Dicks in an analysis of the production and consumption of meaning at the Rhondda Heritage Park in south Wales (Dicks 2000a). Dicks drew on the model of encoding/ decoding developed by Stuart Hall in relation to television communication (1980). Another theoretical model with links to Hall's is the circuit of culture (du Gay *et al* 1997).

The circuit of culture (see Figure 15, overleaf) is made up of five interlinked and overlapping cultural processes: production, representation, regulation, consumption and identity. Meaning(s) of a cultural text or artefact are articulated through the interactions between these five processes; thus, du Gay *et al* argue, any analysis of a cultural object or phenomenon must address each of these processes (1997: 3). Using the Sony Walkman as an

example, du Gay *et al* provide an analysis of its cultural meanings: how it is represented using visual and oral language; the processes through which it has become associated with the identities of various groups of people; the ways in which particular meanings are encoded onto it through its technical and cultural production; ongoing meaning making through active processes of consumption; and how the Walkman has affected the regulation of cultural life.

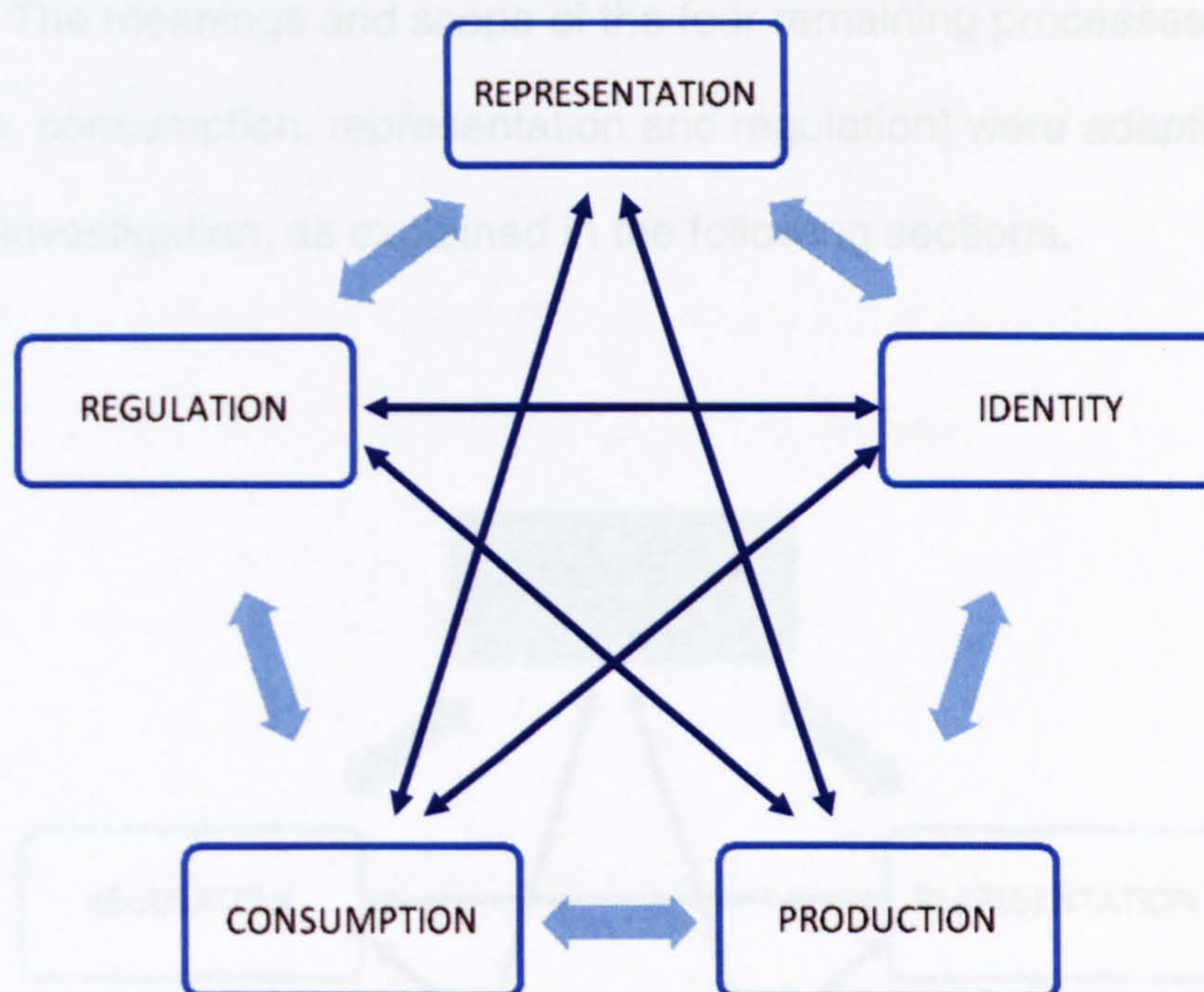


Figure 15 The Circuit of Culture (du Gay *et al* 1997)

The five processes of the circuit of culture are well-suited to this project's investigation of the construction, representation, performance and consumption of social identities at heritage sites. It was therefore decided to use the circuit of culture as a framework with which to design the project's aims, objectives and methodology. However, this research project has a

particular emphasis on one process of the circuit of culture in particular: that of identity. Identity is a central topic of this investigation rather than simply a stage in the analysis method. Figure 16, below, illustrates how the circuit of culture has been adapted for use in this project. This version of the circuit of culture shows that identity, specifically Welsh and Welsh American identities, is the cultural artefact being investigated while maintaining the interlinked nature of the circuit, in which each process affects and is affected by each of the others. The meanings and scope of the four remaining processes (production, consumption, representation and regulation) were adapted for use in this investigation, as explained in the following sections.

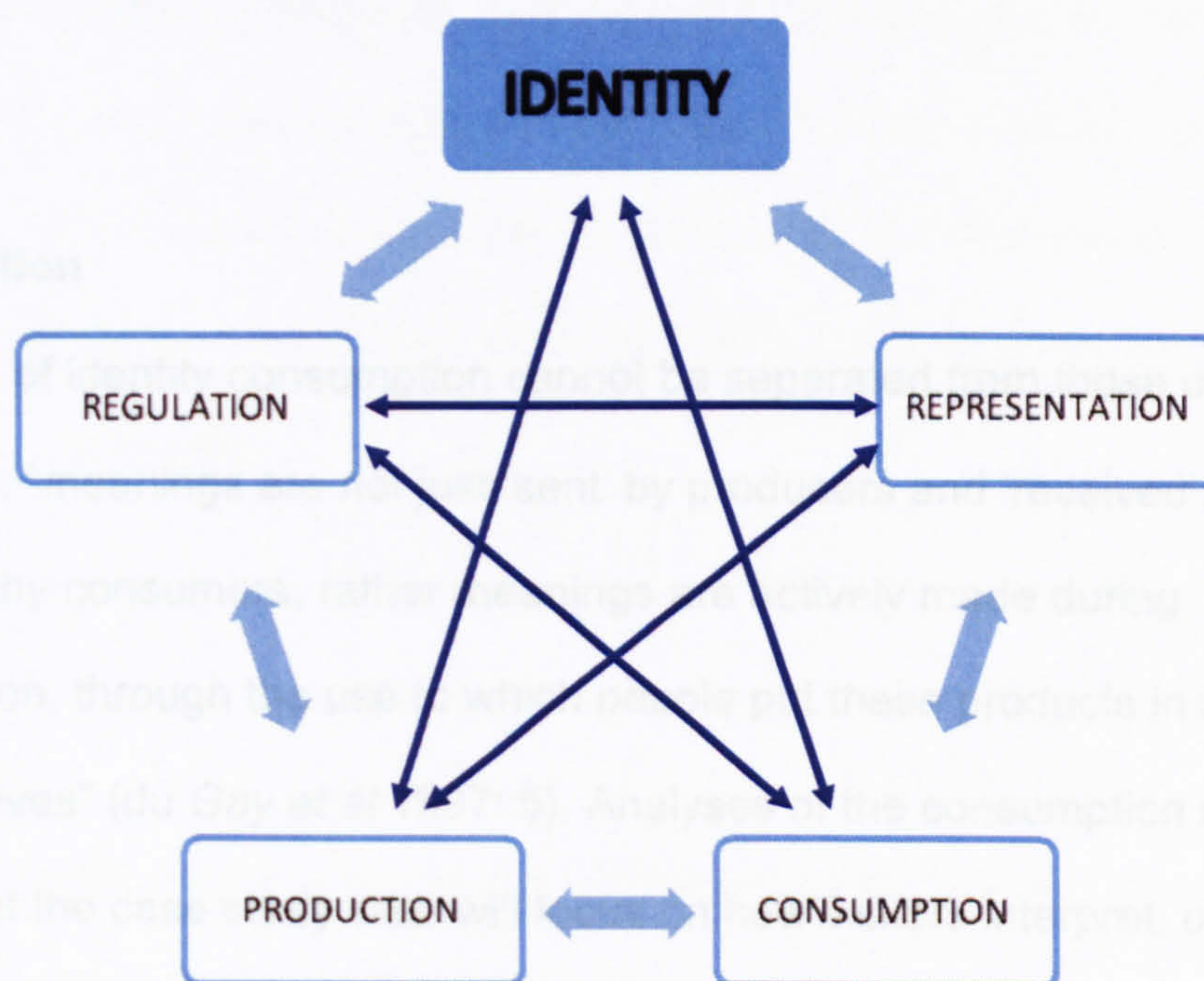


Figure 16 Adapted model of the circuit of culture for use in this project

Production

The analysis of processes of production will focus on the ways in which narratives of Welsh identity are produced and represented at the selected case study sites. Key stakeholders at each site will be identified and their motivations, agendas and aspiration regarding their involvement with the sites will be investigated. The role of the curators and managers of the sites as cultural producers will be examined, in particular in relation to the construction and communication of particular versions of Welsh identity. Finally, the question of whether Welsh identities in the US are created and sustained from the “top-down” (by local or national government policies in the US or in Wales), the “bottom-up” (by Welsh American community groups and individuals), or by a mixture of the two will be investigated.

Consumption

Processes of identity consumption cannot be separated from those of identity production: “meanings are not just ‘sent’ by producers and ‘received’, passively, by consumers; rather meanings are actively made during consumption, through the use to which people put these products in their everyday lives” (du Gay *et al* 1997: 5). Analyses of the consumption of Welsh identities at the case study sites will focus on how visitors interpret, use and relate to the sites in order to claim and perform a sense of Welshness. The fact that the case study sites are all community-based, managed and organised by members of the Welsh American community, further means that producers cannot be separated from consumers. The sites’ curators and

managers are not heritage professionals, but members of a wider Welsh American consumer group. They are consumers who have chosen to take an active role managing the sites' displays and exhibitions. Reflecting this, the investigation will address the ways in which practices of Welsh identity consumption affect and feed back into the ways in which Welsh identities are produced and represented at the sites.

Representation

Representations and perceptions of Welshness in the US will be explored through visual, oral and textual materials at the case study sites. These include the sites' collections and exhibitions, interpretive strategies, events and activities, publicity materials, and the opinions expressed by self-identifying Welsh American visitors to the sites. The way in which certain versions of Welsh identity are privileged at the sites is investigated, with particular reference to how these representations become recognised and accepted as "authentic".

Regulation

This acceptance of certain narratives of Welshness as "authentic" requires a simultaneous recognition of other narratives as being in some way "inauthentic". The processes through which Welsh identities are negotiated and regulated at the case study sites will be examined, investigating the

relative power of curators, visitors and other stakeholders to shape and define what is and is not perceived to be an authentic Welsh identity.

Methods of data collection

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with curators and site/ event managers were carried out at the Welsh Nationality Room (3 interviews) and the Welsh American Heritage Museum (1 interview). These interviews focused on processes of production at these sites, investigating cultural producers' perceptions of Wales and Welshness and the narratives of Welsh identity they seek to construct and represent at their sites. Their perceptions of their site's role(s) in the construction, representation and performance of Welsh identities in the US will also be examined. The semi-structured nature of these interviews means that a list of key topics was discussed with "producers" at both sites, enabling a comparative analysis to be made. It also allows the interviewer the flexibility to respond to topics raised by the interviewees (Bryman 2004: 318).

Interviews lasted between 50 and 90 minutes, and contained a mixture of general and site-specific open-ended questions. General questions covered included:

- Respondents' roles and responsibilities at the site
- Why they chose to become involved in the running and management of the site

- A brief account by respondents of the site's history (reasons for its establishment, development over time, etc)
- Their perceptions of Wales and definitions of Welsh identity

The interviews then moved on to more focussed questions, addressing the particularities of each site (see appendix B for a full list of interview questions at each site). Interviews were recorded on a digital recorder, enabling the interviewer to participate fully in the discussion and to ensure an accurate record of events.

The completed interviews were then transcribed and copies emailed to all interviewees, giving them the opportunity to correct any mistakes or to add further clarifications if necessary. A consent form, agreeing to the use of quotes from the interview in this thesis, was sent to all interviewees (see appendix E). This form enabled respondents to request that a pseudonym rather than their actual names be used in the thesis, if they so wished. All respondents were happy for their quotes to be attributed to them.

Audience surveys

A detailed audience survey was used to investigate the processes of production and consumption by visitors to the four case study sites. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative data was gathered. The survey collected basic data on respondents' gender, age, place of birth and current residence of respondents in order to facilitate the development of some general statistics regarding the characteristics of visitors to Welsh American cultural heritage sites and events. The remainder of the survey contained open-ended

questions designed to sample respondents' opinions and experiences in their own words. Key topics included:

- Motivations for visiting the site
- Opinions regarding how Wales, Welsh culture and Welsh identity were represented at the sites
- Perceptions of Wales and Welsh identity
- Self-definitions of personal identity (i.e. whether respondents felt American, Welsh or a mixture of the two)
- The importance of Welsh identity to respondents' sense of self
- How respondents performed and consumed Welsh identities

A number of site-specific questions were also asked at each of the case study sites (see appendix A for the full text of all surveys).

Respondents were selected randomly: every third passer by was approached and asked if they would participate in the survey. At the North American Festival of Wales 2005 and 2006 (sites A and B respectively), surveys were conducted from a stall in the "Welsh marketplace", a room containing numerous stalls selling Welsh merchandise which was a centre for social interaction between visitors. Respondents were also self-selecting: all those who approached the survey stall were asked if they could spare around ten minutes to answer some questions about Wales and Welsh identity. They were offered a choice between completing the survey themselves or being interviewed by the researcher, using the same set of questions. In total, 88 surveys were collected at the 2005 festival in Orlando, Florida and 118 at the 2006 festival in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Welsh Nationality Room at the University of Pittsburgh (site C), did not exist during the period of fieldwork (February to April 2006), so audience surveys were carried out at the annual Daffodil Luncheon of the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh, the organisation which has led the fundraising campaign and overseen the design process. Society members attending the Luncheon were informed as to the nature and purposes of the research project. Surveys were then carried out at a table near the entrance/ exit from the room in which the Luncheon was taking place. Respondents were again self-selecting, but in this instance surveys were conducted with all those who approached in order to maximise the number of surveys collected. In total, 30 surveys were completed in this way. A further 26 were collected via an email survey circulated to all members of the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh in the autumn of 2006. This increased the total sample size and also enabled the opinions of members less actively involved in Society events to be sampled.

At the Welsh American Heritage Museum in Oak Hill, Ohio (site D), the majority of audience surveys were collected at a reception event organised by the curator. Due to financial pressures and the desire to attend some Welsh American St. David's Day celebrations (1st March), the main period of fieldwork in the US took place between February and April 2006, a time at which visitor figures at the Welsh American Heritage Museum tend to be quite low. A reception event was organised to enable the collection of as many audience surveys as possible. Invitations were sent out to members of local Welsh American organisations and twenty-four attended, all of whom were surveyed. In total, 286 audience surveys were collected at the four sites (see Table 2, overleaf, for a breakdown of the data set). The vast majority

(206 surveys) were collected at the two North American Festivals of Wales (Orlando 2005 and Cincinnati 2006)³.

<i>Case Study Sites</i>	Methods of data collection	
	<i>Audience Surveys</i>	<i>Staff Interviews</i>
North American Festival of Wales 2005	88 (48 interviewed by author, 40 self-completion)	0
North American Festival of Wales 2006	118 (26 interviewed by author, 92 self-completion)	0
Welsh Nationality Room	56 (30 interviewed by author, 26 self-completion by email)	3 (president of the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh, principal architect, project architect)
Welsh American Heritage Museum	24 (24 interviewed by author)	1 (curator of the museum)
TOTAL	286	4

Table 2 Data Set

Application of data collection methods to the case study sites

It was originally planned to use all methods of data collection at each of the four case study sites. However, the very different natures of the selected case

³ Transcriptions of all the interviews and visitor surveys collected at the four case study sites are available from the author on request, as is a copy of NVivo project through which this data was analysed.

study sites soon made it clear that this would be impractical, and in some cases impossible. A pilot study was carried out at the North American Festival of Wales 2005 (Orlando, Florida). While this event was ideally suited to the collection of large numbers of audience surveys from a geographically diverse sample population, attended as it was by self-identifying Welsh Americans and Canadians from across north America, it proved impossible to carry out interviews with “producers” (festival organisers), as they were extremely busy throughout the course of the festival. Conversely, the Welsh American Heritage Museum, open by appointment only, offered an ideal opportunity to address processes of the production and representation of narratives of Welshness in detail but offered fewer opportunities to survey visitors to the site.

As a result of the above practical constraints, it was decided to focus on particular data collection methods at particular sites. At the two North American Festivals of Wales, the focus was very much upon audience surveys; no interviews were carried out with event organisers. Some audience surveys were carried out at the Welsh American Heritage Museum and the Welsh Nationality Room during the main period of fieldwork (February – April 2006), but the main focus was on the investigation of the production of narratives of Welsh identities at the sites. Printed materials and archival information relating to the four sites were also collected and analysed, including promotional leaflets, guidebooks, newsletters and newspapers, and official publications. This mixture of data collection methods produces a multifaceted analysis. It enables a more detailed investigation of the ways in which self-identifying Welsh Americans engage in processes of identity

production and consumption at heritage sites, while also providing site-specific analyses of the production of exhibition narratives by site curators and managers.

Having outlined the theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches which have shaped this project, in the following two chapters this thesis turns to a discussion of the historical and cultural context within which the four Welsh American community heritage sites which form the basis of this study have developed. Chapter two provides an overview of emigration from Wales since the late eighteenth century, identifying key destinations and motivations. Specifically, it investigates Welsh settlement and cultural heritage in the US, examining how the expression of Welshness in the US has changed over time.

CHAPTER TWO

The Welsh beyond Wales

The Welsh, like their fellow Celts the Scottish and the Irish, possess a significant diasporic population as a result of several waves of emigration over the centuries. Welsh societies and events can be found in over twenty countries worldwide, including Malaysia, Norway, France and South Africa (Wray *et al* 2003; Wales Direct). The United States was the most popular destination of Welsh emigrants; other common destinations included Canada, Australia and Patagonia (Jones 2005: 25). Today, around 2 million Americans, a third of a million Canadians, 80,000 Australians and 20,000 Patagonians claim Welsh ancestry or ethnic origin (see Figure 17, overleaf). Such self-identifying Welsh diasporic individuals possess a deterritorialised national identity (Fortier 2000: 162), identifying with and expressing a Welsh identity outside the geographical borders of Wales.

This chapter investigates deterritorialised expressions Welsh identity amongst the Welsh diaspora in the US over time. I argue that it is a misconception to perceive diasporic identities, such as Welsh American, as merely being imitations of the homeland identity. Welsh American identity, like other diasporic identities, is distinct and different from Welsh identity in Wales, its nature and purpose shaped by the American context in which it is imagined. As Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan argue in *Beyond the Melting Pot*: “[a]s the old culture fell away...a new one, shaped by the

distinctive experiences of life in America was formed and a new identity was created" (1970: xxxiii). However, no identity is created in a vacuum: the homeland (Wales) and homeland versions of Welsh identity play an important role in shaping and supporting Welsh American cultural life and cultural identities. This topic forms the basis of the following chapter (chapter three).

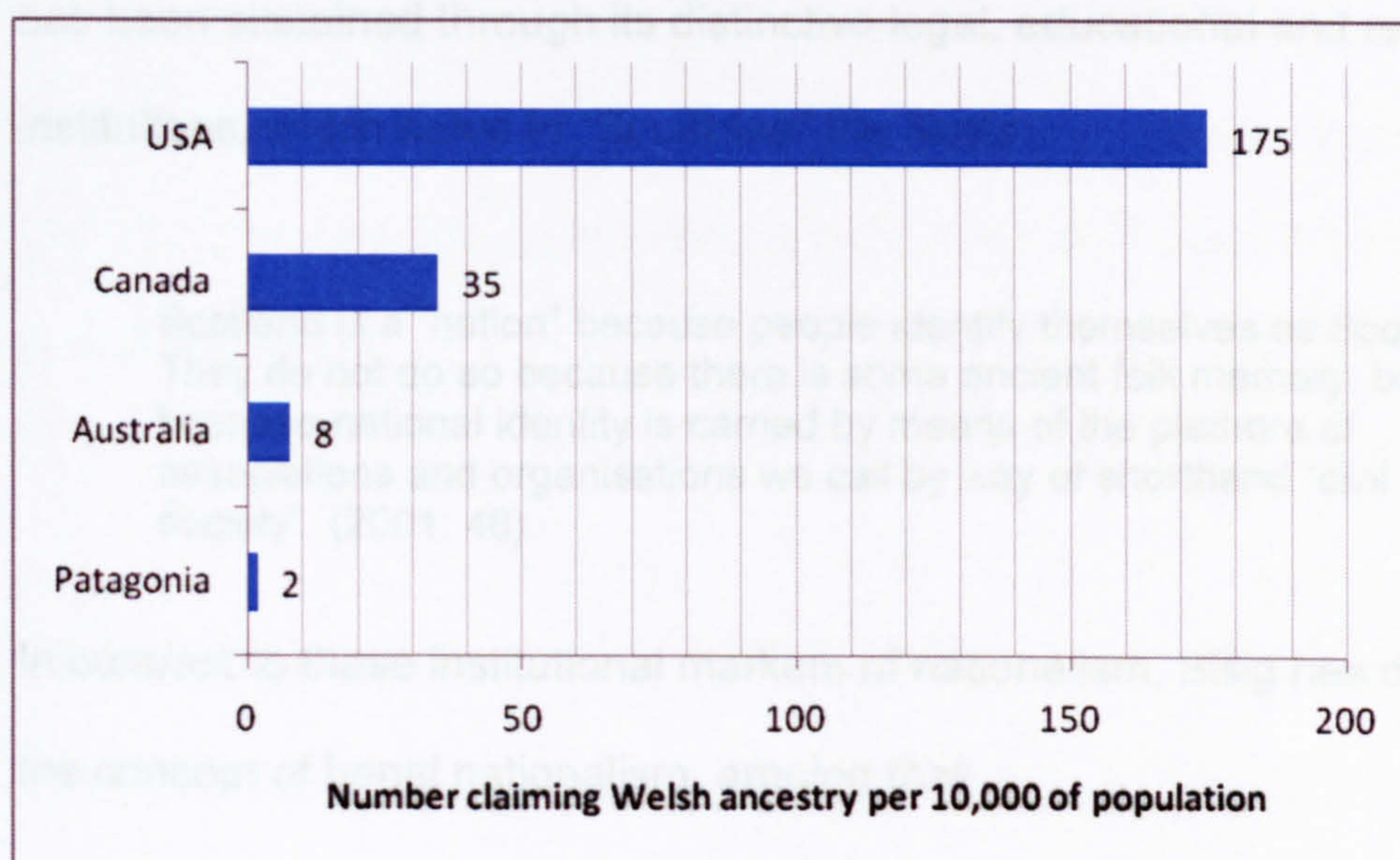


Figure 17 Number of total population claiming Welsh ancestry in the US, Canada, Australia and Patagonia, 2000-2001

Source: Brittingham and de la Cruz 2004; Statistics Canada 2005; Khoo and Lucas 2004; BBC h2g2 Online Encyclopaedia n.d.

This chapter examines the context in which contemporary Welsh American identities are constructed, negotiated, performed and consumed. It explores the revival of interest in Welsh culture and heritage that has taken place in the US since the 1970s, analysing why this revival has occurred and the forms it has taken. In particular, it addresses the question of how Welsh American identities are constructed, supported and sustained: does this process take place through an institutional infrastructure which creates a

distinct Welsh American social sphere (“top-down”) or through more organic, populist and personal means, such as growing up listening to Welsh music or visiting Welsh festivals (“bottom-up”)? This discussion draws on the ideas of David McCrone (2001) and Michael Billig (1995). In *Understanding Scotland: the sociology of a nation*, McCrone puts forward a model of institutional nationalism, arguing that the Scottish nation and national identity has been sustained through its distinctive legal, educational and religious institutions, which serve to “Scotticise” the Scots:

Scotland is a “nation” because people identify themselves as Scots. They do not do so because there is some ancient folk memory, but because national identity is carried by means of the plethora of associations and organisations we call by way of shorthand “civil society”. (2001: 46)

In contrast to these institutional markers of nationalism, Billig has developed the concept of banal nationalism, arguing that:

...national identity...is remembered because it is embedded in routines of life, which constantly remind, or “flag” nationhood...these reminders, or “flaggings”, are so numerous and they are such a familiar part of the social environment, that they operate mindlessly, rather than mindfully. (1995: 38)

It must be noted that the models of institutional and banal nationalism are not mutually exclusive, but rather intertwined. McCrone makes this clear when he argues that the existence of distinct national institutions “encourages people to be Scottish, not in any explicit and self-conscious way, but, to use Michael Billig’s useful phrase, in a ‘banal’, that is, implicit way” (2001: 46). Similarly, Welsh American identities are created and sustained through a mixture of institutional, or top-down, and “banal”, or bottom-up methods.

This chapter begins by tracing the routes and roots of the worldwide Welsh diaspora, addressing when and why the Welsh emigrated, where they settled and what drew them to those destinations. Narrowing its focus to the US, it discusses the processes by which, over time, Welsh identity was translated into Welsh American identity. It investigates the ways in which Welsh settlers and their descendants have variously sought to preserve their culture or assimilate into mainstream American society. Finally, the revival in Welsh cultural activities in the US in the late twentieth century is analysed, identifying and discussing the various institutional and “banal” forms this revival has taken.

The Historical Context of Welsh Emigration

The worldwide Welsh diaspora is relatively small in comparison to those of England, Scotland and, in particular, Ireland. Between 1850 and 1900, the period which saw the highest levels of emigration from the British Isles, for every three individuals who left Wales there were twelve English, twenty Scottish and seventy-seven Irish emigrants (Williams, G.A. 1985: 180). Welsh emigration peaked at a rate of 28-47 individuals per 10,000 of the population in the 1860s. In comparison, emigration from Ireland during the Famine decade (1845-55) climbed as high as 200 per 10,000. In the 1890s, Wales became a country of net immigration; in the period 1904-1914 it gained 45 immigrants per 10,000 of the population, a rate second only to that of the US (Williams, G.A. 1985: 177-178). The relatively small scale of emigration from Wales is due in part to the fact that the country suffered no major agrarian

crisis on the scale of the Potato Famine in Ireland or the Highland Clearances in Scotland. Moreover, the continuing development and expansion of heavy industry within Wales throughout the nineteenth century meant that the majority of migrants from rural areas were able to find work in the expanding industrial villages and towns, rather than emigrating overseas in search of a better life, as many of their Scottish and Irish counterparts did (Knowles 1997: 5).

However, emigration may arguably have had a greater impact on Wales and Welsh society than the empirical size of the emigrant group suggests (Jones 2003; Williams, G.A. 1985). Firstly, the actual numbers of Welsh emigrants may be significantly larger than the figures recorded as until 1908 “Welsh” was not recognised as a separate category by British port officials. Many Welsh emigrants are therefore likely to have been listed as English (Davies 2001: 15). It has been also been argued that the population of Wales and of the regions from which emigrants left at any given historical moment must be taken into account in any consideration of the impact emigration had upon Welsh society. For example, during the early nineteenth century the population of Wales was comparatively small in comparison to the rest of Britain, rising to around one million by 1851 (Online Historical Population Report). During this period the majority of Welsh emigrants came from sparsely populated rural areas and family and communal migration was common. In effect, emigration could remove an entire extended family from a small, tightly knit rural community (Knowles 1997: 24). While in objective terms the level of emigration from Wales was small, emigration has arguably had a major demographic, cultural and economic impact on some areas of

Wales, "...precisely because the Welsh...remained in objective terms a small people. It does not take many of them to create an American [or diasporic] dimension" (Williams, G.A. 1985: 179-180). Today in Wales there is a widespread popular belief that there are few Welsh families that do not possess an overseas connection (Jones 2003: 38).

When did the Welsh emigrate?

There were three main periods of emigration from Wales: the period c.1660 – c.1720, which saw the religiously motivated migration of Welsh Nonconformists to the American colonies; the early nineteenth century, characterised by rural migration to the expanding agricultural frontiers of the United States and Canada; and migration from the industrial regions of Wales to the burgeoning industries of the US during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Knowles 1997: 2). The first permanent Welsh overseas settlements were established in Pennsylvania and New England during the late seventeenth century (Jones 2003: 6), although some claims have been made for earlier Welsh migration to and settlement in the New World. The most famous of these is the legendary discovery and settlement of North America by the twelfth century Welsh prince Madog ab Owain Gwynedd and his followers (see Williams, G.A. 1979).

Following a period of stagnation throughout much of the eighteenth century, Welsh emigration increased once more in the 1790s. Emigration continued in an almost unbroken chain until the early twentieth century, with the vast majority of Welsh emigrants leaving during the second half of the nineteenth century (Davies 2001: 13). This period was dominated by industrial

emigration: the gathering pace of the industrial revolutions of the US and other New World countries meant that the skills of Welsh miners, ironworkers and quarrymen were much sought after (Davies 2007: 400). Emigration from Wales effectively came to an end during the first half of the twentieth century as a result of the impact of the First World War and the worldwide economic depression of the 1930s. Around 13,000 Welsh immigrants entered the US during the 1920s, while others settled in far-flung parts of the British Empire including Australia and South Africa. However, the main destination of Welsh migrants during the twentieth century was England. In 1951, over 600,000 Welsh-born individuals were resident in England, compared with around 35,000 first generation Welsh immigrants in the US (US Census 1940).

Why did the Welsh emigrate?

The Welsh emigrated for a variety of reasons including economic, religious nationalistic and individual choice. Economic motivations – the desire for a better life in material terms – were the most common factor in Welsh emigration (Jones 2003: 7). Until the 1850s emigration from Wales was predominantly rural in character. The availability and cheapness of agricultural land in the New World played a major role in the decision to emigrate during this period. Periods of poor harvests in Wales, which resulted in lower grain prices, were another motivating factor in rural emigration, as were the lower taxes offered overseas, in particular the absence of church tithes, which taxed ten percent of a farmer's annual profit for the church (Knowles 1997: 23). As *Y Cronicl* (the Chronicle), a journal established in 1843, argued: "Your hands can earn four times as much on the plains of Ohio and Mississippi as they

earn in the valleys of the Dyfi and the Severn" (quoted in Davies 2007: 400). Industrial emigration in the later nineteenth century was also dominated by economic motivations. The skills of Welsh industrial workers were in great demand in the US, the main destination of Welsh emigrants during this period, whose industrial revolution was around fifty years behind that of Wales. As a result, industrial emigrants could expect to enjoy higher wages and greater job security in the developing industrial regions of America than they would receive in Wales (Davies 2007: 400; Jones 1993: xix).

Another economic factor in the decision to emigrate was its cost. Emigration was an expensive business: "it is clear that generally it was those who had put something by and not the absolutely destitute that tended to emigrate..." (Jones 2003: 2). In the 1830s the estimated cost for a family of two adults and four children to emigrate from rural Cardiganshire to Ohio was between £30 and £40, the equivalent of a year's profit from a farm (Knowles 1997: 119). However, the money to finance emigration could be raised in a number of other ways: for example, a father might emigrate first in order to earn the money to allow his wife and children to follow at a later date. Emigrant societies were also established by some industrial workers and trade unions to aid the emigration of members without the resources to do so (Jones 2003, Johnston 1993).

Welsh emigration was also motivated by religious reasons. An act of government passed in 1661 and not repealed until 1828 banned anyone who refused to take Anglican Communion from holding public office (Davies 2007: 280). This affected the increasing numbers of Welsh Nonconformists, including Quakers, Methodists and Baptists, some of whom emigrated to

America or the Netherlands in search of greater religious tolerance and freedom (Knowles: 2; Williams, G.A. 1985: 138). As discussed earlier in this chapter, religious motivations dominated emigration from Wales during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Religiously-motivated emigration generally occurred in denominational groups, such as the Welsh Quakers who settled in Pennsylvania around 1681, purchasing 40,000 acres from William Penn in which to establish a self-governing Welsh Barony. Similar denominational settlements were established by Welsh Baptists at Swanzey, Massachusetts in 1667 (Davies 2007: 280) and by a mixture of Welsh Quakers and Baptists from Pennsylvania in the Welsh Tract of Delaware in 1701 (Williams, J. 1996: 17).

Religious motivations for emigration were often closely linked to political or nationalistic agendas, as in the case of the Welsh Quakers who sought to establish an autonomous Welsh settlement in Pennsylvania in the 1680s. The independence of the Welsh Barony did not last long; by 1690 it had fallen under the jurisdiction of Pennsylvania's colonial government (Williams, G.A. 1979: 75). As Brinley Thomas puts it: "[m]any of these people carried with them the belief that not only could they found a new realm of religious tolerance but that it should be a Welsh-speaking commonwealth, virtually a renewed Welsh nation" (1986: 37). The desire to preserve the Welsh language, thought to be in danger of extinction within Wales, and in particular Welsh-language religious services, also played a part in various attempts to establish self-governing Welsh communities overseas (Davies 2007: 401). Most attempts were short-lived: the Welsh Tract of Delaware was absorbed into the developing state government in the early eighteenth century

and the Welsh colony of Beulah, Pennsylvania, established in 1795, failed to thrive for economic reasons (Williams, G.A. 1980; Knowles 1997: 18). The most famous – and most successful – attempt to establish a *gwladfa* (homeland) is the Welsh settlement of Patagonia, *Y Wladfa* (the Homeland), established in 1865. For around thirty years, it enjoyed a high degree of autonomy in political, economic, social and cultural life: Welsh was the language of local government, education and religious worship (Williams, G. 1991). Thereafter, increasingly centralised rule by the Argentinean government and the immigration into Patagonia of large numbers of Italian and Spanish settlers led to a decline in the Welsh settlement's independence.

Finally, personal choice and individual characteristics, including age, occupation, gender and family circumstances played an important role in the decision to emigrate. In general, the young were more likely to emigrate than the old and male emigrants far outnumbered female. Lifecycle also played a part in the decision: emigration often followed marriage or the death of parents or spouse (Jones 2003: 9). The decision to emigrate and the choice of destination were further influenced by the information available in Wales regarding possible destinations (America, Canada, Australia, etc) at a particular time (Jones 2003; Johnston 1993). Letters from emigrants to their families and friends, newspapers, periodicals and emigrant guidebooks, such as *Y Teithiwr Americanaidd* (the American Traveller), published in 1837, the first detailed comprehensive guide for Welsh emigrants to the US, all influenced potential emigrants' choice of destination (Jones 2005; Knowles 1997: 114).

Where did the Welsh emigrate?

The destination of the vast majority of emigrants from Wales since the Middle Ages has been its nearest neighbour, England. When the Welsh have emigrated overseas, the US has always been the most common destination, followed by Canada and Australia (Jones 2003; Johnston 1993). Patagonia also represents an important destination of Welsh emigrants, not because of the size of the emigrant group, but because of the distinct and self-governing Welsh society and culture they established there. In 1890 the Welsh-born population of the Lower Chubut Valley in Patagonia may only have been around 1,500, but they comprised 97.6% of the total population (Williams, G. 1991: 44). These four major destinations of Welsh emigrants are shown in Figure 18 and each will be discussed in turn.

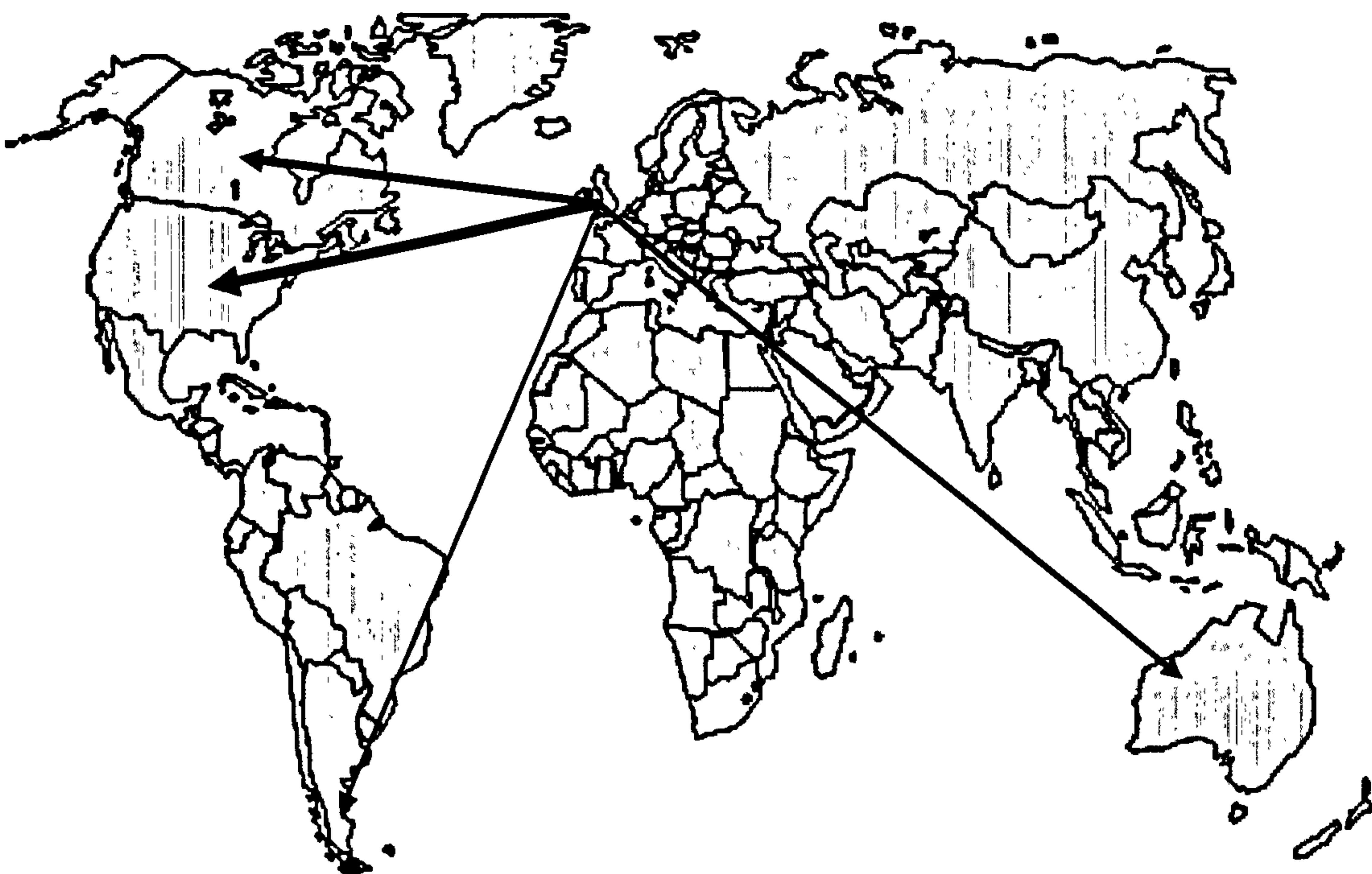


Figure 18 **Worldwide Welsh emigration**

Australia

Welsh emigration to Australia could be said to have begun with the “involuntary emigrants” transported from Britain to Australia’s penal colonies. It is claimed that four Welsh convicts came to Australia with the First Fleet in 1788; famous Welsh transportees included some of the leaders of the Merthyr and Newport Risings (1831 and 1839 respectively)⁴. Voluntary Welsh emigration to Australia began in the mid-nineteenth century with the development of the mining industry. In particular, the discovery of gold in the colony of Victoria in 1851 spurred Welsh immigration to the area (Jones 2000). Welsh settlers represented a distinctive and relatively large immigrant group in Victoria during the mid-nineteenth century: in 1861, almost two-thirds of the 9,500 Welsh settlers in Australia were resident there (Jones 2000: 296). A vibrant Welsh cultural scene flourished in certain areas of the colony, such as the town of Ballarat, which possessed a Welsh literary society, annual *eisteddfodau*, and several Welsh language periodicals (Jones 2000: 299). However, within Australia as a whole the Welsh represented a very small immigrant group. Between 1851 and 1901 first generation Welsh settlers represented no more than 2% of the total Australian population (Jones 2000: 287).

The small size of the Welsh immigrant group was in large part due to the distance between the British Isles and Australia. The journey to Australia

⁴ Both risings were motivated, at least in part, by the demand for electoral system reforms amongst the industrial working class. The Newport Rising was part of the Chartist movement (c.1836-1842), which called for political and social reforms including universal suffrage for all men aged over 21, voting by secret ballot, and the removal of the property qualification for MPs (Davies 2007: 364-367).

took months rather than days and was significantly more expensive than passage to America or Canada: in 1883 passage in steerage to the US cost around £4, while the price of passage to Australia was over £15 (Johnston 1993: 58). To counter this problem and encourage emigration, from the 1860s the Australian colonial governments began to offer a variety of incentives to immigrants, including assisted passage schemes and the opportunity to pay for land in instalments under the homestead selection scheme (Johnston 1993: 61). Despite these incentives, the Welsh immigrant group in Australia remained small, numbering just under 13,000 by the turn of the twentieth century (Jones 2000: 287). Today, around 84,000 Australians claim Welsh ancestry or heritage (Khoo and Lucas 2004: 18).

Canada

Canada was the second most popular destination for Welsh emigrants for most of the nineteenth century (Johnston: 52). It represented all the perceived benefits of emigration (the opportunity to own land, higher wages and lower taxes) and was also a part of the British Empire: “a country of boundless opportunity which flies the British flag...if our surplus manhood must seek a home elsewhere, it is desirable that it should not be entirely lost to the Empire” (Cardiff newspaper 1901, quoted in Bennett 1985: 45). Emigration from Wales to Canada dates back to the short-lived Welsh settlement of Cambriol, which was in existence between 1617 and around 1630 (Bennett 1985: 41). The first permanent Welsh settlements in Canada were established in the early nineteenth century, following the end of the Napoleonic War in 1815 (Thomas

1986). Canada experienced a drain of immigrants to its southern neighbour throughout the nineteenth century, with many settlers leaving for the US. Like Australia, the Canadian government adopted a proactive approach towards encouraging European emigration from the 1860s, offering assisted passages, land grant schemes and free rail travel from its eastern seaboard to the western prairies (Johnston 1993: 53). The Canadian census of 1871 records a first generation Welsh population of almost 8,000. Welsh emigration to Canada peaked in the first decade of the twentieth century, during which time over 15,000 Welsh immigrants entered the country (Multicultural Canada n.d.) Thereafter, numbers of Welsh immigrants reduced significantly in the wake of the First World War and the Great Depression of the 1930s. In the 2001 census, over 350,000 Canadians identified themselves as being of Welsh ethnic origin (Statistics Canada 2005).

Patagonia

Welsh emigration to Patagonia, in southern Argentina, began in 1865, when 163 people, led by the Independent Minister Michael D. Jones settled in the Lower Chubut Valley (Williams, G. 1991: 23). There was a continuing belief amongst some sections of Welsh society during the nineteenth century that the increasing industrialisation and Anglicisation of some parts of Wales threatened the survival of the Welsh language and culture. Some believed that an autonomous and self-contained Welsh colony should be established outside Wales, in which the language and culture could be preserved and safeguarded. Patagonia was chosen as the location of this new Welsh colony

because of its perceived “emptiness” and remoteness as “an area unoccupied by any government and occupied by only a few Indians” (*Y Cyfaill o’r Hen Wlad* (the Friend of the Old Country) 1856, quoted in Williams, G. 1991: 24). This perception of land occupied solely by indigenous peoples as being “empty” is now recognised as inherently problematic, but dominated the ideology behind the European settlement of the New World. Periodic Welsh emigration from Wales and the Welsh settlements of America to Patagonia continued throughout the nineteenth century.

Until the 1890s, it appeared that the Welsh settlers had succeeded in establishing an independent, self-governing Welsh colony. The settlement’s location, far from the seat of Argentinean government in Buenos Aires, and its lack of contact with the outside world meant that Welsh were free to establish their own public institutions and system of local government. Welsh Patagonia was a “closed corporate community”; local government, education, religious worship and daily life all took place through the medium of the Welsh language (Williams, G. 1991). However, as the governance of Argentina became increasingly centralised in the final decades of the nineteenth century, the settlement’s autonomy began to decline. The dominance of the Welsh group in local society diminished with the arrival of large numbers of Spanish and Italian immigrants, and further decreased with the migration of some members of the Welsh community to the developing industrial areas of Argentina, or their emigration to Canada, America, Australia or back to Wales. Coupled with a lack of new emigration from Wales in the twentieth century, the settlement’s distinctive Welsh institutions and culture gradually declined as the population became increasingly assimilated into Argentinean society

(Williams, G. 1991: 250). Today, around 20,000 members of the Argentinean population claim Welsh ancestry or heritage (BBC h2g2 Online Encyclopaedia n.d.)

United States

The vast majority of the Welsh who emigrated overseas have settled in the US (Jones 2005: 25). The relative proximity of North America to the British Isles has been a major factor in this trend: the journey across the Atlantic only took around ten days by steam ship. As a result of its "locality", the cost of emigration to the US was also comparatively cheap. Prices were reduced further by the existence of a number of competing shipping lines offering passage to America (Johnston 1993: 56). Chain migration also played a part in the popularity of the US as a destination: many emigrants from Wales were following family members or friends who had previously settled in the US (Knowles 1997: 116). The amount of information about destination countries available to potential emigrants also affected where they chose to settle. Information about the Atlantic crossing and conditions in the US was more widely available in Wales than that about Canada or Australia, in the form of emigrant letters, newspaper articles and travel guides such as *Y Teithiwr Americanaidd* (the American Traveller). This had the effect of making the US more familiar to the Welsh and less of an unknown quality than Canada and Australia remained until the late 1800s (Johnston 1993: 70).

Welsh settlement of America began in the late seventeenth century, with the immigration of denominational groups including Welsh Quakers and

Baptists. It has been estimated that by 1700 over 2,000 Welsh people had settled in the American colonies, mainly in Pennsylvania and New England (Thomas 1986: 37). Emigration from Wales to America remained low for most of the eighteenth century, before increasing dramatically in the 1790s in what has been referred to as “Madog Fever”. Welsh emigration during this decade was distinctly political and millenarian in motivation, linked to the political ideals of the American and French Revolutions (1775-1783 and 1789-1815 respectively), and to the revival of the legend of Prince Madog’s discovery of America in the twelfth century, with the potent addition of a tribe of ‘Welsh Indians’, the descendents of Madog and his followers, to be found somewhere on the Missouri, still speaking Welsh (Williams, G.A. 1985: 170). To some sectors of Welsh society, America appeared to be the promised land of Welsh independence, the new *gwladfa* or homeland.

Such political and nationalistic motivations for emigration were quickly overshadowed in the early 1800s by the rising tide of economically motivated Welsh emigration to the US as the frontier began to expand westwards. Welsh emigration to the US during the first half of the nineteenth century was rural in character; emigrants came from rural areas of Wales and settled in rural regions of the US. By 1850, it is estimated that around 30,000 first generation Welsh immigrants were resident in the United States (Knowles 1997: 4). However, the vast majority of Welsh immigration to the US occurred in the period 1850-1914: by 1890 the first generation Welsh population had more than tripled, to over 100,000 (Smith 1984: 29; Knowles: 4). This period was dominated by industrial emigration, with migrants from the industrial areas of Wales settling in the developing industrial regions of the US. The industrial

skills of the Welsh were much in demand in the US, whose industrial revolution was around fifty years behind that of Wales (Davies 2007: 400). In the early twentieth century, Welsh emigration as a whole declined steeply, as a result of the First World War and the worldwide economic depression of the 1930s (Davies, J. 2001). Today, almost two million Americans claim Welsh ancestry (Brittingham and de la Cruz 2004).

Welsh settlement in the US was geographically concentrated (see Figure 19, overleaf). In 1850, almost 90% of the 30,000 first generation Welsh immigrants were resident in the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York or Wisconsin (Knowles 1997: 4). Welsh immigrants tended to settle in areas which possessed existing Welsh communities. In part, this was a result of chain migration, in which several groups of emigrants from the same village or town settled in the same area of the destination country over a period of time (Knowles: 124). This trend is particularly notable amongst rural emigration in the first half of the nineteenth century, and resulted in clusters of people from the same area of Wales: many emigrants from Llanbrynmair, now in Powys, settled in Paddy's Run, Ohio, while the Welsh settlements of Jackson and Gallia counties, also in Ohio, were dominated by settlers from Cardiganshire. It was in such communities that the Welsh "...most fully recreated and preserved their traditional way of life in a limited number of fairly large, inward looking communities" (Knowles: 30). Welsh industrial immigrants were generally more widely scattered, though geographically concentrated Welsh industrial settlements did exist, including that of Scranton, Pennsylvania: the largest Welsh community in the US and at one time the largest single concentration of Welsh people outside Wales and England (Jones 1993: xvi).

In 1890, the concentration of Welsh settlers in the states of Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York remained: 38% of first generation Welsh immigrants were resident in one of these three states (Jones 1993: xx). In 1990, around a quarter of self-identifying Welsh Americans were resident in these three states, with significant Welsh American populations also recorded in Florida and California (Madog Center n.d.).

Welsh Identity in the United States

Welsh immigrants brought their culture, language, religions and identities with them to the US. Over time, they and their descendants became increasingly assimilated into American culture and society, but elements of their Welsh cultural identities survived or were (re)imagined and (re)created in an American context. The revival of interest in Welsh cultural heritage since the 1970s, part of a broader ethnic revival in the US, has seen an increase in membership in and participation at Welsh societies and events, and the creation of new groups, organisations, events and sites with a Welsh theme.

First-generation Welsh culture and society

A vibrant Welsh cultural scene flourished in the US during the nineteenth century, despite the relatively small size of the Welsh immigrant group during this period. In 1890 there were just over 100,000 first generation Welsh settlers in the United States, compared to almost a quarter of a million Scots, nearly one million English, two million Irish and three million German settlers

(US Census 1890). The Welsh cultural scene was localised in character, concentrated in those areas in which the Welsh settled in the greatest numbers: Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York (Knowles 1997, Jones 1993). It was sustained by institutions, such as Welsh churches, a Welsh press and various social organisations for Welsh settlers, but was also rooted in more banal, everyday social interactions. The majority of Welsh immigrants to the US during the 1800s spoke Welsh as their first language. Indeed, in geographically concentrated Welsh settlements, such as those in Jackson and Gallia counties (Ohio) and Scranton (Pennsylvania), the majority of day-to-day social interactions took place through the medium of Welsh. Settlers often worked with their fellow Welsh, worshipped in Welsh churches, shopped at Welsh businesses and socialised primarily with their Welsh neighbours (Jones 1993: 88). This banal “flagging” of Welshness in everyday life was supported by the existence of separate Welsh institutions, framing what can be described as a distinct Welsh civil society within the wider American civil society. During the nineteenth century, Welsh settlers and their descendants continued to define themselves as Welsh because their public and private lives continued to be distinctly Welsh in character.

Religion, specifically Nonconformist religion, represented the dominant institution of Welsh cultural life in America. The chapel – or, as it became known in America, the church – formed the centre of Welsh community life, organising religious services, Sunday schools, choirs and social events (Knowles: 140; Hartmann 1967: 101; Jones 1993: 94). A place for religious worship was often one of the first things established by Welsh immigrants in areas where they settled in large numbers. In the Jackson and Gallia counties

of Ohio over twenty Welsh churches were established between 1835, the beginning of a period of intensive chain migration from Wales to the area, and 1869 (Knowles 1997: 136). The establishment of Welsh churches in the US represented “a monumental fulfilment of the urge to proclaim and assert the presence [and distinctiveness] of the Welsh” (Jones 2000: 302). Knowles argues that, particularly for rural Welsh communities, their “sense of place and local identity became strongly associated with the chapel to which they belonged...the chapels of Jackson and Gallia were...repositories of Welsh culture...” (1997: 147). Religion also served as a medium through which links with the homeland and between Welsh communities in the US could be maintained, in the form of ministers from Wales who carried out preaching tours of Welsh settlements in the US.

Music and song were another important feature of Welsh culture and society in America, one closely linked to the church. Welsh churches organised regular *eisteddfodau* (musical and literary competitions) and *cymanfaoedd canu* (hymn singing meetings). These events represented another way in which Welsh communities in the US maintained their distinct identities: local and regional *eisteddfodau*, and later *cymanfaoedd canu*, served to bring scattered Welsh settlers together, helping to forge a shared sense of community identity. In 1875, a national American *eisteddfod* was held in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Events on a similar scale include the Chicago World’s Fair Eisteddfod of 1893 and the Pittsburgh International Eisteddfod in 1913, during which an American Gorsedd of Bards was established (Jones 1993: 147). A National Gymanfa Ganu (the singular form of *cymanfaoedd canu*) was established in 1929 (Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association

2003). These events represent an increasing institutionalisation of Welsh musical activities and as such played an important role in forging a sense of a nationwide Welsh American community and identity. The *eisteddfodau* also provided a continuing link with the homeland: many Welsh Americans made pilgrimages back to Wales to attend the Welsh National Eisteddfod, a tradition that continues today with a welcoming ceremony for members of the Welsh diaspora, or “exiles” (Wales International n.d.)

The Welsh community in the US also possessed its own distinctive print media in the form of books, newspapers and periodicals. Again, the predominance of Welsh speakers amongst first generation Welsh settlers influenced the development of this distinctive Welsh media. The first Welsh language books were published in America in Philadelphia in 1721 (Davies 2007: 326). Numerous Welsh newspapers and journals, both in the Welsh and English languages, were published in the US during the nineteenth century, beginning with the short-lived *Cymro America* (Welsh American) of 1832. Others included *Y Cyfaill o'r Hen Wlad* (the Friend of the Old Country), *Y Seren Orllewinol* (the Western Star), *Baner America*, *Y Drych* (the Mirror), *the Cambrian* and *the Druid* (Jones and Jones 2001). Several denominational periodicals existed, such as *Y Cyfaill o'r Hen Wlad* (Calvinist-Methodist) and *Y Seren Orllewinol* (Baptist), again illustrating the important role religion played in the identities of Welsh immigrants. Most of these periodicals had disappeared by the early twentieth century; several were bought by and absorbed into *Y Drych*, the largest and most successful (Jones and Jones: 37). *Y Drych* is the longest-running Welsh newspaper in America: established in 1851, it is still in print, though in an attenuated form. *Y Drych* and other

Welsh newspapers represented a “virtual Welsh community”, playing an important role in (re)uniting Welsh settlers across the United States and in maintaining their links with the homeland, printing a mixture of news from the various Welsh American communities and from Wales (Jones and Jones 2001: 45). *Y Drych* has been described as a “cultural Ellis Island”, providing a support network for new immigrants from Wales and giving them information on travel, America, agricultural and industrial situations and employment opportunities (Jones and Jones: 71-75). The Welsh press played an important role in defining and maintaining Welsh cultural identity in America.

Welsh settlers also established various local and national Welsh societies and organisations. The first was the Welsh Society of Philadelphia, established in 1729, making it the oldest Welsh society in the world (Greenslade 1986: 128). Another early Welsh society was the Order of True Ivorites, a mutual aid society transplanted from Wales to America by Welsh emigrants in the mid-nineteenth century. It has been argued that Welsh societies came increasingly to the fore with the decline of the Welsh churches in the early twentieth century, replacing the church as the focus of Welsh American cultural life (Hartmann 1967: 162). The majority of Welsh societies were established in the twentieth century, indeed many of them were part of the revival of interest in Welsh heritage amongst Americans of Welsh descent from the 1970s.

Assimilation and decline

The assimilation of Welsh immigrants into American society took place relatively rapidly (Jones 1993). The Welsh immigrant group “fit comfortably

alongside the mainstream of nineteenth century American Protestant society”, being white, from the British Isles, overwhelmingly Protestant and, for the most part, able to speak English (Knowles 1997: xxi). In many ways, the Welsh were an elite immigrant group, illustrated by the privileged status Welsh industrial workers enjoyed in US industries during the second half of the nineteenth century. Welsh immigrants were also generally perceived positively, possessing a public image as religious, hardworking and loyal (Jones 1993: 101). Despite the preponderance of the Welsh language amongst first generation Welsh settlers, the Welsh can be described as an “invisible” immigrant group, broadly analogous to the dominant American cultural group, in comparison to other immigrant groups such as the Catholic Irish and those from southern and eastern Europe, who were more obviously different and “other” in terms of language, religion and cultural practices.

A rapid cultural and linguistic Americanisation of the Welsh immigrant group began in the 1880s and 1890s, with the loss or decline of many of the bonds that had sustained a distinct Welsh cultural identity in the US: religion, language and shared life experiences. Welsh language institutions, including the church and the press began to decline as the American-born second generation increasingly became monolingual English speakers. New Welsh immigrants were also increasingly likely to be English speakers as a result of continuing migration into the industrial areas of Wales from England, Scotland, Ireland and beyond, which led to an erosion of the Welsh language and the rise of bilingualism amongst the Welsh-speaking population (Williams, G.A. 1985: 245). Welsh settlement in the US also became less geographically concentrated and homogeneous, as the upwardly mobile second generation

began to move out of the industries their parents had worked in and into white collar occupations (Jones 1993: 105; Roberts 1998: 249). Both the institutional and banal ways in which a Welsh identity had been sustained amongst Welsh settlers for much of the nineteenth century began to fracture. Coupled with effective end of new immigration from Wales in the early twentieth century, an increasing distance and difference between the Welsh communities of the US and Wales resulted.

Welsh American identity

This period of Americanisation marked the emergence of Welsh Americans: the American-born children and grandchildren of the original settlers, to whom Wales and Welsh culture and society were an ancestral memory rather than a lived experience (Jones 1993: 106). However, assimilation did not result in the extinction of Welsh cultural traditions in America, but rather their transformation (Glazer and Moynihan: xxxiii). As Americanisation progressed, Welshness became less central an experience to the lives of Welsh Americans. The Welsh cultural scene became increasingly dominated by infrequent and symbolic events such as St. David's Day celebrations or an annual *eisteddfod* or *gymanfa ganu*: "occasions when Welshness was aired and thereafter put by until the next time" (Jones 1993: 124). At such events, the imagined Welsh American community of a locality, region or of the nation was reunited. Perceptions of Welsh identity by Welsh Americans also became centred on symbolic perceived national characteristics including religious nonconformity, musical ability, hard work and temperance. These characteristics were elements of the dominant Welsh identity of the late

nineteenth century, brought to the US by the immigrant generation; they did not necessarily reflect the dominant Welsh identities of the twentieth century: "...Welsh-Americans lived in a time warp, whereby what they conceived of as Wales was being bypassed even as it was to be, inevitably, swamped within America" (Smith 1984: 29-30). As a result, Welsh American identity became increasingly distinct and different from Welsh identity in Wales.

A distinctive feature of Welsh American identity was what might be called the "cult of the eminent Welsh-American": the celebration of the contribution made by various Welsh immigrants and Americans of Welsh descent to the US (Jones 1993: 169). A number of presidents have been claimed as Welsh Americans, including Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Calvin Coolidge and Richard Nixon. These claims possess varying degrees of authenticity: while Jefferson's ancestors are documented as having come from north Wales, Lincoln's Welshness is imaginatively linked via his mother Nancy Hanks to an eleventh century Welsh prince, Bleddyn ap Cynfyn, and Nixon is more usually associated with Irish or Scots-Irish ancestry. A third of the signatories of the Declaration of Independence have also been claimed as Welsh Americans and, via Jefferson's authorship of the Declaration, coupled with his Welsh ancestry, it has been claimed that the principles on which the US was founded (namely independence, liberty, truth and democracy) have their roots in Welsh tradition (Jones 1993: 170). Other individuals claimed as Welsh Americans include the architect Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959), Meriwether Lewis (1774-1809), who with William Clark made the first overland expedition to North America's Pacific coast, the explorer H.M. Stanley (1841-

1905), the frontiersman Daniel Boone (1734-1820), and the entertainer Bob Hope (1903-2003) (New World Celts). The discovery of America itself has been attributed to the Welsh prince, Madog ab Owain Gwynedd, who according to legend landed there in 1170: three centuries before Christopher Columbus (Williams, G.A. 1979). The name "America" is also claimed to have a Welsh root, being named, not after Amerigo Vespucci, but rather after a Bristol merchant, Richard ap Meurig or "Amerik", who helped to finance John Cabot's second voyage to the New World in the 1490s (Davies 2007: 248).

The emphasis placed by Welsh Americans upon the contribution of their immigrant group to the history of the United States is a common theme amongst most ethnic groups in the United States. For example, many American presidents and signatories of the Declaration of Independence claimed as Welsh are also claimed as Scottish or Irish in origin, including Lincoln and Nixon (New World Celts). The discovery of North America has also been variously attributed to the Irish Saint Brendan in the fifth century, the Norse Leif Erikson c.1000, the Scottish Prince Henry Sinclair in 1396 and, of course, the Genoese Christopher Columbus in 1492 (New World Celts). Many of the characteristics celebrated by Welsh Americans as being uniquely Welsh (the importance of family, hard work, self improvement and loyalty) are also claimed by various ethnic groups in American to be uniquely representative of their national heritage (Waters 1992: 81).

The increasing assimilation of the Welsh American population that began in the 1890s, coupled with the steep decline in emigration from Wales following 1914, resulted in a significant decline in Welsh American cultural institutions and activity by the mid-twentieth century. By 1940, *Y Drych* was

the only Welsh newspaper still in print; by 1950 it had become a predominantly English language publication (Jones and Jones 2001: 114). The American Gorsedd of Bards, established in 1913, dissolved in 1941 as it did not have enough members to continue (Hartmann 1967: 149). Many Welsh churches closed as their congregations shrank, and numerous Welsh societies and events disappeared or reduced in size or frequency. By the mid-twentieth century, expressions of Welsh American identity had become reduced to a few key symbolic events such as St. David's Day, the monthly edition of *Y Drych* and the annual National Gymanfa Ganu (established 1929). Welshness had become an identity performed at infrequent, symbolic events, rather than through the banal routines of everyday life.

Revival

The 1970s saw a renewal and expansion of interest in Wales and Welsh cultural heritage in the US that has continued to the present day (Jones and Jones: 118). This period has seen the revival of many Welsh societies and events that had previously fallen into decline or disappeared, such as the St. David's Society of Cincinnati (established 1889) which was dissolved in 1973 due to lack of interest but was reborn as the Welsh Society of Greater Cincinnati just six years later, in 1979 (Greenslade 1986: 110). Other signs of the revival of Welsh ethnic identification in America include an increase in *Y Drych's* circulation figures, which rose by 32% between 1960 and 1978 (Jones and Jones: 128). A new Welsh newspaper, *Ninnau* (lit. "We Also") was founded in 1975, reflecting the expanding interest in and market for Welsh materials. Many new Welsh American societies have also been established

across America since the 1970s: today almost every state possesses at least one Welsh American society (National Welsh American Foundation).

This revival of Welsh American activity is part of a broader trend in American society, often referred to as the “ethnic revival”, which has seen a large increase in ethnic identification and activities amongst third generation and beyond white European immigrant groups since the late 1960s. Various factors have arguably contributed to this revival, including the Civil Rights movement, the “roots” phenomenon and the rise of social history, with its focus on the lives and experiences of ordinary people in the past (see chapter one, pp. 58-59, for a discussion of these factors). As discussed in the previous chapter, the later half of the twentieth century also saw a move away from the idea of the US as a melting pot, in which the various immigrant groups would lose their homeland cultures and become reborn as Americans, and towards the idea of cultural pluralism (Joppke 1999: 147). This notion of ethnic diversity as a defining characteristic of American national identity was used by Franklin D. Roosevelt during the 1940 presidential campaign: ‘[w]e are Anglo-Saxon and Latin, we are Irish and Teuton and Jewish and Scandinavian...we belong to many races and colors and creeds – we are Americans’ (quoted in Fuchs 1990: 361). By the 1960s and 1970s, cultural pluralism had become an increasingly accepted part of American political ideology. Ellis Island’s incorporation into the Statue of Liberty National Monument in 1965 and its opening to the public in 1976 are evidence of this, as is the Ethnic Heritage Act of 1974, in which Congress approved the provision of federal funding for ethnic studies projects (Halter 2000: 5).

There is an ongoing debate as to whether this so-called ethnic revival does in fact represent a revival in the strength and frequency of ethnic identification in the contemporary US (see chapter one, pp. 58-61). It has been argued that the “revival” is in fact merely a new stage in the ongoing processes of assimilation and acculturation: ethnicity is becoming weaker in every generation and will one day disappear (Gans 1979, 1994; Alba 1990). Gans (1979) argues that ethnicity represents an increasingly symbolic, voluntary and individual identity, no longer tied to larger social and communal identities. A case has also been made for the reality of the ethnic revival, arguing that hyphenated ethnic identities, such as Welsh American are a product of the American experience, distinct and different from their homeland counterparts (Yancey *et al* 1976; Glazer and Moynihan 1970). These ethnic identities will not necessarily die out, as they are created and recreated anew by every generation, shaped by the changing context of America (Glazer and Moynihan: 17).

Whether the renewal of interest in ancestral ethnicities represents an ethnic revival or is merely part of the ongoing processes of assimilation, it is clear that Welsh ethnic awareness and activity in the US has expanded since the 1970s. This expansion is evident in the increasing number of Welsh societies and institutions, which in turn enable more banal, everyday “flaggings” of Welsh identity. Today, a diverse range of Welsh American institutions exist, from local and regional societies, such as the Welsh Society of Greater Cincinnati, to national organisations. This reflects a broad base of interests in Wales, the Welsh language and culture. National institutions include: the National Welsh American Foundation (est. 1980), which

promotes, coordinates and supports Welsh American cultural activities; the Welsh North American Chamber of Commerce (est. 2000), a network of business people with interests in North America and Wales; the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association (est. 1929), whose annual national *gymanfa ganu* expanded in 2003 into a four-day North American Festival of Wales; *Ninnau* and *Y Drych*; and Cymdeithas Madog (est. 1977), which holds an annual intensive week-long Welsh language course. A number of Welsh American academic institutions have also been established, including: the Madog Center for Welsh Studies at the University of Rio Grande, Ohio; the Green Mountain College Welsh Heritage Program in Poultney, Vermont; and the North American Association for the Study of Welsh Culture and History (NAASWCH), which organises a biannual conference and a quarterly journal. Self-identifying Welsh Americans are able to read a Welsh American newspaper, gain an education in Welsh history and language, socialise with other Welsh Americans, and support Welsh and Welsh American businesses. While this does not necessarily represent a separate Welsh American civil society, it does, arguably, constitute a distinct Welsh American social and cultural sphere.

Welshness is also “flagged” in more banal, personal and everyday ways. Self-identifying Welsh Americans may choose to read books about Wales, purchase and display Welsh crafts and ornaments in their homes, listen to Welsh music, or eat Welsh foodstuffs. These activities, which can take place within the privacy of one’s own home, are in part enabled by the existence of Welsh institutions in both Wales and America: publishers printing books about Wales, companies selling Welsh ornaments and foodstuffs, or

recording Welsh music. Welsh Americans can also interact socially with fellow Welsh Americans on a regular and banal – if generally not day-to-day basis – via membership of a local Welsh society.

This Welsh American social and cultural sphere is geographically diffused across the United States, with concentrated pockets in various regions and states. In the past, it was united through newspapers such as *Y Drych*, which circulated news and information about events occurring both in Wales and amongst Welsh Americans. The development of the internet has played a major role in bringing the scattered Welsh American community together. The internet has also played an important role in revitalising links with Wales. Self-identifying Welsh Americans can now access information about Wales and keep up to date with Welsh news, sport and politics through a myriad of websites, web forums and chat rooms. The internet helps to support a virtual transnational Welsh community.

Links between the Welsh American community and the ancestral homeland, Wales, have expanded on both personal, individual levels, in the form of letters or emails to family and friends, and on public, institutional and business levels. Welsh Devolution in 1997 has been played an important role in supporting these links, as the National Assembly for Wales has sought to increase Wales's international profile. The Wales International Centre was established in New York City in 2002 as a branch of the Welsh Assembly Government's department of Enterprise, Innovation and Networks. Its mission is to raise the profile of Wales "in order to increase inward investment, trade, tourism and academic and cultural exchange between Wales and the USA" (Welsh Assembly Government 2007). Since 2003, the Welsh Assembly

Government has, through the Wales International Centre, organised an annual “Wales Week” in New York, with various events including exhibitions by Welsh artists, musical performances, a food festival, lectures on Welsh society and politics, Welsh film and television. In 2008 a “Wales Week” was also held in Boston, Massachusetts and in Los Angeles, California. The Welsh Assembly Government is also involved in a variety of events being held across the US during 2008 and 2009, whether as organiser, sponsor or co-sponsor, including a concert by Bryn Terfel in New York (April 2008); the North American Festival of Wales 2008 in Chicago, Illinois (August - September 2008); the Ryder Cup golf tournament in Louisville, Kentucky (September 2008); and the Smithsonian Folklife Festival 2009 in Washington DC, which will focus on Wales as one of its feature nations (Welsh Assembly Government 2007). Visit Wales, formerly the Welsh Tourist Board, also explicitly targets the Welsh diaspora as a tourist group through its Homecoming Wales website and brochures, which provides information on emigration from Wales and how to trace family roots as well as more general information about tourism in Wales. This more formal and institutionalised relationship between Wales and the U.S. is arguably an important source of support and validation for the Welsh American community and identity.

Conclusion

Welsh American community and identity are constructed, negotiated, consumed and sustained through a mixture of institutional and banal “flaggings”, or reminders. Institutional “flaggings” include organisations and associations such as the National Welsh American Foundation, the North

American Festival of Wales (NAFOW) and its organising body the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association, and the Welsh American newspaper *Ninnau/ Y Drych*. Such institutions help to create a public, official space in which Welsh American culture, society and identity can be constructed and performed. In reference to Scotland's problematic status as an "understated nation", David McCrone argues that the institutional apparatus of Scotland "whether it is the education system, the legal system, a distinctive press, financial system and so on, provides a social template which has...sustained 'Scotland' as an idea" (2001: 47). The same, on a smaller scale, can be said of Welsh American institutions such as those listed above. They help to shape, sustain and legitimate the existence of a separate and distinct Welsh American community. Other forms of "top-down" support for the Welsh American community include the US Ethnic Heritage Act of 1974. This provision of funding for ethnic heritage projects by Congress, arguably an important factor in the so-called ethnic revival in the US, represents an official government policy to support and legitimate cultural and ethnic pluralism. Similarly, the Welsh Assembly Government's involvement in and sponsorship of a wide range of Welsh activities in the US also helps to legitimate and authenticate the existence of a distinct Welsh American community and identity. Welsh American community and identity is also sustained through banal and "bottom-up" means. Individual Americans make a personal choice to identify as Welsh, to create or join a Welsh American society or organisation, to attend Welsh cultural events and participate in cultural activities, to buy and listen to Welsh music, to eat Welsh foods. Through these

choices, self-identifying Welsh Americans construct, perform and consume a sense of Welshness through the embodied habits of social life (Billig 1995: 8).

No identity is constructed in a vacuum: the sense of Welshness claimed and performed by contemporary self-identifying Welsh Americans is rooted in public narratives of Welsh identity in the homeland, Wales. Such public narratives are multiple and mutable, constantly in the process of being reconstructed in response to the changing political, economic, social and cultural context in which they are performed. In the following chapter, some of the most influential versions of Welsh identity are discussed, and differences between dominant discourses of Welshness in contemporary Wales and the US are identified and discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

Defining Welshness

Dai Smith famously described Wales as “a singular noun but a plural experience” (1984). There exists no single version of Welsh national identity, embracing and embraced by the population of Wales as a whole, but rather multiple competing versions of Welshness. This multiplicity of Welsh identities reflects the diversity of geographic, political, economic, social, cultural, linguistic and ethnic contexts in which Welshness is constructed, performed and consumed. Welsh American identity is one of these multiple versions of Welsh identity, constructed, performed and consumed in a diasporic context by Americans of Welsh descent. It is an identity distinct and different from Welshness in Wales, shaped by the American context in which it is imagined. However, as argued previously, no identity is created in a vacuum.

Contemporary expressions of Welsh American identity are, inevitably, closely connected with the ways in which Welsh identities are, and have been, expressed in Wales. Simultaneously, the versions of Welshness shaped and articulated by self-identifying Welsh Americans and other diasporic Welsh communities have the potential to affect public perceptions of Welshness in Wales. Diasporic versions of a national identity are often perceived, particularly by those within the homeland, as inauthentic and nostalgic. Irish Americans, for example, are often referred to as “Plastic Paddys” (Nagle 2005). However, if we understand nations and national identities to be social constructs, it follows that all the myriad competing versions of Welshness are

equally constructed. Welsh identities in Wales or in the US are inherently unstable, constantly in the process of evolving and being reinterpreted, contingent upon the time and place in which they are imagined (Hall 2003: 236).

This chapter explores the questions “[h]ow many Wales? How many ways of being Welsh?” (Day and Suggett 1985: 96) and analyses some of the key versions of Welsh identity which have come to dominate public perceptions of Wales and Welshness since the late eighteenth century. In so doing, it provides a broader context for this research project, by identifying and discussing the versions of Welshness that are most likely to have shaped and influenced the construction, articulation and performance of Welsh American identities. This chapter begins with a discussion of the complex issue of Welsh nationhood, comparing civic and ethnic definitions of nation and their relevance to an understanding of contemporary Wales. It then moves on to discuss some of the key competing versions of Welsh identity: the dichotomous linked pairs of north/ south and what I term the “Romantic”/ “Industrial” versions of Welshness (Morgan 1983; Smith 1984; Williams, G.A. 1985); the “Three Wales” model proposed by Denis Balsom (1985); and contemporary reimaginings of Welsh identity in the wake of Devolution and ideas of multiculturalism (Aaron and Williams 2005; Williams, Evans and O’Leary 2003). This chapter does not seek to analyse the development of the Welsh nation and national identity over time; that topic has been discussed in great detail and with great skill by others (notably Williams, G.A. 1985; Smith 1984; and Davies, J. 2007). Its focus is rather upon the relative strengths and weaknesses of some of the most influential versions of Welsh identity, and

how and why they came to dominate public perceptions of Wales at different historical moments. Finally, this chapter concludes with an overview and analysis of the dominant version(s) of contemporary Welsh American identity, identifying key elements and discussing the ways in which it resembles or differs from the versions of Welsh identity discussed in this chapter.

Is Wales a Nation?

There is some debate regarding the official status of Wales: is it a separate nation or simply a region of Britain – or even merely a region of England?

Wales has never fitted neatly into the widely accepted modernist definition of a nation as an aspect and product of the modern state. Modernists, such as Ernest Gellner (1982), Benedict Anderson (2006) and Eric Hobsbawm (1983), argue that the nation is a phenomenon of the modern age that did not and could not exist before the political and economic revolutions of the late eighteenth century. They see the nation as a product of nationalism, designed to engineer, legitimate and maintain the power of the state. This approach seems to argue against the possibility of the existence of a Welsh nation.

Wales possessed no official measures of independent statehood until 1999, when the National Assembly for Wales, the first representative body directly elected by the people of Wales, was created following a narrow vote in favour of some measure of political devolution in the 1997 referendum (Davies, J. 2007: 674). Throughout the modern period Wales was a part of the

developing British nation-state, following its legal and political incorporation into England with the Acts of Union in 1536 and 1542.

Thus, if we subscribe to the modernist definition of the nation, Wales might be defined not as a separate nation, but as a region within the British nation-state. Yet the Welsh possess many of the traditional and accepted characteristics of a national group, including residence within a defined geographic territory, a shared history and culture, and a belief in their common ancestry (Smith, A.D. 1999: 13). Moreover, while political devolution did not occur until 1997, there are numerous earlier examples of recognition by the British parliament that Wales was a separate and distinct entity. These include: the establishment of a National Library and National Museum of Wales in 1907 and of the Church of Wales in 1920; the creation of Cardiff as the capital city of Wales in 1955; the establishment of the Welsh Office and a Secretary of State for Wales in 1964; and the creation of the Welsh Tourist Board in 1969 (Parsons 1998: 43; Osmond 1977: 99). Although these measures do not necessarily represent official recognition of Wales as a separate nation, they do illustrate the willingness of the British government to recognise the territorial unity of Wales as a distinct country. Some, such as the National Museum and Library, and the creation of Cardiff as a capital city, can be argued to represent an official acknowledgement of Wales as a separate nation within Britain (Mason 2007).

The question of Welsh nationhood is further complicated by the widespread tendency to use the terms "nation" and "state" synonymously and interchangeably. This tendency is challenged by Walker Connor (1994a) who has argued that the two terms have quite different and distinct definitions: a

state is a territorial-political unit, while in contrast a nation is a non-political human collectivity, an ethnonational group based on the perception of a common ancestry, culture and history (1994a: 92). Connor argues that very few nation-states, defined as countries in which the territorial-political borders of the state coincide exactly, or almost exactly, with the territorial distribution of a single enthonational group, actually exist: out of a total 132 states that existed in 1971, he identifies less than 10% of them as nation-states (1994b: 39). For example, in Connor's model, Britain is not a nation-state, but a multinational state containing within its geopolitical borders the nations of England, Wales, Scotland (and perhaps the problematic Northern Ireland), each with its own distinct geographic territory (1994a: 77).

Defining the status of Britain is just as complex as trying to define Wales's status: it might be a nation, a state, a nation-state or some other mixture of the two, or even, in the wake of Scottish and Welsh devolution, perhaps beginning to move towards a federation of independent nation-states. It is commonly defined as a multinational state (Connor 1994b), but the issue is confused by the frequency of references to the British nation or British national identity in both academia and the media. This confusion is illustrated in a recent publication by the think-tank Demos which analyses Britain in its contemporary multicultural and devolved context (Goodhart 2006). At one point Goodhart states explicitly that "Britain is (technically) not a nation at all but a state formed out of an amalgamation of four nations" (2006: 21), but then goes on to refer to "British national identity", "British national history and literature" and "the British national myth". In his response to Goodhart's essay, Neal Ascherson, a Scottish journalist and writer, argues that this reflects a

“typical English confusion between nation and state” (2006: 61). England is the dominant nation within the British state and the terms “British” and “English” are sometimes used interchangeably or understood to be synonymous by English people. The Welsh and the Scottish appear to possess a greater awareness of the distinction between their Welsh/ Scottish identities and a British identity (McCrone 2001: 182; Osmond 2002: 85).

Britishness might be understood as “an overarching state identity”, complementary to rather than conflicting with or replacing the existing national identities of Wales, Scotland and England (McCrone 2001: 182). As Linda Colley argues in *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*:

As even the briefest acquaintance with Great Britain will confirm, the Welsh, the Scottish and the English remain in many ways distinct people in cultural terms...the sense of a common [British] identity did not come into being...because of a homogenisation of disparate cultures. Instead, Britishness was superimposed over an array of internal differences. (1992: 6)

British identities function at a different level than Welsh, Scottish and English identities, and are relevant to people in different contexts: they represent a series of concentric loyalties (Newby and Burnett 2007: 58). In the case of Wales, this could arguably be seen as a distinction between membership of an ethnic nation (Wales), with a distinctive culture, language, literature, history and belief in a common ancestry, and membership of a civic “nation” (Britain), which is relevant in the political, legal and economic spheres of life. Welsh identities have traditionally been rooted in the cultural distinctiveness of Wales rather than in any political or civic differences between Wales and the rest of Britain. The situation is rather more complicated in Scotland, which arguably possesses a civic rather than ethnic or cultural sense of its separate

nationhood, based on its historically distinctive legal, educational, religious and financial institutions (McCrone 2001: 179).

Today, in the wake of Devolution and the establishment of the National Assembly for Wales, the relationship between Britain and Wales, and between British and Welsh identities within Wales, is in the process of changing. For the first time in its history, Wales possesses a measure of self-government as a nation and it has been argued that “so far as Welsh politics and identity are concerned, the key reference point is now an autonomous civic institution [the National Assembly for Wales], embracing Wales as a whole” (Osmond 2002: 70). Welsh identity is arguably becoming increasingly civic and constitutional in nature. In the second edition of his seminal text, *A History of Wales*, John Davies argues that:

In the decades since the 1970s, remarkable strides were made in that direction. One of the most important of them was the growth of the Welsh Office, a growth which, according to John Osmond in 1994, ‘has served to entrench an institutional sense of Welsh identity’...the Welsh Office became the executive arm of the National Assembly for Wales; thus, Wales came to have two of the three powers considered essential to any constitutional structure. The third power – the judicature – has few Welsh characteristics. Yet, as Cardiff has been recognised as a location for judicial reviews and for meetings of the Appeal Court, there may also be developments in that sphere. With early twenty-first century Wales in possession of the characteristics of a fledgling nation-state, the framework exists within which a consciousness of Welsh citizenship could be fostered. (2007: 709)

He identifies a number of other ways in which contemporary Wales is engaged in “nation-building” and developing the apparatus of a civic state: the increasing international recognition of Wales as a separate and distinct country, from the world of sports to politics, tourism and cultural heritage; and the creation of national buildings and institutions within Wales, representing what Davies calls the building blocks of nationhood, including: the Millennium

Stadium (1999) and Wales Millennium Centre (2004) in Cardiff, the National Botanic Gardens (2000) in the Tywi Valley, and the National Waterfront Museum (2006) and the Wales National Pool in Swansea (2007: 710).

Thus, in answer to the question "is Wales a nation?" it can be concluded that it is, although – like many other nations – it does not fit the model of a classical nation-state. Wales and the Welsh possess a defined geographic territory and a belief in a common culture, history and ancestry: the markers of an ethnonational group as defined by Walker Connor (1994). Moreover, with the ongoing processes and effects of Devolution, Wales is arguably moving towards civic nationhood (Davies, J. 2007: 653-713). But more than that, as Benedict Anderson famously put it, a nation is an imagined community (2006). It is a self-defining group based on a subjective and intangible emotional bond and a people's belief that they are a nation. It "is not what is, but what people believe is that matters" (Connor 1994: 75): the Welsh believe that they are a nation and construct Wales and Welsh identity in those terms.

How Many Wales? How Many Ways of Being Welsh?

However, Welsh national identity is not, and never has been, a single homogeneous entity: it exists in multiple, often highly localised forms. There is no single group that can be identified as "the Welsh", but rather a number of groups and subgroups who claim and identify as Welsh in a variety of different ways. Indeed, Welsh society has been defined as:

...a veritable kaleidoscope within which the key ethnic, linguistic, cultural and social ingredients combine in contrasting proportions and combinations which change in character, across both time and space. (Giggs and Pattie 1992: 43)

Different discourses of Welsh identity have come to dominate perceptions and conceptualisations of Wales and Welsh identity at particular times in the nation's history. As Homi Bhabha states, although not in reference to Wales: "the political unity of the nation consists of a continual displacement of its irredeemably plural space...into a signifying space that is archaic and mythical" (1990: 300). While all nations contain plural and heterogeneous social identities, one of these identities, often that of the dominant group, comes to dominate perceptions of that nation, to be perceived as *the* national identity (Jenkins 1997: 30). Two parallel, and often opposing, mythical signifying spaces of Wales and Welshness are those of a "Romantic" Wales of "wild beauty and mysterious antiquity" and an "Industrial" Wales of pit head gear, terraced cottages and steep sided valleys (Smith, D. 1999: 79).

Place is a key element in discourses of Welsh national identity; each version of Welshness is in part articulated through its association with a particular landscape (Gruffudd 1995: 220). For example, "Romantic" Welshness is linked with rural north-west Wales while "Industrial" Welshness has its roots in the south Wales coalfield (Smith, D. 1999: 38). These respective geographical heartlands correspond to the perceived divide in Wales between a rural north and an industrial south. This divide is based on the perceived economic, political, social and cultural divisions between a rural, agricultural and Welsh-speaking north-west and an urban, industrial, predominantly Anglophone south-east (Williams, G.A. 1985: 333). Another

place-defined conceptualisation of Welsh identities is the “Three Wales” model proposed by Denis Balsom (1985). Balsom divides Wales into three, rather than two, distinct regions: “*Y Fro Gymraeg*” (Welsh-speaking Wales); Welsh Wales; and British Wales. These various approaches to the problematic concept of Welsh identity, or identities, will be discussed in turn. It must be noted that a similar discussion of the multiple, competing versions of Welsh identity has recently been published by Rhiannon Mason (2007). Mason’s account is primarily concerned with an analysis of how dominant discourses have Welshness have evolved since the 1960s and with how these shifts in public perception have been played out within the museum, gallery and heritage sector. In contrast, this study focuses on an investigation of the ways in which the various discourses of Welsh identity that have dominated public perceptions since the late eighteenth century may influence constructions and representations of contemporary Welsh American identity.

North and South

A division of Wales into north and south regions is supported by its geography. The majority of the Welsh landmass is covered by mountainous uplands 600 feet or more above sea level, which creates a physical barrier between the coastal regions of the north and south that are home to the majority of the Welsh population (see Figure 20, overleaf). The geographical distribution of the Welsh population is also lopsided: in the 2001 census around half of the total 2,903,085 residents of Wales lived within 40 kilometres of Cardiff (Davies, J. 2007: 685). The main transport and communication

routes in Wales run east to west, further reinforcing this north/ south divide. In part, this is because of the mountainous nature of the Welsh interior, making the construction of north-south transport routes significantly more difficult than east-west routes, but it also reflects Wales's history as a dependent economic periphery of England. Transport routes were not built to link the various regions of Wales to each other, but to connect them with English markets: north Wales to Liverpool and Merseyside; mid Wales to Birmingham and the Midlands; south Wales to Bristol and London (Osmond 1977: 15).



Figure 20 Topographic map of Wales (G.A Williams, 1985: 1)

There is also some validity to a north/ south division of Wales in economic terms. Stereotypically, north-west Wales has been characterised as a rural, agricultural region, while south-east Wales is urban and industrial. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the vast majority of heavy industry was concentrated in the Valleys of the south Wales coalfield. In contrast, the economy of much of north-west Wales remained predominantly agricultural for much of this period (Williams, G.A. 1985: 235). However, such a division is overly simplistic. Although heavy industry was concentrated in the south-east of Wales, it was not restricted to that area: north-east Wales also possesses a coalfield – albeit significantly smaller – stretching from Point of Ayr on the north Wales coast down to Chirk on the Shropshire border (Davies, J. 2007: 474). North-west Wales, stereotypically perceived as an unspoilt mountainous landscape, was home to the largest slate industry in Britain (Davies, J. 2007: 394). In contrast, south Wales was not uniformly industrial, but possessed large rural and agricultural areas, particularly in Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire (Williams, G.A. 1985: 161).

While a north/ south division of Wales is overly simplistic, it remains remarkably resilient in public discourses of Welshness. This trend can in part be explained in terms of a division between a core and a periphery. As in the case of England, the south-east of Wales, centred on the capital city, Cardiff, and home to the majority of the population, represents the country's core. Today, the majority of national institutions are concentrated in this region, including: the *Senedd* (parliament or senate), the seat of the National Assembly for Wales; the Millennium Stadium; the Wales Millennium Centre; and five out of the seven branches of National Museums Wales. The

geographical distance of these institutions and landmarks, made greater by the psychological barrier of the mountains and the lack of any major transport route linking north and south, can cause resentment amongst the population of north and mid Wales. Cardiff is perceived as coming to dominate Wales in the same way that London is perceived to dominate England, attracting funding and investment at the expense of other regions. This perceived division between a core (the coastal region around Cardiff) and a periphery (north and mid Wales) goes some way towards explaining the continuing strength of the concept of a north/ south divide within Wales.

“Romantic” and “Industrial” Wales

The resilience of the concept of a north/ south divide is further strengthened by the competing discourses of “Romantic” and “Industrial” Welsh identity. As discussed earlier, “Romantic” Welshness is associated with the rural north-west, while “Industrial” Welshness has its roots in the south Wales valleys. These competing discourses represent the two archetypal Welsh communities identified by the historian Gwyn A. Williams: the *gwerin* (folk or people), rural, Welsh-speaking, Nonconformist and associated with north-west Wales and traditional Welsh culture; and the working class, industrial, urban, predominantly Anglophone and associated with the south Wales Valleys (1985: 233-239).

The division of Welsh identity into competing “Romantic” and “Industrial” versions is based around the concept of time as well as that of space. “Romantic” Welshness emerged in the late eighteenth century, at the

beginning of the modern era. It has close links with the Romantic Movement in Western Europe (c.1780-1830), which saw a revival of interest in traditional and folk cultures as a reaction to the rapid political, economic and social changes of the period, particularly industrialisation. The mountains of Wales, previously perceived as barren and inhospitable, a symbol of the poverty and backwardness of the country, became transformed in the public eye into a beautiful and unspoilt natural landscape that had aided the preservation of the unique and picturesque Welsh culture (Morgan 1983: 87-89). In the case of Wales, the Romantic Movement also encompassed the desire to preserve and protect “traditional” Welsh culture, which had declined almost to the point of extinction after two centuries of political incorporation into England, and is often described as a Welsh cultural renaissance. This renaissance began amongst the middle class intelligentsia of the expatriate London Welsh community (Morgan 1983: 43). Several societies were established to preserve and celebrate Welsh history and culture, including *the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (men of Wales), established in 1751, and the *Gwyneddigion Society* (men of Gwynedd), established in 1770 (Davies, J. 2007: 295). The *eisteddfod*, a literary and musical competition originating in the twelfth century, was revived and reinvented during this period, quickly coming to be perceived as a national cultural institution, primarily through the tireless efforts of Edward Williams (1747-1826), a stonemason from Glamorgan better known by his bardic name of Iolo Morgannwg (Smith 1999: 80). Morgannwg played an important role in the (re)discovery of Wales’s Celtic heritage, inventing traditions and customs to fill any gaps in such volume and with such flair that scholars are still trying to

untangle truth from fiction today (Davies, J. 2007: 334-5). The Welsh came to be perceived as the descendents of the ancient Britons, the original inhabitants of the British Isles, and the Welsh language as one of the oldest in Europe (Morgan 1983: 67-74). This “Celtomania” gave the Welsh ‘for the first time in 200 years a vision of their history that was autonomous and separate from England’ (Morgan: 68).

The “Romantic” discourse dominated perceptions of Wales and Welsh identity until the mid-nineteenth century, when it was challenged by an emerging “Industrial” discourse of Welshness, once more a product of widespread economic and social changes. It has been claimed that Wales was the first industrial nation in the world, with a majority of its workforce employed in industry rather than agriculture by 1841 (National Museums Wales 1998). Increasingly, the “Romantic” version of Welshness no longer reflected the reality of the new industrial and modern Wales and consequently a new version of Welsh identity was needed (Morgan 1983: 98). “Industrial” Welshness is particularly associated with trade unionism and the Labour party and has been argued to be defined primarily through a class based distinction – working class as opposed to bourgeoisie – rather than through a national distinction between Welsh and English (Williams, G.A. 1985: 234-241). It is perhaps best described as a working class identity that is specifically Welsh in context, rather than a Welsh identity that is specifically working class in context. “Industrial” Welshness encompassed many elements of “Romantic” Welshness, including religious nonconformity and the *eisteddfodau*, which evolved into an annual National Eisteddfod from 1860 (National Eisteddfod of Wales 2007). This reflects the fact that, until the later decades of the

nineteenth century, the majority of the population of the south Wales coalfield, the heartland of 'industrial Wales' was drawn from the rural areas of the country, and brought their culture and language with them (G.A Williams, 1985: 180). "Industrial" Welshness can perhaps be better understood as an evolution or reimagining of the 'Romantic' version of Welsh identity, rather than its replacement or opponent.

Both versions continue to influence public perceptions of Wales today. "Romantic" discourses of Welshness are evident in the promotional material of the Welsh tourist industry, which focuses heavily on the beauty of the natural landscape and elements of "traditional" Welsh culture. "Romantic" Welshness has also come to be associated with the Welsh nationalist movement. Plaid Cymru, the party of Wales, was founded in 1925 with the aim of preserving the Welsh language and culture; the campaign for self-government was not added to its manifesto until 1932 (Parsons 1998: 37). Elements of "Industrial" Welshness, with its emphasis upon close-knit communities, the chapel, radical politics, industrial employment male voice choirs and rugby, also continue to shape public perceptions of Wales – despite the fact that many of these elements have disappeared from twenty-first century Welsh life.

There is continuing debate concerning which version, "Romantic" or "Industrial" represents the most "authentic" Welsh identity. The "Romantic" discourse of Welsh identity, rooted as it is in the Welsh language, traditional culture and the Welsh heartland of the north-west, has been argued to be the most authentic. However, it has also been described as "a Welsh identity...situated within and in response to regions and ideologies remote physically and ideally from the regions in which the majority of the Welsh

population lived and had their being: an exclusive and elitist definition of Welsh identity, excluding the majority of the population from membership of and participation in the national community” (G.A Williams, 1985: 237). While “Industrial” Welshness can be argued to reflect the experiences of a majority of the Welsh population during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it can equally be portrayed as a diluted and anglicised form of Welsh identity. Its working class character and political affiliation with the Labour party link it to the notion of a Wales-within-Britain rather than the campaign for national self-government by Plaid Cymru.

The fact that neither the “Romantic” nor “Industrial” discourses of Welshness encompass the population as a whole is a weakness in their claims to represent Welsh national identity. Another is their failure to take into account the polyethnic nature of contemporary Wales. The “Romantic” version in particular represents the belief that to be Welsh is to be white – and preferably to be Welsh-speaking (Williams, C. 2003: 224). Both discourses illustrate the focus upon a binary division between Welsh and English in debates of ethnicity within Wales. This creates a bicultural rather than a multicultural Wales, leaving no room for discussion of the versions of Welsh identity possessed by the many other ethnic communities that exist within the nation (Williams, C. 2003: 226).

Ultimately, both “Romantic” and “Industrial” discourses of Welsh identities idealise ways of life and communities that are now things of the past. Neither the *gwerin* nor the industrial working class is representative of the early twenty-first century population of Wales. Both discourses evoke the now vanished golden ages of their respective core communities. Wales is no

longer a predominantly rural country populated by a monoglot Welsh majority, untouched by industry or anglicisation. Nor is it an industrial powerhouse, economically booming and attracting immigration from all over the British Isles and beyond. In a sense, both “Romantic” and “Industrial” versions of Welsh identity are unreal and imaginary, not reflecting the experiences of the contemporary population of Wales.

The “Three Wales” model

An alternative approach to the conceptualisation of Welsh identity is the “Three Wales” model, which identifies three distinct geo-political regions that exist within Wales (Balsom 1985). Denis Balsom divides Wales *into Y Fro Gymraeg* (Welsh-speaking Wales), covering western Wales from Anglesey to Carmarthenshire; Welsh Wales, corresponding to the south Wales valleys; and British Wales, representing the eastern counties, southern coastal region and much of Pembrokeshire (see Figure 21, overleaf). The model is based upon regional differences identified in responses to a question from the 1979 Welsh Election Study: “do you normally consider yourself to be Welsh, British, English or something else?” (Osmond 2002: 80). It echoes Alfred Zimmern’s 1921 observation that:

[t]he Wales of today is not a unity. There is not one Wales; there are three... There is Welsh Wales; there is industrial or, as I sometimes think of it, American Wales; and there is upper class or English Wales. These three represent different types and traditions. (quoted in Williams, C. 2003/04: 3)

Zimmern's "Welsh Wales" is equivalent to Balsom's *Y Fro Gymraeg*, his "American Wales" to the Welsh Wales of Balsom's model, and "English Wales" to British Wales. A very similar division of Wales is identified in the results of the 1983 General Election by the historian John Davies:

...there were three political regions in Wales: British Wales – the eastern constituencies and the southern coastal region, a region in which Conservatism was strong; Welsh Wales – the southern coalfield, Labour's stronghold; and *Y Gymru Gymraeg* (Welsh-speaking Wales) – Gwynedd and most of Dyfed, a region where four parties [Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrats and Plaid Cymru] were struggling for supremacy. (2007: 658)

Each of these versions of a "Three Wales" model presents the three regions as being socially, politically, culturally, economically and linguistically distinct from each other: in other words, possessing its own version of Welsh identity (Osmond, 2002; Dicks, 2000; Pritchard & Morgan, 2003).

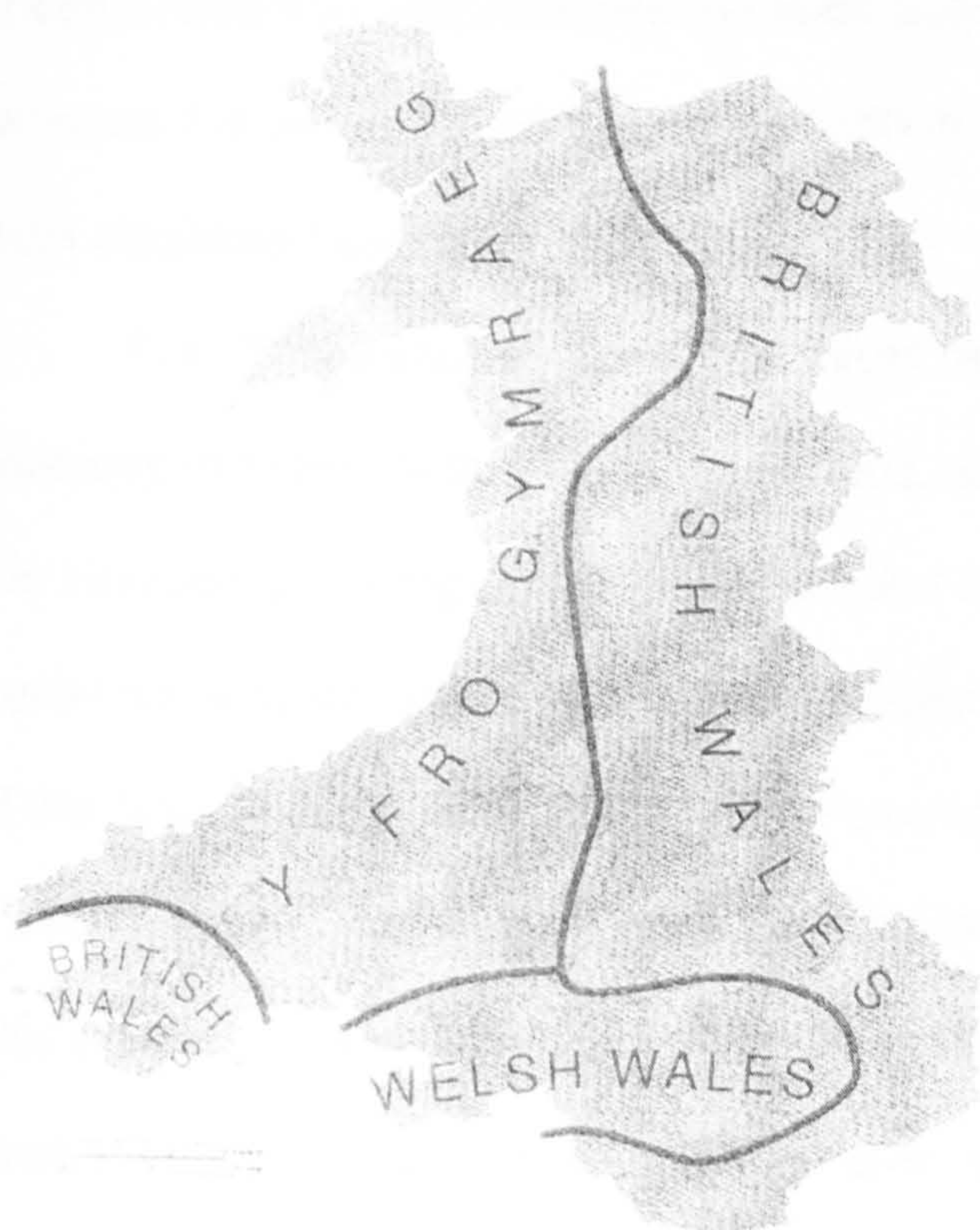


Figure 21 The "Three Wales" model (Osmond, 2002: 81)

The identity of *Y Fro Gymraeg* is based around the three key concepts: land, language and folk (*gwlad, iaith a gwerin*) (Pritchard & Morgan 2003: 115). This region is portrayed by some Welsh nationalists as “a civilising storehouse of Welsh cultural identity”, representing the “authentic” essence of the nation (Gruffudd, 1995: 224). It has much in common with the “Romantic” discourse of Welsh identity. Welsh Wales, corresponding to the boundaries of the south Wales coalfield, is predominantly Anglophone, but with a strong Welsh identity, based on its “members having been born in Wales and sharing a collective experience of the recent industrial past” (Osmond, 2002: 80-82). Its identity is often portrayed as working class in character, unlike the more classless concept of the *gwerin*, the idealised community of *Y Fro Gymraeg*. The third region, British Wales, covers the remaining areas of Wales. Its identity and boundaries are the least defined. British Wales has also received the least academic attention, perhaps because it is perceived as the least Welsh in character, the region with the most anglicised culture and identity.

The “Three Wales” model has informed many political and cultural analyses of Wales in the 1980s and 1990s, although in the wake of Devolution it is increasingly being challenged (Osmond 2002; Williams, C. 2005). The model does reflect some real regional divisions within the country. The results of the 1997 Devolution referendum, for example, showed a clear split between *Y Fro Gymraeg* and Welsh Wales on one side, and British Wales on the other. The eleven counties falling within the boundaries of *Y Fro Gymraeg* and Welsh Wales returned an overall “Yes” vote, whilst the eleven counties of British Wales returned a “No” vote (see Figure 22, overleaf). However, the

significance of this correlation between counties returning pro- or anti-devolution majorities and the “Three Wales” model must not be overplayed. It would be misleading to assume that these results reveal significant geographical and political divisions within Wales. Many “Yes” votes were cast in overall “No” counties and vice versa; indeed, 40% of the “Yes” vote was cast in counties with an overall “No” majority, and 44% of the electorate in the overall “Yes” majority counties voted against Devolution (Osmond 2002: 84; Davies, J. 2007: 674).

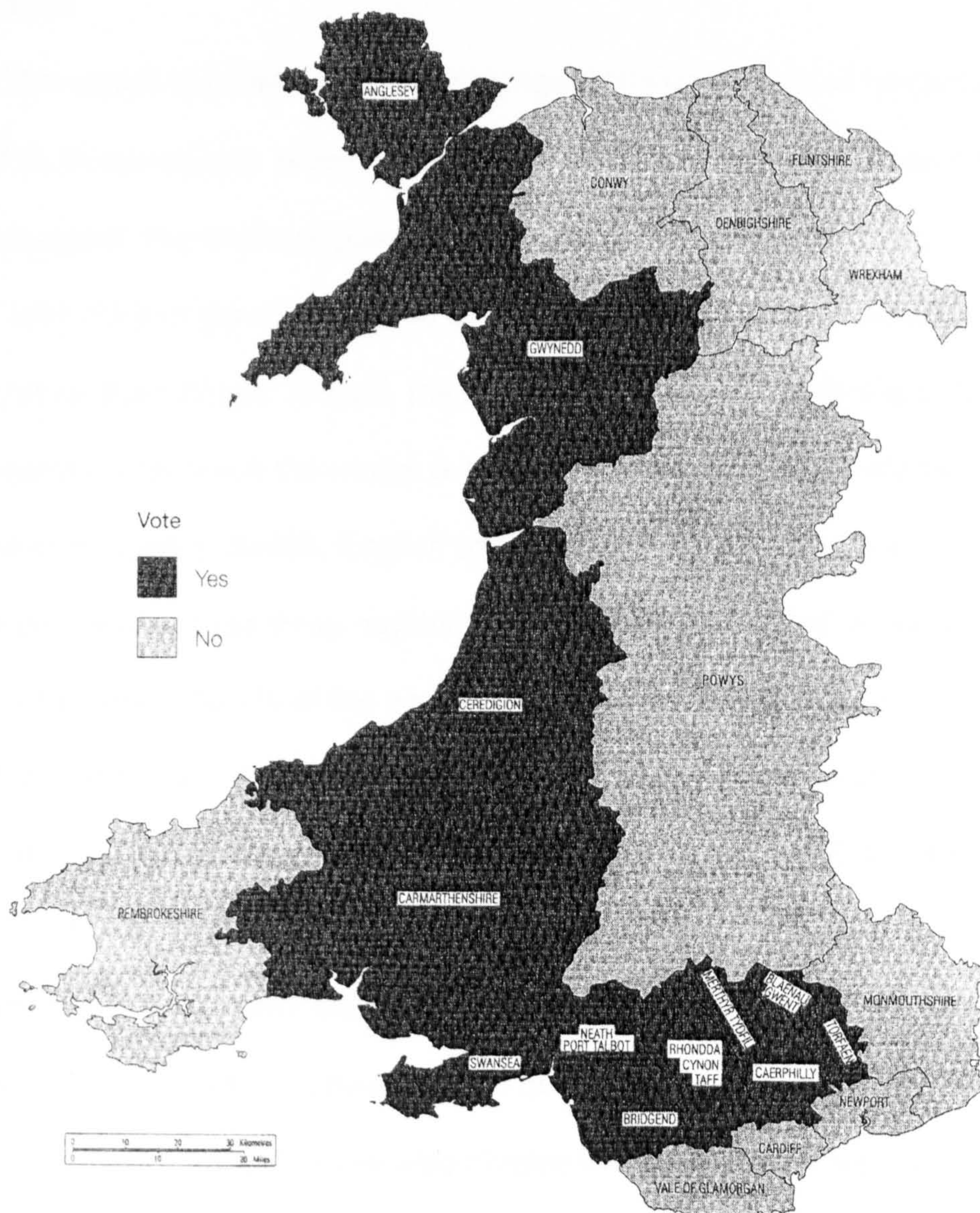


Figure 22 Results of the 1997 Referendum (Osmond 2002: 83)

Furthermore, there are a number of limitations to the “Three Wales” model as a way in which to conceptualise Welsh identities. Perhaps most importantly, it presents an implicit –and possibly unintended – hierarchy: *Y Fro Gymraeg* can be perceived as the most Welsh, followed by Welsh Wales and finally by British Wales, as the least Welsh. To paraphrase George Orwell, according to this model we are all Welsh, but some of us are more Welsh than others. The population of British Wales is in effect disenfranchised from full membership of the nation, defined as being more British than Welsh in culture and outlook.

The model also fails to take into account the diversity that exists within each of its three regions. None of the regions are as homogeneous as their names suggest: the entire population of *Y Fro Gymraeg* are not fluent in Welsh, and not everyone resident in British Wales would define themselves as British rather than Welsh. Indeed, the results of the 1979 Welsh Election Study question on which the model is based, “do you normally consider yourself to be Welsh, British, English or something else?”, show the differences between the three regions to be smaller than might be supposed. In *Y Fro Gymraeg*, 62.1% of the population identified themselves as Welsh and 31.8% as British; in Welsh Wales, 63% identified as Welsh and 30.7% as British; and in British Wales, 50.5% felt themselves to be Welsh and 43% felt British (Osmond, 2002: 81). Although a much greater proportion of the population of British Wales identify themselves in terms of a British identity, a majority of the population in every region define themselves as Welsh.

The “Three Wales” model also divides Wales into geo-cultural regions based upon responses to a question of national identity. This division fails to

take into account other factors that may affect whether an individual identifies more with a British or a Welsh identity, such as age, gender or ethnicity. For example, John Osmond identifies a generation shift as a key factor in the shift from a “No” vote for devolution in 1979 to a “Yes” vote in 1997:

...in 1979 the dominant generation was one that had grown up through the Second World War and its wake, through the creation of a nationalised economy and the welfare state which were distinctively British institutions and experiences... In less than two decades...[a] generation was assuming influence for whom the Second World War was something that had been experienced directly only by their parents...the nationalised industries [too]...were disappearing from view...all these things were mutating back more to what it meant to be Welsh than British...In short, a new common sense about the realities of the Welsh economy, politics and identity was unfolding. (2002: 78-79)

The results of the 1997 referendum illustrate this generation divide between claiming a primarily British or primarily Welsh identity: people aged 45 or over were more likely to vote “No” to devolution by a ratio of 3:2, whilst those under 45 were more likely to vote “Yes” by a similar margin (Osmond 2002).

Most academic research on Welsh history and identity has focussed upon two of Balsom’s three regions of Wales: *Y Fro Gymraeg* and Welsh Wales. While these regions arguably represent the most significant competing discourses of Welshness (corresponding to “Romantic” and “Industrial” Wales respectively), this focus marginalises Balsom’s third region, British Wales, and its population as irrelevant to national story or “not really Welsh” (Williams, C.2003/4: 3). This traditional emphasis on *Y Fro Gymraeg* and Welsh Wales is challenged in an article by Annette Pritchard and Nigel Morgan, who argue that both represent communities and ways of life that are now essentially

extinct (2003: 117). They suggest that, following Devolution, British Wales – or Metropolitan Wales as they call it – increasingly dominates public perceptions of Wales. This argument does not, however, fully rehabilitate British Wales into the debate surrounding Welsh identities: Prichard and Morgan identify Cardiff as the imagined community of Metropolitan Wales, marginalising the other areas of British Wales, such as Pembrokeshire, the eastern borders and the north Wales coast.

The “Three Wales” model also fails to reflect the multicultural nature of contemporary Wales in its conceptualisation of Welsh identities. Wales today is home to a diverse range of ethnic groups, particularly in the southern coastal region, including Welsh, English, Irish, Italian, Jewish, Yemeni, Bangladeshi, Black African and Chinese (Evans 2003: 17). However, the “Three Wales” model presents a Wales that contains just two ethnic groups (Welsh and English/ British) and three versions of Welsh identity. This is not the case; different ethnic groups each have different experiences of Wales and Welshness that do not necessarily fit within the prescribed boundaries of *Y Fro Gymraeg*, Welsh Wales or British Wales (Williams, Charlotte 2003; Jordan 2005). The “Three Wales” model, while a useful way in which to conceptualise Welsh identities in some ways, does not reflect the full range of experiences of Welshness in contemporary Wales.

Contemporary Wales

Since the 1980s there has been an increasing awareness and acceptance of the multiple, fractured and contradictory nature of Welsh identities. Much of

this chapter has drawn upon texts exploring the roots, historical contingency and evolution of various competing discourses of Welshness, such as *When Was Wales?* (Williams, G.A. 1985), *Wales! Wales?* and *Wales: a Question for History* (Smith, D. 1984; 1999), and 'From a Death to a View: the hunt for the Welsh past in the Romantic period' (Morgan 1983). These texts, and others like them, represent a move away from an understanding of Welsh identity as ethnic, conferred by blood, and towards a perception of Welshness as increasingly civic in nature:

The Welsh are in the process of being defined, not in terms of shared occupational experience or common religious inheritance or the survival of an ancient European language...but rather by reference to the institutions that they inhabit, influence and react to. (Jones 1992: 356)

Research on Welsh identity in the twenty-first century tends not to propose new models of Welsh identity but rather seeks to develop alternative ways in which to conceptualise Wales and Welshness, such as postcolonialism, multiculturalism and postnationalism. Two important recent publications are the edited volumes *Postcolonial Wales* (Aaron and Williams 2005) and *A Tolerant Nation? Exploring Ethnic Diversity in Wales* (Williams, Evans and O'Leary 2003). Both take an interdisciplinary approach, exploring the issue of Welsh identity from a broad range of perspectives, including historical, literary, sociological, musical, political, geographical and cultural.

Postcolonial Wales explores whether the concept of postcolonialism might aid our understanding of Welsh cultural and political life. Two alternative interpretations of this concept are applied to this investigation: post-colonial, referring to the historical period after colonialism or empire; and postcolonial, representing a variety of forms of representation, values and practices (Aaron

and Williams 2005: xv). While Wales cannot be unambiguously described as having a post-colonial relationship with England, having been legally and politically incorporated into the developing British state in the sixteenth century and playing an active role in British imperialism during the nineteenth century, the theories and concepts of postcolonialism, such as ambivalence, hybridity and postnationalism, can develop our understanding of historical and contemporary Wales (Williams, C. 2005: 12). Ambivalence, the simultaneous opposition to and acceptance of the coloniser by the colonised, can be argued to reflect the attitudes of the Welsh towards England. Hybridity, with its emphasis upon the “fuzzy borders” of identity, is evident in the increasing awareness of the polyvocality of Welsh identities, as Anglo-Welsh, English-speaking Welsh, Black Welsh, or even Welsh American (Williams, C. 2005: 13-15). Chris Williams argues that devolution “offers us the opportunity to reinvent a new Welsh patriotism”, to move beyond the barriers of “us” and “them” imposed by nations, defining who can and who cannot be a member of the national community, towards a postnational Wales. A postnational Wales would, he argues, “...discard identity discourse...decouple the idea of national culture from the civic rights and responsibilities that go with being a citizen of Wales...” (Williams, C. 2003/4: 4).

The question of how far the polyethnic character of Wales is acknowledged is explored in *A Tolerant Nation?*, which presents an historical overview of ethnic diversity in Wales and responses to it over the past two centuries. Charlotte Williams argues that:

One of the clear implications of devolution is the opportunity to rework discourse of race and ethnicity, to reconfigure discourses of nation and national identity and to reimagine Wales in deliberate and

conscious ways rather than as a product of drift or uncontested “common sense”. (2003: 221)

She goes on to argue that this opportunity has not yet been fully exploited: very little research has been done on issues of social inclusion and racial equality within a specifically Welsh context. Dominant discourses of Welshness often exclude ethnic minorities from membership of the nation and national identity, illustrated by this extract from an interview with a woman of mixed Welsh and African parentage as part of the oral history project in Butetown, Cardiff in 1987:

Nora: ...I was gonna join Plaid Cymru once. I filled in the form in Welsh! ...they sent a man round to my house...[a]nd he said ‘I’d like to speak to the Welsh-speaking person in here’. I said, ‘Well, it’s me!’... I’m proud of being Welsh because I’m born here. And I read the brochure, and the things that were on it at the time I thought was very good for Wales. So since I thought I was Welsh, and I lived in Wales, I wanted to do something for Wales.

The man come and spoke to me, asked me why I thought I was Welsh. I said, ‘Well my mother is Welsh, my grandfather is Welsh, and my grandmother is Welsh, and her grandmother is Welsh... So that’s why I think I’m Welsh... And he said, ‘Dr Davis’ – who Dr Davis is I don’t know – and he said, ‘Dr Davis says you create confusion’...

I’m still very confused about Dr Davis, why he thinks I’m not Welsh... I very much wanted to be Welsh, because that’s what I thought I was. But, Siarad Cymraeg is not for us! Apparently! (Jordan 2005: 71-72)

These texts both illustrate a move away from the idea of identities as categories with clearly drawn and stable boundaries, instead drawing on theories of postmodernism and multiculturalism to stress the fluidity and hybridity of Welsh identities. Wales cannot be divided into three separate regions (Balsom 1985) or Welsh identity split into the binary opposites of “Romantic” and “Industrial”, north and south.

There are no clear-cut boundaries within identity: “the boundary is Janus-faced and the problem of outside/inside must always itself be a process of hybridity, incorporating new ‘people’ in relation to the body politic” (Bhabha 1990: 4). Welshness, as the historian R.R. Davies argues, “is now essentially a geographical concept, referring to those who live in Wales – or wish to be associated by provenance and descent with them [the Welsh]” (2003: 38). Such a definition opens up membership of and participation in the nation to not only the ethnic minority population of Wales but also to diasporic groups such as the Welsh Americans, who “wish to be associated by provenance and descent” with Wales.

Conclusion

Public perceptions of Welsh identity are much simpler than the complex realities of contemporary Welsh society. Explanations of what makes Wales unique, a separate nation with its own distinct national identity, tend to draw upon uncomplicated views of the country’s rural and pre-industrial past, or upon its industrial golden age of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Pritchard & Morgan 2003: 117). These versions of Wales no longer exist in reality, they are outmoded representations of Welshness, and yet they continue to shape our perceptions in the present day. History and the past play a vital role in how national identities are imagined. As Christopher Smout has it: “[n]ational identities are constructed out of references to history, or more exactly, to received popular ideas about history that achieve mythic status irrespective of what modern academic historians perceive to be their

actual truth or importance” (quoted in McCrone 2002: 174). Public perceptions of Wales centre around symbolic markers of Welsh identity such as the Welsh language, the *eisteddfod*, male voice choirs, rugby, the chapel, Celtic heritage and miners.

The identity embraced as “Welsh” by Welsh Americans has most in common with the “Romantic” version of Welsh identity. As we have seen in the previous chapter’s discussion of the Welsh beyond Wales, expressions of Welshness in the US, both in the present moment and in the past, have been dominated by “Romantic” markers including: religious nonconformity; music and singing, particularly hymns; *eisteddfodau* and *cymanfaoedd canu*; and other elements of “traditional” Welsh/ Celtic culture. Some elements of the “Industrial” version of Welsh identity are also incorporated into expressions of Welsh American identity, notably male voice choirs. It is interesting that a “Romantic” rather than “Industrial” trope of Welshness dominates expressions of Welsh American identity, given that the highest levels of immigration from Wales to the US occurred during the period 1850-1914, a period characterised by migration from the industrial areas of Wales to the industrial regions of the US (see chapter two, pp. 98-102). The “Romantic” version of Welsh identity has also proved particularly strong in Wales and is still perceived by many to represent the “true” or “authentic” essence of Welshness, with its focus on the culture and society of pre-industrial, rural, Welsh-speaking Wales. In contrast, many of the markers of an “Industrial” Welshness are perceived by some to represent an anglicised and therefore inauthentic Welsh identity (Williams, G.A. 1985: 234-241). These perceptions may also influence perceptions of Welsh identity amongst the self-identifying

Welsh American population, shaping the ways in which Welsh identities are constructed, articulated and performed in the US.

Welsh American identity can appear very old-fashioned or nostalgic in comparison to contemporary Welsh identities in Wales, rooted as it is in aspects of “traditional” Welsh culture such as religion, music and singing. Rather than revealing Welsh American identity to be inauthentic or imitative however, this difference reflects the very different contexts in which Welsh identities are claimed, constructed, articulated and performed in Wales and in the US. Welsh identity takes on different meanings in an American context, providing self-identifying Welsh Americans with a sense of roots and heritage that stretches beyond the founding of the United States of America in 1776. As such, dominant narratives of Welsh identity from the period in which their ancestors emigrated to the US may be of more relevance to self-identifying Welsh Americans than contemporary discourses of Welsh identity. This hypothesis regarding the nature and function of Welsh identities in the US is explored further in subsequent chapters. The next chapter discusses the ways in which heritage is used by Welsh Americans to construct, negotiate and perform Welsh identities.

CHAPTER FOUR

Community Heritage Networks

Having explored the historical roots of the contemporary Welsh American community and examined the various narratives of Welshness that contribute to the making of Welsh American identity, this thesis now turns to an investigation of how and why Welsh American community groups use heritage as a means of expressing this identity. The relationships between heritage and community are complex and interdependent. Both are concerned with the construction and symbolic representation of group identities. Community and the role of museums and heritage sites in community development are a key element of contemporary museological theory and practice. Museums and heritage sites in both the official heritage sector and what Elizabeth Crooke terms the “unofficial” heritage sector are increasingly concerned with ideas of inclusivity, polyvocality, access and accountability. For the purpose of this study, the official heritage sector is defined as museums and heritage sites funded by local or central government, private museums with accredited status and professional advisory bodies such as the Museums Association (MA) in the UK or the American Association of Museums (AAM) in the US. Such institutions and organisations now commonly employ a community outreach officer or have a gallery dedicated to exhibitions focused on and developed with local community groups. In contrast, the “unofficial” heritage sector encompasses a wide variety of “bottom up” heritage initiatives and

projects that have emerged from within the community groups themselves (Crooke 2007b).

This project's four case study sites, the North American Festival of Wales 2005 and 2006, the Welsh Nationality Room and the Welsh American Heritage Museum, appear to be examples of “bottom up”, community-led heritage initiatives, developed and managed by members of the Welsh American community. However, the situation is rather more complex than it first appears: although the four sites were established by and are run on a day-to-day basis by Welsh American community groups they will, as Corinne Kratz and Ivan Karp argue all museums and heritage sites do, “experience conflicting demands made on them from a range of interested parties, including funders, audiences, government officials, professional communities, collectors, and people who are represented in the museum displays” (2006: 1). Stakeholders at the four sites can be divided into three groups: community-based; academic; and professional. Each stakeholder group has its own motivations for involvement in the site and perceptions of that site's role(s), which may or may not be compatible with those of the other groups. These potentially conflicting motivations and goals, and the negotiation between stakeholders to resolve them, influence how a site constructs and represents Welsh identity.

This chapter analyses the complex inter-relationships and tensions that exist between different stakeholders and stakeholder groups at each of the four case study sites. It examines power relations and processes of identity production, representation, negotiation and consumption, and investigates why and how these sites are used by different stakeholders to construct and

express notions of Welsh American community and identity. The four sites are in essence community-based heritage sites: each has been established and is run by and primarily for members of the Welsh American community. In other words they function as spaces in which that community imagines itself, constructing and negotiating narratives of its collective identity, and then reflects those narratives back to itself. This chapter analyses the processes involved in this imagining of community and identity: who is doing the imagining; what versions of Welsh American community and identity do they imagine; and why have heritage-based activities have been chosen as the means by which to reflect these imaginings back to the community? It questions whether heritage sites can ever be solely community-based or “bottom up”, arguing instead that the boundary between “unofficial” community heritage and the official heritage sector is blurred and overlapping. None of the four case study sites represent a wholly community-based engagement with heritage; they are also influenced by the interests and priorities of external “top down” academic and professional organisations.

Furthermore, close analysis reveals that the sites are not four separate, independent local community heritage sites but are interconnected, part of a larger unofficial Welsh American heritage network that includes community-based, academic and professional Welsh groups, societies and organisations in both the US, Wales and beyond. The existence of such a transnational Welsh heritage network has significant implications in relation to the hypothesis that national identities are becoming deterritorialised as a result of globalisation (Hall 1991a). Through such a network, stakeholders in Wales can influence perceptions of Welsh identity in the US but, arguably, Welsh

American stakeholders may also have the potential to influence narratives of Welsh identity in Wales.

This chapter begins with a critical account of some of the recent literature on the relationships between museums and communities (Witcomb 2003; Clifford 1997; Crooke 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2007b; Kratz and Karp 2006). This account provides a theoretical basis for the analysis of the processes of Welsh American community and identity construction and regulation at the four case study sites which follows. The second section of this chapter identifies and analyses key motivations, priorities and interests of the three stakeholder groups: community-based, academic and professional. It investigates the nature of the relationships between these three groups at each site, exploring the ways in which the sometimes very different interests, motivations and agendas of each group can influence the nature of the sites and the narratives of Welsh American community and identity they represent. Finally, the nature of the relationships between the four sites and other Welsh groups and organisations in the US, the wider Welsh diaspora and Wales are investigated, exploring the processes by which this unofficial heritage network produces and regulates a diffused imagining of, firstly, a national Welsh American community and, secondly, a geographically diffuse transnational Welsh community that links self-identifying Welsh Americans to the ancestral homeland, Wales.

Museums and community

The relationships between museums and communities are an important element of contemporary museological theory and practice. Investigations of

these relationships are a key aspect of New Museology, which called for a greater analysis of the social and political roles of museums and heritage sites at a time when most museological research focussed on practical processes such as collections care and exhibition design (Vergo 1989, Karp *et al* 1992). New Museologists focus on issues of accountability, representativeness, polyvocality and access, stressing the need to represent a range of different people's histories rather than a single grand narrative, and the importance of a two-way dialogue between museums and the communities they seek to represent. The centrality of community in contemporary museological practice is also illustrated by public and government policies which link the role of the museum and heritage sector with agendas tackling social and economic exclusion, fostering social capital and community development and regeneration (Crooke 2006: 180). More recently, the focus has shifted towards questions of *how* museums and heritage sites work with communities, and the potential effects and implications of their greater engagement with communities.

In her book *Re-Imagining the Museum: beyond the mausoleum* (2003), Andrea Witcomb draws on James Clifford's theory of the museum as "contact zone" in order to problematise the concept of community (see also pp. 5-6, this text). She suggests that the museum is best understood as a community in its own right and that relationships between museums and communities should therefore be understood as a series of cross-cultural exchanges between two "interpretive communities", each with its own culture, traditions and ways of doing things (2003: 89). Witcomb further argues that the community with which a museum seeks to engage often contains several

subcommunities, constituting additional “interpretive communities” (2003: 85). She calls for a greater acknowledgement and discussion of the different values, interests and priorities of these various “interpretive communities”, and the complex interactions between them involved in the process of constructing and representing community within the museum (2003: 100). Examples from her personal experiences as curator of a community access gallery in Perth, Western Australia and as a consultant to a local community museum staffed by volunteers in Queensland are used to support her argument. The value of Witcomb’s approach for this research project is in her recognition of the differences between the interests, agendas and values of the official heritage sector and those of the communities with which it seeks to engage, coupled with an analysis of the ways in which these differences can influence and shape the curatorial process. She addresses these issues through case studies from both the official and “unofficial” heritage sectors, and also incorporates a diasporic element into her discussion: the exhibition she curated at the community access gallery in Perth focussed on the city’s Portuguese community. However, this examination of the relationships between heritage and diasporic community takes place within the context of the official heritage sector and a “top-down” project initiated by museum professionals. In contrast, this thesis is concerned with analysing the effects and potential implications of the increased dialogue between museums and communities within the context of grassroots, “bottom-up” community heritage initiatives.

Elizabeth Crooke’s recent work on museums and communities (2005, 2006, 2007a, 2007b) addresses the effects and potential implications of the

increased dialogue between them more explicitly, arguing that “the very nature of the museum is being challenged through community involvement” (2006: 171). She divides her analysis of the construction and representation of community identities through heritage practices into two areas. The first is that of the official heritage sector, the “professional museum sector... [of] advisory bodies, central or local government funded museums, or private museums with accredited status” (Crooke 2007b: 8). The second is what Crooke terms the “unofficial” heritage sector: grass-roots heritage initiatives in the form of collections, exhibitions and heritage centres created and managed by community groups, generally with no museum training, as a means to communicate their own histories (Crooke 2007a: 301). Like Witcomb, Crooke argues that these two sectors often possess very different motivations for engaging in community heritage activities. While the activities of museums and heritage sites within the official heritage sectors are influenced by central and local government policies concerning social inclusion and community building, those of sites within the “unofficial” heritage sector tend to reflect the specific needs and aspirations of the community that created and manages them, or at least those of its leaders (Crooke 2007b: 8-9).

Crooke further addresses some of the potential risks and negative effects of grassroots community heritage initiatives, emphasising the inherently partial nature of community narratives. She stresses that curators need to ask “whether the community they are engaging with is representative, whether the community leaders are accepted by the members, and how the balance of power between the community and the museum expert is best struck” (2006: 184). The representation of a community group’s history,

culture and identity through heritage represents a shift from individual stories to collective heritage narratives. The implications of such a shift from the personal to the public sphere, Crooke argues, must be considered: “[t]here is a difference between stories shared privately between groups of people and the public display of those stories in history, community or heritage centres. The public dimension adds a new significance, is a form of recognition, and provides endorsement” (2007a: 308). Community-based heritage initiatives therefore have the potential to reinforce stereotypes, prejudices and other negative aspects of a community group’s heritage. Crooke suggests that some form of external review of community-based heritage initiatives might be created, in order to investigate their motivating factors and the potential impact of the narratives conveyed: “[w]e must ask what is being recorded, why it is being shared, and for whom are these initiatives being created?” (2007a: 310).

Crooke’s emphasis on the importance of analysing both the processes and the final products of community-based heritage initiatives, whether they occur within the official or “unofficial” heritage sectors, and the need to consider the motivations of both museums and communities for engaging with each other, is a valuable one. She acknowledges the complexity and variety of community heritage projects across the two sectors, stressing for example the fact that a community heritage initiative emerging from the “unofficial” heritage sector may, over time, come to adopt the professional standards and practices associated with the official sector (2007b: 9). She also addresses one of the ways in which wider public and governmental policies can influence heritage projects and sites within the “unofficial” heritage sector: “many grass-

roots heritage initiatives will seek financial or advisory support from institutions linked to national or central government. This often means they have to incorporate the most recent trends in state policy in their initial application and then report on the initiative's contribution to these areas" (Crooke 2007b: 15-16). Crooke further stresses the role of grassroots community heritage initiatives in creating "new 'circuits of power' and sustainable community networks" (2006: 172). However, her analysis focuses on the development of such networks within the community group responsible for the creation and management of a specific heritage sites, rather than between several different, linked communities. This chapter seeks to further develop this idea of the network, building upon Crooke's analysis of the complex and overlapping motivations of public museums' decisions to engage with community groups and, conversely, communities' decisions to engage in heritage-based activities.

Crooke's emphasis on the role of community heritage as a point of intersection between official and "unofficial" interests echoes James Clifford's concept of the museum as "contact zone" (1997). This concept is also addressed by Corinne Kratz and Ivan Karp in their introduction to the edited volume *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/ Global Transformations* (Kratz et al/ 2006). They argue that the idea of the "contact zone", "a power-charged set of exchanges, of push and pull" between the museum and the community group whose history it seeks to represent" (Clifford 1997: 192), is too spatially bounded, obscuring the way in which "contests and debates arise from both within and outside the museum, shaped by museum contexts yet still also related to and often embedded in other contexts, institutions, and processes"

(Kratz and Karp 2006: 2). Instead, they propose the term “museum frictions” as a means by which to understand the museum as a social technology, “a varied and often changing set of practices, processes, and interactions” (Kratz and Karp: 2). They further argue that such an understanding of museums is particularly relevant in light of the increasingly complex international and transnational global connections that shape contemporary museological theory and practice. Kratz and Karp’s emphasis on the multiplicity and diversity of interested parties, or stakeholders, that exist both within and outside the heritage sector is particularly relevant to this research project. The Welsh American heritage sites which form the basis of this study illustrate the transnational connections and influences to which museums can be subject: as community-based heritage sites which address Welsh culture and identity outside the geographically bounded territory of Wales they simultaneously face inward to their local Welsh American communities and outward to a wider, global Welsh community. Stakeholders at the four sites are drawn from a variety of contexts, whether community-based, regional, national or international.

Having noted some important arguments concerning how we analyse and understand the relationships between museums, heritage sites and communities, this chapter argues that the complexities of the inter-relationships between the official and unofficial heritage sectors needs further investigation. Findings at the four Welsh American community-based heritage sites suggest that their stakeholders are drawn, firstly, both from within and outside the museum sector, and, secondly, from both the official and unofficial heritage sectors. Further, these stakeholders are drawn from across a

mixture of local, regional, national, transnational and global contexts.

Having identified the key literature, this chapter now turns to an analysis of the three different stakeholder groups (community-based, academic and professional) which influence and are involved in the construction and representation of Welsh American community and identity at the four case study sites, and the relationships between these groups. In the process links between the four sites are uncovered and a picture emerges of a transnational Welsh heritage network that incorporates elements of both official and unofficial heritage sectors.

Key stakeholders at the Welsh American heritage sites

This project's four case study sites (the North American Festival of Wales, held in 2005 in Disney World, Orlando, Florida and in 2006 in Cincinnati, Ohio; the Welsh Nationality Room at the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and the Welsh American Heritage Museum in Oak Hill, Ohio) are, in essence, community-based heritage initiatives: each has developed directly from the community it serves (see the introduction for a more detailed description of all four sites, pp. 20-45). Each of the sites is organised and run primarily by volunteer enthusiasts drawn from the community-based groups and societies responsible for their creation, under the guidance of a board of trustees and officers. Each is principally supported by donations, membership fees and fundraising programmes.

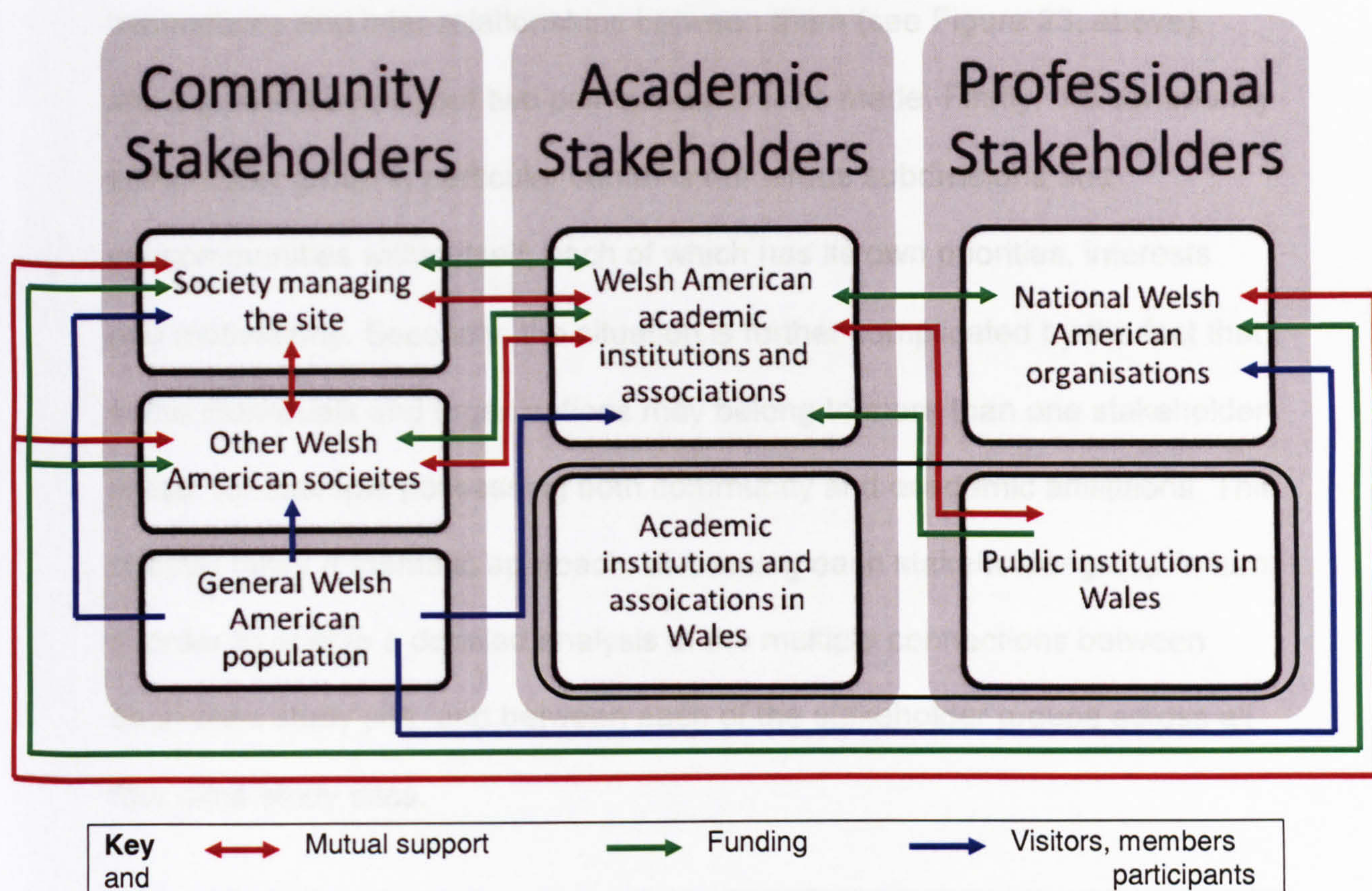


Figure 23 The relationships between different stakeholder groups at a Welsh American community-based heritage site

However, community groups and societies are not the only stakeholder group at each site. Other groups are: academic stakeholders, comprising a number of colleges, universities and scholarly associations with connections to one or more of the four sites; and professional stakeholders, encompassing several large-scale North American Welsh organisations who fund or otherwise support the sites' activities and a range of businesses from both Wales and the US with an interest in the Welsh American market. The different motivations of these three stakeholder groups (community, academic and professional) for their involvement in the four heritage sites, and the

connections and inter-relationships between them (see Figure 23, above), are discussed below, but two points must first be made. Firstly, the community stakeholder group in particular contains numerous subdivisions and subcommunities within itself, each of which has its own priorities, interests and motivations. Secondly, the situation is further complicated by the fact that some individuals and organisations may belong to more than one stakeholder group, for example possessing both community and academic affiliations. This chapter takes a thematic approach, discussing each stakeholder group in turn, in order to enable a detailed analysis of the multiple connections between each case study site, and between each of the stakeholder groups across all four case study sites.

Stakeholder group 1: community

The community stakeholder group is the largest of the three stakeholder groups in the case of each heritage site. It contains three sub-groups. The first comprises the community-based societies responsible for the creation and management of the four case study sites: the Welsh American Heritage Museum Society (the Welsh American Heritage Museum); the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh (the Welsh Nationality Room); and the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association (the NAFOW). The second sub-group consists of various other Welsh American community groups, projects, societies and individuals who possess links to the sites. Finally, the general self-identifying Welsh American population, a key source of visitors, members and

participants at the four sites, form the third sub-group. Each of these three sub-groups will be discussed in turn.

Welsh American societies

The community-based societies responsible for the creation of the four Welsh American heritage sites can themselves be further subdivided into two groups: firstly, the ordinary members, who pay annual membership fees and form a core audience at each of the sites; and secondly, the trustees, officers and committees who are responsible for the day-to-day management of the sites. The St. David's Society of Pittsburgh for example, which led the campaign to establish a Welsh Nationality Room at the University of Pittsburgh, is managed by four officers (president, vice president, secretary/ treasurer and nationality room treasurer) and a board of fourteen directors (St. David's Society of Pittsburgh n.d.). A subcommittee drawn from these officers and directors has overall responsibility for the Welsh Nationality Room project, leading the fundraising campaign and overseeing the work of the architects and builders (Powell, pers. comm.). In a very similar way, the Welsh American Heritage Museum is governed by a group of trustees and officers, including a president, treasurer and curator (Bangert, pers. comm.). The way in which the NAFOW, the largest of the case study sites, is managed is the most complex. Its organising body, the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association (WNGGA) is a non-profit organisation managed by ten elected officers (including a president, executive director, secretary and treasurer) and a board of around twenty trustees, representing three geographical areas: the United States East (nine trustees); the United States West (six trustees); and Canada (five

trustees) (WNGGA 2004). Each individual NAFOW is organised and run by a local planning committee, which generally includes one or more trustees, together with members of local Welsh American community groups, “under the guidance of the Board of Directors of the WNGGA, with the assistance of many volunteers” (Baskwill n.d.). WNGGA trustees and officers may also serve on one of several subcommittees, dealing with areas such as scholarships, grants and publishing (WNGGA 2007).

Other Welsh American community organisations

The second core sub-group within the community stakeholder group incorporates the numerous other Welsh American community groups, projects, societies and individuals which possess links to one or more of the case study sites. These links are commonly ones of mutual support. For example, the St. David’s Society of Pittsburgh’s campaign to establish a Welsh Nationality Room at the University of Pittsburgh has received donations from a large number of Welsh American and Welsh Canadian societies and individuals, including the WNGGA and the philanthropists Evan and Elizabeth Davis, who are also closely involved in the Welsh American Heritage Museum (National Library of Wales 2007). Similar links of mutual support exist between the NAFOW/ WNGGA and numerous localised Welsh American and Welsh Canadian community groups and projects, which can apply to become Associated Members of the WNGGA (Baskwill n.d.).

The Welsh American Heritage Museum is part of a network of Welsh American organisations and events in the Jackson and Gallia Counties area

of south east Ohio. Other members of the network are: the Central Southeast Gymanfa Association, which holds an annual *cymanfaoedd pregethu* (preaching and hymn singing assembly); a St. David's Day committee; the Cardigan Welsh Club, the local Welsh American society; and the Madog Center for Welsh Studies at the University of Rio Grande. There is a significant degree of overlap in the membership and officers of these five organisations which extends to their trustees and officers, and as a result their committee meetings are sometimes combined:

[T]he president [of the Welsh American Heritage Museum Society]... calls the meetings and this one, the first one will be a large combined meeting. It's going to be the St. David's committee, the Gymanfa committee, the Museum committee, the Welsh Club committee and he's going to have Tim Jilg [the then director] come up and represent the Madog Center. So we're going to have all the Welsh things at the same meeting...so that we don't tread on each others' toes. (Bangert, pers. comm.)

As a stakeholder in the Welsh American Heritage Museum, the Madog Center represents a mixture of both community and academic interests. It is an academic institution offering undergraduate courses in Welsh language, history and literature, but its establishment was due in large part to the efforts of the same Evan and Elizabeth Davis mentioned earlier in this chapter, making it in effect a part of the local Welsh American community network. Links such as these between the four case study sites and other Welsh American societies and organisations make it necessary to talk of a geographically scattered network of community stakeholders at each site, of which the organisation that runs the site is only one.

General Welsh American population

The third and final sub-group of the community stakeholder group are the self-identifying Welsh American and Welsh Canadian populations. They make up the majority of visitors, members and participants at the four case study sites and other associated Welsh American community-based groups, societies and organisations. Their diverse interests and motivations for visiting the sites will be discussed in the following chapter (chapter five). The motivations behind community groups and organisations such as the WNGGA, the Welsh American Heritage Museum Society or the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh's decisions to engage in heritage-based activities are discussed below.

Community Stakeholder Motivations

Key motivations behind a community group's decision to engage in heritage-based or museum-like activities include both a desire to preserve elements of a vanishing way of life of a particular area and a desire for self-representation, to tell one's own story – one which may not have been told before or which may have been misrepresented (Watson 2007, Crooke 2005, 2006, 2007).

Both of these motivations are evident at the four case study sites. The mission statement of the WNGGA, for example, illustrates the desire to safeguard Welsh American cultural traditions:

The Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association strives to preserve, develop, and promote our Welsh religious and cultural heritage and our religious and cultural traditions, including but not limited to the Gymanfa Ganu, and to do all things necessary and proper to accomplish and enhance the same. (WNGGA 2007)

Similarly, the Welsh American Heritage Museum was established as a result of the local Welsh American community's desire to preserve the Welsh Congregational Church building in the village of Oak Hill. The creation of a museum was almost accidental:

Well, mainly we wanted to save the building...we wanted to preserve it and you couldn't just let it stand there empty, you had to do something with it and so we...named it the Welsh American Heritage Museum and...let people know it was available, so then we started getting donations. Everything in there has been donated, nothing's been purchased. (Bangert, pers. comm.)

In contrast, the Welsh Nationality Room campaign was primarily motivated by the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh's desire for official and public recognition of Pittsburgh's Welsh American community, as the president of the Society, Dave Williams, explained:

I feel it [the Welsh Nationality Room] will be very important to local Welsh Americans. The Welsh played a major role in the development of the state of Pennsylvania, including much of the industry in the Pittsburgh area...There has never been an enduring monument to remind us...of the pioneering role that Welsh immigrants have played. This will be that monument – a permanent museum of Welsh heritage. (pers. comm.)

Ideas of community building and empowerment, as illustrated in the latter quote, represent another key community motivation at each of the four sites. The creation of a community heritage site or event offers Welsh American community groups a space in which they can tell the stories of their community to themselves, a space in which to construct and express community identity (Crooke, 2007b: 7-26). The importance of such sites in processes of community building is illustrated by the following description of the role of the National Gymanfa Ganu (part of the NAFOW) by Dr. John Ellis, the executive director of the WNGGA: "a great social occasion for the often

scattered Welsh Americans...In a very real way these 'gymanfas' crystallized the larger Welsh American community into physical form" (pers. comm.). A further motivating factor behind community groups' decisions to engage in heritage-based activities, one which is closely linked to the desire to preserve Welsh American cultural traditions, is that of the intergenerational transmission of these traditions. The Welsh American community is an aging one: almost three-quarters of the Welsh Americans surveyed across the four sites were aged fifty-five or over (see page 256). Numerous references were made in the sites' literature, visitor surveys and interviews with staff to the need to attract younger Americans of Welsh descent to the societies, sites and events. For example, the NAFOW 2005 festival programme states that: "[w]e welcome our children as well. They represent the future of this festival and its sponsoring organisation, the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association" (WNGGA 2005b). The desire to educate others about Welsh and Welsh American culture and identity is also a key motivation of academic stakeholders at the four case study sites.

Stakeholder group 2: academic

A number of academic organisations and institutions are stakeholders at one or more of the four case study sites, including: the Madog Center at the University of Rio Grande, Ohio; the North American Association for the Study of Welsh Culture and History (NAASWCH); and the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Madog Center and NAASWCH are organisations with a specific Welsh focus and possess close links with several Welsh American

community groups. The University of Pittsburgh, in contrast, has a more abstract interest in Welsh cultural activities in the US. It will host the Welsh Nationality Room, which upon its completion will become part of the University's "museum" of nationality rooms, each illustrating the architectural styles and cultures of a of a nation, state or region from which immigrant groups in the Pittsburgh area originated (University of Pittsburgh 2000).

The Madog Center was established in 1996 as an offshoot of NAASWCH, whose inaugural conference was held at the University of Rio Grande in 1995. Its dual status as both a community and academic stakeholder has already been discussed. The Center's mission is "to foster understanding and appreciation for Welsh heritage and contemporary Welsh culture" (Madog Center n.d.). It offers minor studies courses in Welsh history, language and literature to students at the University of Rio Grande, runs an annual student exchange programme with Trinity College Carmarthen (part of the University of Wales federation) and has also recently created an online interactive Welsh language course, "The Lingo", aimed at distance learners (Madog Center n.d.). The Center is closely associated with a number of Welsh American groups, organisations and events. As well as its connections within the local Welsh American community of Jackson and Gallia Counties, discussed earlier, it is also a lifetime member of NAASWCH, the WNGGA, the National Welsh American Foundation and the Welsh North American Chamber of Commerce⁵ (Madog Center n.d.). The Madog Center is an active

⁵ The Welsh North American Chamber of Commerce was established in 1999 as a networking channel for people with strong business interests with Wales and for Welsh expatriates now living and working in either the USA or Canada. In 2007 it merged with the Wales-based

participant in the NAFOW, sponsoring a Welsh language class as part of the Festival's seminar programme and maintaining a stall in the marketplace (NAFOW 2005, 2006).

The North American Association for the Study of Welsh Culture and History (NAASWCH) was established in 1995 as a multidisciplinary and transnational association of academics, teachers and individuals with an interest in Welsh history and culture. Its mission is:

[T]o (1) promote scholarship on all aspects of Welsh history and culture; (2) develop connections between teachers and scholars...in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom; (3) provide an intellectual forum in which teachers and scholars...can share their research and teaching experience; and (4) provide support for the study of Welsh-North American culture and history. (NAASWCH 2004)

NAASWCH holds a biennial conference, at which papers are presented by a mix of Welsh and North American scholars, as a former president, Dr. Roderic Owen, explained (pers. comm.). It also publishes the North American Journal of Welsh Studies twice a year, which includes articles originally presented at the conferences. NAASWCH plays an active role in the network of Welsh American cultural and heritage activities. Like the Madog Center it sponsors a seminar as part of the NAFOW, generally given by a Welsh or a North American scholar on an aspect of Welsh history or culture. For example, at the 2005 Festival it sponsored a poetry reading by the Welsh poet Peter Finch, while at the 2006 Festival it sponsored a presentation by the American historian Anne Knowles on Welsh immigration to Ohio (NAFOW 2005, 2006). NAASWCH is also closely associated with a number of academics and

academic institutions in Wales: its executive committee includes an Advisory Council in Wales comprising “at least three scholars of Welsh history or language...[who] offer advice and support to the North American Association for the Study of Welsh Culture and History” (NAASWCH 2004).

The University of Pittsburgh is another stakeholder that resists easy categorisation: its interest, motivations and goals in relation to the Welsh Nationality Room project fit the definitions of both the academic and the professional stakeholder groups. As an academic stakeholder, it is more site-specific than the Madog Center or NAASWCH, being solely concerned with the Welsh Nationality Room project led by the St. David’s Society of Pittsburgh. Its nationality room “museum” project was established in 1938 and is intended as a learning resource for university students, local residents and tourists:

These beautiful rooms...are a very real and important part of education at the University of Pittsburgh. They are classrooms that are themselves teachers...They represent the best and noblest heritage of the nationality groups which have helped make Pittsburgh an industrial and cultural capital of the world. (University of Pittsburgh 2000)

Nationality rooms already in existence include: German; Japanese; Greek; African; Yugoslav; Scottish; and Norwegian. The rooms are simultaneously working classrooms, used for university lectures and seminars, and memorials or monuments to the various immigrant groups that have settled in the Pittsburgh area. The University maintains close links with the community societies, such as the St. David’s Society of Pittsburgh, who have led the campaigns to establish “their” rooms. Some of these societies now fund scholarships enabling students or faculty members to study abroad, while others sponsor or organise concerts, exhibitions and social events to be held

in “their” room (University of Pittsburgh 2000). The St. David’s Society of Pittsburgh, for example, is hoping to be able to hold St. David’s Day celebrations in the Welsh Nationality Room following its completion. As an academic stakeholder, the University of Pittsburgh’s interest in the development of the Welsh Nationality Room can be divided into two main areas: firstly, that the room functions as a modern classroom, incorporating modern technology such as air conditioning and a PowerPoint project screen; and secondly, that it represents an “outstanding architectural or design tradition [of Wales]...prior to 1787, the date of the United States Constitution” (University of Pittsburgh 2000).

Academic Stakeholder Motivations

The motivations of the academic stakeholders identified above for their involvement in the four Welsh American sites centre around a desire to expand and improve awareness of and scholarship on Welsh culture and history, and the culture and history of the Welsh in North America. Evidence for this motivation is seen in the sponsorship of seminars at the NAFOW by the Madog Center and NAASWCH. The purpose of these seminars is to expand festival participants’ knowledge and understanding of both historical and contemporary Welsh culture; by sponsoring a seminar these two academic stakeholders are helping to advance that aim. The exchange programme run by the Madog Center between the University of Rio Grande and Trinity College Carmarthen, as well as the close links between North American and Welsh scholars fostered by NAASWCH are further evidence of

this motivation. A second key motivation is the promotion of Welsh culture and history as an area for research and teaching. This is, in effect, the *raison d'être* of NAASWCH. Similarly, the courses in Welsh history, language and literature provided by the Madog Center reflect this motivation, with a particular focus on attracting and educating younger generations. As discussed earlier in this chapter, this is a major concern of the aging Welsh American population.

The nationality rooms at the University of Pittsburgh play a similar educational role:

University classes meet in the...rooms...amidst surroundings designed to enhance the learning experience...A steady stream of people – often families of three generations – come to see the world-famous rooms, which evoke pride in their own heritage and warm appreciation of others. (University of Pittsburgh 2000)

This quote from the guidebook to the nationality rooms also reflects a multicultural agenda and a further motivation in the University of Pittsburgh's support of the campaign to create a Welsh Nationality Room: to foster acceptance of ethnic diversity. Other important motivations are tourism and the enlistment of local audiences: the development of a Welsh Nationality Room will foster a closer relationship between the University and the local Welsh American community, who may contribute to the University's work in the form of scholarships or by organising events to be held in the room. Similarly, the inclusion of a Welsh Nationality Room will attract more Welsh and Welsh American tourists, as the architects designing the room predict:

Marty Powell: ...Probably every Welshman in shouting distance will come by.

Kathy Horstmann: And...I imagine the donors will bring people through too...We've had a lot of ownership from societies around

Pennsylvania and the general Welsh community across the country. So we've got people feeling that ownership and so they will, it'll be important to them, it will be their room and not just ours here in Pittsburgh. (pers. comm.)

Stakeholder group 3: professional

Professional stakeholders across the four sites can be divided into three subgroups. The first is that of Welsh organisations with a North American remit, such as the National Welsh American Foundation and the WNGGA. These, and similar organisations, could equally be defined as community stakeholders, having generally developed from and are run by members of the Welsh American community. However, the fact that they are not associated with a particular localised Welsh American community, providing support and assistance to Welsh groups, events and sites across the US and Canada, differentiates them from other community stakeholders. The WNGGA, because of its direct involvement in the management of one of the case study sites, the NAFOW, has been classed as a community stakeholder for the purposes of this study. The second subgroup comprises the Welsh Assembly Government and its associated organisations, which are interested in raising the profile of Wales in the US and in promoting investment, trade and tourism between the two countries. The Welsh Assembly Government's activities in the US are co-ordinated through the Wales International Centre in New York, established in 2002 to incorporate the activities of Wales Trade International,

the Welsh Development Agency⁶, the Welsh Tourist Board (now Visit Wales) and other organisations (Welsh Assembly Government 2002). The third and final subgroup is made up of businesses with an interest in attracting Welsh American customers, including both Wales-based companies and businesses owned by self-identifying Welsh Americans.

Welsh organisations with a North American remit

The National Welsh American Foundation was established in 1980 and:

[P]romotes and shares the history and culture of Welsh Americans; co-ordinates cultural and educational activities of Welsh Americans; encourages the exchange of artists and scholars between Wales and the US...; provides financial assistance through scholarships, fellowships and study grants; assures an effective voice for Welsh Americans; and supports Welsh American groups in their relationships with corporate, philanthropic and governmental organizations. (National Welsh American Foundation n.d.)

In effect, it functions as both a funding body and advocate for the geographically scattered and diverse Welsh American population. It is a charitable organisation, supported by membership fees and donations, and its members are drawn from both the US and Wales. The Foundation runs an exchange scholarship programme and provides grants to organisations in both the US, Canada and Wales. Recipients have included the inaugural NAASWCH conference in Ohio, the restoration of a Welsh Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles, and the Merthyr Tydfil Heritage Trust in Wales (National Welsh American Foundation n.d.). The Foundation also awards an

⁶ Wales Trade International and the Welsh Development Agency were combined by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2006 to form International Business Wales (UK Trade and Investment 2007)

annual Heritage Medallion to “recognize a Welsh American for services to the Welsh American community or one whose prominence has brought credit to the Welsh American community”. It is particularly associated with the NAFOW, co-sponsoring the Grand Banquet at which the Heritage Medallion is awarded.

Welsh Assembly Government

In contrast, the Welsh Assembly Government’s interest in Welsh American cultural and heritage activities is based on its aims to strengthen the economic, cultural, educational and political links between Wales and the US. A number of government initiatives and organisations are involved in its efforts to engage with Welsh American and general American audiences, including: Visit Wales, whose website has a separate area, Homecoming Wales, aimed at attracting tourism from the Welsh diaspora; and International Business Wales (formerly Wales Trade International and the Welsh Development Agency), the trade and investment arm of the Welsh Assembly Government. The activities of these organisations in the US are co-ordinated through the Wales International Centre, based in the Chrysler Building in New York, which also provides business facilities and office space for Welsh companies seeking to enter the US market (Welsh Assembly Government 2002). The Welsh Assembly Government sponsors an event at the NAFOW, Cinema Wales, which shows a number of films made or set in Wales. Films shown at the 2005 and 2006 Festivals included: *The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill But Came Down a Mountain*, a romantic comedy set in 1920s Wales starring

Hugh Grant; *The Star-Spangled Dragon*, a documentary tracing the impact of the Welsh on the development of the US; *Gadael Lenin*, a Welsh-language film made by S4C set in Russia; and *Porc Pei*, another Welsh-language film from S4C (NAFOW 2005, 2006). Visit Wales also maintains a stall in the Festival's marketplace, providing tourist brochures and information to participants. Other Welsh Assembly Government initiatives in the US include: Wales Week in New York, established in 2003 as a week long celebration of Welsh art, film, music, business, theatre and food; and "Keeping Up With The Joneses: the story of Wales and the Welsh in the USA", a travelling exhibition which details the history of Welsh immigration to the US from colonial times to the present day. The exhibition opened at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum in New York in June 2006 and has since toured several universities and colleges in areas of high Welsh settlement, including the Madog Center at the University of Rio Grande, Ohio.

Commercial businesses

Businesses, whether a Welsh-based company producing Welsh-themed goods or a company owned by a self-identifying Welsh American are another professional stakeholder subgroup. They are particularly linked with the NAFOW, in whose marketplace a range of Welsh and American businesses, promoting and selling a wide variety of Welsh-themed goods and services. Items on sale range at the 2005 and 2006 festivals ranged from the expected, such as love spoons, books on Welsh history and Welsh flags, to the bizarre: Welsh family tartans and "*cilts*", and Welsh cookies. Welsh and Welsh

American businesses also participate in more localised Welsh American events, such as the St. David's Day celebrations of a community group or society. The variety of Welsh-themed goods and services available is evidence of the trend towards the commodification of culture and heritage. The purchase of such goods and services offers self-identifying Welsh Americans a tangible and material way in which to claim, perform and consume Welsh identity (Dicks 2003, see also chapter six, this text).

Professional Stakeholder Motivations

The motivations of professional stakeholders for their involvement in the four case study sites centre around the opportunity to expand their audience or customer bases and to generate income. These motivations can be seen in the Welsh Assembly Government's various American projects: the travelling exhibition on the history of Welsh settlement in the US, the Visit Wales stall in the marketplace of the NAFOW and its sponsorship of showings of a number of films made in, set in or about Wales. Similarly, the various Welsh and Welsh American businesses who hire stalls in the Festival's marketplace are motivated by the opportunity to market their products to a broader audience drawn from across North America. The National Welsh American Foundation in contrast, is primarily motivated by the desire to increase recognition and awareness of the presence and contribution of Welsh immigrants and Welsh Americans to the US, funding grants for the development, restoration or preservation of Welsh American sites, cultural activities and academic organisations (National Welsh American Foundation n.d.). Finally, the

opportunity to develop closer relationships between themselves and community groups is another motivation of professional stakeholders. A representative of the Wales International Centre, for example, felt that the Welsh American community represented a potential source of “ambassadors” for Wales in the US. Similarly, the Nationality Room project of the University of Pittsburgh (discussed in the previous section) enables the University to build closer and more productive relationships with local ethnic community groups.

Negotiating Community and Identity at Welsh American Heritage Sites

The preceding discussion highlights the diverse range of individuals, groups and organisations with an interest in the operation and activities of the four case study sites. In doing so, it shows that it is simplistic to describe any of the four sites as examples of community-based or “bottom up” heritage activity, despite the fact that each has developed from the Welsh American community and is managed by members of that community. Rather, these sites are part of a larger network of Welsh cultural activities in the US, of which the various stakeholder groups discussed above are also members. As members of this network, the ways in which the NAFOW, the Welsh Nationality Room and the Welsh American Heritage Museum operate – their roles, remits and the way in which they construct and represent Welsh American community and identity – both influence and are influenced by the agendas and interests of other members. The complex processes of negotiation and regulation through which the sites operate, and the “power charged set of exchanges” (Clifford

1997: 192) between stakeholders at each of the sites, are investigated in the following examples.

Community Cultural Centre or Academic Resource?

The Welsh American Heritage Museum is the case study site that is closest to the classic definition of a community-based heritage initiative: established by members of the local Welsh American community, it is supported by donations and membership fees from both that community and the wider Welsh-identifying population, and managed by volunteers. The museum is currently approaching a time of potential major changes to the way in which it is managed. Many of the volunteer staff and members of the board of trustees are becoming increasingly elderly and there are concerns as to what will happen to the museum in the future, as the curator, Mildred Bangert, explained:

[To me] the museum represents a thirty-five year stint of doing all I can to keep Welshness alive, active and a part of not only this area but the state, the nation and in Wales. I do wonder, as I get older and not able to do as much as I could, who will step in? Will the University of Rio Grande take it on or...If we could interest the young people, which is what we're trying to do...we could survive. (pers. comm.)

Bangert is uncertain as to whether the future of the museum lies with the University of Rio Grande and its Welsh studies department, the Madog Center, or with younger members of the local Welsh American community. A greater or more active role in the management of the museum by the University or the Madog Center would represent a shift in power from the local community towards an external, professional organisation. Such a power shift can be understood as an institutionalisation of heritage, a process through

which, over time, a community heritage initiative within the unofficial sector takes on the characteristics of the official heritage sector, such as professional standards of collections care and exhibition techniques (Crooke 2007b: 9).

This transition often occurs when community museums and heritage initiatives move beyond self-sufficiency: while “links with their communities of origin usually remain strong...power often shifts from the community to the museum as an institution when paid staff undertake some of the work previously done by volunteers” (Watson 2007: 9). The Welsh American Heritage Museum may be beginning to move beyond community self-sufficiency: as the individuals who founded, managed and sustained the site since the early 1970s continue to age, the need grows for a new source of managers, whether in the form of younger members of the local community or an external professional organisation such as the Madog Center.

The local Welsh American community of Jackson and Gallia Counties is divided between those who would like to see the Madog Center play a greater role in the management and activities of the Welsh American Heritage Museum and those who wish to maintain the status quo. The Madog Center in effect represents a second or rival focus for Welsh cultural activities in south east Ohio. Although, in common with the Welsh American Heritage Museum, members of the local Welsh American community played an important role in its creation (National Library of Wales 2007), it is an academic institution. As such, the Madog Center’s position in relation to the local area’s Welsh American heritage differs from that of the Welsh American Heritage Museum, and its motivations, agendas and priorities for participation in heritage activity are also different. In particular, tensions exist between the two regarding the

museum's primary role and the way in which it is managed. To the Madog Center, the museum and its collection represent a valuable resource, a potential archive of information about the history of Welsh settlement in the region. In contrast, perceptions of the museum's purpose by the curator, Mildred Bangert, centre on its role as a focus for Welsh American community activities:

We have an annual carol sing...and then of course the Gymanfa meets here every third year, and that's been going on well over a hundred years...The St. David's Day Committee is a little offshoot of the museum that organises the celebrations every March 1st...basically we're active in the community. (pers. comm.)

The museum currently functions as a social and cultural centre for the local Welsh American community, a space in which self-identifying Welsh Americans who were brought up in or live in the region can come together to recall community (Crooke 2006: 175). The objects in the museum's collection represent the history of that community in tangible form, operating as concrete markers of a shared history, culture and experiences – in other words, as markers of a sense of belonging, as these responses to the visitor survey at the site illustrate:

My great-grandfather's tools are in the museum, which means a lot to me - it's a link back to him...The museum brings the whole community together...it's a memorial to what this area was and the people who founded the area and brought their culture. (D17)

I donated a photo of my mother and uncle [to the museum]...She was a piano teacher and he was part of a singing quartet with his brothers. The museum says a lot about the Welsh people who lived in this area...all the objects on display are part of our past. (D1)

However, other members of the local Welsh American community think that more could be done with the collection in terms of the way in which it is displayed, interpreted and cared for:

I feel very strongly that [the museum collection]...needs to be catalogued by a proper archivist. Some items also need to be put into climate control...The Madog Center would be able to do this more successfully than the museum currently can. (D10)

I'm involved [in the museum] as much as I can be, but it's Mildred's domain. I have my own ideas – more control by the University or the Madog Center for one and more interpretation of the stories behind the objects for another. (D23)

These quotes show that some members of the community feel that the museum could be better or more effectively managed by the Madog Center or the University of Rio Grande.

A similar tension was identified by Andrea Witcomb during her time as consultant to a local community museum in Queensland, Australia. Some members of the museum's managing committee "thought it was enough to pay the rates, hold an annual fete and keep the doors open", while others "thought they should be doing more with the collection" (2003: 97). Witcomb identifies a number of factors which contributed to this division, including the distance committee members lived from the museum, differences in their social and economic status, and differing motivations for their involvement in the management of the museum. Several of these factors can also be applied to the case of the Welsh American Heritage Museum. Firstly, in terms of a geographical divide, Mildred Bangert, the curator and the person responsible for the day-to-day management of the site, lives directly opposite the museum. She feels that the location of her home was a deciding factor in her becoming the curator: "I'm curator just because I live across the street and I'm so handy, I guess I'm a glorified janitor or keeper of the keys maybe" (pers. comm.). However, it also means that she is effectively on site at all times, a fact that gives her a great degree of power and control over the way in which

the museum is managed and the activities that take place there. In contrast, the Madog Center and the University of Rio Grande are located around twelve miles away from the museum, in the nearby town of Rio Grande. Secondly, there is a difference in motivations between the Madog Center and the museum's trustees and officers. The latter arguably perceive their role in managing the museum as a means of gaining and maintaining social status within the local Welsh American community. Many members of this group, including Bangert, are also trustees or officers of one or more other local Welsh American organisations, such as the Gymanfa Ganu Association of Southeast Ohio, the St. David's Committee or the Cardigan Club (Bangert, pers. comm.). As such they represent a core group of "insiders" within the local Welsh American community: community leaders who define the nature and identity of that community. In comparison, the Madog Center is a relative outsider: established in 1996, it is a newcomer to the region's Welsh cultural sphere in comparison to the museum (established 1971) and the annual *gymanfa ganu* (established in 1872). The relationship between the Madog Center and the community "insiders" who manage the Welsh American Heritage Museum is one of an ongoing process of negotiation regarding their relative power and authority to determine the nature and scope of local Welsh cultural activities.

"Museum of Welsh Heritage" or Themed Teaching Classroom?

A similar process of negotiation between community and academic interests has been played out in the Welsh Nationality Room project, in the form of the

relationships between the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh and the University of Pittsburgh. To the University, the Welsh Nationality Room is to be a themed, yet fully functioning, classroom that will represent another aspect of Pittsburgh's multicultural heritage. To the Society, the Welsh Nationality Room represents "an enduring monument to...the pioneering role that Welsh immigrants have played...a permanent museum of Welsh heritage", as its president, Dave Williams, explained (pers. comm.). These roles, as university classroom and a museum-cum-memorial to the local Welsh American community, are not necessarily complementary.

The issue of who owns the Welsh Nationality Room is a complex one. The Society has led the campaign for its creation, lobbying the University to approve the project in 2001 and raising the \$450, 000 needed, as Jack Owen, co-chair of the Society's Welsh Nationality Room committee, explained (pers. comm.). It has also had a significant input into the design process, selecting the architects and choosing the design concept. Following its completion, the Society hopes to use the room for meetings and events, making it a focus for Welsh American social and cultural activities in the Pittsburgh area. They are, as the principal architect, Marty Powell, describes, "invested psychologically as well as financially in this" (pers. comm.). However the University has also played an active role in the design process, setting "the overall parameters of the room...the number of students to be accommodated and the instructional equipment needed. They also specified that the architectural style had to predate 1787 and had final approval on the theme and design" (Williams, D. pers. comm.). Furthermore, "[w]hen the room is completed, the University takes ownership and is responsible for all future maintenance and upkeep"

(Williams, D. pers. comm.). This will represent a transferral of power and authority from the Society to the University, something which the project architect, Kathy Horstmann, felt that “the St. David’s Society people don’t want to happen anytime soon” (pers. comm.).

One way in which the Society has exercised its control of the Welsh Nationality Room project during the design phase is by building a close relationship with the architects responsible for designing the room. Both Marty Powell and Kathy Horstmann possess some Welsh ancestry and are members of the Society. Horstmann joined the Society when she moved to the Pittsburgh area in 2003, prior to her appointment as project architect. She is also a member of the Society’s Board of Directors, “so on matters of voting and control Kathy steps out from the Board so there’s no conflict of interest” (Powell, pers. comm.). Powell himself was asked to join the Society after being appointed as principal architect for the Welsh Nationality Room project and explains that “the reason I was asked, and it seemed only appropriate – fair – to be a member while I was being the architect for the Nationality Room [was] so I could...be a better designer for the project and listen to my clients’ [the St. David’s Society] aspirations” (Powell, pers. comm.). Based on their surnames, it seems that most architects who have been involved in designing a nationality room possessed either an ancestral or direct link to that nation. The University of Pittsburgh sees such a link between the architects and the nation whose cultural identity they are trying to represent as a way of “ensuring authenticity of design” (University of Pittsburgh 2000). Echoing this statement, Powell jokes that one reason why the St. David’s Society 2001 campaign for a Welsh Nationality Room had succeeded when several

previous attempts had failed was down to “the fact that there was an architect named Powell” (pers. comm.), a common Welsh surname.

The architects have had the difficult task of trying to balance the needs and desires of the University and the Society. In particular, this process of mediation is evident in regard to several of the design features of the Welsh Nationality Room, which will represent a late eighteenth century nonconformist Welsh chapel, complete with pews, pulpit and an attached minister's residence. The University is concerned as to whether this design will function as a classroom, able to accommodate the teaching technology (data projector, computer, etc), air conditioning systems and health and safety policies required, as Kathy Horstmann explains:

They [the University] would say... “get rid of the box pews, it's taking up too much space” and they said it'd be like being put in a penalty box... so we changed it so we had more family [box] pews – which seat three or four – so now the concern is more that couples... would go in there and have a nice snog while the professor was talking... (pers. comm.)

The University also has some concerns that the pulpit, which is intended to stand in front of the room's large bay window, will block too much light, an opinion which Kathy Horstmann rejects: “it's the pulpit, it's one of the characteristics of the nonconformist chapel, in fact of any chapel... we've got plenty of room, plenty of window left, plenty of light – it's not going to be dark and in fact it'll be very effective” (pers. comm.). These examples illustrate a tension between the University's requirement for the room to be a functional classroom and the Society's desire that it be an authentic representation of a Welsh nonconformist chapel. One of the ways in which the architects have tried to reach a compromise between the needs and desires of the St. David's Society and those of the University is by designing the pew-style seating,

which face towards a concealed data projection screen, in blocks of two and three-seaters “so that they can be picked up [and] rearranged...toward the pulpit” for use by the Society (Horstmann, pers. comm.).

In many ways, the relationship between the St. David’s Society and the University of Pittsburgh echoes the unequal distribution of power in the relationships between public museums and community groups (Witcomb 2003; Crooke 2007a). The nationality room “museums” at the University have a similar purpose as community access galleries or exhibitions in public museums: to achieve a greater engagement with local audiences and encourage community participation in the museum’s, or in this case the university’s activities. While the Society has enjoyed a great degree of freedom to determine what the Welsh Nationality Room will look like, and the narrative of Welsh culture and identity it will represent, with a great degree of freedom, the University maintains overall control of the room’s design through the parameters and requirements it must fulfil. As with any community exhibition within museum or other public institution, it is also important to consider what stories are being told about Welsh culture and the Welsh American community by the Welsh Nationality Room, who these stories are being told by, and why. The Society’s Board of Directors are effectively the ones telling the story: they possess the power and authority to select the final design of the room. This selection of a nonconformist chapel by the Society’s Board of Directors, while in part a result of the cut off date of 1787 prescribed by the University, also reveals something about perceptions of Wales by the Society and perhaps the wider Welsh American community, privileging as it does a particular “Romantic” and rural version of Welshness (see chapter

three). Differences between these Welsh American perceptions of Welshness and contemporary Welsh identity and culture in Wales come increasingly to the fore at the NAFOW.

Focus for the Welsh Community in North America or Ambassador for Wales?

The nature and scope of each NAFOW involves ongoing processes of negotiation between multiple stakeholders, from the visitors and participants to the organisers (the WNGGA) and those sponsoring specific events. The NAFOW functions as a space in which the Welsh North American community and identity is imagined and performed: individuals, groups and organisations from across the US and Canada come together to negotiate a collective identity and forge a sense of belonging to a shared culture and heritage. In the case of the key Welsh American organisations involved in organising and managing the main events of the festival (the WNGGA, the National Welsh American Foundation, NAASWCH, the Madog Center, etc) this process of negotiation is relatively smooth, as they share similar goals regarding the preservation, promotion and support of Welsh cultural heritage in North America. Relationships between these organisations are characterised by the provision of mutual support, whether in the form of funding, sponsorship, promotion or sharing information. For example, NAASWCH helps to sponsor the Festival's seminar series and in turn its creation was funded in part by a grant from the National Welsh American Foundation. The relationship of another stakeholder, the Welsh Assembly Government, to the NAFOW is more complex, involving an interaction between the ancestral homeland

(Wales) and the diasporic community (the self-identifying Welsh population of North America). This relationship reflects a greater difference in motivations and goals, and in perceptions of Wales and Welshness.

The Welsh Assembly Government sponsors the event *Cinema Wales* at the NAFOW, a miniature film festival showcasing films made or set in Wales, and also supports the presence of a Visit Wales stall in the Festival's marketplace. Its motivations for its involvement in the NAFOW, as discussed earlier, focus on the promotion of tourism, trade and investment in Wales. Self-identifying Welsh Americans and Welsh Canadians, who make up the vast majority of the NAFOW's audience, represent not only an important tourist group but also a potential source of "ambassadors" for the promotion of Wales in North America. At the 2005 NAFOW, a representative of the Wales International Centre in New York, an overseas base for the government organisations Visit Wales and International Business Wales, explained that in the past, the films selected to be shown at the Festival had been quite esoteric and had attracted only a small audience: "[w]e wanted to represent Wales as it really is to the Welsh Americans, who cling to a nostalgic perception of Wales rather than the modern Wales of modern technologies" (pers. comm.). In 2005, perhaps in an effort to attract a larger audience, the films sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government to be shown at the NAFOW included *Star Spangled Dragon*, a documentary about the contribution made by Welsh settlers to the development of the US. The films shown at the 2006 Festival represented a mix of "traditional" views of Wales, for example *Visions of Wales*, "[b]reathtaking aerial views [of Wales] set to traditional music including the famed Welsh men's choruses" (WNGGA 2006),

and contemporary Welsh language films: including *Gadael Lenin* and *Porc Pei*, both made by S4C. *Gadael Lenin* (1993), a film about a group of Welsh sixth formers on a school trip to St. Petersburg in Russia, has been described as “placing Wales in an international context...parallels are drawn between the two countries, with the Welsh youth coming to terms with post-Thatcherite Wales as young Russians drift in post-Soviet Russia” (Woodward 2000: 52). Its portrayal of Welsh identity is very different from the version of Welshness created and represented at the NAFOW, which focuses on religion, music and song.

The selection of films such as *Gadael Lenin* and *Porc Pei* by the Welsh Assembly Government perhaps reflect its desire to communicate a more up-to-date representation of Wales, Welsh culture and identity to a North American audience. The question of how successful it has been and may be in trying to modernise American perceptions of Wales is beyond the scope of this project. However, the comment of one survey respondent at the 2006 NAFOW, when asked to describe what the festival said about Wales, is telling: “Except for bawdy movies it says that Wales has a great culture. Not all are bawdy- why didn’t they show *How Green Was My Valley* or *Proud Valley*? That’s the true Wales” (B4). This negative reaction to the version of Wales and Welshness represented in films such as *Gadael Lenin* illustrates the strong influence films like *How Green Was My Valley* (Ford 1941), which “spawned a million clichés about terraced streets and black faced miners, singing on the way home from the pit” (Woodward 2006: 54), continue to exert over perceptions of Wales within the diaspora. The strength of this influence is

further illustrated in the following quote from a respondent at the Welsh Nationality Room:

For a lot of us *How Green Was My Valley* was our introduction to Wales. But some people in Wales don't like that film and say Wales isn't like that. But it's real, it's what our ancestors lives were like and it tells everyone how hard their lives were and how great their culture and language and faith were. (C18)

Any analysis of the Welsh Assembly Government's ability to alter, reshape and modernise Welsh American perceptions of Wales and Welshness must take into account the power of these existing media representations of Welsh culture. It must also consider the strength and influence that versions of Welsh identity constructed, negotiated, performed and celebrated within the Welsh American heritage network have on Welsh-identifying individuals' perceptions of Wales and Welshness. Further, it is important to note that the Welsh Assembly Government, while seeking to challenge Welsh Americans' nostalgic perceptions of Wales, simultaneously plays on the strength of these perceptions in order to market Wales as a tourist destination to members of the diaspora in the Visit Wales website *Homecoming Wales*:

When you think of Wales, what springs to mind - ancient castles, 750 miles of coastline, or tongue twisting place names, perhaps?... We've also got lots and lots of castles (over 400 at the last count), the Welsh National Opera (one of the world's premier Opera Companies)...and a cool flag with a Red Dragon on it. (Visit Wales n.d.)

An alternative view of the differences between perceptions of Welsh culture and identity in Wales and by self-identifying Welsh Americans is

suggested by John Ellis, executive director of the WNGGA, the managing body of the NAFOW and its central event the National Gymanfa Ganu. Ellis argues that Welsh American culture and identity is not merely a nostalgic imitation of Welsh culture and identity based on outdated stereotypes: “[w]hat is being projected is not so much Welshness as Welsh-Americanness, which is more than just a derivative of the mother culture but has its own characteristics and traditions” (pers. comm.). The version of Welsh culture and identity created and displayed at sites such as the NAFOW and the other case study sites, with its focus on religion, music and singing, may not have much in common with contemporary Welsh culture and identity in Wales but, Ellis argues, it is “authentically rooted in the American context and experience” (pers. comm.). His argument raises issues of authenticity, “misremembering” and ownership which are common to wider debates about cultural memory (Misztal 2003; Kattago 2001). Who owns the past being displayed at these sites, a past which centres on the Welsh American experience but which also reaches back to Wales, the ancestral homeland? Who has the power to decide how that past will be represented and interpreted? Who defines what is, or is not, an authentic representation of Welshness or “Welsh-Americanness”? At primarily community-based heritage sites such as the four case studies, it is leaders of that community who hold this power. However, the NAFOW also receives financial support from institutions linked to national or central government, albeit a national government outside the nation in which the NAFOW takes place. The NAFOW’s links with the Welsh Assembly Government illustrate both the transnational network to which it and other

Welsh American heritage initiatives belong, and the tensions and processes of negotiation that emerge from this network.

Conclusions

This chapter has sought to unpick and analyse the diverse range of stakeholders whose interests, motivations and agendas shape and influence the narratives of Welsh identity constructed and represented at the four case study sites. In so doing, it has highlighted the blurred and overlapping nature of the boundary between the official and “unofficial” heritage sectors. Although the four sites are, in essence, community-based and community-led heritage initiatives, they do not fit neatly into the category of “unofficial” or grassroots heritage. Each possesses a wide variety of stakeholders drawn from both the official and “unofficial” heritage sectors, representing a mixture of community, academic and professional interests and operating across a range of local, regional, national and transnational contexts. As such, the sites' exhibitions and activities are shaped not only by the needs and desires of the community, but also by “outsiders”, individuals and organisations external to that community. There is no separation between the official and “unofficial” sectors' engagement with community heritage in this case; rather, the two sectors are interlinked and intertwined. Based on these findings, this thesis questions whether a community heritage initiative can ever be defined as belonging solely to either the official or the “unofficial” heritage sector.

The four case study sites are associated with a range of different geographically-bounded Welsh American communities: the Welsh American

Heritage Museum and the Welsh Nationality Room were created by local Welsh community groups in Oak Hill, Ohio and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania respectively, while the NAFOW is linked to a broader North American Welsh audience. This chapter has further identified the numerous links and relationships that exist between the four sites and other Welsh organisations in US, Canada and Wales in the form of mutual support, funding, members and visitors. As such, it argues that the four sites are members of a transnational Welsh heritage network, incorporating stakeholders from within both the worldwide diasporic Welsh community and Wales, the homeland. The ways in which Welsh American community and identity are constructed, represented and performed at the case study sites are influenced and shaped by the complex web of relationships between these stakeholders.

CHAPTER FIVE

Doing Heritage

Constructing, performing and consuming identity at heritage sites

Issues of identity construction are at the core of the four Welsh American community heritage sites that form the basis of this research project (the North American Festival of Wales 2005 and 2006, the Welsh Nationality Room, and the Welsh American Heritage Museum). The previous chapter explored the processes through which narratives of Welsh identity are constructed at each of the case study sites, identifying key stakeholder groups and unpicking the network of relationships between them. In this chapter and the next, attention turns to an investigation of what happens at the sites, by looking in more detail at the motivations, interests and agendas of the community stakeholder group and in particular at its third subgroup, the general Welsh American population. It is to this subgroup that the vast majority of visitors to the sites belong. There are two alternative ways in which to consider the question of what is going on at the sites: firstly, by investigating how and why visitors use the sites to construct a range of personal and collective identities; and secondly, through an exploration of why and how some Americans choose to identify as Welsh. This chapter focuses on the first approach, analysing the identity work carried out by visitors, while the question of why they choose to claim a Welsh identity is dealt with in chapter six.

This chapter takes as its starting point Laurajane Smith's assertion that heritage "is not a 'thing', it is not a 'site', building or other material object...Rather, heritage is what goes on at these sites...[it] is a cultural process that engages with acts of remembering that work to create ways to understand and engage with the present" (2006: 44). Heritage is conceptualised by Smith, amongst others, as a cultural communicative practice, in which both heritage professionals and audiences are participants in the production and consumption of meanings (see also Dicks 2000a, 2000b). This chapter argues that the identities, meanings and values produced and consumed by visitors to the four Welsh American heritage sites are shaped by their personal knowledge, experiences and interests, by the interpretive strategies they use and the interpretive communities to which they belong. Based on these findings, an audience network model is developed with which to analyse the ways in which visitors use and interpret community heritage sites.

An interpretive community can be defined as a group of people who share common interpretive strategies, or ways of conceptually mapping the world (Hooper-Greenhill 1999: 13). These interpretive strategies can be based on shared specialist knowledge, historical or cultural background, socioeconomic factors, identities (whether national, regional, local or relating to gender, age, place, sexuality or disability), visiting practices, or exclusion from other communities (Mason 2005a; Watson 2007). A distinction can be made between interpretive communities based on "thick" or "thin" attachments. "Thick" attachments represent a group that recognises itself as a group, based on strong social ties – often through face-to-face interaction –

between its members. In contrast, “thin” attachments represent what Gerard Delanty calls a “community of strangers”: social ties are much weaker; members may rarely if ever meet; and may not even identify themselves as belonging to a shared community (2003: 171). This study’s findings indicate that there are two alternative ways in which to conceptualise the interpretive strategies used by visitors to the four Welsh American case study sites. The first is based on visitors’ level of identification with the heritage narratives displayed at each site. The second focuses on visitors’ level of engagement with and involvement in the social and cultural life of the Welsh American community. In each case, a number of distinct interpretive communities can be identified, incorporating a variety of both “thick” and “thin” attachments.

The first way in which in the different interpretive strategies used by visitors to the four heritage sites can be conceptualised is in terms of the degree to which they identify with the heritage narratives on display. It has been suggested that visitors, whether consciously or unconsciously, search for links between the objects on display at a museum or heritage site and aspects of their own personal identities (Paris and Mercer 2002). Such connections can help to make objects more meaningful and relevant to visitors, confirming, contradicting or developing their understanding of the objects (Paris and Mercer: 418). The connections visitors draw between heritage narratives and their own personal identities form a key element of the sociologist Gaynor Bagnall’s research on processes of consumption at heritage sites (2003). She argues that visitors perform a form of reminiscence, based on their physical, emotional and imaginative mapping of sites, which can be used to confirm or reject the authenticity of the narratives on display. A

confirmatory mapping occurs when displays provoke “an emotional response that enable...visitors to feel as if they have experienced a realistic version of the past” (Bagnall 2003: 90). For many visitors, this emotional engagement is achieved by drawing on personal or cultural memories and biographies that support the version of the past offered at the sites.

Alternatively, personal and family memories – for example, lived experience of the particular past on display – can also be used to challenge the constructed nature of the heritage site and to critique the authenticity of the narratives on display (Bagnall: 91). Visitors can therefore “read” a heritage site in a variety of different ways, based on the degree to which they are able to connect, emotionally and imaginatively as well as cognitively, with the narratives on display.

A similar diversity of visitor “readings” of heritage on the basis of the degree of cultural and biographical proximity of a heritage narrative to visitors’ individual identities and experiences is examined by another sociologist, Bella Dicks, in her work on the Rhondda Heritage Park in south Wales (2000a, 2000b). She found that while some visitors “viewed the Rhondda as a place and people both socially and temporally ‘other’” from their own lives and experiences, others identified strongly with the narratives on display, perceiving them as reflecting elements of their “self” and drawing explicit parallels between those narratives and their personal biographies (2000a: 73). This concept is developed further in *Culture on Display* (Dicks 2003: 125-129), in which Dicks argues that heritage represents a point of intersection between an individual’s personal biography and wider narratives of public history which offers a means of encountering the self as other, of placing the self within a

broader context. She proposes a continuum of potential self/other relationships visitors may experience at heritage sites, based on their temporal, geographical, social and cultural distance from the narratives on display (2003: 127, see also Figure 24, this text page 203). The five positions along this continuum arguably represent five different interpretive communities, each with its own interpretive strategies, to which heritage visitors can belong. This chapter applies this continuum to an analysis of the visitor surveys carried out at the four Welsh American heritage sites, exploring respondents' level identification with, or lack of identification with, the heritage narratives on display. Ultimately, the findings suggest that visitors' chronological distance from the heritage narratives on display at the four sites, in other words the number of generations separating them from their immigrant ancestors from Wales, does not fully encompass the range of different ways in which they use and interpret these sites.

A second, alternative way to conceptualise the interpretive strategies used by visitors to the four sites is by focussing on their level of engagement with Welsh American community life. A broad distinction can be made between what might be termed "casual" and "serious" visitors. A casual visitor is an individual with vague knowledge that they possess some Welsh ancestry whose visit to one of the Welsh American heritage sites is motivated by curiosity. In contrast, a serious visitor is an individual who belongs to one or more Welsh American society or organisation and is an active and regular participant in that community's social and cultural events. This distinction is based on Robert Stebbins's work on leisure (1992, 2001, 2007) in which he distinguishes between casual and serious leisure. He defines casual leisure as

a relatively short-lived pleasurable activity that requires little or no special training to enjoy it, while serious leisure is “the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist or volunteer core activity sufficiently substantial, interesting and fulfilling in nature for the participant to find a career there acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge and experiences” (2007: xii). The concept of serious leisure is particularly relevant to this chapter’s analysis of how visitors use heritage sites. As discussed in the previous chapter, each of the sites is run by and primarily for self-identifying Welsh Americans. There are therefore no clear boundaries between cultural producers and cultural consumers at the sites. The volunteers who organise and manage each of the four sites (the “producers”) are also consumers of the heritage on display. They practice a form of serious leisure as “active producers of their own leisure...[who] not only produce and consume their own leisure but also produce leisure for consumption by others” (Orr 2006: 202).

The intertwined nature of cultural production and consumption is analysed in detail by Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst in *Audiences* (1998). They argue that the distance between performers and audiences (producers and consumers) is disappearing as a result of social and cultural changes in contemporary society. The experiences of giving a performance and of being a member of an audience have become constitutive elements of everyday life, informing our perceptions of individual and collective identities: “[l]ife is a constant performance; we are audience and performer at the same time; everybody is an audience all the time” (Abercrombie and Longhurst: 73). Thus, within the context of heritage, “both visitors to heritage sites and those

concerned with their management and interpretation may be usefully understood as engaging in a cultural performance” to an audience of which they are also members (Smith 2006: 68). Abercrombie and Longhurst develop a continuum of five different audience positions or types, based on differing patterns of production and consumption, and technical, analytical and interpretive skills (1998: 121-157, see also Figure 25, page 218 this text). This continuum provides a model for this chapter’s analysis of the different ways visitors interpret the Welsh American heritage sites based on their level of engagement in Welsh American community life.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first and second sections respectively apply Dicks’s continuum of self/other relationships and Abercrombie and Longhurst’s audience continuum to an analysis of how visitors use the four Welsh American community heritage sites to construct, perform and consume a range of personal and collective identities, meanings and values. This analysis is based on the visitor surveys carried out at the four sites and focuses on responses to five key questions:

- Why did you decide to visit the site/ event today?
- Are you actively involved in the organisation or management of any aspects of this event/ site/ society?
- How important is your Welsh ancestry and identity to you?
- Do you celebrate your Welshness, and if so, how do you celebrate it?
- What do you think this event/ site/ museum says about Wales and Welshness?

The third and final section of this chapter offers a critique of the linear nature of each of these continuums and develops an alternative model in which the

different interpretive communities to which visitors belong are conceptualised as being part of an interlinked network of audience positions. Findings across the four case study sites suggest that the ways in which visitors use, interpret and relate to the case study sites are determined by their level of involvement both at the sites and within the wider Welsh American community. The different interpretive communities to which visitors belong are furthermore revealed to be overlapping and closely intertwined.

Heritage Narratives of “Self” and “Other”

The effect that the distance between historical narratives on display at a museum or heritage site and visitors' personal biographies can have on how visitors interpret and understand that site has been explored by Bella Dicks in some detail (2000a, 2000b, 2003). She argues that our relationship with the past is increasingly identity-centred: we understand the past through the prism of our own lives and experiences, through a sense of how our lives are changing in relation to those of our peers, parents and grandparents (Dicks 2003: 125). Museums and heritage sites “offer a space for the intertwining of public, exhibitionary space and private, biographical space”, a space in which visitors can place their own personal lives and experiences within wider narratives of public or “official” history (Dicks 2000b: 202).

The opportunity provided by heritage sites to look at and experience what life was like in a place temporally or geographically distant from our own represents, Dicks argues, a means of encountering the self as other (2003: 127). She proposes a continuum of potential self/other relations set up by

heritage (see Figure 24, overleaf), which traces the increasing gradations of otherness, from “a gaze which mirrors the self (as in local mining families visiting their local mining museum) to one which reflects ‘the other’ (as in Westerners visiting an ethnographic museum of African culture)” (2000b: 204).

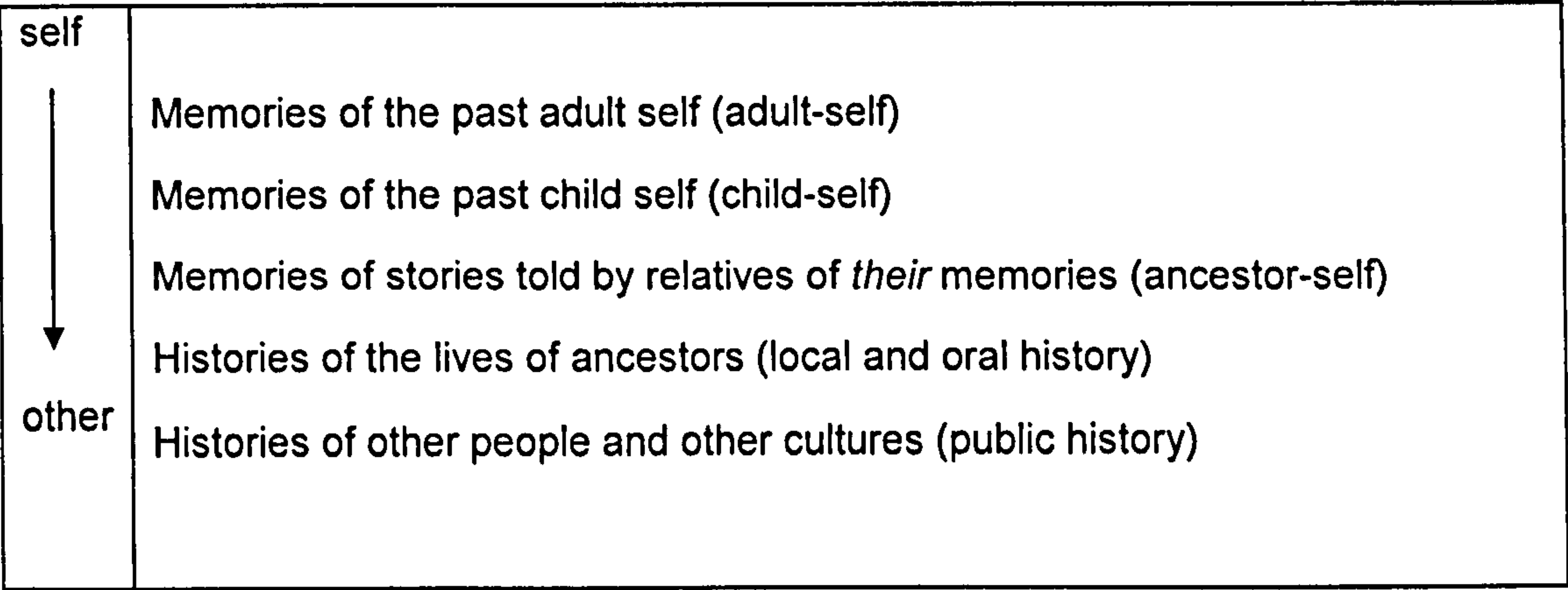


Figure 24 Self/other relations set up in heritage displays (Dicks 2003: 127)

Dicks argues that the increasing distance between the heritage displays and visitor’s lived experience as they move down the continuum affects the ways in which they interact with and understand the displays, and “entails a weakening of the visitor’s demand for experiential detail in the display” (2000b: 204). For example, in her research on the Rhondda Heritage Park in south Wales, she found that visitors with the closest or most recent connection to the historical narratives on display were the most critical in their evaluation of the site’s authenticity. They possessed personal and detailed knowledge and experience of life in the Rhondda valley or of working in a coal mine and made their evaluation based on how the heritage site reflected that

knowledge and experience. In contrast, visitors with little or no connection to the narratives on display, possessing only second-hand knowledge of the subject, evaluated the heritage site's authenticity on the basis of how far it reflected received or canonical ideas about that history (Dicks 2003: 128).

Dicks suggests that visitors who have a "childhood-self" or "ancestor-self" relation to the heritage on display find the greatest satisfaction in living history museums such as the Rhondda Heritage Park. At such sites, the heritage narratives on display are often framed in terms of personal reminiscences by costumed interpreters, which resonate with the visitor's pre-existing personal and family reminiscences. In contrast, "adult-self" or "non-self" visitors tend to demand a greater level of detail than most living history heritage sites are able to provide (Dicks 2003: 129). This argument is particularly relevant to this study's analysis of Welsh American heritage sites. The four case study sites are run by and primarily for Americans with a personal connection to Wales, the majority of whom possess a "child-self" or "ancestor-self" relation to the historical narratives displayed. While the sites are not, strictly speaking, living history museums, they share several characteristics with such museums. The Welsh Nationality Room, for example, represents a late eighteenth century Welsh nonconformist chapel, while the Welsh American Heritage Museum is housed in an old Welsh church building, which retains its pews and preaching dais or platform. The North American Festival of Wales in contrast, centres around the continuation of a long-standing Welsh American tradition, the *Gymanfa Ganu*. This chapter applies Dicks's continuum of self/other relations to an analysis of visitors to the four heritage sites, investigating whether visitors' temporal or generational

distance from Wales affects the ways in which they use the sites and the meanings the sites have for them.

Remembering self, remembering ancestors

All five categories of the continuum of self/other relations proposed by Dicks can be identified amongst the respondents to the visitor survey carried out at the case study sites. Some respondents had been born in Wales and later immigrated to the US as a child or an adult ("adult-self", "child-self"), some possessed Welsh ancestry ("ancestor-self", "local and oral history"), while others had no connection to Wales ("public history"). A more detailed analysis of respondents' connections to Wales is given in the next chapter (see chapter six, pp.250-256). Broadly speaking, the results of the survey support Dicks's hypothesis that those closest to the history on display are the most critical in their judgement regarding the authenticity of the heritage site's representation, while those at a greater temporal, geographical, social or cultural remove are more likely to accept the authenticity of the site's narrative (2003: 128). The way in which visitors perceive and understand the four heritage sites seems to be affected by their proximity to the Welsh heritage on display.

It must however be noted that there are two axes of self/other relations that visitors may potentially experience at the sites. The first is their relationship to Wales and to the immigrant generation, which is in many cases a distant connection reaching back four or more generations. The second is their relationship to a particular Welsh American community in a particular geographic location, which often represents a chronologically closer

connection to parents or grandparents. Welsh settlement in the US during the nineteenth century was geographically concentrated; immigrants often settled in distinctly Welsh “colonies”, areas whose population was predominantly Welsh in origin (Jones 1993: xx). A particularly good example of this is the region of south east Ohio in which the Welsh American Heritage Museum is situated: concentrated Welsh settlement in the mid-nineteenth century created an area with a strong Welsh presence and culture which only began to decline in the late twentieth century. As a result, many visitors to the Welsh American Heritage Museum draw connections between the heritage narratives on display and personal, childhood memories or the reminiscences of their parents in the US, as well as to a more distant ancestral link with Wales.

The following sections discuss each category along Dicks’s continuum of self/other relations in turn, analysing the ways in which distance from the heritage on display affects how visitors use and interpret the four case study sites.

Memories of the adult- or child-self

Visitors with a direct and personal connection to Wales, born and resident in Wales prior to their emigration to the US (defined here as first-generation Welsh Americans), perceive the four heritage sites as public displays of aspects of their self-identities and critically evaluate the sites’ representations of Welsh culture and history in relation to their own knowledge and experiences. Such respondents demonstrated a strong sense of ownership of

the narratives on Welshness on display at the four sites and expressed a concern regarding these narratives' authenticity, as illustrated in the following quotes:

What do I think the festival says about Wales and Welsh identity? Not much! (A28)

...I'm afraid the Welsh Nationality Room will give people only a narrow perspective on Welsh life. (C31)

It's obvious that the festival means a lot to Americans whose ancestors come from Wales but it's not really very much at all to do with what it's like to live in Wales today. It's all about the past! (B40)

Others expressed a certain anxiety regarding the nature of the messages communicated by the four sites about Wales and Welshness:

I think the festival isn't about current communication with Wales – but about communication with a Wales in the past, a Wales that's gone...At the sing-song last night they were singing the old Welsh hymns of my grandparents' time, but Wales has changed. It's not like that now. (A61)

There's too much focus on old traditions here. I want more information on Wales today. (B18)

The [Welsh Nationality] Room can't say much about Wales and Welsh culture and identity. It will emphasise religion, mining and the Welsh language – all the usual clichés. (C36)

I thought coming here would be a little taste of home but there's a lot I don't recognise. It's not my Wales. (A4)

These respondents are specifically concerned by the old-fashioned and clichéd version of Welsh culture and identity they perceive the sites to represent, seeing few similarities between these narratives and their own memories and knowledge of Wales.

However, such critical judgements about the authenticity of the heritage sites' narratives of Welshness are not only made by first-generation visitors,

as the following quotes from respondents with an ancestor-self connection with Wales illustrate:

My mother was born there, I've got cousins and family in Wales still. The festival says that there is a Welsh identity in America, but not a whole lot more. (A58)

My mother's ancestors nearly all came from Wales...I haven't seen the plans for the Welsh [Nationality] Room but I just hope it doesn't become a parody of a stereotype...[I]umps of coal, daffodils, love spoons, women in those black hats, Llanfair-blah-blah-blah, Cwm Rhondda playing on a continuous loop. I hope it's authentic and instructive. (C36)

These quotes suggest that some individuals with a more distant ancestral connection to Wales (the respondents are respectively a second-generation Welsh American and an individual with more distant Welsh ancestry) may possess a pre-existing "elaborated narrative in their minds about the history on display" (Dicks 2003: 128) prior to their visits. The latter quote in particular suggests a relatively detailed knowledge of Welsh culture and history, coupled with an awareness of the fact that the Welsh Nationality Room may not address these complexities but focus instead on well-established and stereotypical symbols of Wales and Welshness.

The way in which first-generation Welsh American visitors, those with an adult- or child-self relation to Wales, interact with the four heritage sites can also take a variety of forms. Rather than critiquing the authenticity of the NAFOW's representation of Welsh culture, for example, one respondent stresses the festival's role as a trigger for personal memories, providing a space in which to perform reminiscence:

The festival reminds me that there's a very strong Welsh heritage in the US – which I otherwise I'd lose by living in Florida. (A37)

This perception of the NAFOW echoes Dicks' analysis of the way in which child-self "returnees", whose families moved away from the area during their childhood, interact with the Rhondda Heritage Park: "the exhibitions are a reminder of personal memories...they are a bridge to access and retrieve visitor's own childhood experiences and reminiscences" (2000b: 223). A different perspective is expressed by another first-generation Welsh American visitor, who critiques the authenticity of contemporary Welsh culture in comparison with both his childhood memories of Wales and representations of Welshness at the NAFOW:

I'm here because I love to sing. I don't think the Welsh realise how important male voice choirs are. People like me relate to the choirs and the music, that's our connection with Wales, that's why the festival is important. But...the members of the choirs are old. They can't get the younger generations involved. They need to. It's important. (B7)

Here, the NAFOW is seen as preserving elements of traditional Welsh culture that are in danger of disappearing from Wales itself. In effect, this respondent views the Welsh culture on display at the NAFOW as being more authentic than that of contemporary Wales.

Memories of the ancestor-self

Visitors to the four heritage sites who possessed an ancestral connection to Wales – as the children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren or more distant descendents of the immigrant generation – were more likely than first-generation visitors to accept the sites' displays and narratives as authentic representations of Welsh cultural identity. This trend supports Dicks's argument that "[w]here memories are second-hand, as in the case of the

ancestor-self, the display will be considered authentic if it resonates with passed-down stories, such as through the use of well-known anecdotes, reminiscences and iconic details” (2003: 128). Responses by such second-, third-, fourth- and fifth-generation Welsh Americans focussed on the important role played by the sites in helping to preserve, safeguard and publicise Welsh heritage in North America, as the following quotes illustrate:

My grandparents were born in Wales, they emigrated in the late 1800s. The festival's amazing – it says we're truly committed to carrying on noble Welsh traditions. (A55)

My grandparents were from Blaenafon [south Wales]. The Welsh Nationality Room will be great. It will focus on they key parts of Welsh identity in America – Christians who prize learning and family. (C14)

My ancestors came over in the 1680s. They were Quakers. The Welsh [Nationality] Room will help gain recognition for Wales and Welsh culture and educate people. It will keep the Welsh character alive in Pittsburgh, a god-fearing respectable people, very musical. And the language of course. (C25)

These responses also draw on iconic, potentially stereotypical, symbols of Welsh culture such as musical ability, the Welsh language, and religious piety, suggesting that these respondents may lack direct knowledge or detailed personal memories of Welshness.

The role of the four sites as storehouses for family and ancestral memories was stressed by respondents with an ancestor-self connection to the heritage on display. Their interactions with the sites were based around the extent to which the displays stimulated personal recognition or echoed visitors' knowledge of ancestral memories and biographies, as these quotes from visitors to the North American Festival of Wales illustrate:

I'm Welsh on my father's side, way back, my great-great-great-grandparents...I come to the festival to connect with memories of my ancestors, particularly through the singing. (B42)

I grew up in a Welsh community, we were always told we were Welsh. Our ancestors came from Llanbrynmair [mid Wales]. Coming here today, it's all about connecting with my past...The heritage gene, it pulls at people. They want to know who they are. And here you can find out – all my memories are here. (A1)

For these respondents, the festival provides an opportunity to engage in reminiscence about the lives of their families and ancestors. These quotes also illustrate the important role played by the four case study sites as “theatres of memory” (Samuel 1994) and support Laurajane Smith’s argument that heritage is not a material object or site but rather a process or experience (2006). Self-identifying Welsh Americans visit the four sites “to reflect and to experience and re-embody...memories and acts of remembering” in a “culturally correct or appropriate context and time” (Smith 2006: 46-47).

This type of interaction with the heritage narratives on display at the four sites, focussed on reminiscence about the lives and experiences of family members or ancestors, most closely resembles Dicks’s definition of a child-self relation with heritage. In defining this relationship, Dicks focuses on individuals returning to the area in which they were born or in which they lived in childhood, or to a heritage site that represents what life was like in that area (2000b: 223). However, within the context of this study the concept of the “returnee” is most clearly expressed by respondents with an ancestor-self relationship to Wales and Welshness. For these respondents, visiting the sites represents a “return” to relatives’ reminiscences about their childhood experiences in Wales, or to the imagined and researched lives of more distant ancestors.

The majority of survey respondents across the four sites possessed an ancestor-self relationship with the heritage narratives on display. For most, the immigrant generation from Wales is beyond living memory. However, as discussed earlier, visitors can potentially relate to the sites along two axes of self/other relationships. The survey data gathered at the Welsh American Heritage Museum is a particularly good example of this:

I'm fourth-generation Welsh American, my great-grandparents on both sides came over from Wales. The museum doesn't say much about Wales but it tells a lot about the Welsh people who lived in this area...My favourite objects [at the museum] are a photograph of my mother and uncle, and my mother's music stand. She was the piano teacher...she used to play in the church. (D1)

My family's Welsh on both sides. My great-great-great-grandmother came over in 1848 and her husband in 1838 and we've been here ever since...The museum is the thing that holds the community together, now so much of the culture, businesses and churches are no more. It's a memorial to what this area was. (D17)

These quotes illustrate two things: firstly, an ancestral-self connection to Wales, via an immigrant generation four or five generations removed from the respondents; and secondly, an adult- or child-self connection to the local area's Welsh American community. This Welsh American community dates back to the arrival of the first Welsh settlers to south east Ohio in the mid-nineteenth century (Knowles 1997). Many of its defining features, such as the large number of Welsh churches established by the settlers and their descendents, only began to decline and disappear in the latter decades of the twentieth century. The Welsh American Heritage Museum is itself housed in what was originally the Welsh Congregationalist Church of Oak Hill, which only ceased to be a functioning church in 1962 (Bangert, pers. comm.). Many visitors to the Museum, most of whom are locals born and bred in the area,

possess personal adult or childhood memories and experiences of life in the local Welsh American community, whose heritage the Museum preserves and displays. They are effectively occupying more than one position at the same time in Dicks's continuum of self/other relations.

Viewing the “other”

The “other-self” relation identified by Dicks (position five on the continuum, histories of other people and other cultures) is a problematic one in the context of this study. Dicks describes visitors belonging to this category as “outsiders” whose biographical relationship to the heritage on display is minimal (2003: 128). However, all survey respondents across the four sites possessed some degree of biographical connection to Wales or the Welsh American community, whether that connection was based on an ancestral link or simply on the basis of a felt emotional connection to Wales and Welsh culture. Thus, in the context of this study, visitors who relate to the heritage narratives on display at each site as “other” can most usefully be conceptualised as those who feel little or no self-identification with Welsh heritage. Based on the results of the survey, this group would seem to encompass individuals who are married to someone who identifies as Welsh American but possess no Welsh ancestry themselves and those who, while they possess Welsh ancestry, feel little or no connection to that aspect of their personal biographies. Survey respondents who fall into the latter category tended to be young (under 25) and were visiting the sites as part of a family

group that includes Welsh-identifying parents or grandparents. The following quotes are examples of the first group (those married to Welsh Americans):

I'm from England – it's my wife who's the Welsh American. The festival has a lot of information about Welsh culture I think, particularly in the seminars given by historians from Wales and in the documentary film. (A52)

My husband moved from Wales in 2004. I'm not sure what it [the Welsh Nationality Room] will say about Wales, but I know that the Society and the designers have been in contact with lots of people over in Wales so I imagine it will be authentic. (C13)

The following quotations are from members of the second group (little or no self-identification with Wales):

The festival says a lot about the culture, language and people [of Wales]. It's a place in Europe with rolling hills, waterfalls, inns, forests and so on. I saw the documentary yesterday, it had lots of Welsh scenes and landscapes. (B37)

I don't really see myself as Welsh but it's nice to come with my family. The festival is very Welsh – I've heard people speaking Welsh and singing Welsh songs and talking about Wales. (A16)

These four respondents are informed outsiders: they possess some knowledge of Wales and Welsh culture, gleaned from their relatives or from mass media texts such as the internet, films, TV programmes and books, but feel little connection to the heritage on display. Their evaluation of the sites' authenticity is based on an analysis of how far the displays match “received and canonical ideas” about Wales, and Welsh and Welsh American culture (Dicks 2003: 129).

Beyond the self/other continuum

The continuum developed by Dicks of potential self/other relations set up by heritage provides a useful way in which to analyse and understand some of the different ways in which visitors can interpret the four Welsh American heritage sites. First-generation Welsh Americans, with an adult- or child-self relation to Wales tend to draw explicit parallels between the narratives on display at the sites and their own personal memories and experiences. They are also the most likely to critique the authenticity of the sites' representations of Wales and Welshness. In contrast, visitors with a more distant connection to Wales, whose relation to the heritage narratives either takes the form of the ancestor-self, or is based on local and oral histories about their forebears, possess a less detailed, second-hand knowledge and experience of Welshness and are consequently more likely to accept the authenticity of the heritage narratives on display (Dicks 2003; 128). Their focus is rather on the site's roles as spaces of reminiscence in which self-identifying Welsh Americans can trace family roots, learn about Welsh and Welsh American culture, and perform a sense of Welsh identity. Finally, visitors with little sense of self-identification with the sites' narratives (the "other-self") interpret and evaluate the sites' authenticity based on how far they reflect widely accepted public history narratives about Wales and Welshness as presented by television, film, literature and other forms of mass media.

However, the temporal distance between visitors and first-generation Welsh immigrants does not necessarily correspond with their level of engagement and identification with Welsh American heritage. As discussed in greater detail in the next chapter, respondents with no known ancestral

connection to Wales can nevertheless identify strongly as Welsh or Welsh American, for example:

I like to think I might have Welsh ancestry but I don't really know...I feel Welsh because when I visited [Wales] I just felt like I was home. And even before I went, I felt this affinity...I belong to the local St. David's Society and I get *Ninnau*. I'm trying to learn Welsh too, and I come to events like this sometimes. (B91)

On the basis of a personal, emotional connection with Wales, this respondent has become involved in Welsh American social and cultural events, joining his local Welsh society, visiting the NAFOW and reading the Welsh American monthly newspaper, *Ninnau*. The distinction implied by Dicks between "insiders" and "outsiders", based on an individual's temporal distance from a heritage narrative, is hard to maintain in this context. The quote given above is by an "outsider" who has chosen to identify as Welsh and to become actively involved in Welsh American community life. Alternatively, at the opposite end of the continuum, not all first-generation Welsh Americans (who might be predicted to be the "insiders" on the basis of their first-hand lived experiences of Wales) will be active participants in the Welsh American community, as the following quote illustrates:

The festival says different things about Wales and Welshness to those of us who were born in Wales, like me, and those who are fifth-generation Welsh, discovering their roots. It's not for me. (A26)

Dicks's model is very useful for highlighting the variety of ways in which visitors use and relate to the case study sites. This suggests that an individual's generational distance from Wales does, to some extent, affect their interpretation of the sites. However, her model does not fully encapsulate the factors affecting this process of interpretation. We have seen above how

visitors' generational distance from their immigrant ancestors does not always mirror the different self/other relationships with heritage suggested by Dicks. If the ways in which visitors use the four heritage sites are not linked to their biographical proximity to or distance from Wales then we need to consider other potential factors that may affect how visitors use the sites to produce, perform and consume Welsh and Welsh American identities. The audience continuum developed by Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst (1998), based around different patterns of production and consumption, offers an alternative means with which to conceptualise this process, based on visitors' level of active involvement with the sites and other Welsh American community groups and activities.

Cultural Producers, Cultural Consumers

The nature of audiences is changing together with wider social and cultural changes in contemporary society. In their 1998 book *Audiences*, Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst analyse the different types of audience and audience experiences that exist within contemporary society. They argue that a new form of audience experience has emerged, which they call the diffused audience. It is characterised by the increasing disappearance of the social and cultural distance between performers and audiences: “[p]eople simultaneously feel members of an audience and that they are performers; they are simultaneously watchers and being watched” (Abercrombie and Longhurst: 75).

Consumer – Fan – Cultist – Enthusiast – Petty Producer
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Figure 25 The Audience Continuum (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998: 141)

The increasing homogenisation of performance and audience in which we are all simultaneously cultural consumers and cultural producers, is, Abercrombie and Longhurst argue, related to the acquisition by audiences (cultural consumers) a range of technical, analytical and interpretive skills previously associated with performers (cultural producers) (1998: 75). They develop an audience continuum which traces the distribution of these skills across five audience positions: consumer; fan; cultist; enthusiast; and petty producer (see Figure 25, above). Each audience position along the continuum is engaged, in a range of different ways, in the production and consumption of media, meanings and identities (see Table 3, page 220, for a summary of the characteristics of each position). Abercrombie and Longhurst discuss and analyse each audience position in turn, using examples from the consumption of popular music and television programmes.

The first audience position, the consumer, is characterised by relatively generalised and unfocussed media use. Consumers possess no strong attachments to any particular programme, genre or star (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998: 140). Fans, the second position on the continuum, are people with a particular attachment to a certain programme or star within the context of relatively heavy media use. They are generally not in contact with other people who share their attachment (Abercrombie and Longhurst: 138).

Their identification with the fan object takes the form of devotion, adoration and worship (Abercrombie and Longhurst: 153). The third audience position, the cultist, is defined as possessing an explicit attachment to a star or programme. They are more focussed and specialised in their media use, primarily consuming media relating to the cult object. They are also more organised than fans and are often members of loosely-knit informal networks of fellow cultists in the form of fan clubs or societies (p.139). Their identification with the cult object takes the form of aspiration and imitation, feeding into the production of “fannish” literature for consumption by fellow cultists (p.153). The enthusiast, the fourth position on the audience continuum, is a member of an enthusiasm: a self-organised group of people with a shared interest in and commitment to a particular media genre or activity. Enthusiasts' level of identification with the subject of their enthusiasm builds on the fan and cultist identities, and becomes an increasingly important part of their everyday lives (p.153). Enthusiasts are very specialised media users; their consumption centres on specialist literature and material produced by and for fellow enthusiasts (p.139). Production is central to the enthusiasm, which revolves around it. This production takes place within the enthusiasm: enthusiasts are producing texts and materials for a known community (p.150). With the final audience position, that of the petty producer, Abercrombie and Longhurst's continuum is transformed into a circuit: petty producers share many characteristics with the first audience position on the continuum, the consumer. They are individuals who have developed from enthusiasts, who produce material for consumption by fellow enthusiasts, into professionals, who produce materials for the mass market, an anonymous, imagined

community. Their production generates other activities rather than being located within an activity, as is the case for cultists and enthusiasts (p.150).

	Consumer	Fan	Cultist	Enthusiast	Petty Producer
Object	No specific attachments	Attachment to a particular star/ programme	Explicit attachment to particular star/ programme	Activities rather than media/ stars	Products and services
Media use	Generalised/ unfocused	Heavy	Heavy but specialised	Specialised	Very specialised
Organisation	None	None	Loose, informal networks	Tight	Relationships organised through the market
Technical Skills	Very specific	More contextual	Contextual, using such skills to produce texts	Increased use of such skills, in production for the enthusiasm	Uses of skills in production for the market
Analytical Skills	Very generalised	Within genres	Immersion in the genre, intrageneric comparisons	Immersion leads to increased productivity	Comparisons to locate market niches
Interpretive Skills	Referential, relating to personal taste	Generic, used in fan legitimisation	Used in authenticity arguments	Immersion leads to less outward direction	Comparison for profit

Table 3 **Characteristics of the Audience Continuum (after Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998: 138, 144)**

The audience continuum developed by Abercrombie and Longhurst offers a valuable alternative way in which to analyse and understand the different ways in which visitors use and relate to the four Welsh American

heritage sites. Its approach, focussing on differing patterns of production and consumption, and the level of audiences' engagement and identification with the object of attachment, complements the continuum of potential self/other relations set up by heritage developed by Bella Dicks (2003). While Dicks's model highlights the different ways in which visitors relate to and identified with the heritage narratives on display at the case study sites, the audience continuum suggests that these relationships are determined by the levels of visitors' active involvement in the Welsh American community, rather than on their distance from the Welsh immigrant generation. This chapter applies the audience continuum to an analysis of the survey data collected at the four sites, discussing each of the five audience positions in turn.

Community involvement and audience skills

The survey data gathered at the four Welsh American heritage sites reveals a wide variety of visitor "readings" of the sites and a diverse range of motivations for visiting. The diversity of audience experiences at the sites can be mapped onto the five audience positions identified by Abercrombie and Longhurst. Survey respondents ranged from casual "consumers", whose visits were primarily motivated by curiosity or by the fact that they happened to be in the area of the site, to "petty producers", self-identifying Welsh American visitors who have built a business or career in producing and distributing Welsh and Welsh American materials. In between these two extremes, the majority of respondents fell into the categories of "fans" and "cultists": defined here as individuals who are members of one or more Welsh American

organisation, often possessing a detailed knowledge of Welsh and Welsh American culture and history, and who are avid consumers (and occasional producers) of Welsh and Welsh American texts or objects. The survey sample also included a number of respondents who were responsible, commonly as part of a group, for the management and organisation of a Welsh American society, organisation, site or event. These respondents fit Abercrombie and Longhurst's definition of an "enthusiast": they are engaged in the production of materials for consumption by other self-identifying Welsh Americans, whether in the form of books on the history of Welsh settlement in a particular state or area, CDs of Welsh music, social events, St. David's Day celebrations, or a heritage site. Each audience position along the continuum will be analysed in turn, focussing on the different ways in which visitors use and interpret the sites.

Consumer

Only three survey respondents across the four case study sites matched Abercrombie and Longhurst's definition of a consumer: an individual with a relatively generalised, unfocussed and unorganised media use (1998: 138), where "media" in this case refers to Wales and Welsh American culture. Their responses demonstrated little attachment to or identification with a Welsh American community:

I'm here with my mom and aunt and cousins and grandpa – he was born in Wales and always comes [to the NAFOW]. I guess I have a little Welsh identity, it's fun to come to the festival this one time but I don't really think about it any other time. (A29)

My grandparents wanted to come [to the NAFOW] and brought the whole family for a reunion...It's nice to know about it [my Welsh ancestry] but it's not really important to me. I only feel Welsh when I'm visiting Grandma. (B100)

I studied there [in Wales] for three months and it became like a second home. I loved celebrating with the Welsh in Wales but I don't really feel Welsh myself...I've passed the museum [the Welsh American Heritage Museum] a couple times, but it's never been open so I've never been in. (D8)

The first two quotes are from young individuals of Welsh ancestry (A29 is under sixteen and B100 is in the 16-24 age group) who visited the NAFOW as part of a multigenerational family group. In both cases it is their grandparents who identify as Welsh. For the respondents themselves, their visit to the site is motivated by family ties rather than by any particular interest in Welsh American cultural life. They do not consume Welsh American themed media (literature, musical recordings, ornaments, clothing, etc) in their everyday lives. In contrast, the third respondent (D8) is a student at the University of Rio Grande who has taken part in that institution's exchange programme with Trinity College Carmarthen (see Madog Center, n.d.). While she possesses no Welsh ancestry and does not identify as a Welsh American, she feels a connection to Wales based on her period of residence there. She is not part of the Welsh American community of south east Ohio, whose activities centre in part around the Welsh American Heritage Museum, which she has never visited.

Based on the very small number of respondents who can be defined as consumers, it can be hypothesised that the vast majority of visitors to the four heritage sites will fall into the category of fan or above on the audience continuum. Arguably, an individual's decision to visit a Welsh American heritage site requires a certain level of attachment to and identification with

Wales and with the culture and history of the Welsh in the US, one that accords with Abercrombie and Longhurst's definition of a fan. This is particularly true in the case of the NAFOW, a four day event requiring a significant investment of time and money by its visitors in terms of travel to and from the event, accommodation and entrance to the festival and its associated events. It should be noted that, in the case of the Welsh Nationality Room, this trend is likely to change when the site opens to the public in June 2008. Data collection at this site took place in March 2006, before construction of the site began. As a result, survey respondents were drawn almost entirely from the membership of the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh, the organisation leading the Welsh Nationality Room project. Following the site's completion however, its visitor population will become much more diverse and it is likely that many visitors will possess no link or attachment to Wales and Welshness. As a result, if the visitor survey was repeated following the site's opening, it is predicted that the results would show a higher proportion of consumers.

Fan

Many respondents across the four case study sites matched Abercrombie and Longhurst's definition of a fan. Their responses to the survey demonstrated a particular attachment to Wales and Welsh American culture "within the context of relatively heavy mass media use" (Abercrombie and Longhurst: 138). In effect, their interest in Welsh culture and history and identification as Welsh American did not dominate these respondents' leisure time activities or sense of self. The construction, performance and consumption of Welsh American

identities is, for such fans, a predominantly personal activity, taking place within the private sphere of the home and family, as the following quotes illustrate:

My Welsh identity is very important to me, it's number one. I celebrate it by coming to the festival about every two years and by celebrating St. David's Day with my family. And by following the [Welsh] rugby team. (A5)

I celebrate my Welshness through my Welsh library, which numbers titles from David Jones, R.S. Thomas, Dylan Thomas, Vernon Watkins, Gwyn Jones and paintings by John Knapp Fisher. Books of Welsh folklore including the Mabinogion and the ancient poetry of David ap Gwilym also feature. (C43)

I decided to come to the festival out of nostalgia and curiosity. I was born in Wales...I celebrate my Welshness by being me, I also study Wales past and present as a hobby. (B62)

Patterns of production and consumption by such fans tend to be integrated into the pre-existing routines of their everyday lives, rather than being the factor that structures or determines those routines (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998: 149).

Respondents defined as fans generally had little contact with other self-identifying Welsh Americans. Most did not belong to a Welsh American society or organisation and those that did tended to either be passive members, receiving the society's newsletter, for example, but rarely attending its events, or individuals who had only recently joined a society. Fans are infrequent visitors to the four heritage sites, visiting primarily at symbolic times such as St. David's Day or, in the case of the NAFOW, because of its proximity to where they live, as the following quotes illustrate:

I try to come to every festival within reach...I celebrate my Welsh identity by singing and by eating Welsh dishes on St. David's Day and this year we've come to the festival. (A55)

My involvement in the Society is minimal. I've been a member for three years and I always attend the St. David's Day pub crawl but I'm just too busy with work and family to do more. (C46)

I go to the gymanfa ganu every year and I probably visit the [Welsh American Heritage] Museum a couple of times a year, at Christmas and for St. David's. (D9)

I attend every year I can, based on time and distance...I'm attempting to learn the [Welsh] language and I fly the Red Dragon at home on holidays. (B84)

For these respondents, their attachment to Welsh American cultural activities comes second to other attachments and obligations, such as work and family. Again, the way in which they celebrate, or perform, a Welsh American identity tends to take place within the privacy of their own homes.

Cultist

The size of the respondent group who can be defined as cultists is similar to that of the fan group. Cultists possess an explicit attachment to and identification with the cult object, in this case Wales and Welsh American culture, which results in a more focussed and specialised media use revolving around that object (p.139). Such respondents are increasingly immersed in the world of the cult object, so here we would expect that Welsh American activities and identities will form a larger part of their lifestyle and sense of self. Cultists are more frequent and regular visitors to Welsh American events and heritage sites than fans, and are commonly also active members of one or more Welsh American societies or organisations:

I'm a member of three Welsh societies and I sing in a Welsh choir. I enjoy the festival very much... This year I'm helping out at the Cymdeithas Madog stall and I made a batch of welsh cakes for the tearooms. (A87)

My Welsh ancestry and identity is somewhat important to me. I've been a member of the St. David's Society for five years. I go the annual gymanfa, sing in the choir and attend social events. (C12)

I've been coming [to the NAFOW] for years. I'm a life member [of the WNGGA] since 1959... I try to attend every year. I also participate in my local Welsh society on a regular basis and attend other Welsh and Celtic events. (B28)

These respondents are in regular, if infrequent, contact with other self-identifying Welsh Americans: they are members of a loosely-knit network of fellow cultists based on their membership and active involvement in Welsh American community life.

Respondents who fitted the definition of cultists also tended to possess a detailed and extensive knowledge of Welsh and Welsh American culture and history. Their technical, analytical and interpretive skills are more highly developed than those of fans. They are avid consumers, and sometimes producers, of texts produced by and for their fellow Welsh American society members, as the following quotes illustrate:

I came [to the festival] because I'm very interested in all Welsh things. I participated in the Eisteddfod yesterday... I celebrate my Welsh identity by attending gymanfas, participating in eisteddfods, singing in Welsh and learning the language. (A41)

I'm in the Society and I sing in the choir. I'm helping with the fundraising for the Welsh Nationality Room – I'm making a CD of hymns and the proceeds will go towards the project. (C15)

I'm a member of the Cardigan Club and I try to go to all the Welsh activities in the area that I can. I try to help out as much as I can – I volunteer to staff the museum [the Welsh American Heritage Museum] whenever I'm needed. (D13)

This production of texts and materials for fellow self-identifying Welsh Americans, whether it be in the form of teaching a Welsh language class, volunteering at a Welsh heritage site, producing a CD or participating in the eisteddfod at the NAFOW, is an increasingly central aspect of cultists' activities (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998: 149).

Enthusiast

The production of texts and materials for their fellow self-identifying Welsh Americans is at the centre of the way in which respondents who can be defined as "enthusiasts" engage with both the four heritage sites and with the wider Welsh American community. This engagement is based around active participation rather than passive media consumption. However, while Abercrombie and Longhurst see the shift from cultist to enthusiasts as a shift from textual to material production, no such clear distinction is identifiable amongst the survey sample. As we have seen, cultists may be actively involved in the production of materials for consumption by other self-identifying Welsh Americans, for example by volunteering to staff a heritage site or by helping to organise a cultural event. The distinction between these two audience positions is rather that enthusiasts are those individuals actively involved in and responsible for the organisation and management of a Welsh American society, event or heritage site, whether as trustees, officers, or curators:

I'm a member of our Welsh society's board of directors and we organise St David's Day celebrations including a luncheon, pub crawl

and fun run, as well as a gymanfa, summer picnic and Welsh church service on Memorial Day. (A62)

I joined the Welsh Society and work towards its success. Within the Society I participate in the various programmes and activities...I'm the vice president and member of both the membership and fundraising committee for the Welsh Nationality Room. (C33)

I'm on the board of trustees [of the WNGGA] so I come pretty much every year. I'm staffing the Cymdeithas Madog stall today, with who I'm also actively involved. (B86)

These respondents, and others like them, are members of more formally organised networks. They are not simply members of a Welsh society, like cultists are, but generally have a named and clearly defined role within the managerial hierarchy of that society. They are, in effect, leaders of the Welsh American community in their local areas, and involved in the production and preservation of Welsh American culture and society. For these enthusiasts, the level of their attachment to and identification with Welsh American heritage is such that it represents a serious leisure pursuit (Stebbins 1992, 2001, 2007). They devote significant amounts of time and effort to an amateur, hobbyist or voluntary pursuit, in the course of which they acquire a range of specialist skills and knowledge.

Petty Producer

The survey respondents identified as petty producers and differ from enthusiasts in that the texts and materials they produce are aimed at a broader, anonymous mass market, rather than for consumption only by fellow members of a bounded Welsh American community or enthusiast group (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998: 150). Six respondents across the four

case study sites fit the description of petty producers. All six were surveyed at the two NAFOW at which data was collected (sites A and B):

We're book vendors, we came to sell our books...my Welsh identity is pretty strong – it's good for selling books!...I celebrate my Welshness by selling Welsh books and music. (A51)

I'm here to represent the Welsh North American Chamber of Commerce and five Welsh companies. I have a stall in the marketplace...I celebrate my Welshness daily, through the music I listen to and the foods I eat. (A28)

This year I came as a vendor, I wanted to sell my goods. I've been to two other festivals as a visitor. As a vendor I'm following in my grandmother's footsteps. (B80)

I live here [in Cincinnati]. That's why I'm here [at the NAFOW]. I also performed on Thursday night [at the folk concert]. Telynores dw i ("I'm a harpist"). (B23)

For these respondents, their enthusiasm for Wales and Welsh American culture forms the basis for a business or career, whether part-time or full-time, in the production and distribution of Welsh themed goods. However, while their target audience is a broad one, it must be stressed that self-identifying Welsh Americans are likely to represent a major consumer group for their products.

Such petty producers further differ from enthusiasts in that their engagement with the four Welsh American heritage sites has much in common with that of a consumer or fan. Often, they do not belong to any Welsh American societies or organisations. Their contact with other self-identifying Welsh Americans is organised through the mass market, in the form of those individuals who purchase their products, rather than within a known and organised community of fellow enthusiasts. The following survey response illustrates this:

We always come to the National [the NAFOW] if it is within driving distance. This year we came as participants and as vendors in the marketplace. I'm selling Welsh crafts. (B107)

This respondent demonstrates a fan-like attachment to the NAFOW, their primary motivation for visiting the site being its proximity to their home. The audience continuum has, in effect, come full circle and transformed itself into a circuit. An individual audience member's level of active involvement with Welsh American community activities influences his or her patterns of production and consumption at the four heritage sites. As we move along the continuum, from consumers towards enthusiasts, we encounter respondents who are increasingly active in producing texts and materials for the Welsh American community and, indeed, of the Welsh American community itself. However, at the final position on the continuum, that of petty producer, respondents' patterns of production reach a peak, while their patterns of consumption return to those of a consumer or fan.

Beyond the audience continuum

The audience continuum developed by Abercrombie and Longhurst offers a valuable way in which to conceptualise the different interpretive communities to which visitors to the four case study heritage sites belong. Visitors surveyed across the four sites can be mapped on to the five audience positions based on the frequency of their visits to these sites, their motivations for visiting, whether or not they belong to any Welsh American societies or organisations, and the level of their involvement in those groups. This audience continuum

helps to demonstrate the variety of different ways in which visitors use the four sites to produce, perform and consume a sense of Welsh identity.

The survey results also support Abercrombie and Longhurst's hypothesis that the audience continuum "may represent a possible career path under certain circumstances" (1998: 141), by which an individual may move from being a consumer to a fan, a fan to a cultist, and so on towards the position of petty producer. For example, some respondents appeared to be in the process of transitioning from being fans to being cultists:

I am just now starting to learn about my Welshness and recently joined the St. David's Society [of Pittsburgh]. I'm hoping to attend lots of events and gatherings. (C35)

My Welsh identity's very important to me, we have family celebrations and gatherings on St. David's Day...I came to the festival because it's close and because I want to get more involved (A82)

These quotes express a desire to become more actively involved in Welsh American community life, to make contact with people who share their attachment to Wales and Welsh American culture, a defining characteristic of the cultist position (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998: 139). However, the transition between audience positions can also take place in the opposite direction:

My Welsh identity is important to me but...[i]t used to loom much larger and take up much more of my time before, when I was involved in the running of Cymdeithas Madog and my local Welsh society...I don't particularly [celebrate my Welshness], I attend the festival and have some ornaments in my home. That's about it. (A35)

I'm an ex-chair and president of the National Welsh American Foundation so I always come [to the festival]. I'm still involved in the Foundation, but in a much smaller way. I attend their events and receive the newsletters. (B69)

These two respondents used to be enthusiasts, actively involved in the organisation and management of Welsh American societies, but their current level of engagement with Welsh American community life most closely resembles the position of fan or cultist.

However, the audience continuum developed by Abercrombie and Longhurst does not reflect the full range of audience experiences at the four Welsh American heritage sites. There are two key problems. Firstly, the five audience positions defined by Abercrombie and Longhurst do not encompass one key audience group present at all four case study sites: the academic and professional stakeholders discussed in chapter four, such as the Welsh Assembly Government and the Madog Center at the University of Rio Grande. These institutions, and others like them, are engaged in the production of texts and materials for both the mass market and for a specialised Welsh American market. They possess links with the four heritage sites, commonly expressed through the sponsorship of an event or a donation to a site, but do not fit the definition of either the enthusiast or the petty producer. A second issue with the audience continuum is that it is too linear, presenting a one-way progression from left to right, from consumer to petty producer. In contrast, this study's findings suggest that individuals can move "up" or "down" the continuum in either direction. Abercrombie and Longhurst's analysis also seems to suggest that there is relatively little contact or interaction between members of each of the different audience positions: fans will interact with other fans, cultists belong to loosely-knit networks of fellow cultists, and enthusiasts produce material for consumption by other enthusiasts (1998: 138-9). In contrast, the survey results suggest that the five audience positions

along the continuum are rather interlinked and overlapping: visitors to the four sites and members of Welsh American societies represent a diverse mix of consumers, fans, cultists, enthusiasts and petty producers. A new way of conceptualising the different ways in which visitors use and interpret the four case study sites is required. In the following section, an adapted version of Abercrombie and Longhurst's audience continuum is outlined that more fully reflects the range of interpretive communities to which visitors to the four sites belong.

Audience Networks

Rather than a linear continuum, I suggest that a circuit is a better way in which to represent the different categories of audience identified by Abercrombie and Longhurst (see Figure 26, overleaf). Indeed, the authors make a similar suggestion when they state that "petty producers...in a seeming paradox tend to turn the continuum into a circle as they become more like consumers" (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998: 140). However, while their acknowledgement of the cyclical nature of the audience continuum helps to highlight the similarities between the skills and level of identification with the subject possessed by petty producers and consumers, it is still too linear. This study's findings have shown that relationships and interactions between each category of audience at the four Welsh American heritage sites are not linear, but rather multidirectional and intertwining (see Figure 27, overleaf). As such, I have developed the Community Heritage Audience Network model (CHAN), in

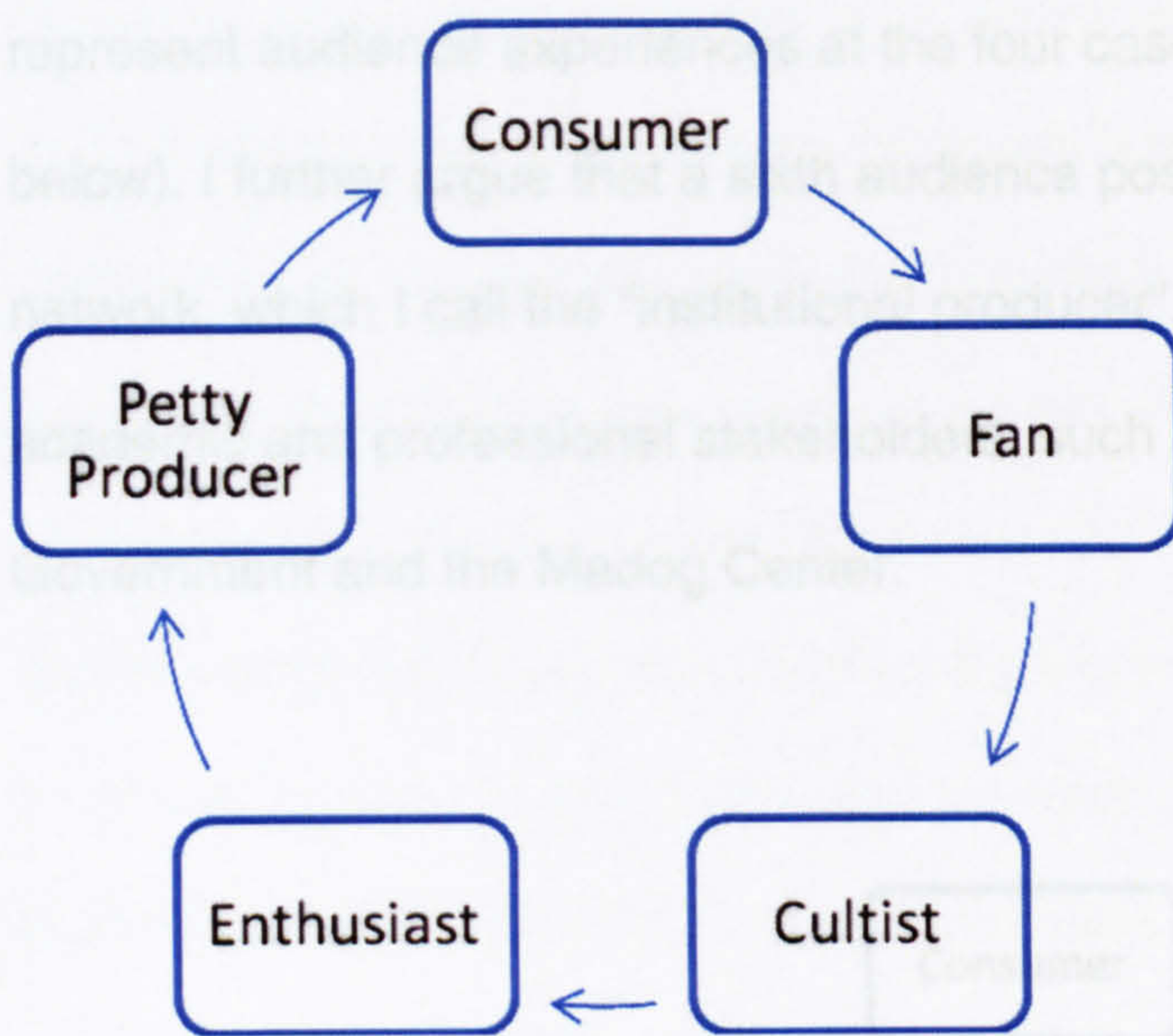


Figure 26 The audience continuum as a circuit (after Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998)

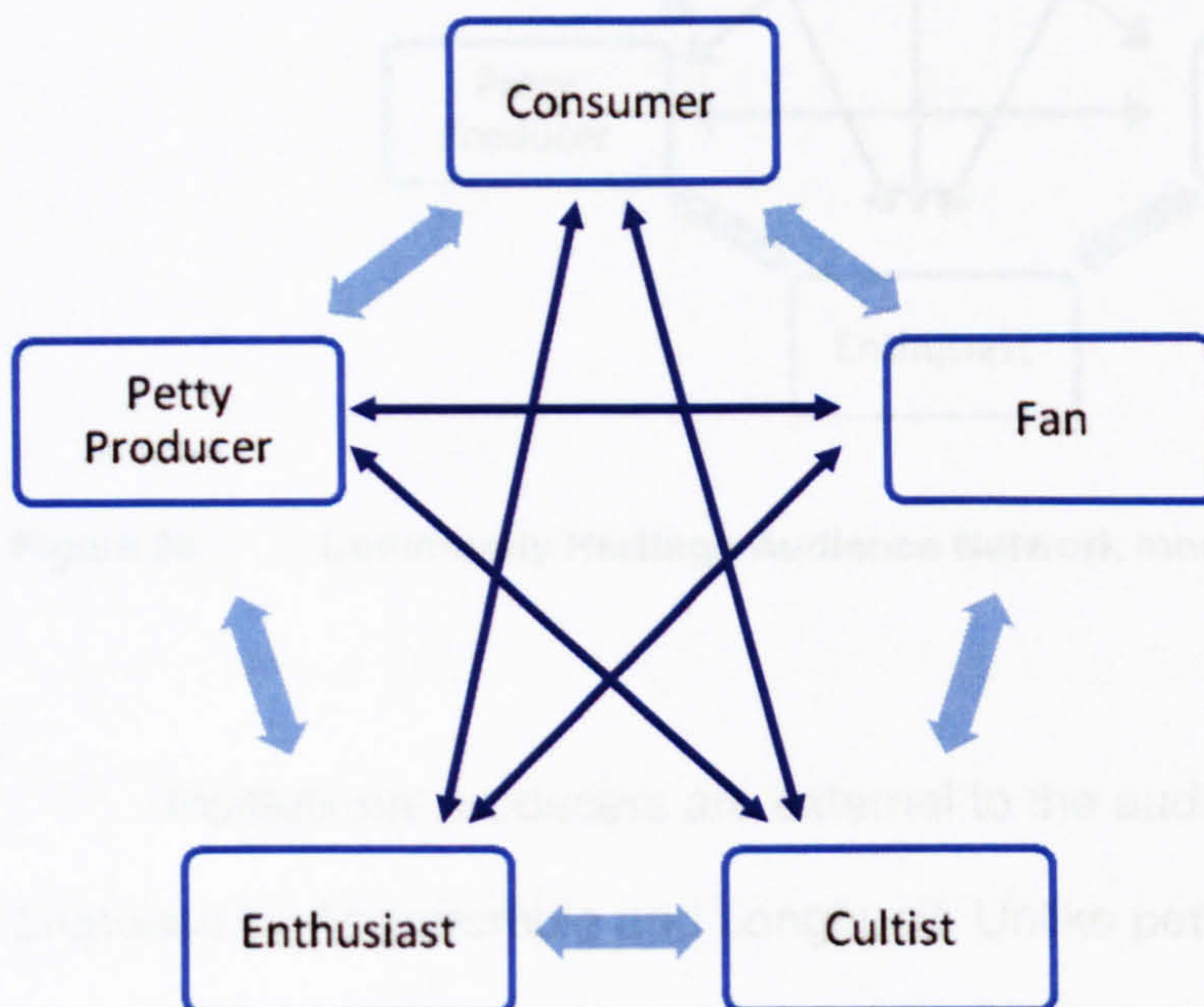


Figure 27 The audience continuum as a network (based on the circuit of culture developed by du Gay *et al* 1999)

which each audience position is linked to all the others, in order to better represent audience experiences at the four case study sites (see Figure 28, below). I further argue that a sixth audience position should be added to this network, which I call the “institutional producer”. This category incorporates academic and professional stakeholders, such as the Welsh Assembly Government and the Madog Center.

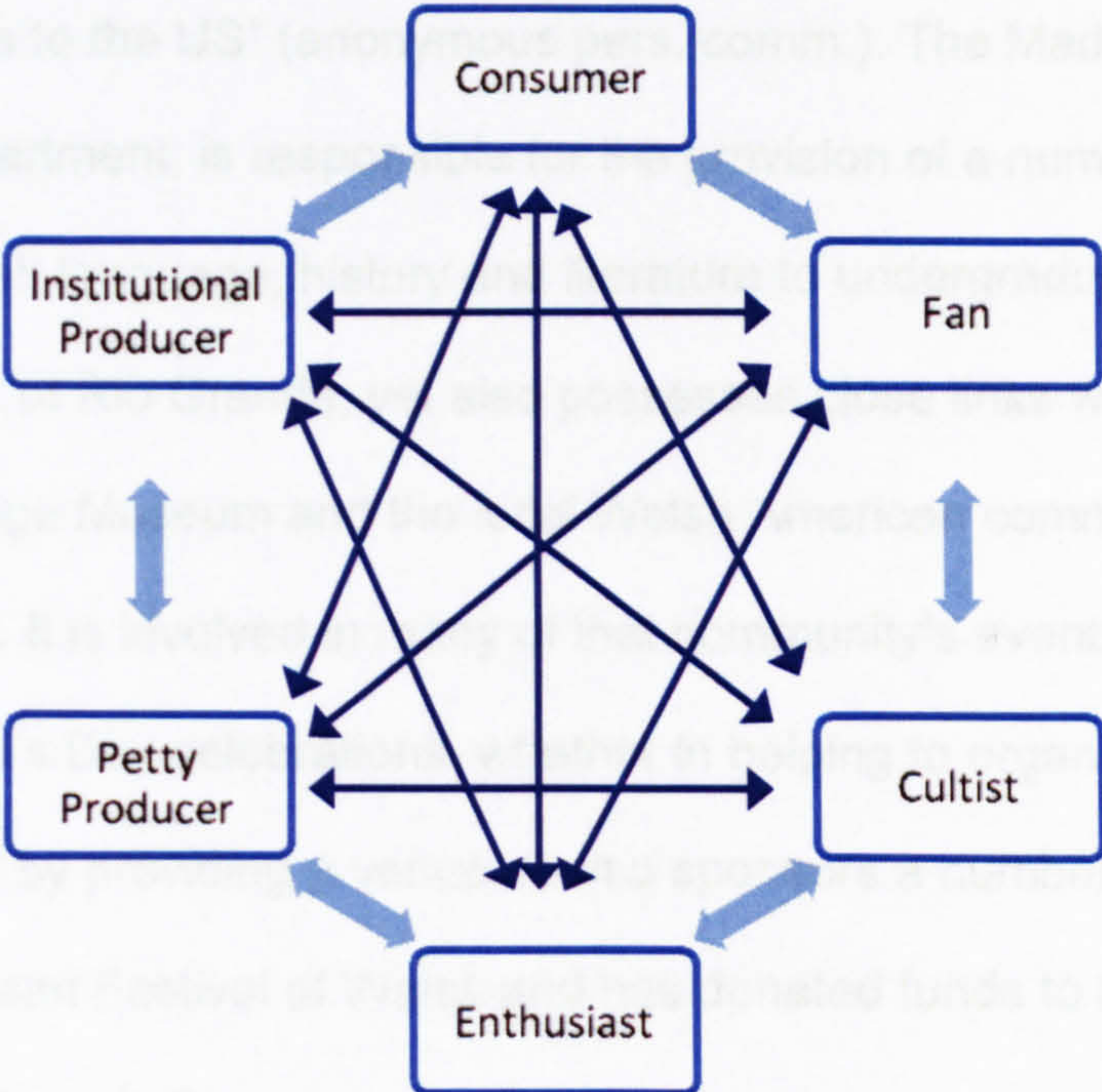


Figure 28 Community Heritage Audience Network model (CHAN)

Institutional producers are external to the audience continuum proposed by Abercrombie and Longhurst. Unlike petty producers, they are not enthusiasts who have developed into professionals, but are rather employed by a public institution or company such as a university, business or government. They produce texts and materials for consumption on the mass

market rather than solely for a specifically Welsh American audience. However, institutional producers such as the Welsh Assembly Government and the Madog Center possess a particular interest in the Welsh American community as a potential market for their products. For example, self-identifying Welsh Americans represent a source of potential “ambassadors” for Wales: as a representative of the overseas arm of the Welsh Assembly Government, the Wales International Centre in New York, put it, “if we can get them talking about Wales in the way we want...they can really help us in marketing Wales to the US” (anonymous pers. comm.). The Madog Center, as a university department, is responsible for the provision of a number of courses on Welsh language, history and literature to undergraduate students at the University of Rio Grande, yet also possesses close links with the Welsh American Heritage Museum and the local Welsh American community of south east Ohio. It is involved in many of that community’s events, such as the annual St. David’s Day celebrations, whether in helping to organise or fund these events, or by providing a venue. It also sponsors a number of events at the North American Festival of Wales and has donated funds to the Welsh Nationality Room project.

The ways in which institutional producers use, interpret and relate to the case study sites differ from those of the five audience positions defined by Abercrombie and Longhurst. They have most in common with petty producers: for institutional producers, the sites represent a means through which to access a potential consumer group (self-identifying Welsh Americans) and an opportunity to market their products to that group. Relationships between institutional producers and the other categories of

audience are organised primarily through the economic market: they produce goods and services for an anonymous public. There is generally little identification with the Welsh American community. Their technical, analytical and interpretive skills closely resemble those of petty producers (see Table 3, page 220) but are practiced on a larger scale. For example, the Welsh Assembly Government, through the Wales International Centre in New York, is marketing Wales as a destination for trade, investment and tourism both specifically, to the Welsh American community, and more broadly, to the general American population. Similarly, the Madog Center operates on a dual level, marketing its academic courses to the broad student population at the University of Rio Grande while simultaneously marketing its knowledge and resources to the Welsh American community. For these institutional producers, self-identifying Welsh Americans represent one of a number of consumer groups to which they seek to market their products.

The Community Heritage Audience Network model (CHAN) I have developed also differs from Abercrombie and Longhurst's audience continuum in that it acknowledges and emphasises the way in which the different audience positions overlap and intertwine. This study's findings indicate that there are no clear or solid boundaries between the different audience positions. This is illustrated in three key ways. The first is the relative ease with which respondents appear to be able to move between positions, whether "up" from consumer to fan or "down" from enthusiast to cultist. The second is in the high level of interaction that takes place between all the audience positions at the four heritage sites. For example, enthusiasts produce materials and texts for consumption not only by their fellow

enthusiasts, but for a broad spectrum of consumers, fans, cultists, enthusiasts, petty producers and institutional producers, as the following quotes illustrate:

I'm a trustee [of the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association, the organising body of the North American Festival of Wales]...The festival helps to keep the Welsh community in America going, it's for everyone who feels a bit Welsh. We're keen to attract new people. (A26)

I'm here to represent the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Project...My retirement is devoted to researching the Welsh settlements in the prairies of North America and operating a museum to preserve and present this history to other people of Welsh heritage and to local people in general. (B12)

Those individuals who fall into the enthusiast audience position represent, in effect, the leaders of the Welsh American community: the trustees of the societies; the managers or curators of the sites; the organisers of cultural and social events; and the producers of newsletters or articles for *Ninnau*, the Welsh American newspaper. Finally, the findings also suggest that an individual can simultaneously occupy two audience positions. For example, some members of staff at the Madog Center can be defined both as institutional producers and as cultists or enthusiasts, as illustrated in the following quote:

I work at the University [of Rio Grande] and I've been actively involved in the Madog Center's activities for number of years now...I celebrate my Welshness by belonging to the Cardigan Club [the local Welsh society] and participating in any Welsh activities in the area. (D10)

In her working life as a member of the University of Rio Grande's administrative staff, this respondent is an institutional producer, while in her private life and leisure time she can be defined as a cultist, actively involved in

the local Welsh society, the Cardigan Club, and in local Welsh American community life.

Conclusion

The way in which visitors use and relate to the four case study sites, the interpretive strategies they use to produce and consumer meanings, are shaped by the degree to which they identify as Welsh and with the Welsh American community. Respondents expressed a variety of motivations for visiting the sites: some were there for an enjoyable day out; others were on a “pilgrimage” to connect with and discover more about their ancestors’ lives; while for some the sites were a focus for their leisure time activities and social lives. The different ways in which they used and related to the sites were not based exclusively on their temporal or geographic distance from a Welsh immigrant ancestor, or from the heritage narratives on display (Dicks 2003). We have seen that individuals who possess no known ancestral connection to Wales can and do identify themselves as Welsh Americans.

Rather, the findings of this study have shown that the way in which respondents use the sites is more closely related to their level of active involvement in the Welsh American community and its activities (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998). This level of engagement is a matter of personal choice. Some respondents choose to claim and express a Welsh identity predominantly within the sphere of the home and family. For such individuals, Welshness represents a private hobby: they may not belong to a Welsh society or be in contact with other self-identifying Welsh Americans. To them,

the four heritage sites represent educational leisure facilities, an opportunity to learn more about Wales and Welshness within the context of a pleasurable day out. In contrast, some respondents choose to become highly active in Welsh American community life: they belong to several different Welsh societies locally and nationally; are often an officer or trustee of one or more of these societies; and are actively involved in the management or day-to-day running of one of the case study sites. For these respondents, the sites represent a serious leisure pursuit (Stebbins 2007), a focus for their social lives and a space in which they can develop and express a range of skills and specialist knowledge.

This chapter has developed a model with which to conceptualise the range of visitor relationships with and interpretations of the four Welsh American community heritage sites. The Community Heritage Audience Network model (see page 236) traces the increasing level of engagement with and involvement in the Welsh American community from consumer to amateur enthusiast, and shows how readings of the sites then return to a more consumer-like interpretation with the audience positions of petty producer and institutional producer. As a network, this model highlights the multiple relationships and interactions between members of the six audience positions that take place at the case study sites. It is through these interactions that the process of heritage occurs and perceptions of Welshness are constructed and negotiated.

This chapter has also shown that visitors can occupy a number of different relationships to heritage simultaneously. The following quote is from

a respondent at the NAFOW 2006 who can be defined, in Abercrombie and Longhurst's terms, as both a petty producer and fan/cultist:

This year I came as a vendor, I wanted to sell my goods. I've been to two other festivals as a visitor. As a vendor I'm following in my grandmother's footsteps. (B80)

The way in which this visitor interprets and relates to the site is linked to the context in which their visit takes place, to whether their main motivation for visiting is in order to sell their goods as a petty producer, as at this NAFOW, or in order to have an enjoyable leisure experience as a fan or cultist, as it has been in previous years. Visitors can also simultaneously experience what Dicks terms a child-self and an ancestor-self connection with heritage narratives (2003), as the following quote from a respondent at the Welsh American Heritage Museum demonstrates:

I'm fourth-generation Welsh American, my great-grandparents on both sides came over from Wales. The museum doesn't say much about Wales but it tells a lot about the Welsh people who lived in this area...My favourite objects [at the museum] is a photograph of my mother and uncle, and my mother's music stand. She was the piano teacher...she used to play in the church. (D1)

This quote illustrates a number of overlapping registers of memory that this individual can draw on at the Welsh American Heritage Museum. The site embodies a variety of individual and collective memories and evokes a sense of belonging to two different communities. Firstly, there is that of the family group and the local Welsh American community of Jackson and Gallia Counties, to which this respondent has a child-self relationship based on personal lived experience. Secondly, there is the broader, imagined community of Welsh immigrants to the US and their descendents, with which

this respondent's relationship is based on ancestral narratives drawn from family stories, local and public history. These findings further develop Gaynor Bagnall's argument that visitors emotionally and imaginatively map heritage sites based on processes of reminiscence and their ability to link the heritage narratives on display to elements of their personal biography and identity (2003).

This chapter has investigated and analysed how and why visitors use the four case study sites, identifying two alternative ways in which to conceptualise the variety of interpretive communities to which they belong. This analysis represents one important way in which the question of what is going on at the Welsh American community heritage sites can be considered. However, the issue of why and how some Americans choose to identify as Welsh must also be addressed. This issue is obviously an important factor in both the creation and continued existence of the case study sites, and in terms of visitor motivations. An investigation of the reasons why and the ways in which Americans choose to claim, perform and consume Welsh identities forms the basis of the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

Claiming Welshness at a Distance

Identity and belonging amongst self-identifying Welsh Americans

In the US Census 2000 over 1.7 million Americans (0.4% of the total population) claimed Welsh ancestry or ethnic origins (Brittingham and de la Cruz 2004: 5). As we have seen, members of this diasporic Welsh American community are responsible for the creation and management of the four case study sites, and also form the core visitor group of these sites. The question of why and how these Americans choose to claim and perform a Welsh identity is a key factor in understanding what is going on at the four Welsh American community heritage sites: the North American Festival of Wales 2005 and 2006; the Welsh Nationality Room; and the Welsh American Heritage Museum. The previous chapter has highlighted the important role of personal choice in determining visitors' level of involvement with the Welsh American community and the way in which they use, relate to and interpret the sites. It can be hypothesised that personal choice may also play a significant role in the decision to identify as Welsh and in how that identity is constructed and performed. Most self-identifying Welsh Americans are three or more generations removed from their Welsh immigrant ancestors: immigration from Wales to the US virtually ceased in the early twentieth century as a result of the impact of the First World War (1914-1918) and the global economic depression of the 1930s (see chapter two pp. 99-100). For many, their connection with Wales has passed beyond living memory; they are identifying

with a place (Wales) and a cultural heritage (Welsh) that is both geographically and chronologically distant from themselves. Why do they continue to identify with their Welsh ancestry? What form(s) does this identification take? What role(s) do Wales and Welsh identity play in their lives? How do they claim, perceive and perform a sense of Welsh identity?

This chapter applies two very different theories of identity and belonging to an investigation of these questions. The first theory, symbolic ethnicity, was developed by the sociologist Herbert Gans to explain the nature and function of white ethnic identities in the contemporary US (Gans 1979, 1994). The second theory, elective belonging, was developed by Mike Savage, Gaynor Bagnall and Brian Longhurst through an analysis of spatial attachments, forms of connectivity and local belonging in four residential areas of Manchester (Savage *et al* 2005). Both privilege the element of personal choice: Gans argues that contemporary white ethnic identities in the US represent a voluntary identity position which individuals can choose whether or not to claim; while Savage *et al* argue individuals who have chosen to live in a particular area actively construct a sense of belonging to that area. This chapter uses these theories to explore the perceptions and experiences of claiming, constructing and performing Welsh identities in the US expressed by survey respondents across the four sites. Its analysis is based on their responses to the following survey questions:

- Do you have a personal connection to Wales? What is your connection to Wales?
- Is your Welsh ancestry and identity important to you?

- What does Wales mean to you?
- How would you define Welsh identity? What makes someone Welsh?
- Do you celebrate your Welshness? How do you celebrate it?
- Are there times when having a Welsh identity matters more to you than at others? When? Why?

This chapter can be divided into three sections. The first addresses the theory of symbolic ethnicity, providing a summary of its main elements and arguments before going on to apply this theory to an analysis of the survey results. The second focuses on elective belonging, again providing a summary of the theory before applying it to an analysis of the survey results. Finally, the applicability of the two theories to an understanding of how and why some Americans choose to claim and perform a Welsh identity is compared and a conclusion drawn.

An Occasional Identity: Symbolic Ethnicity

The theory of symbolic ethnicity was developed by the sociologist Herbert Gans in 1979 as a critique of the so-called “ethnic revival” taking place in the US at that time. This apparent revival in ethnic identification and activities has continued into the twenty-first century, and Gans updated and expanded his theory in a 1994 article. He argues that what is happening in the US does not represent an ethnic revival, but rather a new and final stage in the ongoing acculturation and assimilation of immigrant ethnic groups into American culture and society. He calls this final stage symbolic ethnicity: “an ethnicity of

last resort" (Gans 1979: 1). This stage can appear to represent a revival in ethnic identification and activity, he argues, precisely because it is symbolic, focussed around highly visible and easily recognisable symbolic markers of identity. Moreover, the third generation "ethnics" who practise this symbolic ethnicity have become more visible in American society as a result of their upward mobility into the middle and upper classes (1979: 5). Ultimately, Gans argues that contemporary expressions of white ethnic identities in the US do not represent an ethnic revival because these expressions do not require functioning ethnic groups or a practiced ethnic culture in order to exist (1979: 12).

Symbolic ethnicity is "characterized by a nostalgic allegiance to the culture of the immigrant generation, or that of the old country; a love for and a pride in tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated in everyday behaviour" (1979: 9). It is "intended mainly for the purpose of feeling or being identified with a particular ethnicity, but without either participating in an existing ethnic organization (formal or informal) or practising an ongoing ethnic culture" (1994: 578). Gans defines symbolic ethnicity as a voluntary rather than ascriptive identity category: individuals are free to choose if, when and how to claim and perform an ancestral ethnic identity, their "concern is with identity rather than cultural practices or group relationships, they are free to look for ways of expressing that identity which suit them best" (1979: 8-9). Most individuals, he argues, choose to perform ethnicity in easy, intermittent and above all symbolic ways, for example by celebrating rites of passage or religious and ethnic holidays. Other key symbolic expressions of ethnic

identity identified by Gans include consumer goods, particularly foods, and the ancestral homeland, the “old country” (1979: 10).

The concept of symbolic ethnicity is an influential one, reflecting common perceptions of white ethnicity in the US as a voluntary leisure-time identity role (Alba 1990; Bankston and Henry 2004). The sociologist Richard Alba draws similar conclusions to Gans in his study of white ethnic identification amongst 524 people in the Albany region of New York state in 1984 and 1985 (1990). He argues that the nature of white ethnicity has become increasingly privatised, shifting from a communal identity base to a personal one (1990: 303). Similarly, in their analysis of Cajun festivals in Louisiana, Carl Bankston and Jacques Henry emphasise the central role played by processes of commodification and consumerism in the production and consumption of contemporary ethnic identities (2004). Echoing Gans, they argue that: “ethnic identification is based less on social ties...and distinctive cultural and linguistic characteristics than it is on the consumption of commodities that express a self-ascription to ancestral social ties, culture and language” (2004: 385). Bankston and Henry propose that a new term, “commodified ethnicity”, more fully reflects experiences of ethnic identity amongst white Americans of European descent in the twenty-first century.

However, the theory of symbolic ethnicity has also been critiqued, particularly by researchers investigating contemporary Jewish American identity, an ethnic group that formed one of Gans’s main case studies (Conzen *et al* 1992; Winter 1996; Ray 2001). Conzen *et al* argue that ethnic identification is an ongoing process, evolving through negotiations within an immigrant group, and between the immigrant group and the dominant host

culture (1992: 4-5). This process requires active participation and group awareness, not merely the personal and private consumption of symbolic representations of ethnicity that Gans describes. Similarly, Alan Winter argues that collective religious observances and group affiliation continue to play an important role in constructions and expressions of Jewish identity in the US (1996). The anthropologist Celeste Ray's analysis of processes of Scottish identity formation and performance amongst self-identifying Scottish Americans in North Carolina also supports the existence of a revival in white ethnic identities in the US since the 1960s and 1970s (2001). She rejects the argument that the so-called ethnic revival represents a "last gasp of white ethnicity" (Steinberg 1981), citing the popularity of Scottish Highland Games events, some of which can attract crowds of up to 30,000 (Ray 2001:12). Ray argues that Scottish identities are being actively constructed, claimed, maintained and performed in the contemporary US and that ethnic societies and events play a central role in these processes: "[t]hese ethnic organizations maintain transnational links with the Scottish 'homeland' by importing Scottish ministers, speakers, educators and traditions" (2001: 12). Despite these caveats, the theory of symbolic ethnicity remains a useful one with which to analyse contemporary expressions of Welsh identity in the US, focussing as it does on personal choice and the symbolic performance of ethnic identities.

This chapter focuses on three key elements of the theory of symbolic ethnicity, investigating how far these elements are supported by the survey data collected at the four case study sites. The first element is that of personal choice, the second concerns the symbolic construction, representation and

consumption of ethnicity, while the third addresses the issue of the lack of functioning groups and networks. As indicated, choice is a defining characteristic of symbolic ethnicity: Gans argues that contemporary white Americans are able to make a personal choice if, when and how to play ethnic roles (1979: 8). These ethnic roles are predominantly constructed and performed in symbolic ways, notably through the celebration of ethnic holidays or the purchase and display of ethnic consumer goods (Gans 1979: 10). The ancestral homeland is a central symbol of ethnicity: Gans argues that contemporary Americans feel a nostalgic link and a historic interest in the “old country” as it was before or during the period of ancestral departure (1979: 10-11). He further argues that these symbolic ethnics “lack direct and indirect ties to the old country, and neither need nor have much knowledge about it” (Gans 1979: 6). Finally, for Gans symbolic ethnicity is characterised by the lack of a practiced ethnic culture or functioning ethnic groups and networks (1979: 14). These three dimensions of symbolic ethnicity and their relevance to contemporary expressions of Welsh identity in the US will be discussed in turn.

Choosing identity

From the outset it was clear that choice plays an important role in expressions of Welsh identity in the US. The majority of respondents (196 individuals or 69% of the sample) were the American-born descendents of Welsh immigrants, as illustrated by the data gathered in response to the question “do you have a personal connection to Wales?” (see Table 4, overleaf). Answers

to this question also revealed that most respondents had made an active and conscious choice to identify as Welsh, as illustrated in the following quotes:

My mother was born in Wales but I'm the only one of my brothers and sisters who says I'm Welsh. The others say they're just Americans. I chose to find out more about my Welsh history and culture. (A61)

There's German in me too but it's not as important. The Welsh is much more interesting. (D17)

I have a lot of Welsh names in my family tree and I guess I just chose to get interested in that side of myself. (C31)

This ability to make a personal choice whether or not to claim a Welsh identity supports the theory of symbolic ethnicity, and Gans's argument that ethnic identities in the USA today are voluntary, relevant only to some descendants of an immigrant group (1979: 12).

<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Born in Wales	56	19
Welsh ancestry	196	69
No ancestral connection	22	8
No response	10	4
TOTAL	284	100%

Table 4 Survey respondents' connection to Wales (n=284)

Many of the fifty-six respondents who had been born in Wales (19% of the sample) also described making an active choice as to whether or not to identify as Welsh. Just sixteen members of this group (5% of the total sample) perceived Welsh identity as something they had been born with, an essential element of their personal identity, stating for example:

I'm Welsh not American. I don't know how to quantify it. I just know that's what I am. (B72)

My Welsh identity is what makes me me. (C15)

The remaining forty first-generation Welsh Americans (14% of the total sample) described their identities in more fluid and subjective terms:

I'm more Welsh than American. I would have said American not Welsh once, before [George W] Bush's politics. My sense of identity has changed over the years. (D15)

When I came here we learned not to be Welsh, but I'm proud of it now. (B29)

I'm Welsh by birth but I've chosen to be an American. That's important to me too. (B98)

For these respondents, neither a Welsh nor an American identity are perceived as ascriptive, but are rather shifting identity categories with which they can choose to identify, or to reject, at different times. Respondent D15, for example, appears to be using a sense of Welsh identity as a way in which

to differentiate himself from the general American population and make a statement regarding his opinions of certain contemporary US issues.

In defining the concept of symbolic ethnicity Gans implies that Americans who choose to claim an ethnic identity will choose one with which they have an ancestral link (1979: 12). Although most of the self-identifying Welsh Americans surveyed possessed some Welsh ancestry, twenty-two respondents (8% of the sample) knew of no Welsh ancestors yet still identified themselves as Welsh. This identification was commonly made on the basis of an interest in Welsh history and culture, or simply because they felt an emotional affinity with Wales and Welshness, as the following quotes illustrate:

I don't know much about my ancestry, but I have chosen to be Welsh. I feel I belong to that place. (C21)

I'm not yet aware of any [Welsh] ancestry but I seek the best knowledge we can find of the ancient Celtic Welsh and look at how it can be incorporated into or adapted to modern life. (C7)

Significantly, however, these two respondents do not rule out the possibility that they may possess an as yet undiscovered connection to Wales: "I'm *not yet* aware of any [Welsh] ancestry" (emphasis by author). The possession of Welsh ancestry may not be essential to claiming a Welsh identity, but it appears to be a key way in which respondents can validate their claims.

Gans defines symbolic ethnic identifications as being separate and subordinate to an American national identity, arguing that those who claim symbolic ethnic identities are highly acculturated and assimilated into

<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
American not Welsh	26	13%
More American than Welsh	90	46%
Equally American and Welsh	52	27%
More Welsh than American	8	4%
Welsh not American	12	6%
No response	8	4%
TOTAL	196	100%

Table 5 Responses to the question “Which of the following best describes how you see yourself?” at sites B, C and D based on the Moreno scale (n=196)

American culture and society. The balance between the Welsh and American elements of respondents' personal identities was analysed at three of the case study sites (the NAFOW 2006, the Welsh Nationality Room and the Welsh American Heritage Museum) using an adaptation of the Moreno scale, as this is an accepted means of gauging varying strength of affiliation to two identity positions⁷. Respondents were asked to select which of the following statements they felt best reflected their identity: American not Welsh; more American than Welsh; equally American and Welsh; more Welsh than American; or Welsh not American (see

Table 5, above). Around three-quarters of respondents at the three sites (150 individuals or 77%) felt that they possessed dual identities as both American

⁷ Developed by the sociologist Luis Moreno to investigate relationships between Scottish and British identities in Scotland, and between Catalan and Spanish identities in Catalonia (Moreno 2006)

and Welsh, with ninety respondents (46% of the sample) giving precedence to their American identity (more American than Welsh). Only twenty individuals (10% of the sample) placed Welsh identity above American, identifying themselves as “more Welsh than American” or “Welsh not American”: all were first-generation immigrants who had been born and, in most cases, had lived until adulthood in Wales.

Many of those who claimed a dual identity as both American and Welsh drew a distinction between their possession of a civic-national American identity and an ethnic Welsh identity, as illustrated by the following quotes:

I'm more American than Welsh. I'm very proud of my Welsh heritage – it means a lot to me – but first and foremost I'm a US citizen. (B47)

I'm very proud of my Welsh roots, but I'm glad I live in America. (D13)

My Welsh identity is important to me but is much secondary to my identity as an American and a Christian. (C34)

An interesting comparison can be drawn between the results of this study and those of a different version of the Moreno scale used in the Welsh Assembly Election Survey 1999, which investigated the balance between Welsh and British identities in Wales at the time of the first elections to the National Assembly for Wales (see Table 6, overleaf). A similar distribution pattern is evident in the results of both surveys, with a majority of each sample claiming a dual identity, as both American and Welsh (77%) or as both Welsh and British (63%). A key difference is that while over a third of those surveyed in Wales identified as Welsh rather than British, or as more Welsh than British

(36% of the sample), only a tenth of respondents in the US placed a Welsh identity above an American. This reflects the fact that Welsh identity in the US represents an ethnic affiliation, subordinate to a civic-national identity as American, while in contemporary Wales it is a national identity, of dual standing with a British identity and increasingly framed in civic terms in public policy.

<i>Response</i>	<i>%</i>
Welsh not British	17
More Welsh than British	19
Equally Welsh and British	37
More British than Welsh	7
British not Welsh	14
Other	6
TOTAL	100

Table 6 Results of the “Moreno Question” included in the Welsh Assembly Election Survey 1999 (n=1256) (Paterson 2002)

Choosing to identify oneself as Welsh in the US appears to be linked to lifecycle. A clear demographic trend was evident in the data collected at the four cases study sites (see Figure 29, overleaf). Almost three-quarters of respondents (207 individuals or 73% of the sample) were aged over fifty-five, with a significant proportion (53 individuals or 18%) aged seventy-five or older. In contrast, just 8% of respondents (26 individuals) were under thirty-five years old. Self-identifying Welsh Americans who actively attend and

participate in Welsh societies and events are an aging group.

Respondents were aware of this trend, many expressing their concern that Welsh societies and events are in decline. As one respondent explained: “This is a festival that will fade. Look at our hair colour. Four years ago there were fifteen hundred people here, this year there’s eight hundred. It’s on its last legs in its current form” (A17).

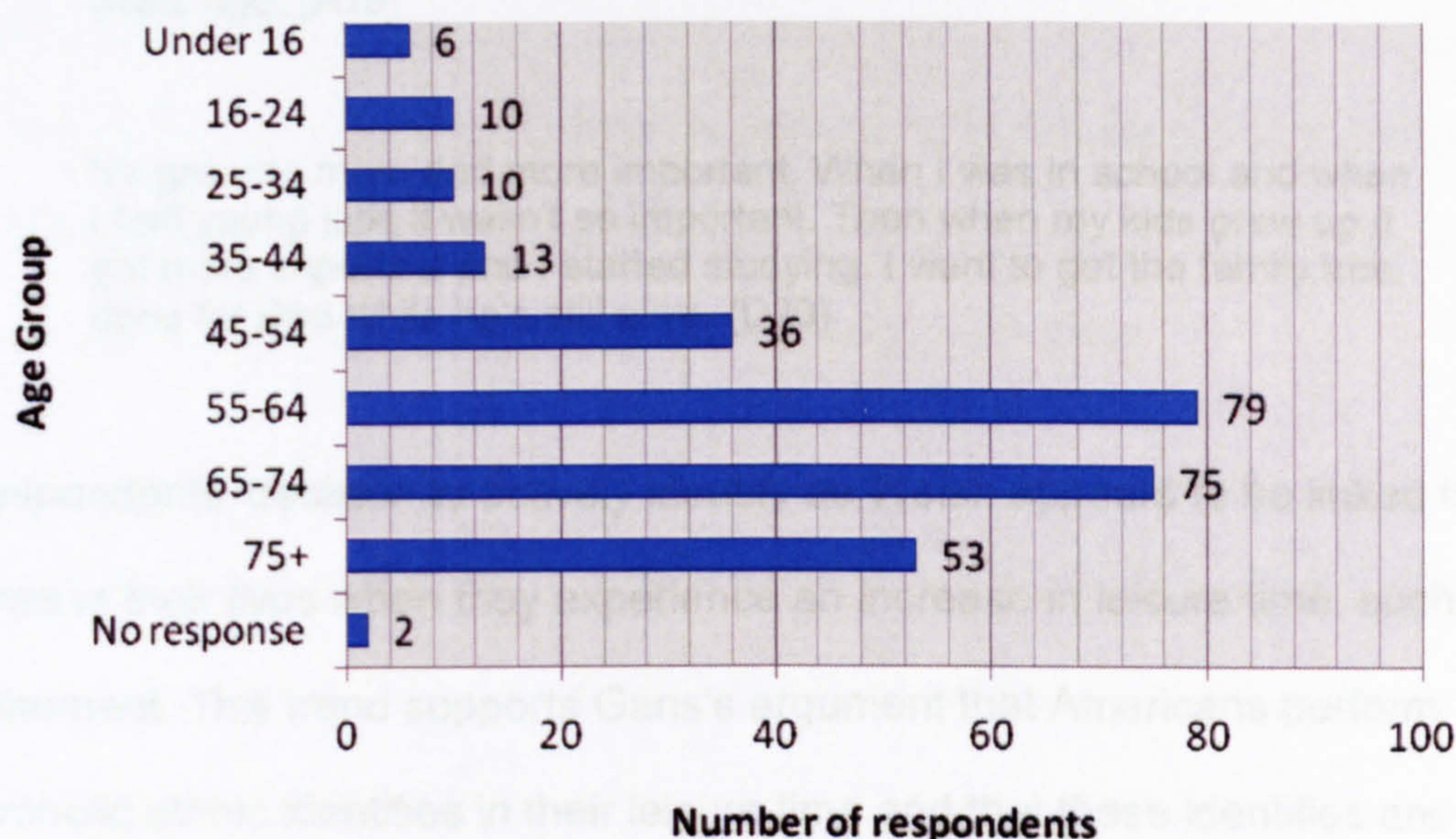


Figure 29 Age range of survey respondents (n=284)

However, the outlook may not be as bleak as many respondents feared. While those who claim Welsh identity are more likely to be over forty-five years old than under, the results of the visitor survey suggest that the decision to identify as Welsh is to some extent an age dependent one. Many respondents described having always known that they possessed some Welsh ancestry, but only becoming interested in this ancestry or choosing to identify themselves as Welsh Americans, at a certain point in their lives,

commonly in middle age. They linked their decision to identify as Welsh to various lifecycle events including retirement, children leaving home and parents become elderly or passing away as the following quotes illustrate:

The older I get the more important it [Welsh identity] gets. I didn't appreciate it when I was young. (A11)

It's very important to me [Welsh identity]. I got into it since retiring four years ago. (A18)

It's growing more and more important. When I was in school and when I had young kids it wasn't so important. Then when my kids grew up it got more important and I started studying. I want to get the family tree done for Dad while he's still alive. (D20)

Respondents' decision to actively identify as Welsh appears to be linked to times in their lives when they experience an increase in leisure time, such as retirement. This trend supports Gans's argument that Americans perform symbolic ethnic identities in their leisure time and that these identities are "easily expressed and felt...without having to be incorporated in everyday behaviour" (1979: 9).

Identity symbols

Survey respondents at the four sites constructed, perceived and performed Welsh identity in highly symbolic ways, focussing on highly visible and easily recognisable signifying markers of Wales and Welshness such as the national flag, *eisteddfodau*, male voice choirs or the mountains of Snowdonia. Most respondents also described feeling and performing a Welsh identity at

symbolic, infrequent occasions such as St. David's Day, the annual North American Festival of Wales, or at family reunions. These trends support the theory of symbolic ethnicity proposed by Gans, in particular his argument that contemporary ethnicity has an expressive rather than instrumental role in people's lives and is characterised by "[e]thnic symbols...frequently individual cultural practices which are taken from the older ethnic culture...abstracted from that culture...to become stand-ins for it" (1979: 9). Some of the key ethnic symbols cited by Gans include: ethnic holidays and rites of passage; ethnic consumer goods, particularly foodstuffs; and the ancestral homeland (1979: 9-10). Such symbols did indeed dominate self-identifying Welsh American respondents' descriptions of their Welsh identity.

The ancestral homeland, in this case Wales, is an obvious source of identity symbols. Gans argues that "[o]ld countries are particularly useful as identity symbols...American ethnics can identify with their perception of the old country...transforming it into a symbol which leaves out its domestic or foreign problems" (1979: 10-11). When asked to describe what Wales meant to them, most respondents at the four sites gave answers in which romantic, nostalgic and emotional descriptions dominated, for example:

When I think of Wales I think of beautiful hills, legends and enchantment...Something ancient and noble. Castles, harps and Merlin. A place I yearn to be, to see, to know. (C6)

To me, Wales means mountains, valleys, song and *hiraeth* [roughly translated as a longing for the homeland]. (A34)

I think of music and language and mountains. (D18)

The feeling one gets when Welsh songs or hymns or the national anthem are sung, the feeling of pride and love of country, that's what Wales means to me. Knowing what it must have taken for my grandparents to leave everyone in Wales and come here to America. (A86)

A holy land – I'd like to think of it as that. That's what I felt when I was there – and even before I went. I felt like I was home. (B32)

Wales is my long lost home country. I went to my first gymanfa ganu in New York City as a young man and when the singing came in Welsh I just had tears running down my face. There was a strong emotional connection to my home language – I'd never heard Welsh before. (D11)

Song, poetry, beautiful land and ancient history. The folklore and fairytales, which in Wales are believed factually. (C9)

The lilting musicality of the language. The dramatic rugged mountains of North Wales. The phenomenal musicality and clarity of vocal performances and the triple harp. (B5)

These and other responses to the question “what does Wales mean to you?” illustrate a number of key ways in which respondents perceived Wales, for example: as a source of family roots and heritage; in terms of music and song; through Welsh culture, history and traditions; in terms of the natural landscapes; and in terms of specific places within Wales. The percentage of respondents citing each of these key descriptions of Wales in their answers was calculated and the results are given in Figure 30 (overleaf).

It is notable that none of the 284 respondents referred to specifically contemporary symbols of Wales, such as the Welsh Assembly Government. References to symbols of industrial Wales, such as coal mining or

ironworking, were also surprisingly infrequent: just sixteen respondents (5% of the total sample) mentioned industry in their descriptions of Wales. Of those

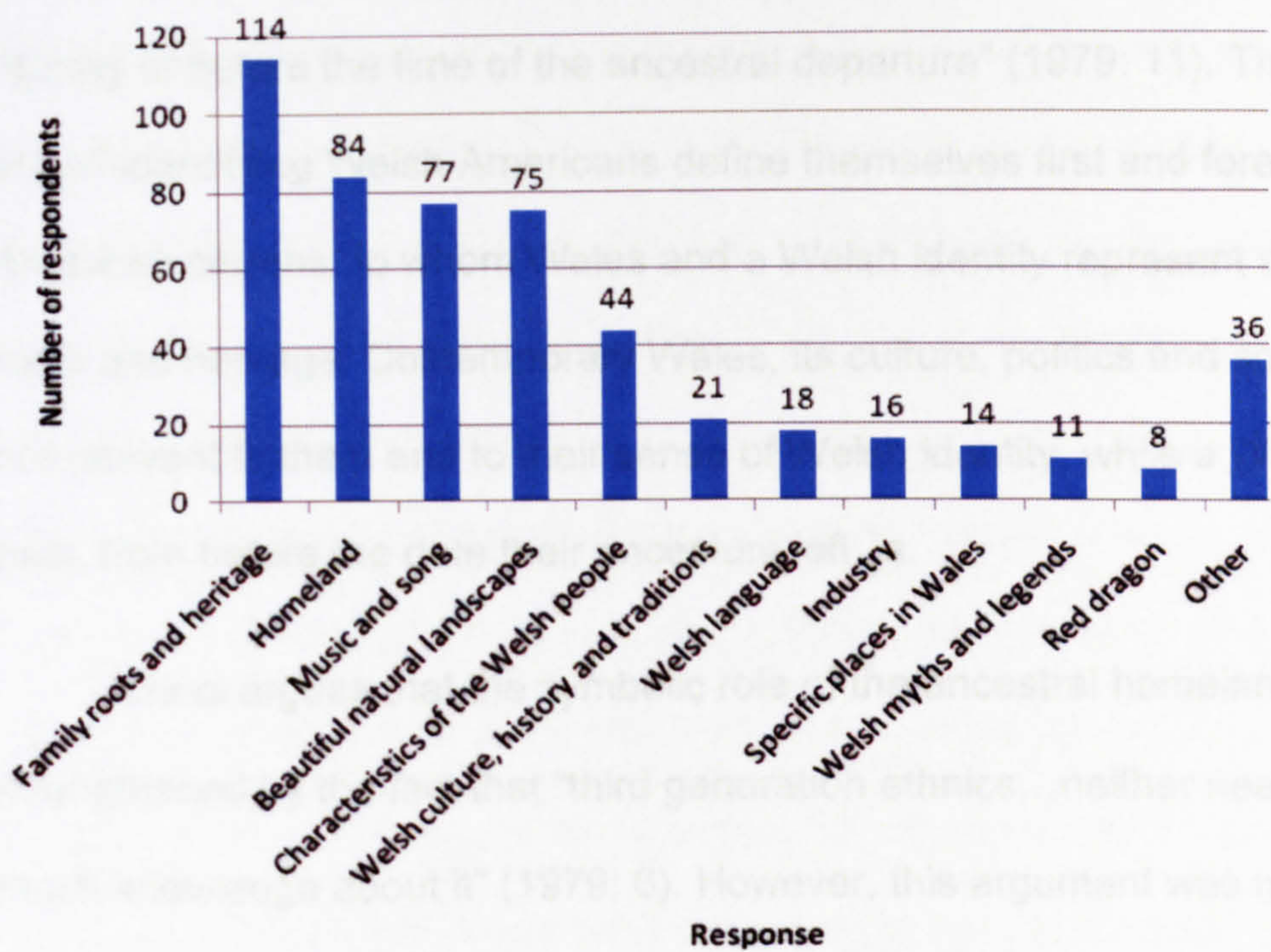


Figure 30 Survey responses to the question “What does Wales mean to you?” (n=284)

sixteen, twelve cited coal mines, miners or mining, perhaps the most powerful symbols of industrial Wales. These twelve respondents referred to *How Green Was My Valley*, the Oscar-winning 1941 film directed by John Ford. *How Green Was My Valley* portrays a “Hollywoodised” romantic and nostalgic version of life in the south Wales coalfield at the turn of the century, focussing on “traditional”, almost clichéd markers of Welsh identity including community, coal mining, religion, education and music (Woodward 2004: 54). Overall, the trends identified in the visitor surveys suggest that survey respondents’ perceptions of Wales and Welshness are not shaped by contemporary Wales,

or by an industrial Wales of the more recent past, but draw upon romantic imagery of the unspoilt natural landscapes and traditional lifestyles of a pre-industrial Wales. This supports Gans's assertion that contemporary American "ethnics" have a historical interest in their ancestral homelands, as they were "during or before the time of the ancestral departure" (1979: 11). The majority of self-identifying Welsh Americans define themselves first and foremost as American citizens, to whom Wales and a Welsh identity represent a sense of roots and heritage. Contemporary Wales, its culture, politics and society, is not relevant to them and to their sense of Welsh identity, while a Wales of the past, from before the date their ancestors left, is.

Gans argues that the symbolic role of the ancestral homeland is further strengthened by the fact that "third generation ethnics...neither need nor have much knowledge about it" (1979: 6). However, this argument was not supported by the results of the audience survey across the four sites. For example, many respondents expressed a desire to learn more about Wales, the Welsh culture or the Welsh language, as illustrated by the following quotes:

The primary reason I joined the St. David's Society [of Pittsburgh] was to learn more about Wales and the Welsh people. (C47)

We attend the festival ever year because it affords us an opportunity to learn about our Welsh heritage, culture, and most of all to sing in Welsh! (B14)

I came to the festival to learn about my Welsh heritage. I've gone to many of the seminars on Welsh history and I took part in the language and the folk dance classes. (A32)

Some respondents also revealed an awareness of differences between expressions of Welshness in the US and in Wales. One respondent felt that “the festival’s a little nostalgic – it’s not about Wales like it is today” (A7), while another described American perceptions of Wales as fossilised: “male voice choirs and hymn sings and the Gymanfa Ganu are the big events here...they’re not big in Wales anymore” (B35). These results suggest that, while an extensive knowledge of Wales may not be essential to an American’s ability to claim a Welsh identity, it plays a more important role than Gans allows. The possession of knowledge about the “historical and contemporary facts, about the geographical, social, linguistic and other sorts of data that distinguish Wales and ‘Welshness’ from other cultural formations” (Bishop et al 2003: 43), is a key way in which self-identifying Welsh Americans can construct, perform and validate a Welsh identity, both to themselves and to others.

A second source of symbolic representations of Welsh identity cited by respondents is consumer goods. Many respondents articulate and perform a Welsh identity through the purchase, display and consumption of consumer goods they perceive to be representative of Wales and Welshness, as the following quotes illustrate:

I buy a lot of Welsh music, especially male voice choirs and Bryn Terfel [a Welsh baritone]. (C30)

My licence plate reads “Cymro” [Welshman]...I fly a Welsh flag and an Owain Glyndŵr flag from the front porch. (B93)

I display Welsh things round the home – like Celtic knotwork, a statue of a miner made from Welsh coal and the flag of course. I have a red dragon lapel pin. (D23)

We import Welsh foods and Welsh tea. (C16)

This emphasis upon tangible and symbolic markers of Welshness reflects the fact that Welsh American identity, like other white ethnic identities, is an invisible ethnicity (Alba 1990: 139). Self-identifying Welsh Americans cannot be recognised from their physical appearance alone, as an African American might be. Respondents make their Welsh identity visible to both themselves and others through easily recognisable symbolic markers of Wales, in particular the national flag. The stress placed by many respondents on the Welsh national flag, the Red Dragon, as a means through which they articulate and perform their Welsh identity echoes Michael Billig's discussion of the role of the unwaved national flag in "flagging" nationalism (1995). Billig argues that that national identity is to be found in the "embodied habits of social life" (1995: 8), in "the routines of life which constantly remind or "flag" nationhood" (1995: 38). The Welsh national flag, a symbol of the Welsh nation and national identity, is displayed on websites, t-shirts, posters, mugs, and other everyday objects, functioning as a banal reminder of Welshness, "flagging it unflaggingly" (Billig: 41).

Performing identity

Most self-identifying Welsh American respondents felt and performed their chosen Welsh identity roles at symbolic times and events. Over half of the

survey sample (174 respondents or 61%) identified most strongly as Welsh on symbolic occasions such as St. David's Day, the North American Festival of Wales, family reunions or holidays in Wales. Symbolic occasions such as these also dominated respondents' descriptions of the ways in which they celebrated their Welshness, as illustrated in the following quotes (see also Table 7, overleaf):

I attend festivals, spread the word, indoctrinate my family, listen to Welsh music and visit Wales whenever I can. (A34)

I'm learning the language and we celebrate St. David's Day. We also import Welsh foods and tea. (C16)

I celebrate by attending Gymanfas [sic], participating in Eisteddfods, singing in Welsh and learning the language. And at Welsh Heritage Week. (A85)

I celebrate through reading and trying to find out more about Wales and the language. I attend events like this one when they're nearby (B31)

I celebrate quietly, with an occasional display of a flag or attendance at gatherings. I also share my sense of identity with my sons. (C3)

I come to the Gymanfas [sic] and sing in the choir and attend the social events. (C27)

Respondents most commonly performed their Welsh identity through membership of a Welsh American society or organisation (156 individuals or 54% of the sample). Other frequently cited methods include: attendance or participation at local, regional or national Welsh American events (36%); listening to and participating in Welsh choral singing (23%); and the

celebration of St. David’s Day (21%). These results support Gans’s assertion that contemporary expressions of ethnic identity in the US are easy and intermittent (1979: 8). While respondents have made an active decision to attend a Welsh American event or join a Welsh American society, such events are commonly held on an annual basis, and membership of such societies can involve little more than attendance at these annual events. The Welsh identity described by most respondents can be defined as a leisure activity, carried out at times and in ways chosen by and for themselves.

<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Belong to a Welsh society or group	156	54
Attend Welsh American social events and festivals	103	36
Listen to/ sing Welsh music and songs	66	23
Celebrate St. David's Day	62	21
Learn/ speak the Welsh language	35	12
Visit Wales	33	11
Display the Welsh flag	27	9
Purchase Welsh foodstuffs	20	7
Learn about Wales, Welsh history and culture	18	6
Teach others about Wales, Welsh history and culture	16	5
Family gatherings and reunions	9	3
Attend Welsh religious services	8	2

Table 7 Ways in which survey respondents perform Welsh identity (n=284)⁸

⁸ This table measures the percentage of respondents citing each of the above ways to perform a Welsh identity. The total does not therefore add up to 100%

However, not all respondents described such easy and intermittent expressions of Welshness. A minority were highly active members of a range of local, regional or national Welsh American organisations, as the following quotes illustrate:

Welshness consumes a lot of my day. I've been on the Board of Cymdeithas Madog [North American Welsh Studies Institute] since 1985. I'm on the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association Board of Directors, I'm president of the Iowa Welsh Society and I write for Ninnau [Welsh American newspaper]. (B27)

I work in the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association, attend local events and I belong to three Welsh societies in Ohio. (B17)

The core of the Society, the board members, are very very active. We're involved in everything – the St. David's Day celebrations, the parade, local Celtic festivals, the Welsh Nationality Room – everything. The general membership kinda sees the Board as social secretaries, organising things for them to do. We're trying to get them more actively involved. (C50)

The above respondents commit significant amounts and time and effort to organising, running and participating in Welsh American events and societies. Welsh activities, as respondent B27 suggests above, can take up a large amount of their daily lives. While performing a Welsh identity can still be described as a leisure time activity for this group of respondents, all of who are retired, it is best classified as a form of serious leisure (Stebbins 1992, 2001, 2007). As discussed in the previous chapter, such enthusiasts' involvement in the organisation and management of Welsh community societies, events, sites and networks represents "the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist or volunteer activity that is sufficiently substantial and

interesting for the participant to find a career there in the acquisition and expression of its specific skills and knowledge” (Stebbins 2007: xii).

The importance given by respondents to these Welsh American societies, events and networks in their descriptions of processes of Welsh identity construction, performance and validation directly contradicts Gans’s argument that “[s]ymbolic ethnicity...does not require functioning groups or networks; feelings of identity can be developed by allegiances to symbolic groups that never meet or to collectivities that meet only occasionally” (1979: 12). For Gans, contemporary ethnicity is an almost totally personal phenomenon, based on an individual’s ability to feel ethnic and requiring little or no external recognition or validation. However, the vast majority of survey respondents emphasised the important role played by collective performances of Welshness in creating and sustaining their feelings of Welsh identity:

It’s social – you can’t celebrate Welsh identity without other people.
(A27)

I feel really Welsh here at the festival because I’m surrounded by Welsh people and music and market goods. (A36)

I feel Welsh when I’m in the presence of other Welsh people. It recharges my batteries. (B37)

I celebrate my Welshness by sharing activities such as singing, genealogy and so on with others who are interested at our local Welsh society in Ohio. (B54)

I feel most Welsh with my family or with other Welsh. It’s a social identity isn’t it? (C39)

It [the Welsh American Heritage Museum] brings the whole Welsh community together to celebrate their Welsh heritage and culture. (D5)

The museum is a focal point of the Welsh in their community... It's a focus for people who've moved away – if the museum wasn't there they'd come back and see their families but not the community. (D16)

The theory of symbolic ethnicity contains the implicit assumption that without face-to-face social interaction in the form of functioning ethnic groups and a lived ethnic culture, ethnic identities cease to be real and authentic, becoming merely symbolic. This is not supported by the results of the Welsh American audience survey, which reveals ongoing social processes of Welsh identity construction and reconstruction through a series of functioning groups and networks. Self-identifying Welsh Americans are members of a deterritorialised, diasporic community, a community based on a shared interest in Wales and Welsh cultural heritage. Members of this community may rarely or never meet, but the community is sustained by infrequent collective performances of communal identity, such as at St. David's Day or the NAFOW, by the social networks created through Welsh American societies, newspapers and periodicals, and through the internet. As such, Welsh American community has much in common with the concept of "virtual community" (Urry 2000; Castells 2001; Delanty 2003). A virtual community is one which is not based primarily upon the place of residence (in this case the US) but rather on shared identities and interests (i.e. Wales and Welshness). New technologies – especially the internet – support new forms of belonging, through which the distant becomes close and familiar. They also enable and help to sustain interactions and social relationships that might not otherwise

be maintained between individuals and groups geographically distant from each other (Delanty: 165-185).

Summary

In many ways, contemporary American expressions of Welsh identity fit the model of symbolic ethnicity proposed by Gans. Self-identifying Welsh American respondents produce and consume a sense of Welshness in highly symbolic forms: they focus on symbolic markers of Wales such as the Welsh language, the national flag, St. David's Day and male voice choirs. The Welsh American social calendar is focussed around symbolic events and dates including St. David's Day and the annual North American Festival of Wales. However, the numerous examples of local, regional and national Welsh American societies and institutions – including the four case study sites – together with the importance placed by respondents on collective performances of Welsh identity in sustaining that identity, seem to contradict Gans's assertion that white ethnicity in the US no longer requires functioning groups or networks (1979: 12). The results of the audience survey suggest that social groups and networks are very important to self-identifying Welsh Americans, playing a significant role in their motivations for claiming and performing Welsh identities (see chapter 5). In conclusion, theories of symbolic ethnicity go some way towards developing an understanding of Welsh identity in the US, but they do not fully address its complexities.

Agency and Identity: Elective Belonging

In common with symbolic ethnicity, the concept of elective belonging emphasises the important role played by personal choice in the construction of identity and belonging. It was developed by Mike Savage, Gaynor Bagnall and Brian Longhurst through an analysis of the significance of local place, identity, community and belonging in four residential neighbourhoods in the Manchester area of north-west England (2005). Savage *et al* carried out 182 in-depth qualitative interviews with residents of these areas, investigating respondents' perceptions of their local neighbourhood, their social and cultural attitudes, values and identities, and their leisure and work practices (2005: 15). They found that "attachment to place is detached from historical communal roots in that area" (Savage *et al*: 52); in other words that feeling a sense of belonging to these localities is not limited to those "born and bred" in the area but can also be felt by local residents who possess no prior ties to that area. These "elective locals", people who have chosen to move to and settle in an area, possess what Savage *et al* define as an "elective belonging". Their sense of belonging is based on their ability to link their personal biographies to the locality in which they have chosen to live, on telling "stories that indicate how their arrival and subsequent settlement is appropriate to their sense of themselves" and thus constructing a tie between themselves and their surroundings (2005: 29).

The sense of belonging felt and claimed by these elective locals is, Savage *et al* argue, often greater than that expressed by transient residents or by locals who have been born and brought up in an area. Elective locals have actively chosen to live in an area and "can thereby, through their agency,

avoid the fixity which comes from the habit simply of living where one always lives [locals], or following one's career slavishly so that one does not make a decision to place oneself anywhere [transients]" (2005: 45). Many of the "born and bred" locals interviewed by Savage *et al* expressed a lack of a full and assertive sense of belonging, often because they felt that "their" area has undergone so many changes during their lifetime that it was no longer theirs, or because of a sense of personal failure that they have not moved away from the area they grew up in, perceived as a failure to move up the social ladder (2005: 48-51). Respondents who had been born and bred in an area were often also less able to articulate their sense of local belonging than elective locals, focussing on the familiarity of upbringing and routines:

So what things do you like about living in this area now?

I feel safe somehow, this is me, I'm home. (C26)

Yes, I have always lived here. I feel safe here, I know it. (D55)

(Savage *et al*: 47)

Elective belonging represents a useful way in which to conceptualise expressions of Welsh identity in the US. At its root, the concept of elective belonging conceives of belonging as fluid rather than fixed. Savage *et al* reject the argument that a community is a fixed entity with closed boundaries to which one either belongs or does not belong, without any middle ground. Choice plays an important role in elective belonging: "[p]laces are defined not

as historical residues of the local, or simply as sites where one happens to live, but as sites chosen by particular social groups wishing to announce their identities” (Savage *et al*: 207). This chapter applies three key elements of the concept of elective belonging to an analysis of the audience surveys carried out at the four Welsh American case study sites. These three key elements are: the ability to link personal biography to a chosen area; the articulation of an emotional attachment to that chosen place; and the differing forms of connection and belonging to place, particularly between “born and bred” and elective locals.

On the basis of these trends, Savage *et al* argue that the concept of historically rooted local communities is increasingly problematic. The ease of mobility between areas, regions and even nations that is an effect of globalisation, coupled with the rapid social and cultural changes villages, towns and cities have experienced over the last fifty years, mean that “the modern individual has to move, and by choosing a place to live they endeavour to confirm a sense of who they are” (2005: 53). These changing relationships between the local and the global have not led to local attachments being eclipsed by global ones, or being constructed as a form of resistance to processes of globalisation. Instead, Savage *et al* argue that processes of elective belonging embody an attachment to locality that enables various global connections to be drawn by individuals. The majority of their respondents related their sense of local belonging to the connections it enabled them to make with other places: “[t]he local is thoroughly implicated in various kinds of global connection and the local can only be understood as a direct product of these” (Savage *et al*: 204); while “[f]ixed places...play crucial

roles within globalizing processes" (p. 53). This has particular relevance for this study, with its focus upon community heritage sites as spaces in which self-identifying Welsh Americans construct and perform a sense of belonging to a transnational and global Welsh community.

Biography and belonging

A central premise of the concept of elective belonging is that "[b]elonging is not that of an individual to a fixed community rooted in place, but rather, one in which the place becomes valuable to the individual" (Savage *et al.*: 80).

Belonging is not, therefore, dependent on pre-existing links with an area, but rather on an individual's ability to relate their place of residence to elements of their personal biography. Similar connections between personal biography and chosen place were articulated by self-identifying Welsh American respondents across the four case study sites. The key difference is that, while respondents in Savage *et al.*'s study were engaged in constructing a sense of belonging to the place in which they lived, self-identifying Welsh Americans express a sense of belonging to Wales, a place geographically distant from their place of residence, and to a Welsh cultural heritage and identity. As such, Welsh American identity could be described as a diasporic elective identity.

Respondents at the four Welsh American heritage sites articulated this sense of belonging to Wales and Welshness in three main ways. One group of respondents perceived various physical and personality traits they possessed as being representative of a Welsh heritage and identity:

I believe that the personality traits I display were inherited from the Welsh side of my family. (B51)

My Welsh heritage is important to me because it colours who I am. I'm short and love to sing. This helps me feel connected to something older, to generations of people who lived before me in places rich with history. (C36)

My Welsh heritage informs my beliefs and values. (A80)

I had problems learning [English] grammar in high school. I think it was because my brain's wired for the Welsh language. I've got 100% Welsh blood. (A15)

These accounts see respondents drawing on discourses of kinship to identify personal traits and characteristics which they believe they have inherited from ancestors born in Wales. Welshness, the possession of a Welsh identity, is perceived by these respondents as an assumed "given" of their existence, an essential and inescapable biological element of who they are. A second group of respondents created connections between their personal biographies and Wales by defining their sense of Welsh identity in opposition to narratives of Englishness:

My Welshness is always important. It's pervasive – my preference for the underdog and resentment of the way England has lorded it over Wales. (D11)

I lost my latest job because I am of Welsh heritage and the company and its managers are all English. (B102)

I feel most Welsh when I'm with my mother's snotty English relations. (A56)

In the above quotes, England and the English are presented as aggressors, looking down on and even victimising Wales and the Welsh. It seems that England continues to play its traditional role, as the “other” against which discourses of Welsh identity are constructed, even within the Welsh diaspora. A third group of respondents describe their sense of belonging through the ways in which a Welsh identity is implicated in their lifestyles:

I'm very interested in all things Welsh. I attend gymanfa ganus [sic] – national and local – and participate in eisteddfods [sic]. I attend Welsh Heritage Week and the St. David's Day celebrations. I'm learning Welsh – last summer I attended Nant Gwrtheryn [a centre in north Wales which runs Welsh language courses for adult learners]. (A42)

I like to impersonate Riothamus Arthur Pendragon, King of the Britones, in parades and festivals...I took a semester of Cymraeg...at the University of Pittsburgh. I serve on the Board of St. David's Society of Pittsburgh. (C17)

I participate in many Welsh activities. I'm a life member of the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association and the Welsh Society of Central Ohio...I've made a personal commitment to go to every North American Festival of Wales and I'm planning to go to the National Eisteddfod in Swansea. (D23)

This group of respondents demonstrated their commitment to Welsh cultural activities as a means by which to validate their sense of belonging to Wales and Welsh identity.

Savage *et al* argue that “arrival stories”, people's account of how they came to live in their current place of residence are an equally important way in which a sense of belonging to place can be constructed (2005: 90). Many

respondents told similar “arrival stories” to explain how they had come to identify as Welsh, as illustrated by the following quotes:

I'm half Welsh. I didn't get interested in this 'til my fifties when I joined a Welsh society to find out more. And it just felt right, I fitted, I felt I belonged. (A15)

I grew up in a Welsh community in Venedocia, Ohio, and we were always told we were Welsh. My ancestors came from Llanbrynmair in mid Wales. And I guess there's just that heritage gene, it pulls at people. We want to know who we are. (A45)

Both sides of my family originate from Wales. I am seeking an identity that stretches beyond American culture, which is relatively young and very shallow...as it becomes less important to me to feel American over the last six years, I've felt more and more Welsh. (C3)

My husband moved from Wales in 2004. We celebrate St. David's Day and we both joined the local Welsh society. I help to run the [Welsh] language course and bimonthly socials. (C16)

Knowing your ancestry is to know yourself. They have come together to make your personality...Since retiring I've been tracing my family history – Welsh is the part I feel closest too. (B4)

I have distant cousins still in Wales. My great-grandparents came over from Wales. The families have kept up a correspondence since the immigration 155 years ago. (D12)

Three main narratives can be identified in the above responses. The first is that of experiencing a personal epiphany, discovering “that American sense that this is somehow where I come from” (C10). The second is more prosaic, describing a developing interest in one's ancestry and family history following retirement. The third narrative draws on ideas of commitment to one's kinship

ties, whether in the form of a Welsh partner or extended family members still resident in Wales.

Similar narratives of kinship and emotional connection were also used by some respondents to describe their sense of belonging to the US and to an American identity:

It's very special being American. Our families chose to come to the USA. (A7)

American identity is a melting pot. If you took the Welsh out it wouldn't taste as good – each culture is a part of what America is. (A58)

I'm Welsh, I was born in Wales, but I've chosen to be American. That's important to me too. This is where I live. My children are American. (B39)

These respondents are using elements of their personal biographies to explain why and how they identify first and foremost as Americans. Their explanations draw on a discourse of the US as a nation of immigrants and a cultural melting pot. Respondent A58, for example, a first generation Welsh American, goes on to talk about the contribution he feels Welsh immigrants have made to the US: “[w]e’ve given a lot to America, culturally. There’s a number of presidents – including [Thomas] Jefferson, the architect Frank Lloyd Wright was Welsh, and Lewis from Lewis and Clark⁹” (A58). Respondents A7 and B39 emphasise that either they or their ancestors have chosen to settle in the US and to claim an American identity: “[i]t’s very special

⁹ Meriwether Lewis (1774-1809) and William Clark (1770-1838) led the first United States overland expedition to the Pacific coast (1804-1806).

being American” (A7). These responses suggest that not only Welsh American identity, but also American identity can be understood in terms of an elective belonging.

<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Born in Wales/ of Welsh ancestry	113	40
Possession of Welsh characteristics	70	25
Interest in Wales and Welsh cultural heritage	31	11
Emotional connection to Wales	26	9
Ability to speak Welsh	8	3
Other	12	4
No response	24	8
TOTAL	284	100

Table 8 Responses to the question “How would you define Welsh identity? What makes someone Welsh?” (n=284)

As outlined above, the concept of elective belonging stresses the agency of individuals in choosing a place to live and in actively constructing a sense of belonging to that place. Savage *et al* argue that this sense of belonging is not dependent upon the existence of prior ties to that place, but on an individual’s ability to “link their residence to their biographical life history” (2005: 29). Many self-identifying Welsh Americans similarly articulated their sense of Welshness by highlighting connections between their personal biographies and Wales. However, in contrast with the concept of elective belonging, 40% of respondents (113 individuals) felt that only people

with an ancestral connection to Wales could be defined as Welsh (see Table 8, previous page). When asked “how would you define Welsh identity? What makes someone Welsh?” this group of respondents defined Welsh identity in terms of blood or birth, as illustrated in the following quotes:

Ancestry or birth makes someone Welsh. It can't be anything else.
(A68)

Being born in Wales or having some connection to Wales (A33)

Where somebody's family comes from. Their blood line, or where they were born. (C5)

I consider myself Welsh because I am one quarter plus Welsh blood.
(B19)

A further quarter of respondents (70 individuals) felt that the possession of definable Welsh characteristics, particularly musical ability, made someone Welsh:

Welsh identity is defined by an interest and skill in the performing arts – fine art, singing and poetry. (A18)

Someone who has music in their soul and a passion for the beauty in life. (D10)

Just the way Welsh people look. There seems to be that special Welsh quality, that Celtic look that sustains. (B32)

Having the ability to sing and enjoy the arts. (B69)

These responses also draw on a “blood and birth” definition of Welsh identity: musical ability and other “Welsh” personality traits are perceived as inheritable characteristics, passed down through Welsh blood. In total, 65% of respondents (183 individuals) felt that to be Welsh, one needed to possess existing familial ties to Wales.

In contrast, seventy-seven respondents (27% of the sample) felt that it was possible to identify as Welsh without the possession of prior ties to Wales. Thirty-one respondents (11% of the sample) defined Welsh identity in terms of having a strong interest in Welsh culture and history, as the following quotes illustrate:

Obviously, Welsh blood and ancestry define Welsh identity. But I also think it is in knowledge and passion about the history and culture of Wales. (D18)

Having a Welsh identity is to be interested in Wales, its customs, language, history...that makes someone Welsh. (A45)

A person fascinated by Welshness – wanting to know the ancient lore and present culture, and interested in the language. (C6)

A love of the language, literature and heritage defines Welsh identity. (B31)

A further 9% of respondents (26 individuals) felt that an emotional connection with Wales and Welshness could confer Welsh identity:

You're Welsh if you have a feeling for the country. That feeling of connection. (A9)

Feeling an affinity to the ethnic hearth culture: language, personal and place names, history, cuisine, characteristic attitudes. I'm not yet aware of any Welsh ancestry but as a druid I'm interested in living Celtic cultures, particularly Welsh and Irish. (C22)

It's hard to answer – in the US people can have one-sixteenth Welsh blood and consider themselves Welsh. I guess it's in having an affinity for that part of your heritage to the exclusion of others. (B27)

However, these responses again draw on the idea of Welsh ancestry, of the possession of Welsh blood, as an indicator of Welsh identity. Discourses of kinship represent a key way in which respondents established and enacted their membership of a Welsh identity group.

For a majority of Welsh American respondents, the possession of a Welsh identity is closely linked to the possession of a direct ancestral link, however distant, to Wales. Definitions of Welsh identity and of what makes someone Welsh centred around ideas of blood and birth. Being born in Wales or possessing Welsh ancestry is used as a way in which to legitimate one's claim to be Welsh. By stressing their blood link with Wales, respondents seek to emphasise that they have not merely made an individual choice to identify with Wales and as Welsh: their Welshness is rather an inescapable and essential part of their self identity. Their possession and knowledge of their direct ancestral connection with Wales helps to both support and legitimate their claim to be Welsh. The perceived importance of such a blood link to Wales in claiming a Welsh identity is further emphasised by those respondents who do not possess Welsh ancestry: they make a point of stressing that they are “not yet aware of any Welsh ancestry” (C22).

Attachment to place

In defining the concept of elective belonging, Savage *et al* stress the important role played by the articulation of a sense of spatial attachment to place of residence. They argue that places do not represent sites of fixed and bounded belonging, but spaces in which their residents construct and perform narratives of identity (2005: 29). This sense of spatial attachment is relational; a majority of Savage *et al*'s respondents felt an emotional attachment to their local area that involved locating that area within a wider symbolic geography (2005: 79). In other words, respondents defined the distinctiveness of their chosen place of residence in relation to a network of other places in which they had chosen not to live. A similar discourse of spatial attachment was evident amongst self-identifying Welsh American survey respondents at the four case study sites, as illustrated below:

I'm one-sixteenth Welsh. I'm more Irish, Scottish, English and German. But as a music lover, I value the Welsh disproportionately.
(B1)

Welsh identity is important to me. I take it for granted because it's so much a part of me. I consider being Welsh more important than being English, Scottish or Irish – and I've got all four in my ancestry. (A12)

My Welsh identity is who I am and central to me as a person. I've lived in the US for thirty years but I will never give up my British citizenship.
(C32)

These quotes show respondents defining their sense of Welsh identity in relation to a number of other identities that they could potentially claim. Their

feeling of belonging to a Welsh identity is compared with these other identities, to which they do not feel as great an attachment.

Many self-identifying Welsh American respondents articulated a sense of attachment to specific places in Wales when describing Wales and Welsh identity. Just over a quarter of respondents (75 individuals or 26% of the sample) articulated a sense of spatial attachment to specific places in Wales, generally either places they had visited or the area in which their ancestor(s) had lived:

I'm one hundred percent Welsh. My father was born in Neath, in the Swansea area of south Wales, and my mother's family is from the Caernarfon area and the Blaenau Ffestiniog area of north Wales. (A86)

I've visited Wales six or seven times. I love the scenery and the people, particularly those who run the B&B we stay at in Mumbles, outside of Swansea. (C34)

My *taid* and *nain*¹⁰ were from Abergynolwyn [near Machynlleth, Gwynedd]. That's where I belong. (A39)

I have amazing memories of a Bryn Terfel concert near Conwy. That's Wales to me. (B19)

My great-great-great grandparents were from north Wales so I feel a connection with that place over south Wales. (B77)

In emphasising their sense of attachment to specific places in Wales, these respondents are again seeking to validate their claims to a Welsh identity, and

¹⁰ "Taid" and "nain" are Welsh for "grandfather" and "grandmother" respectively.

their sense of belonging to that identity. Through knowledge of Wales and of places in Wales, whether in the form of first-hand experience or an ancestral link, these respondents are constructing a connection between their personal biographies and their chosen ethnic identity.

A second group of respondents (21 individuals or 7% of the sample) articulated a sense of spatial attachment to places in the US when describing their sense of Welsh identity:

I was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania, which is a city with strong Welsh connections. (A11)

My parents were born in a section of northwest Pennsylvania commonly called Wales. (C8)

My great-great-great grandfather came from Cardigan to the Oak Hill area [Ohio] in 1818. (B53)

The places in the US to which this group of respondents referred were all in areas that experiences high levels of immigration from Wales, and as a result possessed a very active Welsh cultural and social scene during the nineteenth century (see chapter two). Other members of this respondent group articulated a networked sense of spatial attachment, drawing connections between the places in Wales from which they or their ancestors had come and the places in the US in which they or their ancestors had lived:

I have three families in my background that are definitely Welsh: Evans, Rice and Vaughan. The Vaughans went from Caernarfon to Vermont, to the slate mines. The Evanses went from the [south Wales]

Valleys to the coal mines in West Virginia. And the Rices came from Cardigan and settled in Ohio. (D11)

My grandfather was a slate quarryman in Bethesda, north Wales. He emigrated to Vermont in the early 1900s, to the slate mines. Like him, I don't see myself as from America. I'm from Vermont. (B5)

Wales is a lot like western Pennsylvania where I live. You know, the coal mines...I love the spirit, the independent spirit of the miners there, which is Welsh in origin. (B33)

These quotes show respondents articulating a sense of Welsh identity and belonging by drawing connections between their personal experiences or family backgrounds and specific places. This supports Savage *et al*'s argument that elective belonging is "related to people mapping their own biographies through identifying places dear to them. In this way, people can feel 'at home' even when they have little or no contact with other local residents, and little or no history of residence in the area" (2005: 104). Many self-identifying Welsh Americans possess only a distant ancestral connection to Wales, their chosen place, and may have little or no contact either with people living in Wales (Savage *et al*'s "local residents") or with other self-identifying Welsh Americans in the US, yet they can still feel a strong sense of belonging and attachment to Wales and Welshness.

Savage *et al* identify two opposing types of "ideal place" in respondents' narratives of how and why they came to live in a particular area: "full" and "empty" places (2005: 93). A "full" place is one "already 'full' of resonances in the minds of their arriving residents": incomers possess a great deal of knowledge about the area prior to their arrival, often in the form of existing social contacts and experiences in that area (Savage *et al*: 91). Their

study identified a group of respondents whose decision to live in a particular neighbourhood was based on their prior knowledge and understanding of that area. In contrast, a second group described choosing to live in an “empty” place: an area which they had little knowledge about or interest in prior to moving there, but which suited their needs in terms of work, family and leisure (Savage *et al.*: 90). Overall, self-identifying Welsh Americans respondents’ accounts of why and how they identified with Wales most closely resembled an attachment to a “full” place, commonly possessing detailed knowledge about the country.

Two contrasting narratives of the places to which respondents felt an attachment can be identified. The first narrative focuses on the rural landscapes of Wales, “empty” places in the sense that people are largely absent from such accounts. The second narrative focuses on busy social spaces, full of people with a shared interest in and attachment to Wales and Welshness, such as the annual NAFOW or a local St. David’s society. A quarter of respondents (26% of the sample, equivalent to 75 individuals) drew on idealised symbolic imagery of Welsh natural and rural landscapes in their descriptions of what Wales meant to them (see also pp. 258-264). For example:

When I think of Wales I think of beautiful hills, legends and enchantment...Something ancient and noble...A place I yearn to be, to see, to know. (C6)

I think of rugged mountainous country...beautiful geography and nature. (B53)

Natural beauty, rough country...the beauty of the land, my people's homeland. (C33)

Mountains and valleys...*hiraeth* [homesickness] for the landscapes and the countryside my ancestors saw. (A78)

In these responses, Wales represents an almost magical place, possessing an intrinsic and emotional significance as the ancestral homeland. These respondents express a sense of homesickness ("*hiraeth*") for the natural landscapes of Wales, a desire to visit or return to these places. It is notable that the Welsh landscapes to which respondents felt they belonged were overwhelmingly those of rural Wales, even when their ancestors came from the industrial and urban areas of Wales:

I just love the north country. South Wales is an industrial wasteland really – even though that's where I come from, my Dad was born there. But when I get on the [A]470 and I've passed that castle [possibly Brecon castle], I feel like I'm coming home. (B93)

Respondents' sense of connection with the rural landscapes of Wales perhaps involves an implicit contrast being made between these "empty" places of Wales and an urban, modern US. As Garrett *et al* have argued: "Wales 'from afar' might need to be antithetical to a busy, populous, urban, 'modern' America" (2005: 559).

However, a significant proportion of respondents stressed the importance of social, peopled spaces to the process of claiming and performing a sense of Welsh identity. Examples of such spaces include community gatherings and events such as the meetings of a St. David's

society, the NAFOW and St. David's Day celebrations. As discussed earlier in the chapter (see pp. 264-269), the construction and performance of Welsh American identities in the US are focussed very much on social interactions: "[i]t's social – you can't celebrate Welsh identity without other people" (A27). For some respondents, "full" places such as the North American Festival of Wales represented their ideal place, as illustrated in the following quotes:

As my daughter said "This [the North American Festival of Wales] is my heaven! (B56)

The museum is a source of pride for the local community...we come together here and that brings our Welsh identity to life. It's very special. (D6)

As a whole, respondents across the four sites stressed the importance of places as sites to construct and perform their Welsh identities, whether that place is the annual North American Festival of Wales, a holiday in Wales or a room in one's house displaying Welsh themed objects.

"Born and bred" vs. elective belonging

In defining the concept of elective belonging, Savage *et al* argue that the meaning of belonging varies between "locals", those born and bred in an area, and incomers who have chosen to settle there. In three out of their four case study areas, Savage *et al* found that "'locals' are more likely to feel that they do not belong than incomers" (2005: 46-47). The sense of belonging

articulated by such locals also tended to be terse, focussed on narratives of familiarity and upbringing. Similarly terse responses were given by many of the fifty-six individuals surveyed at the four Welsh American heritage sites that had been born and brought up in Wales before immigrating to the US:

What does Wales mean to you?

Family. (D15)

Home. (A6)

Home and family. (B3)

Where I grew up. (B62)

My place of birth. (C24)

Some explained why they did not, or could not, give more detailed responses to this question:

I don't think of Wales like that. Wales is where I'm from. There's no cosmic significance. (B85)

My close family comes to mind when I think of Wales. It's hard to define what Wales means to me, because I was born there. (A2)

These respondents arguably do not feel a sense of elective belonging to Wales and Welsh identity; they do not articulate their attachment to Welsh identity in relation to other possible identities. To them, Wales and Welshness

represent essential elements of their personal biography and identity:
 “there’s no cosmic significance” (B85).

In comparison, most American-born respondents, commonly three or more generations removed from Wales, gave much more detailed answers to the same question:

I can’t put it into words. Wales is my spiritual being. My soul belongs to God, but the rest of me is Welsh. (A12)

Wales is a holy land. I’d like to think of it as that. That’s what I felt when I was there – and even before I went. I felt I was home. (B32)

These respondents have chosen to identify themselves as Welsh. Their responses illustrate an emotional connection to place and articulate a sense of belonging, focussed on drawing connections between elements of their personal biographies, Wales and a Welsh identity.

Discourses of kinship are commonly perceived to play a central role in distinguishing locals from incomers, insiders from outsiders, in terms of belonging to place. Savage *et al* contradict this perception in developing their concept of elective belonging, arguing that the ability to feel a sense of belonging to one’s place of residence is not dependent on pre-existing kinship ties to that area. They found that respondents’ distinction between locals and incomers was relatively muted and argued that different groups within an area are identified using different characteristics, such as age (2005: 31). Self-identifying Welsh American respondents articulated discourses of insiders/outsiders on the basis on both kinship ties and generational differences. As

discussed earlier, the Welsh American population is an aging one: eighty-five percent of respondents (243 individuals) were aged forty-five years old or more (see figure 29, page 257). Many respondents also perceived a distinction between older and younger self-identifying Welsh Americans:

For me I think it's [the North American Festival of Wales] an opportunity to celebrate with other Welsh Americans...it's discouraging that membership and attendance are down every year. People are getting older and can't travel anymore. But where are the young people to replace them? (B27)

The museum is for the established Welsh community, us old ones. The Madog Center plays an important role in getting the young people interested. We have big problems in getting the younger generations involved. (D20)

The festival is important to keep Welshness alive now and for future generations...but how can we do that if the young people aren't interested? (A36)

In these responses the older generations are very much perceived as the insiders, the guardians of Welsh American culture, while the “young people” are outsiders, who are not particularly interested in preserving that culture. A more negative view of this age-based insider/outsider distinction was expressed by one respondent at the 2006 North American Festival of Wales, who felt that the older generations, the insiders, were preventing younger people from getting more involved:

Old people! Where are the youth? Why do they hold this event when school is starting for children? (B18)

In contrast to Savage *et al's* findings, kinship ties were an important way in which self-identifying Welsh Americans constructed a boundary between insiders and outsiders: those who could claim a Welsh identity and those who could not. While twenty-two respondents possessing no known Welsh ancestry (8% of the sample) identified as Welsh, the vast majority (252 respondents or 88%) did possess kinship ties to Wales, having either been born in Wales or being partly of Welsh descent (see table 4, page 251). Some of those who did not possess such kinship ties with Wales felt excluded from a full sense of belonging at the four Welsh American heritage sites, as illustrated below:

I came to the festival to find out more about Wales. My husband was of Welsh ancestry and I'm tracing his family tree and I wanted to fill in the gaps a little more, to understand what kind of life his family would have lived. Unfortunately, my initial experience at this particular festival was not welcoming...no hospitality and it's too "insider" exclusive. (A38)

My grandparents were from Blaenafon but people here say "the Browns aren't Welsh, they're from England originally". But they intermarried with Evanses and Joneses for four generations. And they say "they only married Welsh". But I say "c'mon, you can't get more Welsh than that". I've got four generations of Welsh women in my family tree. (C13)

These responses suggest that a hierarchy of Welshness exists amongst the self-identifying Welsh American population. At the top are those who possess known Welsh ancestry through the male line; in other words, individuals with a recognisably Welsh surname such as Jones, Williams, or Evans. This patrilinear definition of Welsh identity suggests that the Welsh American population perceives Wales as culturally homogeneous: individuals such as

respondent C13, whose family seems to have been Anglo Welsh, possibly part of the English migration to south Wales during the Industrial Revolution, are excluded from full membership in the Welsh American population as a result of their lack of a Welsh surname.

Summary

The concept of elective belonging provides a useful way in which to analyse and understand contemporary expressions of Welsh identity in the US. It prioritises the active role of the individual in constructing a sense of belonging and identity: similarly, Welsh identity in the US is best defined as a personal and voluntary identity role. The key argument of elective belonging, that feeling a sense of belonging to a particular area is not restricted to those born and bred in that area, supports self-identifying Welsh Americans' assertions to feel a full Welsh identity and sense of belonging to that identity. The vast majority of respondents were three or more generations removed from an immigrant ancestor from Wales, and many had never visited Wales, yet were able to provide detailed accounts of why and how they identified as Welsh. These accounts commonly centred on perceptions of a connection between elements of respondents' personal biographies and Wales and Welshness, another key aspect of Savage *et al*'s definition of elective belonging. However, a key difference between elective belonging as defined by Savage *et al* and the sense of elective belonging articulated by self-identifying Welsh American respondents is that these respondents are feeling a sense of belonging at a

distance, belonging to a place (Wales) and a cultural heritage (Welsh) both geographically and chronologically distant from them.

Conclusion

Both symbolic ethnicity and elective belonging offer valuable perspectives from which to approach the analysis and understanding of perceptions and expressions of Welsh identity in the US today. Each emphasises the active role of the individual in the processes of identity construction, performance and consumption. The concept of symbolic ethnicity is based on the argument that contemporary white ethnicity in the US is a voluntary identity role: individuals are able to choose whether, when and how to perform identities such as Welsh American. Similarly, the concept of elective belonging stresses the fluid and performative nature of identity construction and belonging to place, based on an individual's ability to draw connections between that place and elements of their personal biography. Such active constructions and performances came through very strongly in the survey data collected at the four Welsh American heritage sites, with the majority of respondents making a personal choice to claim a Welsh identity. As a whole, respondents also exhibited a high degree of freedom of role definition, choosing to perform Welsh identities in a wide variety of different ways, places and times.

Respondents' expressions of Welsh identity were dominated by symbolic markers of Welshness, such as the national flag, and symbolic occasions, such as St. David's Day. This appeared to support the concept of symbolic ethnicity, in which Gans argued that contemporary white ethnicities

in the US have become so symbolic, personal and private in nature that they no longer require the existence of ethnic groups or networks in order to function. However, respondents across the four sites emphasised the importance of communal performances of Welshness to their feeling of being Welsh. The social networking opportunities provided by Welsh American community groups, heritage sites and events play an important role in the construction, negotiation and validation of Welsh identities in the US. While expressions of Welsh identity in the US are highly symbolic in a number of ways, they have not become wholly private and personal identity positions, defined solely by individual agency. Self-identifying Welsh Americans continue to perform and validate their sense of Welshness through communal constructions and performances of that identity.

The concept of elective belonging helps to explain more fully why and how Americans choose to claim and perform Welsh identities. It emphasises the important function of personal choice and the active processes of identity construction and performance by individuals, yet also acknowledges the social aspects of these processes. As discussed in the previous chapter, identity construction is a performance which needs an audience (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998). Welsh American identity is not simply a private identity position, based solely on individual agency and a personal decision to identify as Welsh. Rather, it is both a personal and a collective identity, requiring functioning groups and networks, or communities, to support its construction and performance.

Self-identifying Welsh Americans construct and participate in community on a number of different levels. The first is that of local Welsh

American community in the form of a Welsh society in a particular city, region or state. These societies generally organise a number of events and meetings over the year, offering their members many opportunities to engage in face-to-face interaction with each other, and as such represent “thick” communities (Delanty 2003: 171). The remaining two levels represent “imagined communities” (Anderson 2006) based on “thin” attachments, in which members may rarely – if ever – meet each other. The second level of community is that of the diasporic Welsh population of North America and is based around a sense of common ancestry and kinship. Events such as the North American Festival of Wales offer a venue in which this geographically scattered Welsh-identifying population can (re)unite and (re)forge their sense of community. Finally, self-identifying Welsh Americans belong to a transnational and global Welsh community, based on a sense of shared cultural heritage, kinship ties and attachment to a particular place (Wales) and incorporating the Welsh both in Wales and within the diaspora. The majority of its members are unlikely to ever meet face-to-face, but the community is sustained by a communicative network of relations between its various, more localised components. In fact, each of the three levels of community outlined above can be described as transnational, representing a nexus of place specific, locally based attachments (whether to Wales or to a particular region of North America) which are constructed and operate within a global context (Delanty 2003: 158).

The ongoing collective construction and performance of transnational Welsh identities and communities in the US is sustained in large part by Welsh American societies and the heritage sites and events they organise

and maintain. This study's conceptualisation of elective belonging differs from the original definition of this concept in that, while the narratives of identity and belonging Savage *et al*/ sampled were played out within respondents' area of residence, self-identifying Welsh Americans identify with and feel a sense of belonging to a place physically distant from their place of residence. In this context, heritage is best understood not only as a cultural and social communicative process (Smith 2006; Dicks 2000), but as providing a physical and conceptual space in which Welsh identities and a sense of belonging to a Welsh American community can be constructed and performed. Viewed in this way, heritage provides a social and cultural infrastructure for Welsh American community and the expression of Welsh identities in the US. The four community heritage initiatives which have formed the basis of this study are part of what I argue to be a network of heritage spaces and processes, in the form of sites, organisations and events, through which a collective definition of what it is to identify as Welsh in the US is constructed, negotiated, performed and consumed.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusions

The central theme of this thesis has been the complex nexus of relationships between community, heritage and identity. Welsh American community-based heritage sites were used as a case study with which to examine these relationships, focussing on an investigation of how and why community groups use heritage to shape and communicate narratives of their collective identity, both to themselves and to others. In so doing, this thesis has highlighted the diverse range of stakeholders, both within and external to the community, who are involved in the construction, negotiation and representation of Welsh identities at the case study sites. These stakeholders represent a mixture of “bottom-up” grassroots, influences from within what Elizabeth Crooke has termed the “unofficial” heritage sector, and “top-down” influences from within the official heritage sector. These findings demonstrate that, within the context of these Welsh American community heritage initiatives, the interests and agendas of the official and “unofficial” sectors are interlinked and overlapping.

This thesis has also further developed our understanding of heritage as an active cultural and social process through which identities, meanings and values are (re)constructed and (re)imagined (Smith 2006). It has analysed some of the reasons why and the ways in which self-identifying Welsh Americans choose to engage in heritage-based activities, whether in the form of a visit to a museum or heritage site, through membership of a society or

organisation with a heritage remit, an interest in family roots and genealogy, or the consumption of heritage products including food, clothing, books and CDs. The investigation of these processes within the diasporic context of the Welsh American community has illustrated the important role played by heritage (in the form of material culture, sites, events, groups and other networks) in providing a focus for and a physical space in which to claim and perform personal and collective identity positions.

This final chapter discusses the key findings of this study, highlighting their relevance to the field of cultural and heritage studies. These findings are grouped into two main areas: heritage networks and heritage processes. This is followed by an examination of the potential implications of the fact that narratives of Welsh national identity in the US are supported and sustained primarily through grassroots volunteer-led community projects within the “unofficial” sector. The chapter then goes on to hypothesise that the construction and representation of Welsh cultural heritage in the US may be in process of becoming more institutionalised. Such a process would represent a shift in the power and influence to shape public perceptions of Wales and Welsh identity from the “unofficial” to the official heritage sectors.

Heritage Networks

As we have seen, Welsh American identity and community are sustained and supported by a network of sites, events and organisations that incorporates stakeholders from both the official and “unofficial” heritage sectors. A variety

of stakeholders, representing community, academic and professional interests both within and external to the Welsh American community, were identified at each case study site. The way in which Welsh identities are constructed and represented at the four sites is shaped by interactions between the different stakeholders and their varying degrees of power to influence this process. This power is related to the context in which the sites were established, how they are managed and funded, the scale on which they function, and the type of audiences they attract. It is clear that these four “unofficial”, community-based heritage sites in fact represent a synthesis of “top-down” and “bottom-up” influences and agendas.

The four sites represent community heritage initiatives that straddle the boundary between the official and “unofficial” sectors. This study has revealed the intricate and interdependent network of relationships that exist between stakeholders from both sectors at the case study sites. Echoing Elizabeth Crooke’s assertion that “community heritage initiatives, despite their appearance of being local and grassroots activities, will often reflect agendas that extend well beyond the community group” (2008: 415), this thesis argues that no community-based heritage site or event can be described as being a solely grassroots or “bottom-up” initiative. It argues that the motivations and agendas of both the official and “unofficial” heritage sectors for engaging with community heritage projects are overlapping and intertwined. As we have seen, when we look in detail at a community-led heritage site or event, such as those represented by the four case study sites, it becomes increasingly difficult to separate or draw a boundary between the influence and interests of stakeholders from the official and “unofficial” sectors. Based on this finding,

this thesis argues that any investigation of a community heritage site or project, whether it has emerged from within a community group or represents part of a public museum's community outreach programme, must consider the agendas of stakeholders from both the official and "unofficial" heritage sectors, their power to influence processes of production and consumption, and the network of relationships that exist between them.

Heritage Processes

The process of "doing" heritage at the four case study sites also takes place within a network. Visitors, site managers and other stakeholders use and interpret the sites in a range of different ways based on their needs and interests, constructing a variety of meanings, values, and personal and collective identities. A model of the network of potential audience relationships with Welsh American heritage was developed in chapter five, based on audience members' level of engagement with and active involvement in the Welsh American community (see Figure 28, page 236). The important role played by functioning social groups and networks in the production and consumption of Welsh identities in the US is emphasised by the multidirectional interactions that take place between each audience position. The network concept further privileges "the idea of the museum [or heritage site] as a varied and often changing set of practices, processes and interactions" (Kratz and Karp 2006: 2).

Heritage is a process through which personal and collective identities are constructed, negotiated and validated (Smith 2006). The four Welsh American community heritage sites represent one space in which this process takes place. They are public spaces in which an individual's personal narrative of Welsh identity can be externalised and made tangible through the sites' displays and events. Once externalised, this personal narrative can be (re)constructed, (re)imagined, (re)negotiated and performed through interactions with both other audience members and the sites' own narratives of Welshness, before being reinternalised. Through this process, shared collective narratives of Welsh American community and identity are shaped and communicated, helping to support and sustain the continued existence of that community and, in turn, of the heritage sites themselves. However, this process is iterative rather than self-perpetuating: visitors to the sites are able to accept or reject elements of Welsh identity narratives – whether their own, the sites', or those of other visitors – based on the extent to which these narratives reflect or conflict with their own personal perceptions and experiences of Wales and Welshness. Such confirmatory or critical emotional mappings of the case study sites (Bagnall 2003) highlight the tensions that exist between individual expression and the collective recognition of social identities and cultural memories. Welsh American is an elective and voluntary identity position: individuals enjoy a significant degree of freedom to choose whether, when and how to claim and perform this identity. Although the four heritage sites play an important role in the construction, negotiation and validation of Welsh American identity, these processes also take place on an individual, personal level.

Welsh identity and Welsh American community heritage: issues and implications

Having highlighted the network of “top-down” and “bottom-up” relationships and processes through which Welsh identities in the US are constructed, negotiated and represented, it is worth considering the practical implications. It must be stressed that this network is primarily supported by grassroots, community-based heritage initiatives such as the four case study sites. The diasporic context of these sites therefore raises interesting issues about the way in which expressions of Welsh national identity in the US are supported and sustained within the “unofficial” heritage sector. The four sites are volunteer-run, staffed by members of the Welsh American community, the vast majority of who have had no formal training in collections care, interpretation and display. This has implications in terms of issues of professionalism. Within the heritage sector there tends to be an unequal distribution of power between professionally-trained staff and amateur, enthusiasts or volunteers, based on perceived relative levels of their heritage knowledge and expertise (Orr 2006: 204). In the case of this study, this can be translated into the power relationships between community stakeholders and those representing academic and professional interests. The unequal distribution of power is in fact often a motivating factor in a community group’s decision to engage in heritage-based activities: seeking empowerment and recognition through the self-representation of its own heritage and identity (Crooke 2006). For example, at the case study sites it is arguably community stakeholders and interests which possess the most power and influence. The issue of professionalism is largely irrelevant within the context of community-

based heritage, as Elizabeth Crooke argues in relation to a community-led collection in Northern Ireland:

...some of the most historically important objects within the collection are on open display, for visitors to handle. Documentation of the collection is minimal and concern for collection care issues in little evidence. For the professionally trained curator amongst my group this was anathema...Although I have great respect for the best of museum standards, in this case their adoption was not the primary concern of the collector...would perhaps contravene the aims of the collection...[and] would lessen the value and meaning of the collection for the local community group. (2007b: 11)

As the above quote illustrates, to focus on community-led heritage sites' perceived lack of professional standards of display and collections management rather misses the point: such sites have been created to serve the needs of the community and the two do not necessarily coincide.

A second issue is that of sustainability: will the four case study sites continue to exist when the volunteers who created and manage them become elderly, and less able to take an active role in their day-to-day running? A real fear was expressed by respondents across the four sites, particularly at the NAFOW, that both the sites themselves and Welsh American community life more broadly might soon begin to decline and would eventually disappear. Many respondents felt that younger generations of Welsh Americans were not interested in maintaining either the sites or Welsh American community in the same way that their parents and grandparents are (see chapter six, pg. 255-257). However, once again it is important not to judge "unofficial" community heritage initiatives by the standards of the official sector: they possess very different goals, purposes and agendas. While the official sector tends to

measure success in terms of longevity and permanence, “[o]ften, for community-based initiatives, the survival of the museum, although favourable, is not paramount” (Crooke 2007b: 134). Each of the four case study sites was created in response to the needs of a community group at a particular time, whether motivated by a desire for self-representation or community building, to preserve a vanishing way of life, or to seek public recognition and validation for the community and its identity. When that goal is achieved, the sites will have served the purpose they were created for and they may decline in importance or even disappear. Alternatively, their remit, purpose and mission may change, reflecting new community needs and desires.

Such an evolution of community-based heritage sites is illustrated by the NAFOW, a four-day festival established in 2003 and focussed around an event with a much longer pedigree, the National Gymanfa Ganu, first held in 1929 (WNGGA 2003). The transformation of a one-day religious gathering into a weekend-long celebration of Welsh culture and heritage in the US arguably reflects the changing nature and needs of the contemporary Welsh American community. Through the course of the twentieth century the territorially-bounded areas of settlement that characterised first-generation Welsh American community declined, resulting in a diffusion of the self-identifying Welsh American population across the US. The role played by the National Gymanfa Ganu as a symbolic event at which the scattered Welsh American community could collectively construct and perform Welsh identities became increasingly important. Its evolution into the NAFOW reflects this increasing importance, providing an extended timeframe for this process.

A third issue relating to the construction and representation of Welsh national identities outside Wales concerns the version(s) of Welshness that are produced and communicated at the Welsh American heritage sites. As this thesis has shown, these tend to be romantic and nostalgic narratives of Welshness, focussing on symbolic markers including male voice choirs, mountainous unspoilt landscapes, Welsh ladies, Celtic legends and cultural traditions such as the *eisteddfod*. The dominance of such “traditional” versions of Welsh identity reflects the role of Welsh cultural heritage in the US in providing self-identifying Welsh Americans with a sense of roots and heritage: their interest is not in contemporary Wales but in Wales as it was during or before their ancestors emigrated. In contrast, contemporary narratives of Welsh identity within the public sector in Wales tend to focus around issues of sustainable development, creative industries, and the development of new and cutting edge technologies (Welsh Assembly Government 2003). This discrepancy between perceptions of Welshness in Wales and the US has implications for the transnational network of influence, funding and support that exists between Welsh American community heritage sites and the Welsh Assembly Government.

The institutionalisation of Welsh heritage in the US?

Although the Welsh heritage network in the US is sustained primarily by community-based initiatives from within the “unofficial” sector, it appears that the balance may be in the process of shifting towards the official sector. This thesis hypothesises that expressions of Welsh heritage and identity in the US

are becoming more institutionalised. This process is evident on a local level at the Welsh American Heritage Museum, one of this project's case study sites, which has been managed by volunteers from the local Welsh American community since its creation in the 1970s. However, these volunteers are becoming increasingly elderly and it appears likely that the site will, at some point in the future, experience a shift in power and management from the community to the Madog Center for Welsh Studies, a nearby academic institution and a second focus for Welsh American activities in the region. Such a shift would result in the institutionalisation of the museum: indeed, survey respondents with connections to the Madog Center expressed their desire for professional standards of collection care in terms of storage, cataloguing and display to be introduced (see chapter four, pp 180-183). It seems that management of the site by the Madog Center would, in effect, see its remit shift from a community-led heritage initiative, run by and for members of the local Welsh American community, towards that of a public museum concerned with representing the history and culture of one of the significant immigrant groups of the region.

Similar processes of institutionalisation are also evident on a larger national and transnational scale. As discussed in chapter four, the Welsh Assembly Government has implemented a variety of Welsh heritage initiatives in the US in recent years (see pp. 188-193). The Wales International Centre in New York, which co-ordinates the activities of Visit Wales (formerly the Welsh Tourist Board) and International Business Wales (a merger of the former Wales Trade International and the Welsh Development Agency) in the US was established in 2002 (Welsh Assembly Government 2002). It sponsors a

number of events at the North American Festival of Wales and also organises Wales Week, an annual celebration of Welsh culture and heritage to mark St. David's Day, in New York. Similar Wales Week events are also being rolled out to other US cities, including Boston and Los Angeles (Welsh Assembly Government 2007a). The Welsh Assembly Government has also developed "Keeping up with the Joneses", a touring exhibition charting the history of the Welsh in the US, in association with museums, libraries and academic institutions in both Wales and the US. This exhibition was unveiled at Ellis Island Immigration Museum, New York in 2006 and has since been displayed at various academic institutions in areas of high Welsh settlement, including: the Madog Center in Rio Grande, Ohio; Utica College in Utica NY; Marymount University in Arlington, VA; and Bryn Mawr College in Philadelphia, PA (Welsh Assembly Government 2006, 2007).

Transnational connections with the Welsh American community have also been established by Amgueddfa Cymru (National Museum Wales) and Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru (the National Library of Wales), national institutions funded at arms length by the Welsh Assembly Government. The National Library of Wales launched the Wales-Ohio project in 2007 through funds donated by Evan and Elizabeth Davis, Welsh American philanthropists who are also closely associated with both the Welsh American Heritage Museum and the Madog Center. This project's mission is "to digitize a selection of Welsh Americana relating to the state of Ohio currently held at the National Library of Wales and to make them available to audiences worldwide via [a] website" (National Library of Wales 2007). National Museum Wales also forged similar transnational links with the US in 2007 when one of its

sites, the National Slate Museum in Llanberis, was twinned with the Slate Valley Museum in Granville, NY, a local history museum in a region that experienced high levels of Welsh immigration to its slate quarries in the nineteenth century. A temporary exhibition at the National Slate Museum, *American Dreams* (July 2008-January 2009) addresses issues of emigration and tells the stories of some of quarrymen and their families from north Wales who settled in the US (National Museum Wales 2008). The exhibition includes a wooden travel trunk from the Slate Valley Museum's collection that originally belonged to an emigrant family from north Wales who settled in the US.

A further example which supports the hypothesis that Welsh heritage in the US is becoming more institutionalised is the Smithsonian Folklife Festival's selection of Wales as one of two featured nations at the 2009 festival (Welsh Assembly Government 2007b). The Smithsonian Institution, which organises and manages the Festival, is a major national American institution; its annual Folklife Festival, founded in 1967, takes place over ten days in June or July and typically attracts over one million visitors (Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage 2005). As such it represents an important new platform for the construction and representation of Welsh culture, identities and heritage in the US, one very firmly within the official heritage sector. It will reach a much larger and more diverse audience than those of the four Welsh American community heritage sites. The Welsh Assembly Government and associated Welsh national bodies, including Visit Wales, National Museum Wales, the National Library of Wales and the University of Wales, are closely involved in the development of the 2009 Festival: a memorandum was signed between the Welsh Assembly

Government and the Smithsonian Institution in November 2007 and a member of the Government's staff has been assigned exclusively to the project (Belanus, pers. comm.). The curator of the Welsh Folklife Festival, Dr. Betty Belanus, sees it as an opportunity to introduce Americans to Wales, Welsh culture and society, areas which she feels few people in the US have much knowledge about (pers. comm.). In a similar vein, the Welsh Assembly Government hopes to "use this festival to target its international audience to maximise economic opportunities for Wales" whether in tourism, trade or investment (2007b).

This apparent trend towards more institutional and official Welsh heritage initiatives in the US is arguably, I suggest, a result of the ongoing processes of political devolution that have taken place in Wales since 1997. While existing studies of Devolution focus on its effects and implications either within Wales itself or within a British context, this thesis suggests that Welsh Devolution has had an impact outside the British Isles. Although technically responsible only for Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government is able to take a more specific and proactive approach to promoting the country overseas and to trying to shape international perceptions of Wales and Welshness. The US is home to the largest Welsh-identifying diasporic population in the world and, as such, represents an important market in which to promote tourism, trade and investment in Wales. The self-identifying Welsh American community further has the potential to function as an ambassador for Wales if, as a representative of the Wales International Centre put it, "we can get them talking about Wales in the way we want" (anonymous pers. comm.).

Final thoughts

This thesis set out to investigate the relationships between community, heritage and identity. Through case studies of four Welsh American community-based heritage initiatives it has illustrated the ways in which community heritage can be variously understood in terms of: firstly, a network of sites, stakeholders, interests and agendas; secondly, an active process through which a range of personal and collective identities are constructed, negotiated and performed and consumed; and thirdly, the important role played by the sites themselves as physical spaces in which this process takes place and this network is sustained.

Its first research aim was to examine how community groups use heritage as a means in which to shape and express collective identities and forge a sense of belonging. Why do community groups decide to engage in heritage-based activities? How do Welsh American community groups construct and represent Welsh identity through heritage? Why and how do some Americans choose to identify as Welsh to begin with? This thesis has shown that the Welsh identities expressed at the four case study sites represent a voluntary or elective identity position: individuals are able to make a personal choice whether, how and when to claim and perform a Welsh identity. Although Welsh American identity is a personal choice, this study has also revealed the importance of community groups and networks in supporting and validating this identity. The four heritage sites represent symbolic spaces in which self-identifying Welsh Americans can engage in a collective construction, negotiation, performance and consumption of Welsh American community and identity. The nature of the Welsh identities constructed and

represented at the sites is shaped by the needs of the community group, as is the original decision to create these heritage sites. In this case, the sites represent community groups' desire to preserve Welsh American cultural heritage and to sustain a transnational connection with the ancestral homeland, Wales. As such, the narratives of Welsh identity they represent can appear old-fashioned and nostalgic when compared with contemporary Welsh identity in Wales, reflecting Welsh American community groups' desire to maintain the cultural heritage of their immigrant ancestors. These narratives of identity, together with the nature and purposes of the sites, evolve and alter in response to the changing needs of the community group. For example, the National Gymanfa Ganu, a religious gathering focussed on hymn singing, has become transformed into the North American Festival of Wales, an event with a more educational and recreational focus.

This thesis has also analysed processes of production and consumption at the four community heritage sites, investigating who was involved in the construction and representation of narratives of Welsh identity, and how self-identifying Welsh Americans use and interpret the sites. This analysis highlighted the fact that these processes are overlapping: the four sites are run by and for members of the Welsh American community and therefore managerial staff and visitors at the sites are simultaneously both producers and consumers of meanings. The mix of "top-down" and "bottom-up" influences through which the four community heritage sites are supported and sustained, representing a variety of stakeholders, motivations and agendas, was also revealed. The different ways in which visitors and stakeholders can use and interpret the sites, based on their level of active

involvement with the Welsh American community was also discussed.

This revealed the interaction that takes place between individuals' interpretations of the sites, based on their personal knowledge and experiences of Wales and the Welsh American community, and wider public narratives of Welshness based on mass media representations such as film, television, literature and newspapers.

A related research aim was to test the hypothesis that processes of production and consumption at the case study sites are best understood in terms of a network. This thesis has traced the relationships between the different stakeholders at each site, between the four case study sites, and between these four sites and wider Welsh heritage initiatives in the US, Wales and beyond. In chapter four, the complex web of relationships (whether based on funding, mutual support, information sharing, influence, etc) that exists between stakeholders across the four sites was discussed. Based in part on these intertwined relationships that in effect transformed the four separate sites into four nodes within a broader, transnational Welsh heritage network, this thesis developed the Community Heritage Audience Network model (CHAN). This model traces the relationships between different users of the four sites, based on their level of attachment to and active involvement in the Welsh American community.

Taken as a whole, this thesis has demonstrated how community-based heritage initiatives represent a diverse mix of interests, motivations and agendas at the levels of both individual users and wider collectivities. It has revealed the links that exist between community heritage initiatives in the official and "unofficial" heritage sectors, and between a diasporic community

(Welsh American) and the ancestral homeland (Wales). It has shown how heritage is used by such diasporic community groups to translate and reimagine public narratives of the ancestral identity (Welsh) within the context of the adopted homeland (the US), constructing and performing a variety of intersecting and often transnational identities and forging and sustaining a sense of community and belonging. Finally, it is hoped that this thesis has demonstrated the importance of tracing and analysing the relationships of influence and support through which narratives of identity and community are produced and consumed at community heritage sites.

POSTSCRIPT

Reflections on the Research Project

This postscript offers some general reflections on this thesis and the research project as a whole. Firstly, it maps the aims and objectives onto the structure of thesis, illustrating the chapter(s) in which aim and objective was addressed. Secondly, it reflects upon the methodological approach taken in this study, analysing its appropriateness and effectiveness, and identifies some alternative approaches. Finally, a number of potential avenues for further research are developed.

Mapping the aims and objectives

Like the four community-based heritage sites that formed the case study of this project, the three aims and their associated objectives were interlinked and overlapping. Although divided into three groups, the issues addressed by the ten objectives of this project are closely inter-related. This is reflected in the structure of the thesis (see Table 9, overleaf). The aims and objectives were not dealt with in a linear manner, each being completed in turn before moving on to the next. Rather, the issues they addressed and the questions they asked are intertwined throughout the structure of the thesis, being dealt with in one or more of the chapters. Finally, in chapter seven, the various threads have been brought together and some overall conclusions offered.

<i>Aim</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Thesis Chapter</i>
To examine the ways in which community groups use heritage as a means of expressing community identities and forging a sense of belonging.	Why do some community groups choose to engage in heritage-based activities?	Chapter 4
	How and why are transnational identities such as Welsh American constructed and represented at community heritage sites?	Chapters 3 and 6
	Why and how do some Americans choose to claim and perform a Welsh identity?	Chapters 2 and 6
To investigate processes of production and consumption at community heritage sites.	Who is involved in the construction, negotiation, performance and consumption of narratives of Welshness the case study sites?	Chapters 4 and 5
	Are Welsh identities in the US created and sustained from the "bottom-up", the "top-down", or by a mixture of the two?	Chapter 2
	How do self-identifying Welsh Americans use and interpret the case study sites?	Chapters 5 and 6
	What factors affect how self-identifying Welsh Americans use and interpret the case study sites?	Chapter 5
To test the hypothesis that processes of production and consumption at community heritage sites may be best understood in terms of a network of relationships.	What is the nature of the relationships that exist between different stakeholders at each of the case study sites?	Chapters 4 and 5
	What is the nature of the relationships that exist between the case study sites themselves?	Chapter 4
	What is the nature of the relationships that exist between the case study sites and other Welsh-themed heritage sites in the US, Wales, or elsewhere?	Chapter 4

Table 9 **Aims and objectives in relation to the thesis structure**

Reflections on the methodology

Overall, the methodological approach taken in this study was an appropriate and useful one. By focussing on four selected Welsh American community

heritage initiatives (the North American Festival of Wales 2005 and 2006, the Welsh Nationality Room, and the Welsh American Heritage Museum), it was possible to develop an in-depth and detailed analysis of processes of identity production, performance and consumption at these sites. Using the circuit of culture (du Gay *et al* 1997) as a framework in which to develop the methodology ensured that each of the five key processes through which a cultural text or artefact's meaning(s) is articulated were addressed: production, regulation, representation, consumption and identity.

This thesis took as its starting point the concept that any identity, whether personal or collective, is a social construct, inherently subjective and constantly being (re)produced and (re)imagined. Its focus was on how and why self-identifying Welsh Americans constructed, performed and used narratives of Welsh identity at the four case study sites. The two main tools of data collection, semi structured interviews with the sites' managers and a qualitative visitor survey, were ideally suited to this approach as they allowed the subjects to speak for themselves and to express their opinions of Wales and Welshness in their own words. These personal accounts of Welsh and Welsh American identity production, performance and consumption were then contextualised by the analysis of the case study sites' collections, exhibitions, events and activities, and publicity materials. By using a number of different methods of data collection, this study was able to triangulate the findings of each, resulting in a fuller and more detailed analysis.

The selective and subjective nature of such a qualitative analysis means that the findings cannot be easily generalised beyond the specific research context (in this case Welsh American community heritage initiatives).

However, the findings and conclusions of this study do suggest and develop a number of hypotheses regarding the nature of diasporic, transcultural identity positions, and how and why community groups use heritage to express their identities. These hypotheses can be applied to investigations of community heritage or diasporic communities in a variety of other contexts. This study has also sought to make its findings transferable by providing a rich and in-depth account and analysis of the production, performance and consumption of identities at community heritage sites within a Welsh American context. It is hoped that readers will thus be able to make an informed decision as to whether these findings might be transferable and applicable to other contexts.

A number of challenges were encountered during the course of this research project. Most significantly, the research question, aims and objectives altered during the course of the project, particularly following the main period of fieldwork in the US (February-April 2006, see appendix D). As discussed in chapter one, the original aim was to investigate how and why Wales and Welsh identity were represented at the case study sites and perceived by self-identifying Welsh Americans, and the methodological approach was designed in reference to this. However, during the data analysis period, issues of community, identity production and consumption came increasingly to the fore, looking at, for example, how and why Welsh Americans used, interpreted and related to the heritage sites. This represents an inductive approach, in which the themes and theories emerge from the data, rather than a deductive approach, in which data is used to test a hypothesis formulated prior to its collection. As a result, the survey and

interview questions asked during the data collection phase of this project did not, perhaps, fully reflect its overall research question, aims and findings.

In light of this discrepancy, two main alterations to the methodological approach would be made if the project were to be repeated. The first would be to carry out pilot studies at each of the case study sites. This would enable the effectiveness of the methodology to be tested and a preliminary analysis of the data to be conducted, highlighting key trends and issues emerging from the data. In theory, the issues of community, production and consumption that formed the focus of the final thesis would have been highlighted at this point and the methodological approach, interview and survey questions adapted to reflect this change in focus. It must be noted that a pilot study was carried out at one case study site, the North American Festival of Wales 2005 (and at the 2005 National Eisteddfod in Wales, a comparative case study in an earlier version of this project): time and financial constraints prevented this pilot from being extended to the remaining three case study sites. Changes were made to the methodological approach, interview and survey questions on the basis of the findings of this pilot study at the NAFOW 2005. Significantly, the original aim to compare representations of Welsh identity at heritage sites in the US and in Wales was removed, and the focus shifted to an investigation of the production, representation and consumption of Welsh identities at Welsh American heritage sites only.

The second alteration would be to increase the depth of analysis possible based on the data collected at the four sites. This could be achieved by carrying out a greater number of semi-structured interviews with curators, managers and associated staff at each of the sites. As discussed in chapter

one, timing constraints prevented the carrying out of interviews with staff at the two NAFOWs due to the limited timescale of these events and the workload of such managerial staff during this period. This did not prove to be a major issue in the event, as the two NAFOW formed a focus for the analysis of processes of consumption by festival visitors, while processes of production were investigated through interviews with managerial staff at the remaining case study sites (the Welsh Nationality Room and the Welsh American Heritage Museum). However, carrying out these interviews with “producers” across the four sites would result in a fuller and more detailed analysis. Another way in which to increase the depth of analysis would be through the addition of focus groups with visitors to the sites, as well as the audience surveys carried out. This would provide a less-structured and more participant-led method of data collection, based around a number of key topics identified by the researcher, in which the subjects themselves could effectively lead the discussion. Through these improvements, a greater and more detailed understanding of processes of identity production, performance and consumption at the four community heritage initiatives could be achieved.

Opportunities for further research

The nature of this thesis, investigating as it has done issues of heritage and identity amongst the diasporic self-identifying Welsh American community, suggests that many of its findings may be applicable to heritage initiatives led by other hyphenated ethnic communities in the US, perhaps particularly those of diasporic Celtic communities such as the Scottish or Irish Americans.

Alternatively, the Community Heritage Audience Network model (CHAN) developed in chapter five could be applied to an analysis of how other community groups – diasporic or otherwise – use and relate to community-based heritage initiatives in order to test the wider applicability of the CHAN model. It could also be used to develop a comparative analysis of community heritage initiatives amongst a number of different ethnic groups in the US.

A second potential avenue for further research is suggested by the speculative hypothesis made in chapter seven that Welsh heritage initiatives in the US may be becoming more institutionalised, shifting from predominantly grassroots “bottom-up” sites and events towards more “top-down” or official endeavours such as those represented by the annual Wales Week in New York organised by the Welsh Assembly Government, or by its touring exhibition “Keeping up with the Joneses”. In particular, the Smithsonian Folklife Festival 2009, which has selected Wales as one of two featured nations, would provide an excellent case study through which to explore this hypothesis further. The Festival offers an opportunity to investigate the production, representation and consumption of Welsh identities in the US on a much larger scale than those of this project’s four case study sites: it typically attracts over one million visitors (Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage 2005). This visitor population will also be far more diverse than that of the four community heritage initiatives investigated here, enabling a broad analysis of American perceptions of Wales and Welshness. Such an analysis would help to further contextualise the present study, enabling comparisons to be drawn between perceptions of Welsh identity by Welsh Americans and by the American population more broadly.

A third potential avenue for subsequent research based on this thesis would be to test the ecomuseum potential of Welsh American community heritage initiatives in the Jackson and Gallia counties of south east Ohio. As discussed in the introduction, these initiatives centre around the Welsh American Heritage Museum, which effectively functions as a hub for Welsh American community heritage activities in the area. Other heritage sites and activities in the region include: several Welsh churches, most of which no longer function but have been preserved and are used on special occasions such as St. David's Day; the remains of a Welsh-owned and Welsh-worked charcoal iron furnace; and various other buildings including businesses and the homes of prominent members of the community, past and present. These sites are linked by the Welsh Scenic Byway, part of a US – wide Scenic Byways Scheme (National Scenic Byways n.d.). However, although Welsh heritage in this region seems to possess many of the characteristics of an ecomuseum, there is no integrated management of the various sites. Rather, they are managed by a mix of community-based initiatives, special interest groups and state-wide or national schemes.

APPENDIX A

Visitor Survey Questions

North American Festival of Wales 2005

1. Gender?
2. Age group?
3. Where are you from?
4. Who are you visiting the festival with?
5. Why did you decide to visit the festival today/ this year?
6. Are you actively involved in any of the events being held today? Which ones?
7. What do you think this festival says about Wales and Welshness?
8. Do you have a personal connection to Wales? What is it?
9. What comes to mind when I say Wales? What does Wales mean to you?
10. How do you define Welsh identity? What makes someone Welsh?
11. And what makes someone American?
12. How important is your Welsh ancestry or identity to you?
13. How do you celebrate your Welshness?
14. Are there times when having a Welsh identity matters more to you than at others? When?
15. Do you find your Welsh identity in any way useful or helpful in other aspects of your life?
16. Does your Welsh identity in any way conflict with other aspects of your life?
17. Has your visit here today changed the way you think about Wales?

North American Festival of Wales 2006

1. Gender?
2. Age group?
3. Where are you from?
4. Do you have a personal connection to Wales? What is your connection to Wales?
5. Are you attending the festival:
6. Why did you decide to attend the festival this year?
7. Are you actively participating in any of the events being held? Which ones?
8. What do you think this festival says about Wales and Welshness?
9. What does Wales mean to you? What comes to mind when I say the word 'Wales'?
10. How would you define Welsh identity? What makes someone Welsh?
11. How would you define American identity? What makes someone American?
12. Which of these best describes how you see yourself: American not Welsh; more American than Welsh; equally American and Welsh; more Welsh than American; Welsh not American?
13. Is your Welsh ancestry and identity important to you? How important?
14. Do you celebrate your Welshness? How do you celebrate it?
15. Are there times when having a Welsh identity matters more to you than at others? When? Why?

Welsh Nationality Room

1. Gender?
2. Age group?
3. Where are you originally from?
4. Do you have a personal connection to Wales? What is your connection to Wales?

5. What does Wales mean to you? What comes to mind when I say the word 'Wales'?
6. How would you define Welsh identity? What makes someone Welsh?
7. How would you define American identity? What makes someone American?
8. Which of these best describes how you see yourself: American not Welsh; more American than Welsh; equally American and Welsh; more Welsh than American; Welsh not American?
9. Is your Welsh ancestry and identity important to you? How important?
10. Do you celebrate your Welshness? How do you celebrate it?
11. Are there times when having a Welsh identity matters more to you than at others? When? Why?
12. How long have you been a member of the St David's Society of Pittsburgh?
13. What is your involvement with the Society?
14. Are you actively involved in the Welsh Nationality Room project? What is your involvement with the Welsh Nationality Room project?
15. What do you think about the proposed Welsh Nationality Room at the University of Pittsburgh? Do you think it is important that a Welsh Nationality Room be constructed at the University of Pittsburgh? Why?
16. What do you think the room will say about Wales, Welsh culture and Welsh identity? / What do you think the room should say about Wales, Welsh culture and Welsh identity?

Welsh American Heritage Museum

1. Gender?
2. Age group?
3. Where are you originally from?
4. Do you have a personal connection to Wales? If so, what is your connection to Wales?

5. What does Wales mean to you? What comes to mind when I say the word 'Wales'?
6. How would you define Welsh identity? What makes someone Welsh?
7. How would you define American identity? What makes someone American?
8. Which of these best describes how you see yourself: American not Welsh; more American than Welsh; equally American and Welsh; more Welsh than American; Welsh not American?
9. Is your Welsh ancestry and identity important to you? How important?
10. Do you celebrate your Welshness? If so, how do you celebrate your Welshness?
11. Are there times when having a Welsh identity matters more to you than at others? When? Why?
12. Are you actively involved with the Welsh-American Heritage Museum? How?
13. How often do you visit the museum?
14. Do you have a favourite object or exhibit at the museum? If so, what is it and why?
15. What do you think the museum says about Wales, Welsh culture and Welsh identity?
16. Do you think the museum plays a role in local Welsh-American community life? What kind of role?

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

Welsh Nationality Room

1. What is your position or role in the St David's Society?
2. What does that involve?
3. How long have you been a member of the Society?
4. Why did you decide to join the Society?
5. What is your involvement in the Welsh Nationality Room Project?
(e.g. input, responsibilities, etc)
6. Do you have a personal connection to Wales? What is it?
7. What does Wales mean to you?
8. How would you define Welsh identity?
9. What do you think about the decision to create a Welsh Nationality Room at the University of Pittsburgh?
10. Could you tell me a little about the progress of the Welsh Nationality Room project to date?
11. When did the project begin?
12. How did the decision to create a Welsh Nationality Room come about? (e.g. did the Society approach the University or vice versa?)
13. What role does the St David's Society play in the project?
14. What role does the University of Pittsburgh play in the project?
15. Could you tell me a little about the design for the Welsh Nationality Room?
16. How did you arrive at this final design? Were lots of different designs suggested?
17. Who had input into the design process?
18. Could you describe to me what the finished Room will look like?
What objects will it contain?

19. What do you think the Welsh Nationality Room will say about Wales, Welsh culture and Welsh identity?
20. Who do you think will visit the Room?
21. How do you think the Room will be used?
22. Do you think the Room will be important to (local) Welsh-Americans? Why? How?

Welsh American Heritage Museum

1. What is your position or role at the Welsh-American Heritage Museum?
2. What does that involve?
3. Could you tell me briefly what a typical day would involve for you?
4. Why did you decide to become involved in the museum?
5. Do you have a personal connection to Wales? What is it?
6. What does Wales mean to you?
7. How would you define Welsh identity?
8. Could you a little bit about how the museum came to be?
9. When was the museum established?
10. Who was involved in establishing the museum?
11. Why was it decided to establish a Welsh-American museum?
12. How has the museum developed since its establishment?
13. How is the museum managed?
14. What are the aims or mission of the museum?
15. Who visits the museum?
16. Could you briefly describe the museum to me?
17. What is in the museum's collection?
18. What would you say was the key exhibit or object in the museum, if anything?
19. What do you think the museum says about Wales, Welsh culture and Welsh identity?
20. Could you tell me whether the museum plays a role in any local Welsh-American activities?

APPENDIX C

Basic Data on Survey Respondents

Gender

<i>Site</i>	<i>Gender</i>		TOTAL
	Male	Female	
NAFOW 2005 (A)	52	36	88
NAFOW 2006 (B)	53	65	118
Welsh Nationality Room (C)	34	20	54
Welsh American Heritage Museum (D)	15	9	24
TOTAL	154	130	284

Place of Birth

<i>Place of Birth</i>	<i>Site</i>				TOTAL
	NAFOW 2005 (A)	NAFOW 2006 (B)	Welsh Nationality Room (C)	Welsh American Heritage Museum (D)	
USA	56	103	48	19	226
Canada	8	4	0	0	12
Wales	21	10	6	5	42
Other	3	1	0	0	4
TOTAL	88	118	54	24	284

Age

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Site</i>				TOTAL
	NAFOW 2005 (A)	NAFOW 2006 (B)	Welsh Nationality Room (C)	Welsh American Heritage Museum (D)	
Under 16	4	2	0	0	6
16-24	4	2	2	2	10
25-34	2	0	2	6	10
35-44	2	6	5	0	13
45-54	13	12	9	2	36
55-64	25	37	12	6	79
65-74	20	29	22	4	75
Over 75	19	28	2	4	53
No response	0	2	0	0	2
TOTAL	88	118	54	24	284

APPENDIX D

Fieldwork Schedule

Data was collected in the course of three periods of fieldwork in the USA. A pilot study was carried out at the North American Festival of Wales in September 2005, at which the audience survey and the exhibition analysis model were tested. This was followed by a two month period in the USA during spring 2006, during which interviews, surveys and exhibition analyses were carried out at three sites. Finally, a return visit was made to the North American Festival of Wales in September 2006 in order to collect more audience surveys. The details of these periods are given in the table below.

TIME PERIOD	SITES VISITED
1 st – 4 th September 2005	North American Festival of Wales 2005 Disney World, Orlando, Florida
28 th February – 16 th April 2006	Welsh Nationality Room Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (28 th February – 12 th March 2006) Welsh American Heritage Museum Oak Hill, Ohio (13 th March – 27 th March 2006) Slate Valley Museum Granville, New York State (28 th March – 11 th April 2006)
31 st August – 3 rd September 2006	North American Festival of Wales 2006 Cincinnati, Ohio

APPENDIX E

Consent Form

Title of project	Community, Heritage, Identity: constructing, performing and consuming Welsh identities in the US
Name of Researcher	Ellen Chapman
Contact details	International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies, Bruce Building, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU, UK Email: ellen.chapman@ncl.ac.uk

1. I confirm that I have read the transcript of my interview, dated _____, and have been given a copy to keep.

2. I agree to the use of quotes from my interview in the final PhD thesis and subsequent publications.

3. I would like quotes from my interview to be made anonymous
Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes, my chosen pseudonym is:

4. I understand that my interview tapes and transcripts will be kept confidential and will not be used other than for the purposes described above.

Name of participant (please print)

Date

Signature

Name of researcher (please print)

Date

Signature

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