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Whiteness in the English countryside: A case of the National Trust

Sarah Mary King

Ph.D.

University of Durham
Department of Geography

2007

Abstract

Whiteness in the English countryside: A case of the National Trust

Sarah Mary King

While the majority of research on race and ethnicity in rural England has focused on 'ethnic minorities', so rehearsing the all too common conflation of 'race' with 'others', this thesis advances a fresh analysis of the racialisation of the English countryside by critically interrogating the 'white' ethnic majority. It argues that it is only by subjecting whiteness to critical scrutiny that dominant discourses and normatively racialised assumptions of the English countryside can begin to be confronted and challenged. To such ends, this thesis seeks to make explicit the particularly English chain of association between countryside, nation and whiteness, encapsulated nowhere more than within the pioneering and powerful preservation organisation of England's National Trust. It argues that even within such a powerful organisation as the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty, and within nationally iconic countryside spaces of Derwentwater in the Lake District and Gibside in Tyne and Wear, whiteness is far from a hegemonic and homogeneous discourse, but is rather complex, contested and contingent. Analysis of contemporary 'white' countryside visitors aims to further exemplify this cultural complexity of whiteness that is at once marked and unmarked, powerful and precarious, stable and unstable. By combining archival and documentary research, key informant interviews and visitor surveys, the thesis contributes a detailed empirical analysis of the under-researched historical and contemporary processes through which the countryside has been (re)constructed as a white racialised space in England. In its analysis of the historical, geographical and institutional nature of whiteness in the English countryside, the thesis seeks not only to advance a more complex understanding than is currently available in academic scholarship of how the countryside has been intimately and implicitly inflected by race, but also aims to contribute a fresh perspective to policy debates concerning social inclusion in rural England.

Whiteness in the English countryside: A case of the National Trust

Sarah Mary King

Ph.D.

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University of Durham
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2007



- 3 MAY 2007

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Declaration

None of the material included in this thesis has been previously submitted for a degree at the University of Durham or any other university.

Statement of copyright

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Chapter 1

Introduction:

Scope, aims and overview of research

1.1 Research scope

'In England the connections between the countryside, nation and racialization have had a particular longevity'

(Neal, 2002: 444)

'(D)ominant common-sense and populist discourses (re)present the English countryside as a timeless "white landscape"'

(Agyeman and Spooner, 1997: 197)

This thesis analyses historical and contemporary connections between countryside, nation and white racialisation in England through a focus on the preservation organisation of the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty. It rests on the premise that race in the English countryside not only relates to so called 'ethnic minorities', but is a mainstream issue which concerns 'white' as much as 'non-white' people. In its focus on 'white' people and places, the thesis contributes a fresh perspective to the burgeoning body of academic and policy research on race in the English countryside that has tended to focus on the exclusion of 'black people' from the 'white landscape' of rural England (Agyeman 1989). Although there has been a growing recognition over the past twenty years that connections between countryside, nation and racialisation have had a particular permanence in England (exemplified in Sarah Neal's quote), so far the complex historical and contemporary processes through which the English countryside has been implicitly racialised as white have remained critically under-researched. This thesis aims to respond to the pressing need to 'turn attention towards constructions of whiteness, and how it is related to questions of power and exclusion' (Agyeman and Spooner 1997: 212) by advancing a detailed, empirical analysis of the white racialisation of the English countryside.



The thesis contends that unless the recent wave of academic (Kinsman 1995; Agyeman and Spooner 1997; Kinsman 1997; Slee 2002; Rishbeth 2003) and policy research (The Countryside Agency 2000; Countryside Recreation Network 2002; The Countryside Agency 2003) into the exclusion of so-called 'ethnic minorities' from the countryside is coupled with research into the 'white' ethnic majority, studies and policies run the risk of 'normalizing the spatial dominance of the non-racialized majority' (Bonnett and Nayak 2003: 305, sic); of perpetuating the myth of white rural homogeneity that stands to severely hinder the project of anti-racism. Although a growing body of work in geography and the environmental sciences has begun 'to address the associations between racism and an exclusive white British national identity, embedded within the countryside' (Agyeman and Spooner 1997: 211-212), focusing on a host of 'rural others' to reveal how the uncritical idealisation of the countryside is bound up with questions of exclusion (see section 2.4.5), analysis of how the dominant view of rurality has been (re)constructed is also crucial to understanding the wider power relations underlying processes of exclusion in the countryside (Little 1999). While this research is sensitive to the problematics of interrogating whiteness – from running the risk of being narcissistic to detracting attention from less powerful groups who need it the most (see section 2.5) – by bringing the white ethnic majority into critical scrutiny, the thesis aims to unveil and unsettle its normative status and power.

Despite the tendency for studies of rurality to take a historical bent and studies of urbanity to be more contemporary in focus, work that has drawn attention to the racialised character of the English countryside (Agyeman 1989; Kinsman 1995; Agyeman and Spooner 1997; Kinsman 1997; Cloke and Little 1997a; Neal 2002; Hubbard 2005) has tended to focus on contemporary mechanisms of exclusion more than on historical processes of racialisation. While scholarship on whiteness has generally tended to analyse *either* historical processes of white racialisation *or* contemporary formations and reconstitutions of white identities rather than a combination of the two (see section 2.5.2), policy discourses on the social in/exclusiveness of the English countryside, like day-to-day politics more generally, seem to be less historically oriented (Schwartz 2005: 225). By bringing into one study a twin focus on the historical making of white countryside, as well as on contemporary reformations of the normatively racialised English countryside, the thesis produces a fresh race and class-based critique of the contested English countryside. Analysing the co-construction of countryside, Englishness and whiteness from what some have claimed to be the very 'invention' (Landry 2001) of the countryside in the late nineteenth century through to the present day allows different intersections and inflections of white racialised countryside to be traced. Focusing on the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty – one of the oldest existing preservation organisations that has possessed an unrivalled capacity to redefine

what is meant by 'national heritage' in every generation over the past century (Newby 1995: 22) – facilitates empirical analysis of how the countryside has been historically and contemporarily (re)constructed as a white racialised space.

Few institutions exemplify so strongly the complex and dynamic interconnections between discourses of whiteness, Englishness and countryside than the National Trust. As the Trust has not only encompassed diverse conservation, recreation, amenity and resource interests to become the established point of convergence for the countryside movement (Bunce 1994: 176-190, see Figure 1.1), but was also formed well in advance of any other multiple-interest environmental bodies, it singularly enables the diverse discourse of preservationism to be traced from its origins in the late nineteenth century to the present day. While the Trust provides a lens on the discourse of preservationism, through its unique legislative powers to protect *public* interest through the acquisition of *private* land, it has played an unparalleled role in constructing the countryside and representing national heritage (see section 4.3.4). The thesis not only breaks new ground by analysing the Trust within a racialised frame for the first time, but it also stands as a corrective to the lack of attention assigned to institutions in the race and rurality studies literature more generally (see section 2.5.4).

In its focus on the prevailing preservation organisation of the National Trust, this analysis exposes the institutional power and cultural authority of whiteness inscribed upon the English countryside as well as its provisional and precarious nature. As we shall see, even within the powerful organisation of the National Trust (which is now the largest private landowner in Britain, has over three million members and is the largest voluntary organisation in Europe, see Table 6.1), whiteness appears to be an anxious, ambiguous, fractured and fragile formation. The thesis furthers an understanding of how even dominant discourses of (white rural) Englishness are less fixed and stable than uncertain and anxious (Young 1995). By arguing that whiteness is not nearly so confident, dominant and timeless a position as is often implied by anti-colonial discourse analysis, this thesis aims to advance a dialectical, layered and anti-essentialist reading which challenges work by neo-abolitionist scholars and others that have equated whiteness with white power and white racism (for example Ferber 1998; Hacker 1992; Ignatiev 1995; Ignatiev and Garvey 1996).

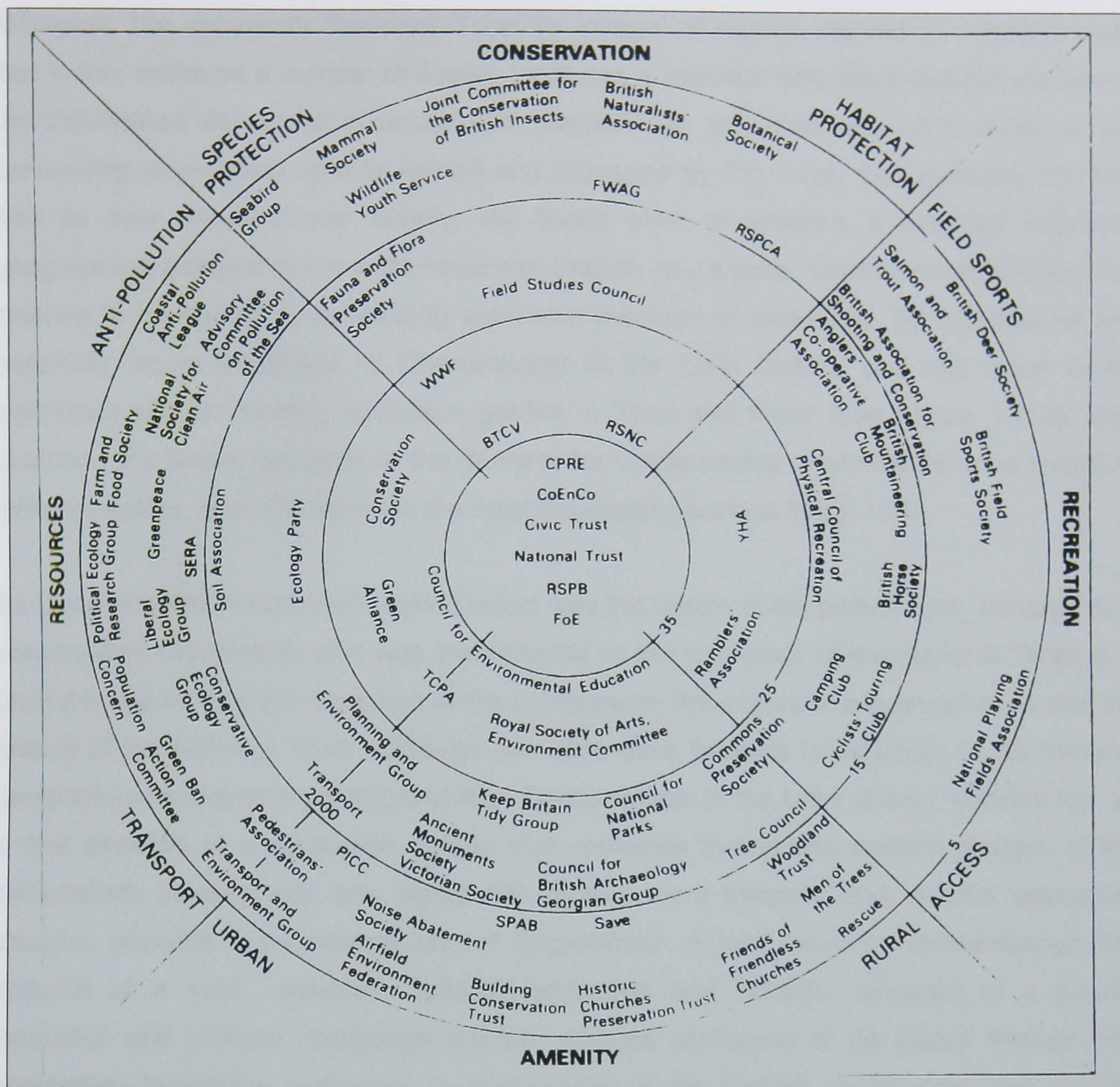


Figure 1.1: The National Trust at the epicentre of the diverse countryside/ preservation movement in England
Source: Lowe and Godyer 1983: 81, reproduced in Bunce 1994: 189

By combining an analysis of the historical and contemporary philosophy, policies and practices of the Trust, based on archival and documentary research, with survey research into the attitudes and values of white visitors to countryside sites owned and managed by the organisation (see Chapter 3), this thesis responds to the call for work 'that bridges the gap between the more mundane routine expressions of whiteness and...sources of institutional power' (Gabriel 2000: 176). While the Trust facilitates analysis of how whiteness has been implicitly and ambiguously institutionalised within the discourses of preservationism and the countryside, it also enables individual inflections of whiteness to be analysed over time, from its founders to its contemporary visitors, volunteers and staff. Given that, as we shall see in Chapter 2, the countryside was a thoroughly urban conception, this research focuses explicitly on visitors to the countryside rather than on rural residents.

Moreover, the apparently 'National' Trust for 'places' of historic interest or natural beauty, that in fact works on a number of scales, facilitates a 'national' and place-specific analysis of the interrelated discourses of countryside, Englishness and whiteness. In its focus on two contrasting countryside spaces owned and managed by the Trust, that variously intersect with its over hundred year history, the thesis aims to advance a nuanced historical-geographical analysis of the white racialised English countryside, which Bonnett (2000a) has claimed to be central to developing anti-racist readings of whiteness. By focusing on one nationally iconic landscape of Derwentwater in the Lake District, and one more locally significant site of Gibside landscape garden in Tyne and Wear (see Figure 1.2 for their location), the thesis responds to the demand for constructions of whiteness to be traced at different scales, from the nation to the neighbourhood (Jackson 1998: 100).

As Derwentwater in Cumbria's Lake District was the cradle of the picturesque, romantic and preservation movements and was instrumental in the formation of the National Trust, it is pivotal to the story of the invention of the countryside, the origins of preservationism and the history of the National Trust. Although few sites have become more iconic in the national geographical imagination of England than Derwentwater in the Lake District, Gibside too, as a rare example of a landscape garden that combines formal and uniform designs of the seventeenth century with late eighteenth century more irregular and 'natural' appearing designs, provides a contrasting icon of Englishness. A joint focus on Derwentwater, the epitome of a 'wild', 'sublime', 'natural' landscape and Gibside, symbolic of a gentle, 'beautiful' and 'cultural' landscape garden, enables whiteness to be traced through two contrasting landscape aesthetics or mythologies of the English countryside (see section 2.4.4, 2.5.3 and Chapter 5). As we shall see in later chapters, the two sites, preserved by the Trust as 'national icons' (Daniels 1993: 7), provide particularly fitting case studies because they not only symbolise the two pervasive aesthetics and arcadias of the English countryside, but they also align with the two main elements or facets of the Trust's work of 'natural beauty' and 'historic interest'.

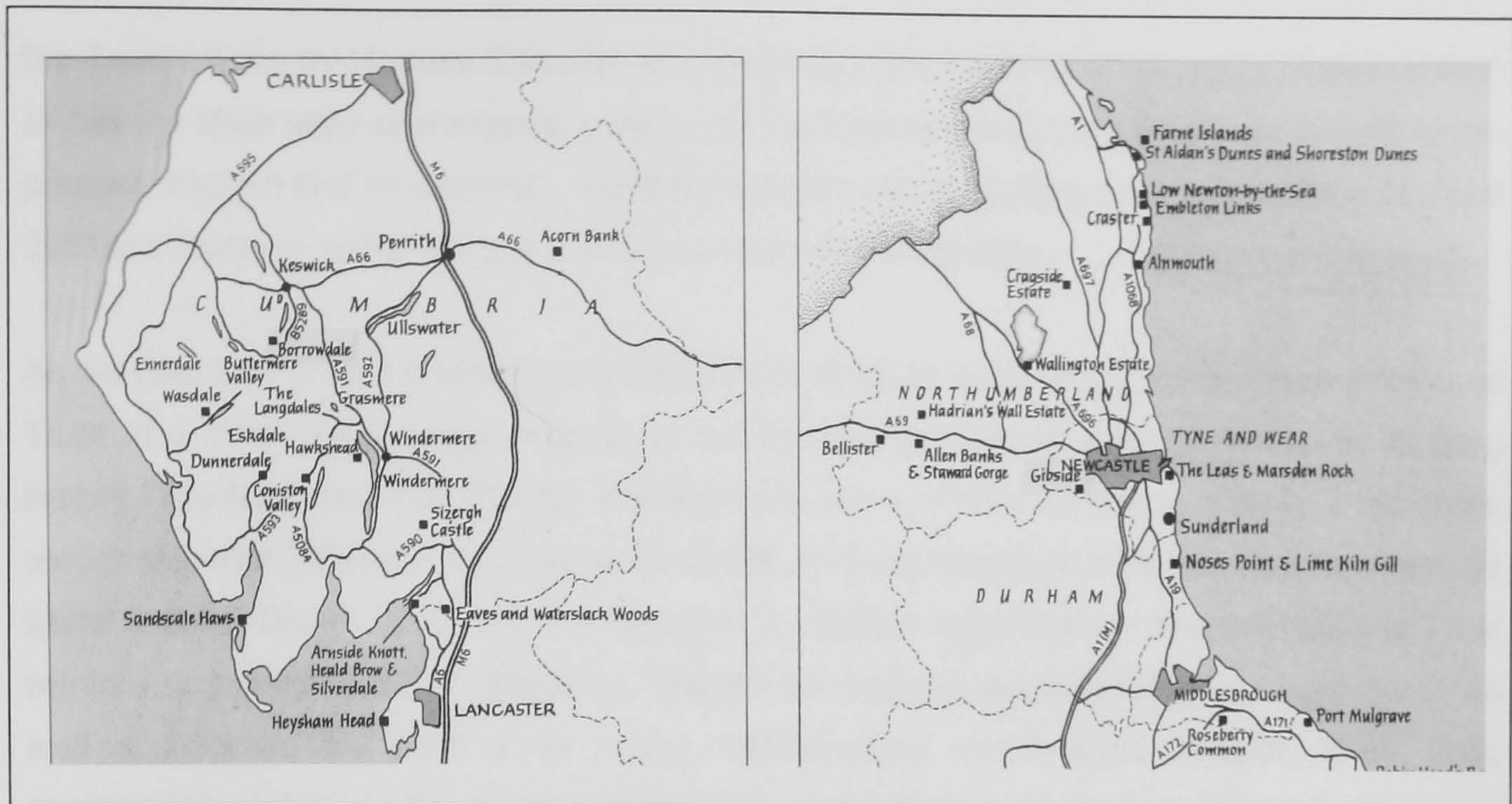


Figure 1.2: The location of National Trust properties in the North West and North East showing Derwentwater/Borrowdale and Gibside

Source: The National Trust (1999c) Coast and Countryside Handbook

While the two contrasting countryside cases allow a geographically sensitive, multiscalar analysis of whiteness to be developed, Derwentwater in the Borrowdale valley and Gibside in Tyne and Wear¹ also facilitate analysis of the two historical ‘bookends’ of the Trust’s history that this thesis takes as its focus. Rather than attempting to advance another chronological account of the Trust, or comprehensively charting the discourse of whiteness from the ideological construction of the countryside in the mid to late nineteenth century through to the present day, it develops an analysis of the National Trust’s role in the process of white nation building through the constitutive medium of ‘countryside’ at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and at various ‘moments’ throughout its history. The thesis broadly, although not exclusively, analyses the two temporal extremities of the Trust – its first decade or so from 1895, when ideas of ‘countryside’ and ‘preservationism’ were still relatively new, and on its last decade, from its Centenary year in 1995 through to the present day, when issues of social in/exclusion have been prioritised. As Derwentwater in the Lake District, first acquired in 1902, was ‘where the National Trust began’ (The National Trust 1970: 6, see Figure 5.3), it brings the Trust’s preservation of the countryside in its formative years into focus. By way of contrast, Gibside estate, that has been gradually acquired from 1965 through to recent years, serves as a window on a later period, while also illuminating

¹ Although Gibside, positioned very near to the boundary between Tyne and Wear and County Durham, is now located in the county of Tyne and Wear, it has fallen within the administrative boundaries of both areas in the past and thus the thesis variously refers to its situation either in Tyne and Wear or County Durham.

the Trust's 'Country Houses Scheme' and 'National Land Fund' that were pivotal elements in its history. Both sites also provide insight into how the contemporary Trust has sought to 're-present, explain and re-interpret... heritage in fresh and appealing ways' (The National Trust 2001a) in order to widen access and enjoyment of its properties.

As we shall see in later chapters, it is particularly fitting to analyse the contemporary National Trust at a time when it has recently gone through the largest internal review in its long history (The National Trust 2002b). Furthermore, in the context of the increasing, if reluctant, recognition that '[A]lmost all conservation trusts and organizations in Britain remain nearly all white' (Alibhai-Brown 2001: 25), it is pressing to analyse organizations like the National Trust within a racialised frame of reference. This thesis extends tentative criticisms from inside as well as outside the Trust of its 'white, middle-class, middle-aged' (Taylor, 1994: 259) composition and character to argue that such a seemingly national and natural institution is inflected by race as well as class. In so doing, it not only contributes a fresh analysis of the race and class based English countryside, but in view of mounting criticisms among populist commentators (Yasmin Alibhai-Brown and Trevor Phillips) and policy makers (Wong 1998; Prendergast 2004) as well as academics (Agyeman 1989; Taylor 1994; Kinsman 1995; Matless 1998; Alibhai-Brown 2001; Ware 2001; Neal 2002; Bonnett and Nayak 2003; Brace 2003; Halfacree 2003; Howard 2003) that the English countryside is a racialised space, it also holds wider policy and political relevance. The government level recognition that the countryside is 'the preserve of the white, middle-aged, middle class and able-bodied' (Department of Environment Transport and the Regions 2000a: 137) and on a much smaller scale, the funding of this research by English Nature, provide indication of the policy concern for the cultural specificity and normatively racialised character of the English countryside.

Amidst the controversy sparked by Trevor Phillips' (the Chair of the Commission of Racial Equality) claim that a form of passive apartheid operates in the English countryside² (which foregrounded issues of race and racism among mainstream rural organisations from the Ramblers Association to the National Farmer's Union), recent assertions in the fall out of '7/7' that English cities are fast becoming segregated into 'ghetto communities'³ (Gillan 2005) and the furore generated last year over the Lake District National Park Authority's plans to axe its guided walks based on their white, middle-aged, middle-class appeal

² The online debate hosted by BBC News in the fallout of Trevor Phillips' 'apartheid' claim, is indication of the national, and even international controversy sparked by his comment. See http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/talking_point/3726602.stm

³ Trevor Phillips' address to the Manchester Council for Community Relations on 22nd September 2005 entitled 'After 7/7: Sleepwalking to Segregation' highlighted that the fragmentation, segregation and ghettoization of society along race and ethnic lines poses a threat to the future of multicultural Britain.

(Crowley 2005),⁴ it is arguably more pertinent and pressing than ever before to research the spatialisation of white racialisation in the English countryside. While such comments and controversies have highlighted the inescapably spatialised and geographical nature of ethnicity in a race-preoccupied, post 7/7 Britain, they arguably reinscribe the dominant national geographic imagination that has fixed so called 'ethnic minorities' in urban areas and has collapsed whiteness into countryside. This thesis, by critically analysing and empirically exploring how rural space has been connoted as white, aims to expose such a normative geography in order to break the normative hold of whiteness – a project which this chapter has begun to suggest holds as much policy and political relevance as academic.

1.2 Thesis aims and research agenda

The overriding aim of this thesis is to explore how the English countryside has been constructed as a white racialised space through the institutional case of the National Trust. This overarching aim is advanced through four subsidiary research aims:

- 1) To analyse the historical connections between normatively racialised English national identity (or 'Englishness') and countryside from the late nineteenth century through the discourse of preservationism and the institution of the National Trust
- 2) To explore how the contrasting countryside spaces of Derwentwater in the Lake District and Gibside in Tyne and Wear have been variously and historically constructed as terrains of white racialisation
- 3) To examine ways that the contemporary National Trust has reconstructed, represented and reimagined the countryside through a focus on the cases of Derwentwater and Gibside
- 4) To investigate the attitudes and values of contemporary 'white' countryside visitors to issues of countryside, national and ethnic identity in order to analyse the cultural complexity of white racialisation in rural England

⁴ The fierce regional and national debate spurred by the Lake District National Park's proposals to scrap its free guided walks as part of a three year plan to encourage more ethnic minorities, inner city children and disabled people to visit the area provides strong indication of the sensitivities surrounding issues of race in the contemporary English countryside.

In addressing these aims, the thesis seeks to contribute to current academic debates on the social construction of racialised whiteness and to intervene in policy debates regarding the social ex/inclusiveness of the English countryside. Thus, it embraces both an academic and policy agenda that holds at its core a deeper anti-racist political goal.

1.3 Thesis overview

The thesis addresses these aims through the course of seven chapters. The following chapter, *Chapter 2*, draws connections across the literature that make explicit the co-construction of countryside, Englishness and whiteness in order to generate a more complex understanding than is currently available in academic scholarship of how the English countryside became identified with a particular white national identity. It fleshes out the rationale for empirical focus briefly outlined here by highlighting several conceptual silences in existing literature that this thesis aims to address.

In order to analyse the complex historical and contemporary processes of white racialisation in contrasting countryside spaces and within the organisation of the National Trust, the thesis has used a combination of research methods. *Chapter 3* reflects on the research approach that bridges well-rehearsed divides of theory and policy, qualitative and quantitative, historical and contemporary and discusses the triangulated methods of archival and documentary research, key informant interviews and visitor surveys that were used to empirically explore the nature of whiteness in the English countryside.

Based on archival and documentary research that combines core primary documents with secondary sources, *Chapter 4* analyses the historical co-construction of whiteness and the English countryside through the institutional case of the National Trust. The chapter makes whiteness visible as a central discourse in preservationism before tracing racialised whiteness through the organisation of the National Trust from its foundation in 1895. It argues that although the Trust has played an important role in the construction of a nationalist narrative of the countryside and in the process of white nation building, such a process has been far from secure. Rather, we see that from its very foundation, the Trust was fuelled by anxiety and has been internally incoherent and insecure.

Chapter 5 further develops and exemplifies the culturally complex condition of whiteness through historical analysis of two contrasting geographical locales – Derwentwater in the Lake District and Gibside in Tyne and Wear. Based on the assumption that it is only by geographically locating and historically particularising whiteness that it can be dislocated

from its normative power and privileged position, the chapter traces discourses of whiteness through these two contrasting countryside sites. In examining these spaces, as central 'cultural figures' (Matless 1994: 7) of the English countryside, the chapter draws into focus different historically and geographically contingent intersections of countryside, Englishness and whiteness.

The thesis is then advanced through analysis of the National Trust's contemporary role in reconstructing and reimagining the white racialised English countryside. *Chapter 6* draws on a range of documents from policy statements to grey literature and also on key informant interviews to argue that over the past decade, from its centenary year in 1995, the Trust has been characterised by a critical, reflexive shift. The cases of Derwentwater/ Borrowdale, which has been a trailblazer for the development of education and interpretation policies, and Gibside, that has been the foci for the pioneering Newcastle Inner City Project, are used to exemplify the Trust's contemporary emphasis on reaching out to new audiences and widening its support. However, the chapter argues that despite its attempts, the Trust still has a way to go to become truly socially inclusive.

Chapter 7 responds to the lack of critical attention on 'white' peoples' attitudes to race and ethnicity in the countryside by contributing detailed empirical, qualitative and quantitative research to unpack the complex, ambiguous positionings of 'white' visitors to Derwentwater and Gibside. The chapter analyses the attitudes, values and opinions of 400 visitors to English national identity, race and ethnicity, the countryside and the National Trust in order to "productively complicate" historically hegemonic versions of countryside and whiteness by exposing the categories to be far from unitary and monolithic, but rather fractured and dynamic. Analysis of the visitor survey exposes whiteness to be a ruptured, almost schizophrenic discourse that is lived through senses of both authority and anxiety; power and powerlessness, security and insecurity, belonging and alienation that are manifestly expressed through discourses of racism and anti-racism.

The concluding chapter, *Chapter 8*, pulls together the multiple strands and central arguments of the thesis. It outlines how the thesis contributes to academic debates by advancing an understanding of the cultural complexity of whiteness and suggests some possible directions for future research. It also highlights how the thesis can help inform policy debates on the social in/exclusiveness of the countryside by contributing a fresh approach and deeper historical perspective to contemporary concerns over the cultural constituency of the English countryside.

Chapter 2

Conceptual connections: Countryside, Englishness and whiteness

2.1 Introduction: research niche

'One of the problems with studying whiteness is that no-one who does it has an easy time determining what authors or texts should be included in the inquiry'

(Rasmussen, Klinenberg et al. 2001b: 1)

My aim in surveying them [the work of scholars] is not to provide a comprehensive guide to the literature, but to indicate a stance'

(Ignatiev 1995: 179)

The aim and approach of this chapter is neatly summarised by the quotation from Noel Ignatiev, a leading scholar of whiteness and co-founder of the neo-abolitionist *'Race Traitor'* journal.¹ Rather than comprehensively review the rich conceptual terrain that informs the thesis; from race to rurality, whiteness to wilderness, countryside to culture and nature to the National Trust, the chapter charts some of the core debates that emanate from such literatures. In so doing, the chapter provides a conceptual and theoretical coordination to situate the thesis within wider academic debates. The first quotation from the editorial team of *'The Making and Unmaking of Whiteness'* draws attention to the problematic process of selecting texts in order to chart a genealogy of critical studies of whiteness that this chapter also confronts in a more general sense. Rather than being solely dedicated to detailing the vast and expansive 'whiteness studies' literature, the chapter reviews and critiques a number of debates surrounding the three core themes of countryside, Englishness and whiteness in order to flesh out the multidimensional academic rationale and to delimit the spatial and temporal boundaries of the empirical focus briefly outlined in the introductory chapter.

¹ Race Traitor, the Journal of the New Abolitionism is premised on the belief that 'treason to whiteness is loyalty to humanity' and aims to act as an intellectual center for those seeking to abolish the white race. See: <http://racetractor.org/> (accurate to 18/ 11/ 05) or Garvey and Ignatiev (1993).

Over the past decade and a half there has been a proliferation of critical studies of whiteness (Dyer 1988; Roediger 1991; Morrison 1992; Ware 1992; Hall 1992a; Frankenberg 1993a; Ignatiev 1995; Nakayama and Martin 1999; Dwyer and Jones III 2000; Kobayashi and Peake 2000; Bonnett 2000a; Rasmussen, Klinenberg et al. 2001; Yancy 2004), of scholarship on the concept and constituency of Englishness (Colls and Dodd 1986; Taylor 1991; Giles and Middleton 1995; Gikandi 1996; Baucom 1999; Easthope 1999; Langford 2000; Corbett, Holt et al. 2002a; Wilson 2003) and of scholarly interest in a myriad of countryside-related issues from hunting (Woods 1997; Kennedy 2002; Milbourne 2003; Wallwork and Dixon 2004) to housing (Satsangi and Dunmore 2003; Walker 2004). However, thus far the connections between the three concepts of whiteness, Englishness and countryside remain critically under-developed in the academic literature. As we shall see, a huge body of work has focused on the centrality of the countryside to English national identity or Englishness (Weiner 1981; Howkins 1986; Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Mingay 1989; Lowenthal 1991; Short 1991; Daniels 1993; Bunce 1994; Cloke and Little 1997a; Matless 1998; Brace 2003; Halfacree 2003) and another strand of literature has highlighted the normatively white racialised character of Englishness (Lorimer 1978; Gilroy 1987; Hall 1992a; Puar 1994; Taylor 1994; Schwarz 1996; Jackson 1998; Baucom 1999; Bonnett 2002; Halfacree 2003; Wilson 2003). However, only a relatively small number of scholars – many of them geographers – have drawn critical attention to the white racialisation of the English countryside (Agyeman 1989; Kinsman 1995; Agyeman and Spooner 1997; Kinsman 1997; Cloke and Little 1997a; Neal 2002; Hubbard 2005).

Although Phil Hubbard has recently asserted that work on race and landscape has 'extensively documented' (2005: 12) how the dominant version of the English countryside serves to exclude ethnic 'others', he cites only three authors to support such a claim (namely Kinsman 1995; Agyeman and Spooner 1997; Neal 2002). While not exhaustive, the Web of Knowledge citation indices provide further indication of an under-studied field of research. Agyeman and Spooner's chapter (1997) is conspicuous in being so often cited to exemplify the ways that rurality and whiteness are co-constructed in the English context. Furthermore, the fact that Ingrid Pollard's *Pastoral Interludes* (1987) photographic collection continues to be exhibited around the world and has been enduringly used to make wider analytical connections between 'race, nation and...geographies of belonging and exclusion' (Moore, Pandian et al. 2003: 14), is evidence of the scarcity of other sources as much as the compelling quality of the images and captions themselves (for one of the photographs from the collection see Fig 2.4). This is telling of the lack of sustained critical and empirical attention dedicated to analysing the English countryside as 'a terrain of whiteness' (Schech and Haggis, 1998: 616). Although a number of commentators have gone some way to

advance a critique of the normatively racialised nature of the English countryside, often as part of a wider discussion of the relationship between landscape and identity (Daniels 1993; Taylor 1994; Lowenthal 1995; Matless 1998; Baucom 1999; Ware 2002b; Brace 2003; Halfacree 2003), this thesis extends such arguments by contributing a detailed, empirical analysis of the white racialisation of the English countryside from its construction in the late nineteenth century through to the present day.

The chapter is structured into three main parts. The first part analyses the invention and idealisation of the countryside during the mid to late eighteenth century in opposition to rapid urbanism and industrialism. The mediating discourse of Englishness (between countryside and whiteness) occupies the second part of the chapter while the third part situates the thesis within the emergent critical scholarship on whiteness. Before exploring these three main themes, the chapter pays brief attention to some of the key concepts that will be elucidated later and throughout the thesis.

2.2 Mapping the terrain: some key concepts in brief overview

As this thesis is positioned at the nexus of cultural, historical and rural geography, it critically engages a wide range of paradigmatic concepts including race, place, nation, nature, culture and landscape. Such concepts are by now widely theorised in terms of social constructionism within cultural geography (Jackson and Penrose 1993; Anderson and Gale 1999; Winchester, Kong et al. 2003), which has underscored the upsurge of research on race, racism and ethnicity over the past twenty years (Bulmer and Solomos 1999; Back and Solomos 2000). While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to rehearse an already exhaustive analysis of the genealogy of the idea of race (Anthias, Yuval-Davis et al. 1993; Solomos and Back 1996; Eriksen 1997; Back and Solomos 2000; Delgado and Stefanic 2000; Mason 2000; Bulmer and Solomos 2004b), it is important to review the broad contours of intellectual thinking about race that inform the central conceptual positioning of this thesis.

Following the lead of scholarship that has discredited the 'logic' of race on the basis that there is wider genetic variation within a so called 'race' than between different 'races' this thesis understands race as a culturally constructed, rather than a natural, biological or essential category. Although '[r]etriving race from the sphere of biological nature, and positioning it in a social field of contestation is by now a fairly standard manoeuvre' (Anderson 2002: 25), equally standard has been the anxious recognition among social construction theorists that analysing race as a 'floating signifier' (McClintock 1995), that is as an effect of signification, should not detract from acknowledging its very real material effects.

Albeit to differing extents, scholars have insisted that even though 'race has no semantic respectability, biological basis or philosophical legitimacy...race, or racialised identities have as much political, sociological and economic salience as they ever had' (Alcoff 1999: 29). While critics have exposed the enduring power of popular discourses of race, they have also widely acknowledged that race is fluid and contested, which this thesis will aim to show holds true even within apparently stable narratives of national identity.

Within this vein of constructivist scholarship on race, a number of geographers and others have attended to the mutually constitutive relationship between race and place, chiefly between the enduringly powerful discourses of race and nation (Gilroy 1987; Jackson and Penrose 1993; Keith and Pile 1993; Schwarz 1996; Eriksen 1997; Watt 1998; Linke 1999; Bonnett 1999a; Guss 2000; Delaney 2002; Bonnett and Nayak 2003; Wilson 2003). This thesis is particularly informed by critical geographical scholarship on the co-construction of race and place as exemplified by the dedication of a recent special issue of the journal *The Professional Geographer* (2002, 54:1) to 'Race, Racism and Geography'. While the special issue brought together a host of different authors and wide ranging articles (Anderson 2002; Delaney 2002; Gilmore 2002; Peake and Kobayashi 2002; Pulido 2002; Schein 2002; Wilson 2002), such geographical scholarship has been broadly united in its emphasis on the complex processes of the spatialisation of race and the racialisation of space, on the interrelated discourses of *'Race, Place and Nation'* (Jackson and Penrose 1993 and also Gregory and Sanjek 1994; Dwyer and Jones III 2000; Kobayashi and Peake 2000; Bonnett 2003; Nayak 2003). In the same way that the 'idea of race' has been exposed to be just that, an ideological construction, Benedict Anderson's pathbreaking work (1991) on nations and nationalism, has fostered a generally accepted understanding of nations as 'imagined communities'.

While race is commonly understood to have no basis in biology, nature remains an important site for the articulation of racialised identities. This thesis contributes to recent work that has exposed how the idiom of race has been implicitly and inextricably interconnected with discourses of nature (Neumann 1996; De Luca 1999; Braun 2003; Moore, Pandian et al. 2003; Peretti 2003; Chakraborti and Garland 2004a; McCarthy and Hague 2004). Within this expanding corpus of research, the recently published volume on *'Race, Nature and the Politics of Difference'* (Moore, Kosek et al. 2003) has made a particularly valuable contribution to understanding the different ways that 'race and nature invoke each other, speak through each other, build on each other' (Moore, Pandian et al. 2003: 4). Although, as we shall see later, the most developed critiques have been advanced in the American context (De Luca 1999; Braun 2003), the racialisation of the English rural landscape is

beginning to attract more sustained accounts. Although there is no scope here for rehearsing the already well documented evolution of landscape as an analytical concept within geography (Cosgrove 1985; Duncan and Duncan 1988; Olwig 1996), this thesis will go on to demonstrate how some white, upper-middle class identities have been normalised and naturalised within the English countryside, while others have been excluded from dominant landscape representations and imaginations.

As noted earlier, this thesis particularly responds to the conceptual gap between race and rural studies. Although rural geography has traditionally been reluctant to embrace new theoretical developments (Little 1999: 437), over recent years geographers have 'become increasingly sensitised to the significance of rurality as a cultural construct' (Phillips et. al., 2001: 1; also Cloke 1997). The recent upsurge of interest in rural issues and increased geographical scholarship on '*Contested Natures*' (Macnaughten and Urry 1999) and '*Contested Countryside Cultures*' (Cloke and Little 1997a) has advanced an understanding of 'nature' and 'rurality' as culturally constructed categories. However, studies of race have tended to neglect rural areas, perpetuating 'the hegemonic status of the inner-city discourse in relation to race and space' (Watt 1998: 688). The argument that urban areas matter in the daily negotiations of race has been well advanced yet the countryside has largely escaped critical attention as a racialised territory, 'offering little challenge to the ascendancy of whiteness as a dominant and normative power' (Nayak 2003: 7). For example, while a special issue of the journal '*Ethnicities*' (2002, 2: 3) has recently been dedicated to the interaction between cities and ethnicities, no such focus has yet been assigned to the field of countryside relations.

As we shall see later in the chapter, critical studies of whiteness have also largely followed suit and concentrated on urban and suburban areas. By redressing the urban bias that has pervaded whiteness studies the countryside is analysed as a racialised spatiality, and whiteness is critically interrogated in the otherwise neglected rural sphere. What follows is an abbreviated account about how the English countryside *became* white. Like many other studies that have focused on the process of 'becoming white', this study focuses on how the English countryside has come to be constituted as a white space, and yet unlike that expanding body of work, this story takes two different paths. Firstly, instead of taking 'a people' like 'the Irish' (Ignatiev 1995) or 'the working class' (Bonnett 1998a) as its subject of 'becoming white', it takes a space (as internally fractured and dynamic as a group of people) – the English countryside – as its subject of inquiry. Even if this landscape approach is a way of understanding 'a people', and is by no means distinct from such an emphasis, it is none-the-less a key constitutive element of white formations worthy of its own attention. Secondly,

the process of 'becoming white' implies a non-white, or not-quite white status previously accorded to a particular group excluded from or marginal to the symbolic formation of whiteness. This story differs because, as will be argued, the idea of the 'countryside' from the mid to late nineteenth century has always been a 'white' construction in the English context. Therefore, it is not a story of the transition from a not-quite-white countryside to a whitened version, but of the *making* or *invention* of the countryside as a white-racialised, middle-class space constructed in opposition to the city. By focusing on the often-implicit historical processes through which the countryside became synonymous with white racialisation, contemporary exclusions can be traced back to the very ideological construction of the countryside in the mid to late nineteenth century.

2.3 How the English countryside became white: the ideological construction of the countryside in the late nineteenth century

Although the idea of countryside is now deeply embedded within popular national geographical imaginaries, including well beyond England, historically, it is a relatively recent term that only came into common usage and was cemented within popular culture in the nineteenth century. As Raymond Williams (1975: 9) has pointed out, while a 'contrast between country and city, as fundamental ways of life, reaches back into classical times', it was only when England became the first predominantly urban dwelling society in the world in the mid to late nineteenth century that the countryside was imagined as a distinct socio spatialisation (Phillips et. al. 2001). For all the possible interpretations of countryside from aristocratic to communist, from arcadian to utopian (Short 1991), commentators agree that it was constructed in opposition to the city during a period of rapid urbanisation and industrialisation (Horne 1969; Keith 1975; Haggard 1976, first published 1902; Weiner 1981; Marsh 1982; Howkins 1986; Short 1991; Lowenthal 1991; Daniels 1993; Marsden, Murdoch et al. 1993; Bunce 1994; Taylor 1994; Humphreys 1995; Matless 1998; Macnaughten and Urry 1999; Burchardt 2002). As the countryside was a distinct product of the mid to late nineteenth century, of 'a thoroughly Victorian way of seeing the world' (Bunce 1994: 207), this thesis recognises that any attempt to analyse the countryside in the pre-industrial period could be considered anachronistic (Burchardt 2002: 4). As such, it focuses on the period from mid to late nineteenth century onwards in order to understand how the English countryside was constructed from its very imaginings.

By the mid to late nineteenth century an anti-modern, anti-urban critique of industrial towns militated towards a countervailing 'pastoral impulse' to return *'Back to the Land'* (Marsh 1982). As a result of such a 'nostalgia for a pre-modern society' (Stafford 1989), the countryside became a dwelling space largely for the bourgeois, intellectual classes who sought a 'purer, better and more natural life' (Howkins 1986: 225). Rural migration thus became understood as a process of 'white flight' away from the ills (racial degeneration and pollution) of the city to a 'white safe haven' (Tyler 2003: 393 and also Bonnett 1992; Agyeman and Spooner 1997). For people who couldn't afford to escape to the country, visiting the countryside was the next best option, which gave rise to the cult of countryside visiting, first among the intellectual classes, and later among the public more generally. As noted in Chapter 1, the way in which the *'Green and Pleasant Land'* (Newby 1979) of the countryside was largely created 'by an urban society, for an urban society' (Humphreys 1995: 218 sic) justifies this thesis' focus on visitors' perceptions of the countryside rather than those of rural residents.

Late-Victorian iconography imagined the countryside as 'everything the industrial society was not – ancient, slow-moving, stable, cozy [sic] and "spiritual"' bound up with values of nostalgia rather than progress, with moral stability over material development (Weiner 1981: 6). Table 2.1 shows how the mythology of English countryside has been based on a dichotomous understanding of the world, constructed through the alignment of a series of binary fixes that equated the city with pollution, the modern, the present, with industrial production and the working class and associated the countryside with purity, tradition, the past, consumption and the upper-middle classes. These are alignments and intersections through which this thesis will argue whiteness was enrolled, complexly and invisibly, like a spider's web. As Chapter 4 will go on to argue, in combination, they reinforced the message that the 'rural (white) past was preferable to the urban (multicultural) present... because, in contrast to the squalor and deprivation of the towns, it was the very embodiment of decency, Englishness, national character and national identity' (Cannadine 1995: 13). In the same way that Englishness (in contrast to Britishness) and whiteness (as opposed to blackness) have also been constructed as relational discourses, the mythology of the countryside has always been a counterpoint to the city (Short 1991:31) and all its numerous associations.

COUNTRYSIDE	CITY
England	Britain
Purity	Pollution
Past	Present/ future
Leisure	Work
Tradition	Modernity
Nature	Culture
Consumption	Production
Upper/ middle class	Working class

Table 2.1: The oppositional construction of the English countryside in the late nineteenth century

The countryside was also constructed as an idealised space through cultural representation in poetry and painting. In his seminal analysis of depictions of the rural poor in English landscape painting, John Barrell has hinted that pictorial representations of rurality were not only class-inflected, but also racialised. He has revealed how landscape painters (like poets) portrayed rural England as stable, unified and harmonious by casting the rural poor in the shadows of *'The dark side of the landscape'* (1980). By erasing labourers and work from representations of rural England, landscape painters played an important role in constructing and cementing the division between rural *leisurely* landscapes and urban *industrial* areas. Further, by suggesting that discourses of light and dark were overlaid with those of rich and poor, Barrell's work began to make explicit the connection between classed and racialised conceptions of the countryside. David Sibley has further argued that during industrial capitalism 'black assumed wider significance through its association with dirt, disorder and the threat to the bourgeoisie posed by the working class. In the same system of values, whiteness is a symbol of purity, virtue and goodness' (1995: 23). Particularly during Victorian times² when such an 'ingrained nostalgic discourse of an exclusively white rural idyll [was] set against its polluted towns and cities' (Ware 2002b: 218), the English countryside was codified as the last frontier of whiteness.

A number of commentators have highlighted how urban sprawl and the urban, working classes became associated with national and racial degeneration from the mid to late nineteenth century (Bolt 1971; Weiner 1981; Howkins 1986; Winlow 2001). In late Victorian racial theory, which teamed echoes of eugenics and corrupt forms of Darwinism (Howkins 1986: 66) with a doctrine of national degeneration (Winlow 2001), the city and the country

² Victorian Britain, as a period when scientific and biological attitudes to race thrived (West, 1996), has particularly warranted and attracted critical scholarship on race (Bolt, 1971; Lorimer, 1978; West, 1996).

were considered to breed different races of human beings, with 'puny pygmies growing from towns' in contrast to the 'robust and intelligent' countryman (Haggard 1905: xix). Many accounts have seized on Rider Haggard's 'rural' works from the late nineteenth century to illustrate how the imagined divide between urban and rural England was based on racial distinctions (for example Howkins 1986; Bonnett 2002). Haggard (1899) harnessed ideas of racial degeneration and Social Darwinism circulating at the time to argue that 'the city breeds one stamp of human being and the country breeds another' (Howkins 1986: 226). He believed that national decay was inevitable if people were removed from 'their natural breed and growing grounds' and envisioned that the desertion of the countryside would 'mean nothing less than the progressive deterioration of the race', which 'may in the end mean the ruin of the race' (Haggard 1976: 218 first published 1902).

Furthermore, seizing on the mid-nineteenth century work of Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor* (1861), Barringer (1996) has revealed how images of the 'savage' were projected onto the urban working class to portray the poor as an ethnic group. He identifies the slippage between the darkened skin of manual labourers and the dark skin of the 'savage' to expose how the otherness of race became mapped onto that of class (Barringer 1996). Comparisons between the urban poor and 'savage' races in mid-Victorian social fiction treated class and race as interchangeable and analogous discourses (Dolin 1996). Bonnett has also analysed the formation of 'a class-based, colour-coded imaginative geography' of the 'dark city' during this time (2002: 349). While England's industrial towns and the urban working classes were 'reconstructed as alien "races" and were seen as a threat to the racial future of the stock' (Winlow 2001: 510), particularly among the middle classes who were anxious about the rise of a politicised, foreign-influenced metropolitan culture (Bonnett 2002: 358), the 'countryside' was coded as the true foundation of the white nation, the real home of the pure English 'blood and sinew of the race' (Haggard 1905: xix).

In her analysis of 'racial cartography', Winlow (2001) has insightfully demonstrated how such racialised distinctions were spatially represented through the Victorian tradition of 'anthropometric cartography'. Although she focuses primarily on Scotland, her analysis starkly reveals how late Victorian fears for the decline of the national character in Britain fuelled a tendency among anthropologists like John Beddoe to measure and map racial characteristics according to eye and hair colour (Allen 1971). Based on his 'assumption that the perceived darkness occurring in cities was a sign of national deterioration' (Winlow 2001: 525), Beddoe developed an 'Index of Nigrescence' of *The Races of Britain* that presented a picture of a gradual depth of tint from north-east to south-west Britain (see Figure 2.1). Likewise in the late nineteenth century the 'Racial Committee' defined a hierarchy of racial

distinction emanating from the dominant Anglo-Saxon or Teuton race in south England to the remoter Celtic regions of England (Taylor 1994: 22). For example, such ethnographic surveys portrayed Cornwall as a 'dark continent', 'a dark, uncharted and uncivilised land' inhabited by 'simple and 'primitive' 'Celtic' people still awaiting the civilising influence' of Teutonic modernity (Vernon 1998: 159). By way of a regional contrast, Beddoe's military statistics³ recorded the low, 'minus' nigrescence of Cumberland and Westmoreland (modern day Cumbria) on account of the fact that they had few dark eyes and the highest proportion of blond hair in England⁴ (Beddoe 1971: 156, first published 1885). While the area surrounding Gibside was observed to have a slightly higher nigrescence of '0-5', both counties in which the study areas for this thesis are located were considered to be relatively light in complexion, which in turn were equated with personal characteristics of 'morality and cheerfulness' (Beddoe 1971: 159, first published 1885).



Figure 2.1: Beddoes' 'Military Schedules' Index of Nigrescence
Source: Modified from Beddoe 1971, first published 1885

³ Beddoe used military statistics on the chromatic hair and eye characteristics of young men, aged 21.

⁴ Beddoe (1885) observed that Cumbrians were 'fine specimens of the old bronze type', in the main Scandinavian, with a straight profile, a long, fine, straight nose, fair hair and grey eyes.

As we see from another of Beddoes' maps of 'nigrescence'⁵ (see Figure 2.2), there was clearly a perceived urban-rural geography to racial mapping. Although the map does not show an easily distinguishable pattern between the 'nigrescence' of urban and rural areas, the fact that Beddoe differentiated between towns (represented by squares) and country locations (marked by circles) indicates that the two remained significantly distinct. What is clear from such attempts to cartographically represent racialised characteristics in the late nineteenth century is that racial distinction was made along class lines, evidenced by the fact that lower social classes concentrated in urban areas were viewed as a lower, alien, dark race that constituted a threat to the racial future and to civilization itself (Winlow 2001). Even in late Victorian England when biological and scientific attitudes to race prevailed, race was understood not just as a marker of skin colour, of phenotype, but also as a class and spatialised signifier of difference.

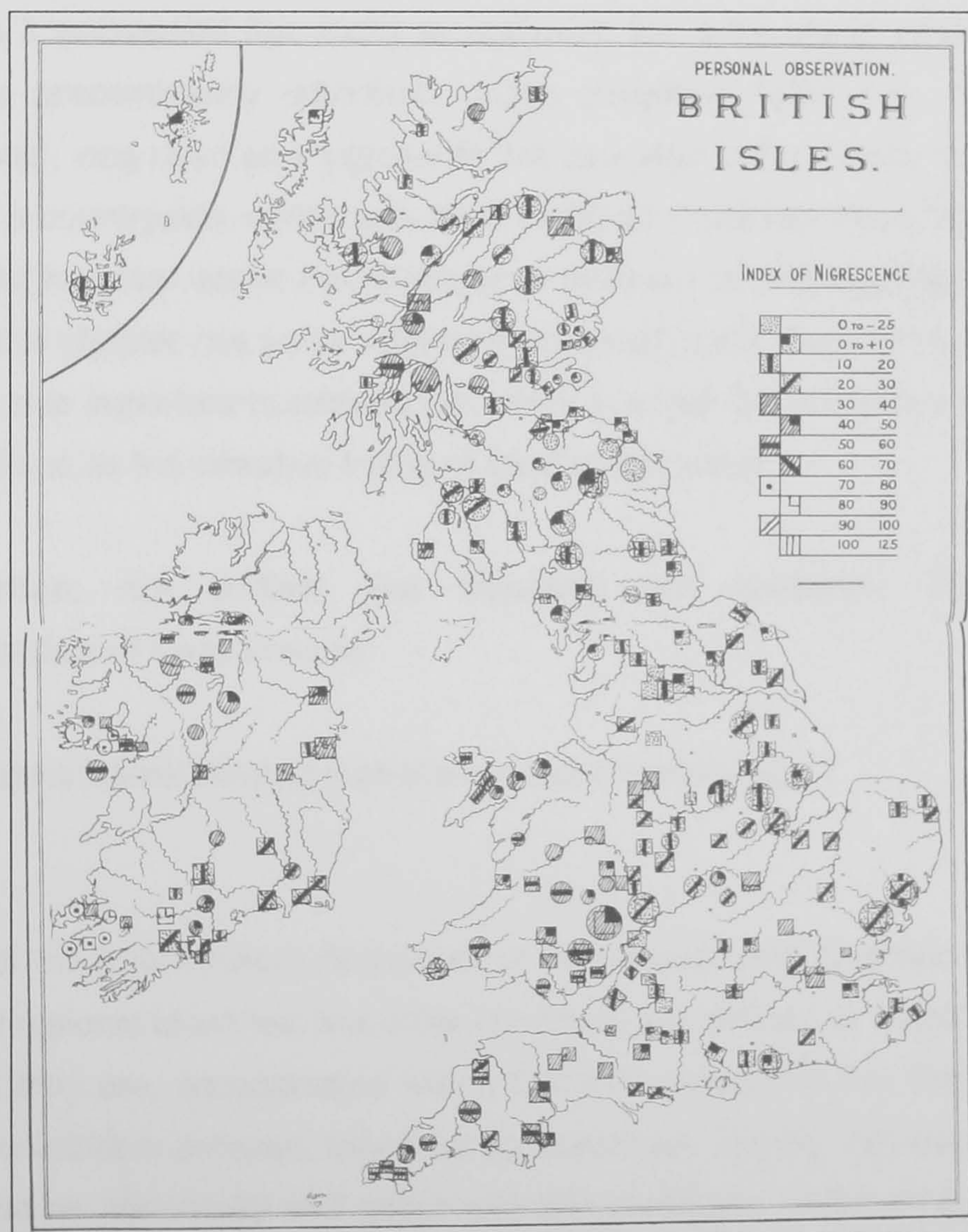


Figure 2.2: Beddoes' 'Personal observation' Index of Nigrescence
Source: Beddoe 1971, first published 1885

⁵ Based on his observations of 2,400 people across six parts of the county

Whereas urban areas were associated with miscegenation in Victorian England, the countryside was constructed as a space 'uncontaminated by racial degeneration and the false values of cosmopolitan urban life' (Howkins 1986: 69), the reference point for all things normal. As the thesis goes on to argue, the countryside was produced not only as a space of moral, spiritual and racial purity, but also a space of 'purification' that is '*a place where people became white*' (Braun 2003: 197). Like many Victorian critics, John Ruskin believed that urban dwellers had become more like Arabs or Gypsies than Englishmen (Baucom 1999: 20) and only on exposure to England's putatively authentic spaces of the countryside would their status as citizens be reinstated. There was a strong feeling that returning to the land was 'the key to the maintenance of a healthy, vigorous and moral race' (Lord Milner, 1911 quoted in Howkins 1986: 67). Haggard (1902) suggested that although England had grown away from the land by the twentieth century, the countryside was still the 'true mother of our race' as it possessed the ability to replenish the 'pale blood' associated with rural living among a predominantly urbanised nation (Howkins 1989: 81). In this way, the thematic of 'blood', long used as a signifier to link race and nation (Linke 1999) located 'real' Englishness in a countryside, which was itself raced and classed. More remains to be said and documented however about the relationship between countryside and English national identity. While this chapter has so far reviewed work that has critically linked countryside and whiteness, it is also important to retrieve the sense in which the white-racialised countryside became naturalised as the narrative frame of the English nation.

2.4 Not urban, not British, not imperial, not northern: The oppositional construction of Englishness

'The content of national identity is more often than not a counter-image'

(Kumar 2003: ix)

This analysis of the inter-related discourses of countryside and Englishness relies on the recognition that national identities, like other identities, are defined as much by what they are not as by what they are, encapsulated within Laclau's concept of the 'constitutive outside'. Through this constitutive process, taken up by numerous identity theorists, identities have been understood as historically and geographically contingent, differentiated and relational (Dwyer and Jones III 2000: 211-2). By exploring how Englishness has been oppositionally constructed, this thesis approaches national identity as a historical process, as 'a matter of becoming', in the words of Stuart Hall (2000: 22-3). In the same vein as the last section that described how the countryside became imagined as a white space, this section analyses how English national identity became associated with a particular rural version of the nation.

It argues that Englishness has been constructed as a relational concept in opposition to discourses of urbanity, Britishness, empire and 'the north', and challenges the dominant rural mythology of Englishness by revealing that it is neither unitary nor idyllic.

2.4.1 Not urban: the interconnected discourses of countryside and Englishness

'In English 'country' is both a nation and a part of a 'land'; the 'country' can be the whole society or its rural area'

(Williams 1975: 1)

'[T]he ideology of England and Englishness is to a remarkable degree rural. Most importantly, a large part of the English *ideal* is rural.... If the countryside...was the source of the English race, it was also the source of English culture'

(Howkins 1986: 72)

The wealth of work on the ideological and idealised construction of the countryside has been united in its emphasis on the centrality of the countryside to English national identity (Wright 1985; Howkins 1986; Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Lowenthal 1991; Short 1991; Daniels 1993; Bunce 1994; Taylor 1994; Humphreys 1995; Matless 1998; Macnaughten and Urry 1999; Burchardt 2002; Corbett, Holt et al. 2002a; Brace 2003; Halfacree 2003). Few have conveyed the mutually constitutive nature of countryside and Englishness more pointedly than Raymond Williams (1975: 9) who highlighted the dual meaning of the word 'country' as both land (rural area) and nation (society). Ever since, the duplicity of 'country' has been widely cited to advance the now well-rehearsed argument that the geographical imagination of England has been, and continues to be dominated by a particular idealised image of rural England. Commentators have recognised that 'countryside is intimately and inextricably linked to notions of national identity' (Agyeman and Spooner 1997: 207) and have emphasised how '(p)astoral images of England – rolling green fields, winding lanes, cream teas, chocolate box villages – have, historically and contemporarily, provided the cornerstones of a specific national identity' (Neal 2002: 443). A particular national identity, then, one that reflects 'a concern with the reproduction of a mythical and nostalgic white heritage' (Agyeman and Spooner 1997: 197) has been tied to the English countryside.

The fundamental link between countryside and Englishness is revealed by the English origin of the term 'countryside' that 'reflects a peculiarly national obsession with countryside as an aesthetic and a social ideal' (Bunce 1994: 3). Critics have commonly seized on Stanley

Baldwin's poignant evocation and eulogisation of the countryside in 1924 to highlight the centrality of the countryside in the national geographic imagination:

'To me, England is the country, and the country is England...England comes to me through my various senses – through the ear, through the eye and through certain imperishable scents...The sounds of England, the tinkle of the hammer on the anvil in the country smithy, the corncrake on a dewy morning, the sound of the scythe against the whetstone, the sight of the plough team coming over the brow of a hill, the sight that has been England since England was a land' (Baldwin quoted in Paxman 1999: 143).

By claiming that these sights (of a plough team, of wild flowers in the woods and of hay being collected), sounds (of the country smithy, the corncrake and the scythe), and smells (of burning wood fires) 'touch chords that go back to the beginning of time and the human race' (Baldwin quoted in Wright 1985: 82), such an idealised conception of rural England was naturalised as an essentialised Englishness. According to Vron Ware (2002b), if the essence of English national identity is communicated by such indigenous smells, sounds and sights, the implication is that the essence is fragile, vulnerable and pure.

Drawing on a host of literary and artistic sources – from Hoskins' sentimental and nostalgic portrait of the 'gentle, unravished English landscape' (Hoskins 1955: 299-300), to Constable (Daniels 1991; Gruffudd 1991) and Ruskin's (Russell 2002) idealised rural landscape paintings, from Massingham's construction of a divine rural Englishness (Palmer 2002) to Beatrix Potter's romanticised children's books (Squire 1993) and B.T.Batsford's dust jackets (Brace 2001; Brace 2003) – scholars have focused on the multifarious ways that countryside has become 'a nostalgic symbol of English national identity' (Bunce, 1994:4). Critics have drawn parallels between Hoskins' picture of a 'deep' England, Williams' dichotomous England, and Ruskin's anti-urbanism, which each represent attempts to achieve a stability of meaning in landscape (Cosgrove and Daniels 1988), to equate landscape with nation, and to anchor Englishness in the countryside. The dominant geographical imagination of Englishness has been rooted in an idealised 'deep' (Wright 1985), 'real' (Howkins 1986) and 'essential' (Colls and Dodd 1986) England, understood as the countryside.

Rather than rehearse such a well-chronicled narrative of the construction of countryside as the epitome of Englishness, this thesis is primarily concerned with different historical and geographical intersections between racialised discourses of countryside and Englishness. As such, the thesis is informed by David Matless' (1998) work that has identified three main visions of '*Landscape and Englishness*' during the period from 1918 to the 1950's. First, he traces the emergence of planner-preservationist Englishness in the 1920's and 30's that worked across traditional binaries of preservation and progress, traditional and modernity, city and country in order to define Englishness as orderly and modern (1998: 14). His

arguments that preservationists helped forge 'moral geographies of landscape' and foster a 'landscaped citizenship' are adopted here in order to illustrate how particular 'cultures of landscape' were embedded in the discourse of preservationism (Matless 1998: 14, 62, 73). Second, he discerns a counter-current of Englishness that reinscribed polarities of urbanity and rurality, tradition and modernity to project a vision of organic Englishness. The associations he traces between soil, authority and fascism provide an insight into some of the ways the countryside has been constructed and imagined. Third, Matless argues that during the Second World War and its aftermath the planner-preservationist discourse of Englishness was revived and given renewed power. His ideas about the formation of an 'open-air citizenship' (1998: 15) are particularly pertinent to this study's attempt to understand the racialised undercurrents of countryside belonging.

Where Matless' analysis largely focuses on the period from 1918 through to the 1950's, when he claims many of the contemporary assumptions regarding landscape took shape (1998: 14), as noted in the previous chapter, this thesis focuses on defining historical 'moments' around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As a turning point in English history, the mid to late nineteenth century provides a useful point of departure for many reasons, not least, as we have already seen, because it was at this time that England became industrialised and the countryside was secured within the national geographic imagination. Moreover, while the origins of English national identity have been the source of some debate, many commentators agree it was only in the last quarter of the nineteenth century that English national identity was formed (Colls and Dodd 1986; Dodd 1986; Kumar 2000), that is, 'that we find a clear concern with questions of Englishness and English national identity' (Kumar 2003: xi). The thesis specifically interrogates this 'moment of Englishness' (Kumar 2000: 592) during the late nineteenth century when the construction of the countryside and English national identity coincided with the proliferation of racial ideas and the formation of the National Trust in 1895.

2.4.2 Not British: the nationalist discourse of the countryside in England

'[T]he countryside is not British; it is English'

(Lowenthal 1991: 21)

Despite the enduring slippage between English and British national identities that has long been a source of 'natural confusion' (Kumar 2003: 1) and controversy (for discussions on the relationship between Englishness and Britishness see Taylor 1991; Colley 1992a, 1992b; Baucom 1999; Kumar 2000), critics like David Lowenthal have insisted that the countryside

is a specifically English ideology. Nowhere else, he asserts, 'does the very term suggest not simply scenery and genres de vie, but quintessential national virtues' (1991: 213). The specificity of the *English* rural idyll has been noted in comparison with other British countries of Wales (Gruffudd 1991; Gruffudd 1996) and Scotland (Lorimer 1999) and in contrast to other nations like France where the landscape ideal has typically been urban on account of the fear and distrust of the rural peasantry (Howkins 1986: 62). When it is considered that in other national contexts, particularly in former white settler societies like America and Australia, rural landscapes have tended to be equated with discourses of 'wilderness' primitivism and savagery (De Luca 1999; Braun 2003; McCarthy and Hague 2004), the specificity of the English rural idyll becomes starkly apparent.

By focusing specifically on England, this thesis avoids the danger of subsuming Britishness within an Anglo-centric interpretation of the nation for which some analyses like Raphael Samuel's (1989) *'Patriotism'* have been criticised (Taylor 1991). Although English national identity has long remained taken for granted, unexamined and under-theorised (Taylor 1991; Kumar 2000) critical scholarship on Englishness has proliferated over the past decade or so to the extent that now '[W]hole forests have been destroyed to comment on and attempt to salve England's national identity crisis' (Ware 2002b: 207). At a time when English national identity is constantly being debated in both popular journalism (Paxman 1999; Alibhai-Brown 2001; Scruton 2001)⁶ and interdisciplinary academic scholarship (Colls and Dodd 1986; Dodd 1986; Taylor 1991; Giles and Middleton 1995; Gikandi 1996; Schwarz 1996; Matless 1998; Baucom 1999; Davey 1999; Easthope 1999; Langford 2000; Corbett, Holt et al. 2002a; Wilson 2003), and tends to be either celebrated, eulogised and defended (Scruton 2001) or derided and dismissed as a myth (Nairn 1981; Jones 1998; Johnson 2002), it is certainly fitting to analyse the concept and construction of Englishness. Following in the line of critical scholarship on English national identity, the thesis understands Englishness as a set of relationships, not only in tension, but always in flux, as a dynamic and differentiated concept (Taylor 1994). Unlike Britishness, which has been characterised by industrial development and urban growth, the dominant popular geographical imagination of Englishness has remained located in the pre-modern era, in the countryside. Through such internal contrasts with Britishness, English national identity was constructed in relation to what Kumar has termed its 'internal empire' of Great Britain or the United Kingdom (Kumar 2000). This ideological separation between English and British national identity was further cemented through reference and relation to the overseas or 'external' empire.

⁶ For example, in October 2004, the BBC dedicated a week of programming, 'Think of England week', to exploring the nature of Englishness across the country. The numerous impassioned comments posted on its website exemplify the hotly contested concept of Englishness. See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/england/thinkofengland/feedback2.shtml>

2.4.3 Not imperial: The cult of localism and the discourse of 'Little Englandism'

'[T]he empire...was simultaneously *within* the boundaries of Britishness and *outside* the territory of Englishness'

(Baucom 1999: 10, original emphasis)

'[A]t the very height of empire the impact of nationalist ideology could create something of a counter-image in the idea of Englishness'

(Kumar 2000: 592)

'During colonialism it was English rurality that represented what was particularly civilised and culturally superior about Britain'

(Neal 2002: 444)

Nineteenth century industrialisation took place within the context of empire, based on the *British* self-image as 'the bearers of modernity and progress, the carriers of civilisation to the "lesser breeds"' (Kumar 2000: 591). Metropolitan Britain became associated with imperialism and the industrial advances of modernity, while Englishness was rooted in a more localist discourse (Baucom 1999). The very fact that English national identity only began to develop in opposition to empire foregrounds the importance of imperialism in narratives of nationhood. In recent writing on the British Empire, Englishness 'emerges as something that can be spoken of only in relation to imperialism, as something entirely, but schizophrenically, "involved" with questions of empire' (Baucom, 1999: 25). Indeed, while commentators have acknowledged that 'empire has been, and inescapably still is, constitutive of English identity' (Schwarz 1996: 1) due to the fact that the English were an imperial nation in a double sense', with both an internal and external empire⁷ (Kumar 2003: 35), they have paradoxically recognised that Englishness has defined itself in opposition to the *British* Empire, by rooting its identity in the 'rural, traditional and organic society' (Cannadine, 2002: xix). Whereas British national identity has traditionally been equated with imperial expansion – hence the general reference to 'the British Empire' – the essence of Englishness in some sense became defined as almost antithetical to empire, as localist, rural and anti-modern.

⁷ The concept of 'internal' and 'external' empire originates from Sir John Seeley's influential lectures on 'The Expansion of England' (1883). The 'internal' empire of Great Britain referred to the hegemony of England over Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, while the 'external' empire referred to Britain's imperial expansion across the globe (see Kumar 2003).

In the attempt to define English national identity in the late nineteenth century, so called 'Little Englanders' (Gott 1989; Green and Taylor 1989) ascribed to a cult of localism that located the quintessential soul of the nation in the countryside, and a specific version of that countryside. By locating English national identity in mythologised and romanticised rural locales like the Lake District, Wordsworth and Victorian social critics like Ruskin who were strongly influenced by him, defined Englishness in opposition to the metropolis and the British Empire (Baucom 1999: 30). In fact, as Sarah Neal and others have pointed out, during colonialism, rural England was used to signify all that was culturally, morally and racially superior about Britain (2002: 444). By investing in a counter-image of idealised rural Englishness that proactively disavowed yet was inherently implicated in empire, the discourse of 'Little Englandism' (Gott 1989; Green and Taylor 1989; Samuel 1989) preserved the unsullied, morally pure image of the countryside. As discussed earlier, such an associative process had racial overtones. In opposition to industrialised and imperial Britain and particularly in contrast to London (the heart of the British Empire) that was troped as 'a zone of cultural primitivism and racial alterity' (Baucom 1999: 36), Englishness became synonymous with *spaces of whiteness*. In his analysis of the relationship between Englishness and empire, Ian Baucom (1999: 15) has suggested that by defining Englishness as antithetical to the racialised discourse of empire and city, many people, from Wordsworthian Little Englanders to Powellite racial theorists drew on a 'history of the reading of Englishness as a racial category'.

Although the association of English national identity and white racialisation has received little critical attention in American-biased whiteness studies, scholars from Paul Gilroy to Vron Ware have drawn attention to continuing links between certain attributes of whiteness and particular forms of Englishness (Gilroy, 1987; Hall, 1992; Young, 1995; Ware 1996; Hesse, 1997; Jackson, 1998; Paxman, 1999; Baucom, 1999; Ware 2002b). Paul Gilroy's famous contention that '*There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*' has highlighted how the 'morbid celebration of England and Englishness', typified in the notion of the rural idyll, has served to systematically exclude blacks to the extent that black people have been judged to be 'incompatible with authentic forms of Englishness' (1987: 12, 46), that 'Blackness and Englishness are constructed as...mutually exclusive categories' (1993: 27). Gilroy's critique of the ways that black people have been 'hidden' and erased from national identity paved the way for other studies of nationality to further unpack the normatively white racialised nature of English national identity. For example, in one of the few studies that have directly drawn connection between the English countryside and white racialisation, Vron Ware has suggested that the English investment in an Arcadian, idealised view of national identity hinged around the countryside has produced 'a nostalgic version of England that is white by

birth and by right' (2002b: 210). This thesis analyses such historical and contemporary co-constructions of Englishness and whiteness in contrasting countryside locales.

Just as Wordsworth, Ruskin and fellow 'Little Englanders' understood locales to be 'crucial to the construction of English identity' (Baucom 1999: 39), this thesis recognises 'that national identity is constructed in the context of local identities which cut across...each other in complex ways' (Cosgrove, Roscoe et al. 1996: 536). In analyses of the dominant 'rural mythology' (Humphreys 1995) of Englishness in particular, a number of commentators have focused on generic spaces, like the village as their unit of analysis (Boyes 1993; Matless 1994; Cloke 1997; Hughes 1997a; Hughes 1997b; Tyler 2003), while others have focused on specific sites like Stonehenge (Halfacree 2003). Here, the focus on two contrasting landscapes in Northern England facilitates analysis both of particular 'locales of identity' (Baucom 1999) and of generically English countryside aesthetics of the country house/landscape garden and open, wild countryside (see Chapter 5). As we shall see in the next section, by focusing on contrasting countryside spaces in *Northern* England, the thesis seeks to confront the dominance of the southern metaphor in the national geographical imagination and brings under-researched northern spaces into empirical investigation.

2.4.4 Not Northern: redressing 'southern' Englishness

The national geographical imagination of England has not only been located in the countryside, but more specifically in an idealised version of the southern English countryside (Weiner 1981; Colls and Dodd 1986; Howkins 1986; Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Short 1991; Bunce 1994; Taylor 1994; Cosgrove, Roscoe et al. 1996; Matless 1998; Vernon 1998; Macnaughten and Urry 1999; Neal 2002). Following the lead of Donald Horne (1969), a succession of commentators (see Table 2.2 for a selection) have identified a pervasive polarisation between northern and southern landscape metaphors that as early as 1900 produced a 'massively important social-spatialisation' of Englishness dominated by southern England (Matless 1998: 17). As English national identity has been anchored in a cultivated, ruralist dream of southern Englishness, epitomised by '*Country Life*' magazine (Howkins 1986), northern England was constructed as 'other' to the central 'Home Counties' of the 'Crown Heartland' (Taylor 1991). For example, Hoskins' seminal account of '*The Making of the English Landscape*' (1955) is a sentimental portrait of a specifically southern English countryside. While his account is scattered with references to these southern English counties, his comparative disinterest and lack of attachment to 'northern' England (Muir 1999: 31; Matless 1993) is evident by the way he only makes one allusion to each of the counties of Cumberland and Durham.

'North'	'South'	
Pragmatic	Romantic	}
Empirical	Illogical	
Calculating	Divinely lucky	
Puritan	Anglican	
Bourgeois	Aristocratic	
Adventurous	Traditional	
Peripheral	Centre	}
Working class	Elites	
Bleak countryside	Tamed landscape	
Rugged leisure pursuits (dale walking, football)	High culture (opera, ballet)	
Wet and cold climate	Warmer climate	
Sociality, emotional community	Social structure, institutions	
Upland	Lowland	}
Moorland and pasture	Ploughland	
Wild	Domestic	
Nature	Culture	

Table 2.2: The imagined divide between North and South England

Although scholars have widely recognised the dominance of the south country and the enduring power of the southern metaphor in the national geographical imagination, in their focus on the ideology of the south county and on southern English case studies (Daniels 1991; Gruffudd 1991; Brace 1999; Brace 1999; Palmer 2002), they have also ironically contributed to that southern-bias. Of the accounts that have focused on counter-hegemonic symbolic landscapes, a number have analysed the relationship between regional and national identity in 'peripheral', 'Celtic' regions of the West Country (Vernon 1998; Brace 2003), Wales (Gruffudd 1996; Cloke, Goodwin et al. 1998) and Scotland (Lorimer 1999), but it is fair to state that the English 'North' has escaped empirical and critical attention.

As one of the few commentators to attend to the symbolisation of the North as well as the South, Rob Shields has argued that since the nineteenth century a relatively coherent image of the North of England divided from the South has underlined the 'imaginary geography' of Englishness (1991: 208). He has argued that media representations, from nineteenth-century literature to television programmes like *'Coronation Street'*, have contributed to a 'spurious, homogenised identity' of the 'North' as a working class, industrialised, 'undifferentiated unity' (1991: 208, 207). Geographers have mapped this 'iconic landscape structure of Britain' to show how, in contrast to the domestic 'garden' of southern England, the north has been imagined as a 'wilderness' (Cosgrove, Roscoe et al. 1996). It is no coincidence then that the vast majority of National Parks, transplanted from the American

model and the associated notion of 'wilderness', were designated in the north of England. The concentric pattern emanating from London and the generic labelling of 'Scotland' in Figure 2.3 (much in the same way as motorway signs label 'the North'), highlights the Anglo-centric and specifically southern-bias of the imaginative landscape structure of Britain.

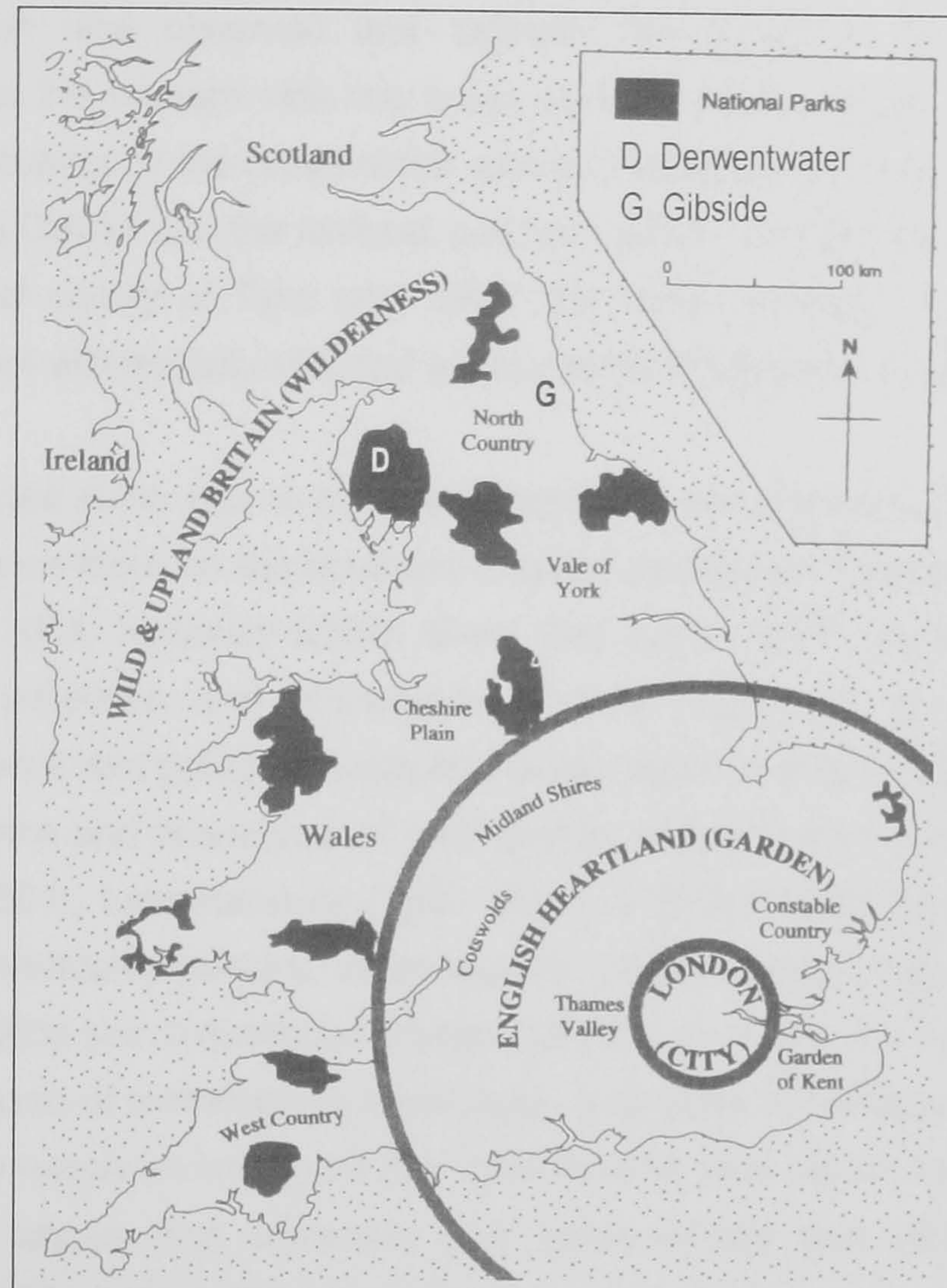


Figure 2.3: Derwentwater and Gibside plotted onto the iconic landscape structure of Britain
Source: Modified from Cosgrove et al. 1996: 537

This thesis focuses on two contrasting countryside spaces and landscape aesthetics within *northern* England to argue that the two defining versions of the English countryside are not so neatly aligned with the fixities of 'north' and 'south' but are historically embedded *within* contrasting spatialities of the 'mythological north' (Shields 1991: 245). The two cases of Derwentwater and Gibside (see Figure 2.3) illustrate that the iconic landscape structure is more complex than has been suggested and that 'while the Southern and Northern metaphors undoubtedly have considerable cultural power, we should be wary of reaching for them as a general mode of cultural analysis' (Matless 1998: 18). Rather, 'alternative metaphors' (Matless 1998: 17) that run on East-West and upland-lowland axes challenge the 'relatively coherent and continuous image of the 'North' of England divided off from the

South' that has persisted since the nineteenth century (Shields 1991: 229). These contrasts between East and West, lowland and upland Englishness, that continue to have policy applications (for example Countryside Commission 1983; English Nature 2001), stemmed from long enduring perceptions of difference among early tourists of the eighteenth century like William Gilpin who observed that '(a)lmost the whole of the western coast is mountainous... on the eastern side the coast consists chiefly of low, flat, sandy shores' (1792: 1-2). By focusing on the cases of the upland, western 'wilderness' of Derwentwater in the Northern Lake District and the lowland, eastern 'garden' of Gibside Pleasure Grounds in the more industrial county of Tyne and Wear, this thesis analyses how the discourse of whiteness has been differentially inflected within contrasting northern English countrysides.

The thesis also goes some way to counter-balance the overwhelming tendency of work on rural racism to concentrate on the southern English countryside (notable recent exceptions include de Lima 2004; Holloway 2004). Since Eric Jay's (1992) seminal research report highlighting the incidence and importance of rural racism in South West England, subsequent academic and policy research has drawn upon Southern English case studies to expose the presence and prevalence of rural racism, including work on Norfolk (Derbyshire 1994; Malcolm 2004), Leicestershire (Tyler 2003), Suffolk (Jalota 2004; Chakraborti and Garland 2004a) Northamptonshire, Warwickshire (Garland and Chakraborti 2004), Kent (Ray and Reed 2005) and Oxfordshire (Hubbard 2005). Crucially, this research responds to the need for analyses of whiteness to interrogate 'rural parts of Northern England that have only very recently begun to recognize the relevance of race issues to their areas' (Neal, 2002: 456) and argues that whiteness has been equally and variously important in constructing contrasting northern countrysides.

2.4.5 Whitewashed rurality: a culturally constrictive English countryside

'[T]here remains a danger of portraying British rural people...as all being 'Mr Averages: as being men in employment, earning enough to live, white and probably English, straight and somehow without sexuality, able in body and sound in mind, and devoid of any other quirks of (say) religious belief or political affiliation. This is to reduce the real complexity of the rural population to the 'same', and to turn a blind eye to the presence of all manner of 'other' human groupings within this population'

(Philo 1992: 200)

Accounts of how the rural idyll has been historically embedded at the heart of the national geographical imagination of England have recently been extended to take in periods closer to the present (Cloke and Little 1997b). In order to expose the cultural specificity and

exclusivity of the countryside, many geographers have directed their attention to *'Revealing Rural Others'* (Milbourne 1997). These are the groups who have variously been cast outside the symbolic formation of the English countryside. Chris Philo's call for a greater focus on 'neglected rural geographies' (1992) opened the passage for studies on a host of 'rural others' including women (Little and Austin 1996; Hughes 1997a), children (Jones 1997; Valentine 1997; Matthews, Taylor et al. 2000), travellers (Halfacree 1996; Davis 1997; Sibley 1997; Holloway 2004), the poor/ working classes (Barrell 1980; Phillips 1993; Murdoch and Marsden 1994; Tyler 2003) the homeless (Cloke, Milbourne et al. 2000, 2001, 2002; 2003; Meert and Bourgeois 2005), black and ethnic minorities (Agyeman 1989; Kinsman 1995; Agyeman and Spooner 1997; Kinsman 1997) and most recently on asylum seekers (Lynn and Lea 2003; Grillo 2005; Hubbard 2005).⁸ This work has rested upon the recognition in Philo's quote above that most accounts of rurality have been viewed through the dominant lens of white, male, middle-class, middle-aged, heterosexual norms (Cloke and Little 1997b: 3). In response to such a tendency, these studies have exposed a culturally constrictive English countryside that has served to hide, marginalize and exclude 'all manner of 'other' human groupings' (Philo 1992: 200) not only from a sense of belonging to the rural, but also to the nation (Cloke and Little 1997b).

As part of the process of challenging the uncritical image of English rurality and rural people, a number of studies have argued that the hegemonic and homogeneous representation of the idealised English countryside allows no place for ethnic 'others'. The popular perception and persistent portrayal of the countryside 'as the true keeper of Anglo-Saxon culture' (Agyeman 1989: 336) has served to fix black and minority ethnic people in urban areas and has collapsed whiteness into countryside. By recognising how so called 'ethnic minorities' have been excluded and alienated from rural England,⁹ critics have begun to reveal the 'hidden human geography of power' (Keith and Pile 1993) entrenched within the English countryside, to expose the 'whitewashing and exclusivity of rural areas' (Agyeman and Spooner, 1997: 208). Many commentators have exposed the presence and prevalence of rural racism (Agyeman 1989; Agyeman and Spooner 1997; Kinsman 1997; Dhalech 1999; Neal 2002; Halfacree 2003; Chakraborti and Garland 2004a, 2004b, 2004c; Grillo 2005; Hubbard 2005; Ray and Reed 2005) and have begun to discuss strategies to deal with racism in rural areas (Garland, Chakraborti et al. 2004b; Broadhurst and Wright 2004; Jalota 2004; Pugh 2004).

⁸ Keith Halfacree's (2003) study details a list of 18 groups of 'rural others' that have attracted varying degrees of academic scrutiny.

⁹ For a recent analysis of the main barriers to access and participation see <http://openspace.eca.ac.uk/litblackminorities.htm>

A common point of entry into such debates on rural racism has been to draw connections between conservationists' hostility to 'alien' species that threaten to 'invade' or 'colonise' 'native' landscapes, and discourses concerning the threat and fear of alien races and cultures to white lifestyles in rural England (Fenton 1986; Agyeman 1989; Wong 1999a; Olwig 2003; Peretti 2003). In this way, by anthropomorphically projecting terms like 'alien' and 'invasive' on to black and ethnic minority people, critics have shown how biological and ecological racism has been translated into cultural racism that casts non-white people as 'aliens', out of place in the countryside and out of the symbolic formation of nationhood. As suggested earlier, in an attempt to reveal how the rural idyll's 'whiteness is blinding' (Agyeman and Spooner 1997: 195) many commentators, particularly cultural geographers (Agyeman 1989; Daniels 1993; Taylor 1994; Kinsman 1995; Brace 2003; Cosgrove 2003; Halfacree 2003), have summoned Ingrid Pollard's powerful images. Their purpose has been to lay bare the normative racialisation of the countryside (see Figure 2.4 for one of the images from the *'Pastoral Interludes'* exhibition). However, scholars who have seized on the same set of images to build the case that black and minority ethnic people feel out of place in the countryside run the risk of universalising 'the black experience' and perpetuating precisely the dominant white mythology of rural England that they seek to contest.

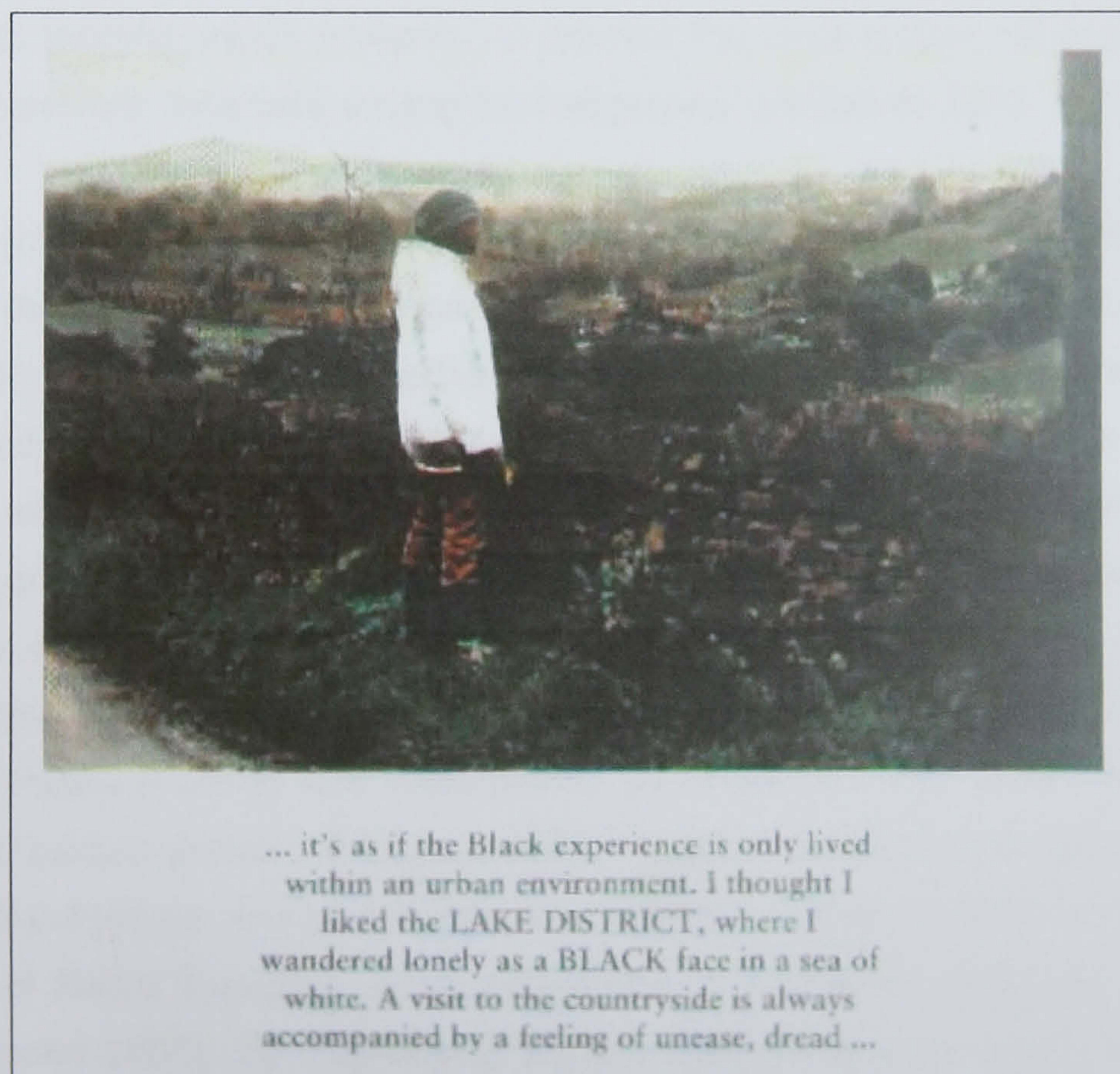


Figure 2.4: 'It's as if the Black experience is only lived within an urban environment': challenging the uncritical conflation of whiteness, countryside and English national identity
Source: Ingrid Pollard (1987) 'Pastoral Interludes' exhibition. In Taylor, 1994: 272

This increased recognition of the normatively white, if not explicitly racist face of the English countryside fuelled the formation of the Black Environment Network (BEN) in 1988. This organisation agitated against what it sees as a fundamental link between rural racism and the lack of ethnic environmental participation in countryside recreation.¹⁰ The success of BEN in highlighting and working against mechanisms of social exclusion and rural racism is evidenced by the high profile now attributed to issues of social inclusion, barriers to access and ethnic environmental participation within the mainstream environmental movement (The Countryside Agency 2000; Carter 2002; Countryside Recreation Network 2002; The Countryside Agency 2003), including within the National Trust (1995a; 1995b; 1995c; 1995d; 2001a; 2004). The recognition of the relevance of rural racism has not been confined to academia as there has been a genuine and growing acknowledgement of the rural/race relationship among policy makers over the past decade or so (Jay 1992; Derbyshire 1994; Dhalech 1999). Although Sarah Neal (2002) has already argued that rural policy-makers have begun to recognise that racism is not an exclusively urban phenomenon, using the example of one of the most conservative and traditional environmental organisations in England – that of the National Trust – this thesis argues that policy makers' concerns about inclusivity are more deeply-rooted and widespread than she suggests. Detailed analysis of the contemporary National Trust (see Chapter 6) reveals that while there is a strong commitment to tackling social exclusion, in practice the organisation still has a long way to go to directly confront 'race hate among the hedgerows' (Halfacree 2003: 151).

Although a growing interest in rural racism has been documented, a number of analysts have argued that attempts to tackle rural racism have not gone far enough (Agyeman and Spooner 1997; Ayamba and Rotherham 2002; Neal 2002; Agyeman and Evans 2003; Broadhurst and Wright 2004; Jalota 2004; Pugh 2004). Recent work on white rural residents' opposition to asylum seekers (Grillo 2005; Hubbard 2005) has placed renewed emphasis on the taken for granted association of rurality and whiteness in order to expose the racialised discourse that lies at the heart of the nationalist imaginings of the English countryside. By highlighting how opposition among white rural communities to proposed asylum centres (Grillo 2005; Hubbard 2005) was underpinned by 'a (white) rural imaginary that mapped deviance onto asylum seekers' (Hubbard 2005: 4), some scholars have identified the rise of a 'new apartheid' (Lynn and Lea 2003) that reaffirms Trevor Phillips' (the Chair of the Commission of Racial Equality) recent recognition of a 'passive apartheid' in the English countryside (John 2004). By stigmatising asylum seekers as rural others white protestors reaffirmed the imagined boundary between an idealised, unsullied, pure and white English

¹⁰ For more on the ideas and work of BEN see Agyeman 1989; Kinsman 1997 and the Black Environment Network's own publication 'Ethnic Environmental Participation' 1998; 1999; 2002; 2003.

rurality on the one hand and multicultural, permissive, spoiled and polluted urbanity on the other (Grillo 2005; Hubbard 2005). Phil Hubbard (2005: 12) has demonstrated how the protection of rural England has been used as a rallying cry to preserve white values and lifestyles in the face of alternative ways of life that have been represented as threatening.

Moreover, a number of studies have shown that it is not only black and minority ethnic groups, but also minority or sub cultural 'not-quite' white groups (Gabriel 1998) who have been excluded from 'hyper-whitened...exclusive versions of Englishness' (Neal 2002: 445). In his study of travellers and the rural idyll, Halfacree (1996) has described how travellers have been considered as one of the New Right's "enemies within",¹¹ also pointing out that the discourse of ethnicity has been mobilised to reinforce the exotic status of New Age Travellers and Gypsies. Like other groups who threaten to breach the 'cultural straightjacket' (Halfacree 1996: 65) of the rural idyll, travellers have been cast out of the symbolic formation of the English countryside. Building upon such a critique and being particularly sensitive to the need to understand the 'fluidity of rural otherness' (Little 1999), Sarah Holloway (2003) has argued that Gypsy-Travellers were complexly and often contradictorily racialised in late nineteenth and early twentieth century England. Her analysis, which crucially for the purposes of this study draws attention to discourses of racialisation in modern day Cumbria (then Westmoreland), responds to some of the critiques of scholarship on 'rural others' that has tended to perpetuate stereotypical and static representations of so-called others (see Little 1999). Holloway (2003) has highlighted how the unstable category 'Gypsy' was ascribed contrasting meanings (from noble savage to deviant and criminal) and was variously racialised according to a racial hierarchy of bodily and cultural authenticity, drawing out the complex and contradictory racialised negotiation of 'Gypsy' identity.

While this academic and policy work has emphasised how questions of ethnicity and exclusion are central to the construction of the English countryside, their focus marks a fascination with 'others' rather than 'self'. Recognising this enduring preoccupation, critics like Jo Little (1999) have emphasised the need for studies of rural others to be understood in the context of broader configurations of power, for rural geographers to pay close attention to how the dominant view of rurality has been constructed and reconstructed. As we shall see in the next section, in turning critical attention on the white rural majority, on selves rather than others, this thesis directly responds to such an agenda by analysing wider power relations and underlying processes of exclusion in the countryside which studies of rural otherness have tended to overlook.

¹¹ For more on this notion of the 'enemy within' Thatcherite Britain see Samuel, 1989.

2.5 Whiteness in the English countryside: historical, geographical and institutional formations of whiteness

'My project is an effort to avert the critical gaze from the racial object to the racial subject; from the described and imagined to the describers and the imaginers; the serving to the served'

(Morrison 1992: 90)

This analysis of whiteness in the English countryside is part of the post-colonial paradigmatic shift from an almost obsessive interest with 'other' (black) people and 'their' (often urban) places to exploring 'us' (white people) and 'our' (white, often rural spaces) places. Following in the lead of black feminists and critical race scholars such as bell hooks and Toni Morrison, who in the early nineties called for 'a discourse on race that interrogates whiteness' (hooks 1990: 54), this thesis contributes to a now flourishing body of scholarship on whiteness that has aimed to challenge the common sense conflation of race with black communities (Solomos and Back 2000: 21). In his landmark article simply entitled 'White', Richard Dyer, one of the first scholars to critically engage with the discourse of whiteness, outlined the discrepancy that motivated critical scholarship on whiteness (1988: 195):

'It is the way that black people are marked as black...that has made it relatively easy to analyse their representation, whereas white people – not there as a category and everywhere everything as a fact – are difficult, if not impossible to analyse qua white'.

Although critically interrogating 'whiteness' has a crucial role to play in decolonising our minds and reorienting the racial gaze (hooks 1992), there are, non-the-less, a number of 'possible shortcomings' (Solomos and Back 2000: 22) and 'problems inherent in Whiteness Studies' (Shaw, 2006: 851) in terms of both writing and research practice. From the very emergence of 'whiteness studies', scholars (not least Dyer 1997) have been sensitive to the intrinsic problems within the arena of study. Possibly the liveliest area of debate surrounds the use of the term itself. Some critics (most recently Kaufmann 2006) have questioned the value of the 'whiteness' concept, expressing reservations with the term due to its affiliation with powerful, hegemonic ethnicity, preferring instead alternatives such as 'dominant ethnicity' (Kaufmann 2006). Although the thesis recognises, and is sensitive to, the problematics of using the term, the research exposed whiteness to be a category that people use, identify with and attach belonging to (see Chapter 7). While whiteness is shown to be a historically contested and geographically contingent category, it is also paradoxically revealed to be a visible reality, a marker of identity, a label with currency. Thus, despite all the inherent complexities of using the term outlined in this section, the thesis continues with the term to describe a process-based form of identification.

However, in unveiling dominant discourses of whiteness at the heart of the English countryside, the thesis is sensitive to the risk of paradoxically reinscribing those very narratives and inadvertently investing in an erroneous 'true essence' of whiteness (Nakayama and Krizek 1997: 90). Recognising such a danger, is not the intention of this study to artificially assign or attribute 'whiteness' onto the institution of the National Trust, or to places in its care, but rather to use 'whiteness' as a vehicle to make explicit the normatively racialised, institutionally embedded discourses of the English countryside. While the naming of 'whiteness' without qualification may indeed lead to an uncritical engagement with the 'already always existing' entity called whiteness (Frankenberg 2004: 105), this study concurs with Frankenberg's proposal that 'the making of steady ground – the crafting of a space called whiteness – actually makes it possible to further disturb, question, complicate that very ground' (2004: 114).

While such a belief in the potential of analysing whiteness theoretically underscores this research, in practice, writing about and researching whiteness proved to be a complex and problematic process. As we shall go on to see in Chapter 3, the elusive character of whiteness meant that it was difficult to trace discourses of whiteness through dominant constructions of the English countryside and institutional narratives of the National Trust. Also, the anxiety revolving around the politically-loaded banner of 'whiteness' posed serious challenges in terms of communicating the aims and objectives of this study to individuals and organisations involved. As Chapter 3 details, particularly in terms of negotiating archival access, finding an appropriate, unthreatening language to communicate the aims of the study and win crucial support and collaboration proved to be one of the central challenges of the research process. In light of the current political and policy importance assigned to opening up countryside access to typically marginalized, minority communities, it was difficult to justify the relevance of researching on whiteness.

Certainly some policy makers and practitioners seemed to share the sentiment of whiteness critiques more generally, expressing reservations that focusing attention on white people and white places brings with it the risk of diverting attention from where it is most needed, on underprivileged people and groups (Pulido 2002). According to Gabriel, 'the more we research white culture, the more we potentially marginalize representations of diasporan cultures, new ethnicities and forms of representation' (2000: 174). At the opening of their edited collection, Rasmussen et al. (2001: 1) went further by asking whether whiteness could in fact serve as a 'Trojan horse', providing an intentional disruption to critical race studies by recentering the perspective of whites in work on race and ethnicity. Such a suggestion highlights the underpinning unease and 'discomfort about the emergence of whiteness as a

topic of debate' (Rasmussen et al. 2001: 1), among countryside practitioners as well as scholars of whiteness. In his seminal analysis of whiteness, Richard Dyer (1997) reflexively recognised that 'whiteness studies' could be accused of a sense of 'me-too-ism' fuelled by a sense of neglect in the face of increased attention placed on non-white subjects in postcolonial analyses. He draws attention to the inherent paradox or in his words, the 'green light problem' (Dyer 1997), where writing about whiteness (with whatever good intent) enables white people to write (yet) more about them/our selves. Through such a 'possessive investment in whiteness' (Lipsitz 1995), studies of whiteness run the risk of defeating their very objective – to expose, challenge and overturn the authority and dominance of white racial formations. Thus, critics have quite rightly highlighted the tension that often underscores studies of whiteness, between the politics of critical whiteness studies and its methodology (Kaufmann 2006: 250). While this study remains sensitive to the potential pitfalls of such a counter-politics, it is justified in its attempt to critically analyse whiteness given the near obsessive, fetishist focus on minority ethnic people in research and policy work on race in the English countryside. However, overcoming resistance to the notion of whiteness among policy makers and practitioners proved to be a constant and central challenge in this research process.

It was not only convincing people, from policy makers to the public, of the merits of focusing on whiteness that proved challenging, but also explaining the focus on majority 'mainstream' culture as oppose to more easily-identifiable minority or subcultural groups that were more broadly considered to warrant attention (such as travellers, children, homosexuals). Unlike many studies of whiteness that have a tendency to lapse into what Weigman has identified as a 'repeated appeal to the minoritised, injured nature of whiteness' (1999: 127), this thesis deliberately interrogates dominant, normatively white racialised discourses at the heart of the English countryside. Rather than rehearse the focus on marginal or 'liminal' whites (see page 42-43), such as those identified as 'white trash' in America (Newitz and Wray 1997; Wilson 2002), this research critically interrogates the 'core' of whiteness and exposes dominant white racial formations. As the chapter will go on to make clear, this thesis aims to stand as a corrective to the penchant for studies of whiteness to focus on 'minoritarian positionings' by refocusing attention on dominant white racialised narratives and discourses in the English countryside. Such a move is important in the context of scholarly warnings (for example see Weigman 1999) that affording groups such as white racial supremacists the 'marginal' status runs the danger of engendering sympathy for those who often overtly and violently exercise the oppressive power of whiteness. Although studies of whiteness hold the potential to 'liberate research from the trap of (mis)representation of the "other"', they also have the 'potential to produce a disturbing converse politics' (Shaw 2006: 857, 855), to

threaten the very antiracist project from within. Despite the fact that researching the normative 'core' of whiteness presents more challenges than focusing on a minority 'white' subculture, by bringing normatively racialised, dominant discourses into critical scrutiny, the thesis aims to harness the liberating potential of whiteness studies, casting white as well as non-white people as 'ethnic'.

Furthermore, as studies of whiteness have tended to be historically and geographically limited in their focus on America, and specifically on a period of North American history around the time of the Declaration of Independence, this thesis marks a concerted attempt to extend the spatial and temporal boundaries of whiteness scholarship. By analysing whiteness in the context of the English countryside, the thesis responds to repeated calls for the dynamics of whiteness to be explored beyond the United States (for a recent example see Roediger 2006: 260). It aims to serve as a corrective to the American-biased, historically-specific study of whiteness in order to explore white racial formation in different places and times, beyond its current confines. However, in so doing, it risks uncritically transferring and transposing American-centred research into the English context. As well as applying existing debates to a new context, the thesis also aims to go some way to redress the over-emphasis of whiteness studies on racial boundaries rather than racial discourses (Kaufmann 2006) by tracing discourses of whiteness through historical and contemporary English countrysides.

While it is important to acknowledge the inherent problems and complexity of researching and writing about whiteness, some critics have recently argued that the (perhaps all too) well-developed critique of whiteness studies constitutes a problem in itself (Roediger 2006; Shaw 2006). In the context of geography, Shaw has recently suggested that an acute awareness of the problems associated with whiteness studies has served to stigmatise the concept and stifle its development (2006: 854). However, despite the difficulties of analysing that which is normative and unmarked, the 'critical rush to whiteness' (Hill 1997: 3) over the past decade and a half has proved not only that it is possible to interrogate whiteness, but that it is essential part of the long attempt to deconstruct race and dismantle racial inequality (Hartigan Jr. 1999: 184). Indeed, far from diminishing the intellectual project of critical whiteness studies, remaining vigilant to the inherent problems with researching and writing about whiteness is part of its demand for attention (Shaw 2006: 856). If, as Shaw maintains, 'we are to accept that whiteness (like blackness) is a racialised/ ethnicized construction, then closer examination, rather than avoidance, is a useful disciplinary trajectory' (2006: 866).

As such, the analysis of racialised whiteness has captured the imagination of critics from a variety of disciplines ranging from anthropology (McDonald 1986; Hill 1997; Brodtkin 1998; Hartigan Jr. 1999; Wilson 2002) to literary criticism (Morrison 1992; Segrest 1994; Aanerud 1997; Weigman 1999; Schocket 2000), education (Giroux, 1997; Maher and Tetreault, 1997, Willis and Lewis, 1999) to communication studies (Nakayama and Krizek, 1995; Nakayama and Martin 1999; Crenshaw, 1997; Jackson, 1999; Warren, 2001), philosophy (Young 1990; Gimbel and Wilson 2004; Yancy 2004) to film studies (Dyer 1997; Gabriel 1998; Bernardi 2001) and even legal theory (Harris 1993; Haney-Lopez 1996; Gross 1998). While such a selective list of disciplinary engagements indicates the sheer diversity of the intellectual movement that comes under 'the rubric of whiteness studies' (Twine 2004: 881), it also signals the interdisciplinary reach and consensus of the project that seeks to challenge the 'authority with which whites act and speak about the world' (Dyer 1997: 1). For all the multiple interpretations and manifold understandings of whiteness, such scholarship has been broadly united in the aim to expose whiteness as a racially marked category like any other (Steyn 2001: xxv) in order to bring the wider system of racial demarcation and privilege into view (Bonnett and Nayak 2003: 300). Analyses of whiteness have attempted to render whiteness visible from its position of invisibility in order to destabilise its privilege, standpoint and 'way of being' in the world (Frankenberg 1993a). Collectively, the achievement of such a multidisciplinary critique of whiteness has been to push the "white problem" onto mainstream intellectual agendas (Roediger 2002: 15) to the extent that it now constitutes a sub field or field of investigation in its own right.

Critics seeking 'to make sense of the field' (Ware 2002a: 31) have attempted to slice scholarship on whiteness into different waves, schools or 'tropes' (Gordon 2004) to develop genealogies of whiteness. Rather than aiming or claiming to advance a definitive definition of whiteness, as it is believed to be impossible and undesirable to fix the meaning of such a complex concept, in what follows, the chapter outlines how this analysis of the nature of whiteness in the English countryside is informed by and contributes to specific streams of thought bracketed under the banner of critical studies of whiteness. First, it argues that far from being a unitary, uncontested discourse, whiteness is a culturally complex condition that is at once powerful and precarious. Second, it demonstrates how studies of whiteness have been further segmented into those that have analysed historical processes of white racialisation and those that have focused attention on contemporary lived and experienced whiteness. This thesis aims to combine both prevalent elements of critical whiteness scholarship that have rarely been co-ordinated. Third, scholars of whiteness, and geographers in particular, have highlighted the importance of analysing not only white people, but also white places. By tracing whiteness through the nationalist discourse of

countryside, through institutional narratives of the National Trust and through nationally-iconic countryside locales, the thesis analyses how spaces from the nation to the location have been implicitly racialised as white. Fourth, as there have been few attempts to analyse institutional formations of whiteness *as well as* individual inflections of whiteness, the thesis interrogates both institutional and individual discourses of whiteness. By analysing the culturally complex, historically rooted, geographically located, institutionally and individually inflected nature of whiteness in the English countryside, this thesis attempts to specify particular versions of a racial formation that has suffered from over generalisation.

2.5.1 The ambivalent nature of whiteness: paradoxically powerful and precarious

Studies of whiteness have broadly shared two central goals within 'the larger project of anti-racism' (Nakayama and Martin 1999), what Mike Hill (1997) has discerned as two 'waves' of white critique. As we have already seen, the so-called 'first wave' analysed the different ways that white identities have been, and continue to be, shaped by power (Roediger 2002: 23) in order to denormalise, destabilise and deconstruct whiteness as an ethnically located, racially marked discourse. Pioneering film (Dyer 1988), literary (hooks 1992; Morrison 1992) and other cultural critics demonstrated how, through definition as a relational category, in opposition to racially marked blackness, whiteness has been removed from the realm of racial categorisation (Bonnett 1997) and has instead been constructed as a supranatural, transcendental deracialised and dominant discourse. Many critical whiteness scholars have drawn upon the work of identity theorists (Hall 1991; Bhabha 1994; Pred 2000) to argue that whiteness has been constructed as the 'self' through the refusal of the 'other' and has emerged as the core of the 'same' through the negation of 'difference'. Whether in Dyer's definition of the paradoxical 'everything and nothing' quality of whiteness (1997: 39), or hook's description of 'whiteness as terrorizing' (1992: 169), critical race and whiteness scholars have analysed white people (and to a lesser extent places) as products of racialisation in order to expose the 'ubiquitous nature of white dominance in Western societies' (Tyler 2004: 290).

The 'second wave' of critique has not only aimed to further interrogate the power of white racial privilege (Hill 1997) but has also attempted to broaden the way that whiteness is conceptualised beyond a monolithic or unitary category by analysing the complex, heterogeneous, dynamic and relational qualities of whiteness. While white racial critique has analysed the relational construction of whiteness in opposition to blackness, the relational nature of whiteness has also been used to refer to the intersections of white ethnicity with nationality, gender, class and other categories of identification. Following in the line of critics

who have argued that white people experience their gender, class and sexual identities through the lens of race in the same way that black people do (Hall 1992a: 21), this thesis aims to demonstrate the inextricable interconnection between whiteness and other forms of identification, particularly class. Informed by a rich vein of white critique that has exposed the fluidity and plasticity of white identification – for example Twine's (1996) study of *'Brown Skinned White Girls'* – this thesis understands whiteness not as the core of the homogenous, hegemonic 'same', but as a heterogeneous, differentiated discourse. It attempts to further the analysis of whiteness as a particularly fractured and fragile formation, as one that is 'increasingly power by default' (Amin and Thrift 2002: 296).

This thesis bridges both 'waves' of critical 'white studies' scholarship by analysing how whiteness has functioned as a powerful discourse inscribed in the fabric of the English countryside and understanding that whiteness as a fractured and fragile formation. It recognises the need to move beyond a now exhaustively deployed 'whiteness-as-power framework' that proceeds on an unacknowledged equation of whiteness with various forms of privilege (Winders 2003: 45). While some scholars have signalled the insecure foundation of whiteness that 'alone, is mute, meaningless, unfathomable...frozen, veiled...senseless' (Morrison 1992: 59), studies that have analysed the vulnerabilities of whiteness have disproportionately focused on working class poor whites (Roediger 1991; Newitz and Wray 1997; Bonnett 1998a; Hyslop 1999) and a on a host of other 'outsiders inside' (Walter 2001), including women (Ware 1992; Frankenberg 1993a; Frankenberg 1993b; Muller 2001; Horrell 2004), the Irish (Hickman and Walter 1995; Ignatiev 1995; Walter 2001; Gibbons 2002; Gray 2002; Hickman, Morgan et al. 2005), Jewish people (Brodkin 1998; Gilman 2000; Shadmi 2003) and homosexuals (Hedges 1997; Berube 2001). Although analyses of underprivileged, subaltern 'whites' undoubtedly have a crucial role to play in challenging dominant narratives of white racialisation, it is also important to analyse the fragilities and vulnerabilities of dominant whiteness. Where scholarship has focused on dominant whites, it has tended to analyse white supremacist discourse (for example Blee 1991; Ferber 1998), which although important, runs the risk of reinscribing the equation of whites with power. In its focus on particular spatial and temporal cases within the institutional context of the National Trust, this thesis stands as a corrective to these tendencies by analysing the provisional and precarious nature of an apparently privileged, dominant, middle class 'hyperwhiteness'.

2.5.2 The historical nature of whiteness: bridging the historical and contemporary

Studies of whiteness have also been loosely divided into historical analyses of white racialisation and contemporary investigations of the multiple lived experiences of whiteness (Bonnett 1997). By analysing how white identities were historically constructed and appropriated, historians like David Roediger have sought to provide some answers to 'questions of when, why and with what results so-called "white people" have come to identify themselves as white' (1994: 75). In the process of historicizing discussions of whiteness, and being particularly attendant to the intersection between discourses of race and class, scholars have challenged whiteness as a site of racial, economic and political privilege, albeit primarily in America (Roediger 1991; Saxton 1991; Allen 1994; Ignatiev 1995). Moreover, by charting how various liminal groups have been included and excluded from the category 'white' at different times, including the working class (Roediger 1991; Bonnett 1998a; Hyslop 1999), the Irish (Ignatiev 1995; Walter 2001) and European immigrants (Roediger 1991; Jacobson 1999; Jacobson 2001), historical analyses have also greatly furthered the understanding of the shifting 'racialized boundaries' (Anthias, Yuval-Davis et al. 1993) of whiteness.

A stream of scholars have also analysed contemporary white identities, exploring the 'plural constitution and multiple lived experiences' (Bonnett 1997) of whiteness, particularly of white women (Blee 1991; Ware 1992; Frankenberg 1993a; Frankenberg 1993b; McClintock 1995; Twine 1996; Moon 1999; Harris 2000; Muller 2001; Walter 2001; Dolan 2002; Gray 2002; Redmond 2002; Horrell 2004). That said, as part of the 'reflexive movement' (Jackson 1998) that has begun to confront and challenge dominant identities, the discourse of whiteness has also been increasingly analysed in relation to masculine identities (Hall 1992a; Pfeil 1995; Ching 1997; Pfeil 1997; Wald 1997; Weis and Lombardo 2002; Nayak 2003; Dixon and Grimes 2004; Farough 2004). While this thesis gestures towards some of the gendered inflections of white countryside identities, it is primarily interested in the class-specificity of the whiteness through which the English countryside became a signifier of the nation. In analysing the class-based formation of the white racialised English countryside, this study responds to recent calls for a re-prioritisation of class (hooks 2000) in critical whiteness scholarship (Hartman 2004). Research on the lived and experienced, and increasingly on the embodied and performed nature of whiteness (Franks 2000; Harris 2000; Tehranian 2000; Roen 2001; Hoelscher 2003; Nayak 2003; Cateforis 2004; Lunde 2004; Twine 2004; Tyler 2004), has indeed done much to capture the instable, incomplete and internally diverse nature of white racial identities. However, such studies have been criticised for 'failing to provide a nuanced, dialectical and layered account of whiteness' (Giroux 1997: 383), for

lacking historical depth, which some have argued, brings into question their ability to interrogate fully the social construction and cultural complexity of whiteness (Bonnett 1997: 196).

By bringing into one study a historical *and* contemporary analysis of the white racialised English countryside, the thesis aims to go some way to bridge the tendency of studies of whiteness to focus *either* on historical processes of racialisation (Young 1990; Ware 1992; Hesse 1993; Allen 1994; Ignatiev 1995; Bonnett 1998a; Bonnett 1998b; Hyslop 1999; Bonnett 2000a; Lambert 2002), *or* on contemporary lived, experienced and performed white identities (Frankenberg 1993a; Frankenberg 1993c; Pfeil 1995; Twine 1996; Nayak 1997; Schech and Haggis 1998; Watt 1998; Harris 2000; Kintz 2002; Nayak 2003; Twine 2004; Hickman, Morgan et al. 2005). By advancing an empirical analysis of historical and contemporary formations of whiteness, the thesis directly responds to Bonnett's (1997) twofold agenda for future geographical inquiry on whiteness that demands attentiveness to the historical construction of whiteness and attention to contemporary formulations of this racial category. As suggested in the previous section, the thesis not only understands whiteness to be a complex cultural condition in contemporary England, but also argues that whiteness has always been a multiple, plural and dynamic racial formation. Rather than giving credence to one element over the other, or indeed creating an artificial separation between historical and contemporary constructions of whiteness, this thesis concurs with Bonnett's argument that understanding contemporary formations of whiteness demands a historical sensitivity and attentiveness to the historical processes of racialisation (1997: 198).

2.5.3 The geographical nature of whiteness: from nation to location

As well as being attentive to historical and contemporary constructions of white racialised identity, the thesis is also sensitive to the geographical nature of whiteness. Although geography's disciplinary history has been characterised by a 'near silence on issues of racialization...a silence...dominated by whiteness' (Kobayashi and Peake 2000: 399), geographers, led by Alastair Bonnett (1992; 1993; 1996a; 1996b; 1997; 1998a; 1998b; 1999a; 1999b; 2000a; 2000b; 2002), have made an important contribution to critical scholarship on whiteness (Nayak 1997; Jackson 1998; Anderson 2000; Dwyer and Jones III 2000; Kobayashi and Peake 2000; McGuinness 2000; Bonnett 2000a; Pulido 2002; McCarthy and Hague 2004). Ironically, despite geographers' important contribution to analysing whiteness as a profoundly geographical phenomenon, advancing a 'white socio-spatial epistemology' (Dwyer and Jones III 2000), and arguing that white places as well as white people need to be interrogated (McGuinness 2000; Kobayashi 2003; McCarthy and

Hague 2004; Reitman 2006), few geographers have taken up their own gauntlet by interrogating normatively racialised *rural* spaces. Even Alastair Bonnett, whose pioneering work drew attention to the need to bring 'white areas' into critical scrutiny (1992), has tended to focus on urban areas, as signalled by the title of one of his articles that draws connection between '*The metropolis and white modernity*' (2002). As McCarthy and Hague have pointed out, many studies have subtly reinforced 'if only through their choice of case study locations, the geographic presumption that to have a racial identity also meant to be urban' (2004: 388).

This thesis develops from recent attempts to turn towards more racially unmarked and normative spaces of investigation, to analyse suburban (Twine 1996; Back and Nayak 1999) and semi-rural areas (Ray and Reed 2005). In analysing how particular countryside spaces have been preserved and (re)presented as icons of an idealised national identity, one that 'developed around the politics of (invisible) whiteness' (Neal 2002: 443), the thesis aims to expose and explore some of the racialised and class-based processes through which the countryside has been constructed. By analysing the processes and practices of white racialisation in two normatively racialised countryside spaces, this research aims to challenge the uncritical conflation of race and urbanity and to advance a wider geographical understanding of how rural, traditionally 'less obvious sites of difference' (McGuinness 2000: 226) are equally racialised. Such a focus on two countrysides of Englishness on different scales facilitates analysis not only of the racialised and classed constitution of English 'national whiteness' (Hartman 2004: 29), but it also directly replies to the call for geographers 'to be more attentive to local nuances and regional identities' in researching whiteness (Nayak 2003: 7). In analysing national and local spaces of the countryside, the thesis advances a thoroughly spatial interpretation that calls to account 'the "empty spaces" that result from silence, exclusion and denial, and that serve as a basis for reproducing normative whiteness' (Kobayashi and Peake 2000: 401).

While the chapter has already begun to demonstrate, through Beddoes' maps, that the areas surrounding Gibside and Derwentwater were historically imagined to be 'white', the latest (2001) census statistics reveal both sites to be located within overwhelmingly white-populated areas – of Gateshead (Gibside) with 98.4% white population and Carlisle (Derwentwater) with 99.1% of the population who classify themselves as white.¹² When compared with the national 'white' population (91%), it is clear that both Gibside and Derwentwater are situated in relatively 'white areas' in England. Hence, in the map below

¹² Figures taken from the 2001 Census. See <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/default.asp>, Correct to 3rd May 2005

(Figure 2.5), based on the 2001 census data, we see that Cumbria has the lowest percentage of ethnic minority residents (0-0.97%) even among rural areas. Although Gibside may be embraced within the urban area of Gateshead, represented in brown on the map, census figures have shown Gateshead itself to have a very small (1.6%) ethnic minority population.

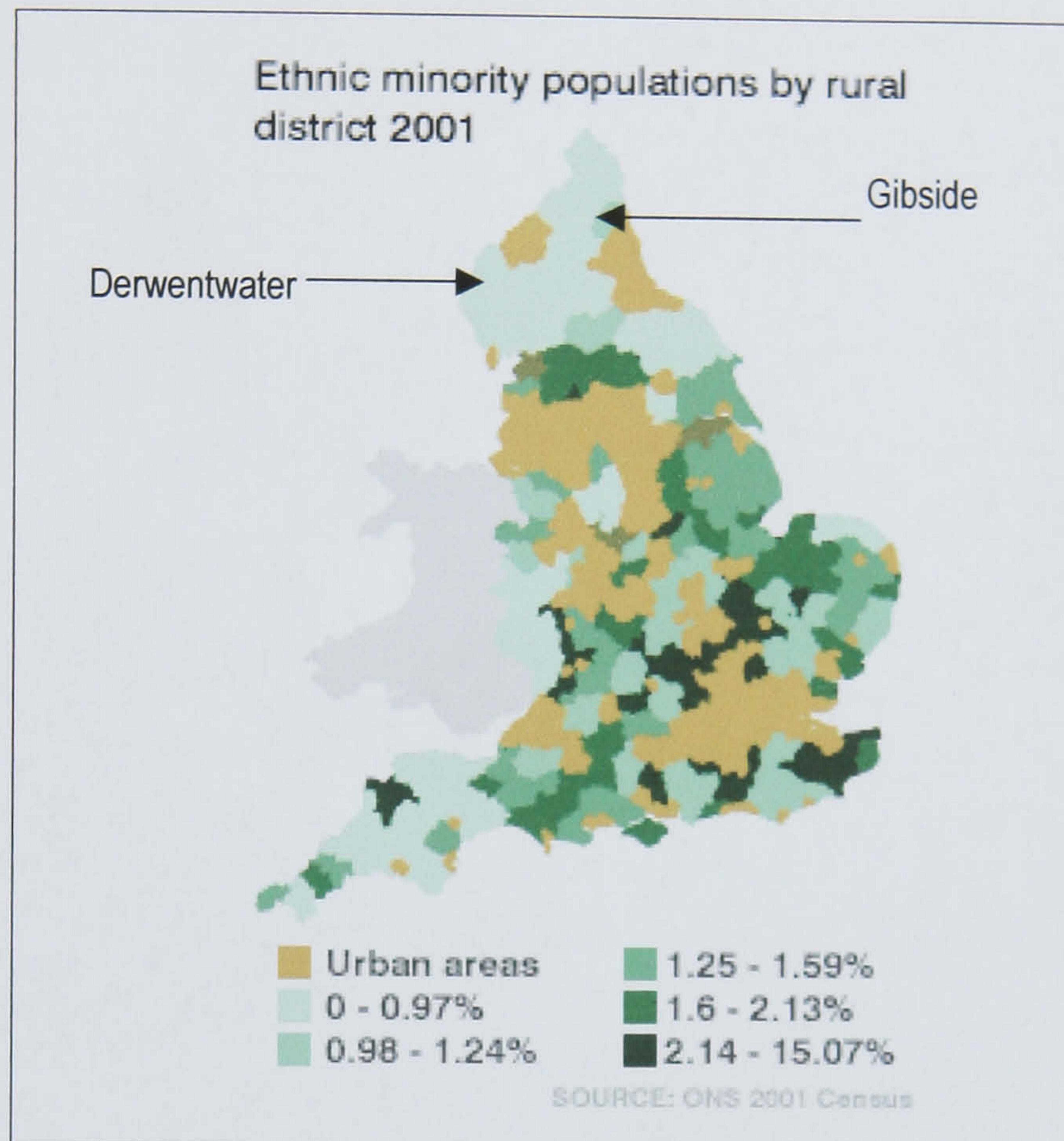


Figure 2.5: The 'white areas' of Derwentwater and Gibside in rural England
Source: Modified from Office of National Statistics, Census 2001

While geographers have argued that analysing race and racism in rural areas is crucial to advancing a more meaningful debate about ethnicity in the contemporary British context (McGuinness 2000: 229), such an endeavour is clearly not just an academic exercise in view of the findings of the Observer's *Rayner Report* (2001: 2), which illustrated that ethnic minorities living in the lowest density minority ethnic areas (many of them northern) are at greater risk of racial crime (see Figure 2.6). The report highlighted that rural counties in England with the smallest 'ethnic minority' populations, like Durham and Cumbria witnessed a higher incidence of racial crime relative to the 'non-white population', and consequently constitute more 'dangerous areas' than metropolitan centres like London. Furthermore, the recent follow-up report (Rayner 2005) which recorded an even greater increase in racist attacks in rural Britain between 2000-2004 and found Cumbria to be statistically the most racist region in England and Wales, provides a compelling case for analysis of race and racism in under-researched rural areas like Country Durham and particularly Cumbria.

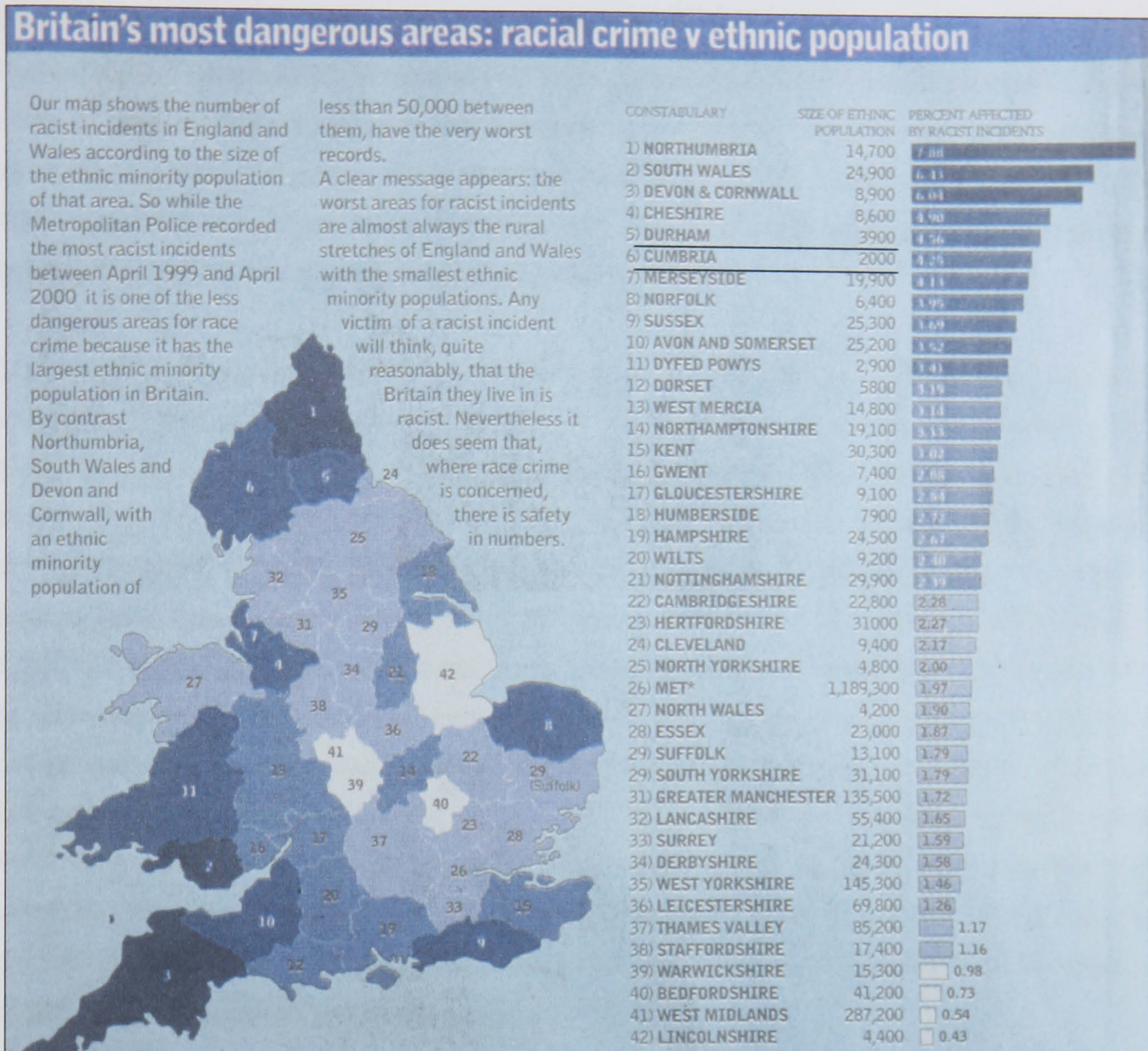


Figure 2.6: The rural-urban geography of race crime
Source: Modified from Rayner, J. (2001) Observer: 18th February: 2

2.5.4 The institutional nature of whiteness: A case of the National Trust

Whatever the merits of scholarship on 'new ethnicities' (Hall 1992; Back 1996) and whiteness, some scholars have recently recognised that 'there have been few sustained attempts to link them to research on institutions' (Bulmer and Solomos 2004a: 6). The emergence of these 'new' areas of scholarship, they suggest, has led to the neglect of research on institutions at the expense of theoretical abstraction and cultural analysis. Given the central preoccupation of whiteness scholarship on the condition of white power, it is surprising that attention has shifted away from the role of institutions in analyses of race and ethnicity. Ironically, although studies have recurrently signalled the importance of institutions by emphasising the 'institutional form and force' (Weigman 1999: 148) of whiteness and the importance of social institutions in binding white ethnicity up with nationality (Nakayama and Martin 1999: 99), so far few accounts have developed detailed critical analyses of

institutional inflections and formations of whiteness (a few exceptions include Marshall and Ryden 2000; O'Brien 2000; Weis and Hall 2001; Chaisson 2004). There have been tentative shifts to respond to such a gap in the literature by bringing the 'ivory towers' of the academy into critical scrutiny (Kaplan 1997; Marshall and Ryden 2000; Haylett 2001; Pulido 2002; Mahtani 2006), but as yet there has been very little sustained interest in the intersections between institutional structures and white racial formations.

This neglect of the importance of institutions in critical studies of whiteness could be understood as more generally reflective of the silence on institutions within critical geographical scholarship (Philo and Parr 2000). Although 'institutional geographies' have begun to attract increasing academic inquiry, 'the new institutionalism' has largely related to the 'governance of cities', to urban geographical contexts (Philo and Parr 2000) and has tended not to be applied to analyses of rural areas. By bringing the institution of the National Trust into focus, the thesis responds to the need to understand identities 'as produced in specific historical and institutional sites' (Hall 1996). In so doing, it aims to redress the lack of critical attention on the importance of institutions in race and rurality research, while also furthering the limited development of an 'institutional approach to rural geography' (Clark 1982: 98). This thesis focuses on institutional constructions and inflections of white rural identities, here termed 'institutional whiteness',¹³ in order to challenge the institutional and discursive edifices through which whiteness is reproduced as a dominant narrative of national identity (Schech and Haggis 2001: 157).

In the American context, a number of commentators have analysed whiteness at the centre of mainstream environmental organisations and discourse (Cosgrove 1995; De Luca 1999). Although this thesis cautions against the uncritical application of American analyses of whiteness to other nations, there is clearly wider significance and relevance in De Luca's (1999: 225) argument that:

'In environmental discourse it is the unstated assumption that nature is white nature...and that political efforts must be directed toward saving such a nature for all of humanity, which refers primarily to white, middle-to upper class people who have the money and leisure time to be tourists, hikers and bikers'.

This thesis aims to illustrate how such normatively racialised, universalised assumptions embedded within preservationist discourse have masked the particular racialised and class-based constituency of the *English* countryside. To date, although a number of writers have tracked the evolution of the British preservation/ conservation/ environmental movement from the late nineteenth century onwards (Stamp 1969; Sheail 1976; Evans 1992; Green

¹³ The term is used to depict the ordinary power of whiteness to control dominant values embedded within institutions (Kobayashi and Peake 2000: 393).

1985; Dwyer and Hodge 1996) and a wave of heritage critics from the mid-seventies have critically interrogated representations of the national past (Cormack 1976; Lowenthal 1981; Wright 1985; Hewison 1987; Walsh 1992; Graham, Ashworth et al. 2000; Harvey 2003; Howard 2003), few studies have analysed nature-based organisations within a specifically racialised frame of reference, possibly on account of the very real challenges noted earlier of empirically studying that which is normative and unmarked.

While a number of studies have begun to analyse the normatively white racialised character of supposedly 'National' Parks and National Park Authorities (for example Ayamba and Rotherham 2002; Davies and Adomoko 2002; Prendergast 2004), the National Trust, an organisation that proclaims to preserve places of historic interest or natural beauty 'for the benefit of the nation', has not received the same degree of critical scrutiny. Although there is no shortage of published material on the Trust (Thompson 1945; Lee-Milne 1945; Fedden 1968; Battrick 1987; Gaze 1988; Lee-Milne 1992; Jenkins and James 1994; Waterson 1994; Weideger 1994; Newby 1995; Murphy 2002; Hall M. 2003b), its history has largely been narrated through self-authored, chronological and celebratory accounts of its 'Record of...Achievement' (Lee-Milne 1945, see Table 2.3), which constitute little more than 'institutionalized self-congratulation' (Weideger 1994: 159). By effectively narrating its own history, the Trust has not only escaped sustained critical investigation but has also, in effect if not in intention, failed to confront sensitive issues of race within its history. As we shall see, one of the processes through which whiteness has been rehearsed within the institutional formation of the National Trust is through the highly politicised process of narrating history.

AUTHOR	ROLE OF AUTHOR IN NT	YEAR	ABBREVIATED TITLE
Bruce Logan Thompson	First agent in the North of England	1946	The Lake District and the National Trust
Robin Fedden	Historic Buildings Secretary from 1951 Deputy Director-General	1968	The National Trust Past and Present
John Gaze	Land Agent 1948-1982 Chief Agent 1976-82	1988	Figures in a Landscape
James Lee-Milne	Country Houses Secretary from 1936	1945 1992	Record of Fifty Years Achievement People and Places
Dame Jennifer Jenkins	(First female) Chairman 1986-1990	1994	From Acorn to Oak Tree
Merlin Waterson	Regional Director for East Anglia Worked for the Trust for over 20 years	1994	The National Trust: The First Hundred Years

Table 2.3: 'Official', 'administrative' histories published by the National Trust

The thesis advances a critical analysis of the Trust within a racialised frame in order to re-write complexity and discourse in to the organisation's (hi)story. The history of the National Trust is not understood as a unitary and uncontested narrative, as 'our' (normatively white) story (see Figure 2.7), but rather as a series of multiple, contested histories. As we shall see, from its very origins and throughout its history the Trust has on the one hand been associated with a particular upper-middle class concern to preserve an idealised and nostalgic rural Englishness while on the other hand, it has been motivated by a concern to preserve land for the benefit of the nation, for public access and enjoyment.

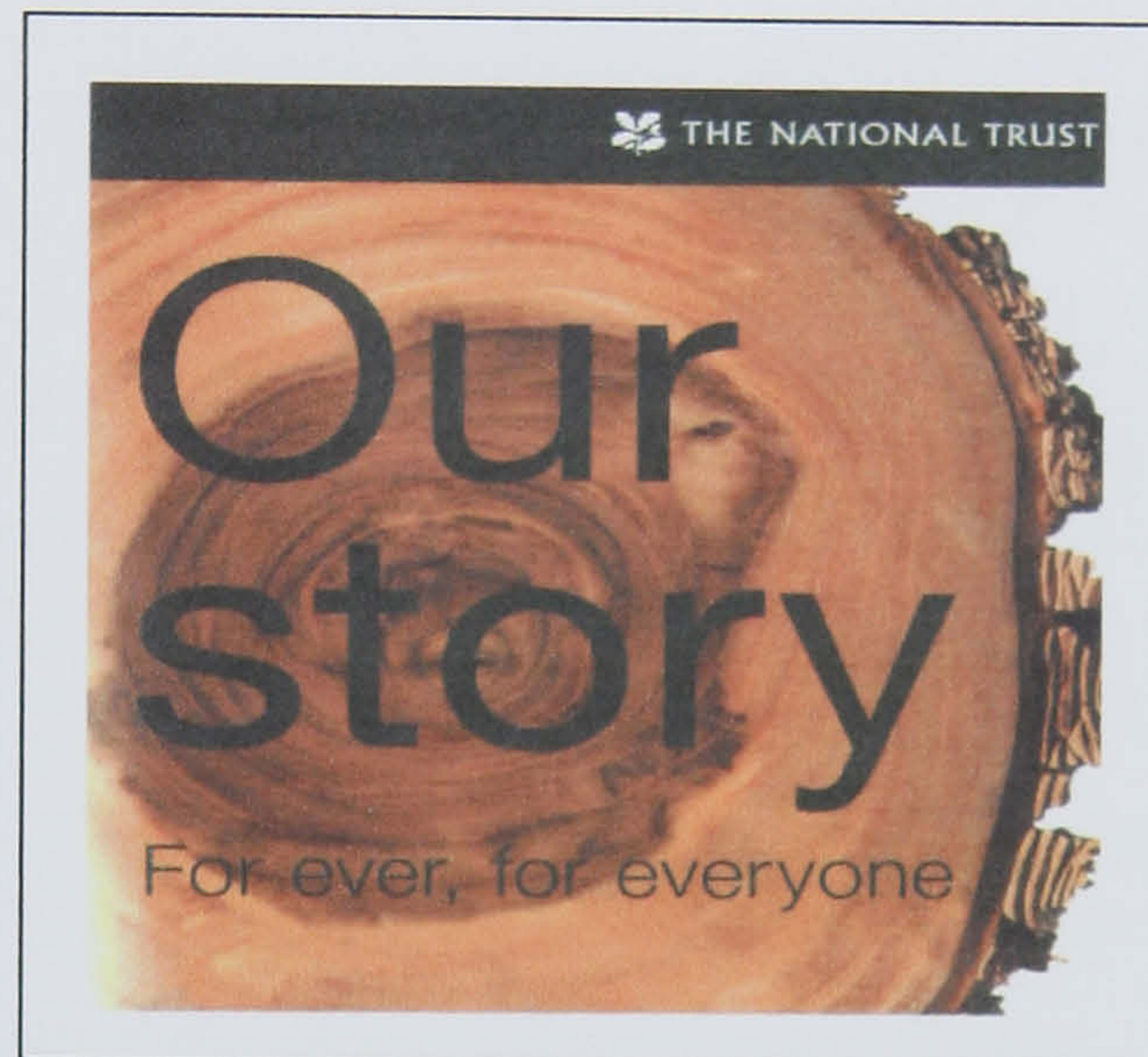


Figure 2.7: Self-authorship of the Trust's (hi)story
Source: Cover of Trust booklet (Waterson 2003)

By applying theoretical debates about the cultural complexity of whiteness to the institution of the National Trust, this analysis aims 'to provide a basis for more dialogue between...important scholarly debates and the social actors who are part of the subject matter of the research' (Bulmer and Solomos 2004a: 6), in order to progressively theorise and positively contribute to the development of a socially inclusive countryside. As the previous chapter pointed out, such an analysis might be regarded as timely in view of the Trust's recent internal review that has taken stock of the organisation and its position within contemporary society. In the words of Hodge (1957: 181), the objective is not to be unnecessarily critical of the National Trust, but 'to supply criticism which may help it to avoid dangers and attune itself better still to the needs of the future'.

Thus, the case of the National Trust serves as an 'institutional bridge' between the master narratives of countryside, Englishness and whiteness that have formed the focus of this chapter and facilitates analysis of the complex historical and contemporary, national and local, institutional and even individual formations of whiteness. Through a critical focus on

the Trust, the thesis responds both to conceptual silences in the race and rurality studies literature in terms of institutions and to policy concerns regarding the concept and constituency of the English countryside. While this chapter has outlined how, by plugging a number of conceptual holes in existing scholarship on whiteness, Englishness and rurality, the thesis aims to advance a fresh analysis of the historical and contemporary co-construction (of different forms) of whiteness and the English countryside, the next chapter turns attention to the methods used to research the complex nature of whiteness in rural England.

Chapter 3

Researching whiteness: Approach, issues and methods

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the empirical approach, issues and methods used to research the nature of whiteness in the English countryside. Although a number of edited collections have, over the last decade or so, focused on the methodological and practical aspects of researching race, ethnicity and racism (Stanfield II and Dennis 1993; Twine and Warren 2000; Ratcliffe 2001; Bulmer and Solomos 2004a), given the controversial, politicised and sensitive nature of research on race in general (Lee 1993; Bulmer and Solomos 2004b) and whiteness in particular, there has been surprisingly little critical methodological reflection in this field (Bulmer and Solomos 2004b). While such work has signalled a greater reflexive recognition of the dilemmas confronted in researching race, few accounts have explicitly concentrated on the methods and methodological issues involved in researching whiteness (notable exceptions include Gabriel, 2000; Frankenberg, 2004). This chapter responds to calls for the need to improve the methodological basis of research into race and ethnicity (Stanfield II 1993a) and more specifically to adopt a more critical, reflexive approach to the methods used to study various facets of white racialisation (Bulmer and Solomos 2004b: 15). In so doing, it outlines different elements of the research approach, highlighting some issues involved in the research, before detailing the combination of methods used in this study.

3.2 Research approach and issues

This research is situated within a postmodernist, poststructuralist and postcolonial frame associated with the 'cultural turn' within human geography. By interrogating and 'researching selves' (Davies 1999: 178), the thesis is 'part of the project of 'researching back', in the same (deconstructive) tradition of 'writing back' or 'talking back', that characterizes much of the post-colonial or anti-colonial literature' (Tuhiwai Smith 2002: 7). This research broadly follows in the 'ethnographic tradition' (Taylor 2002), centred on the belief that knowledge is plural (Hughes, Morris et al. 2000) and that meanings are always multiple (Schumer-Smith 2002), understanding whiteness to be a complex, multiple and dynamic discourse and interpreting the 'the rural...as a heterogeneous field' across time and space (Matless 1998:

17). In order to unpack the multiple, complex nature of whiteness in the English countryside, a case study approach was adopted. As specified in previous chapters, the thesis focuses on particular spatial, temporal and institutional cases which 'act as a lens through which to seek a clearer view' (Schumer-Smith 2002: 81) of historical and contemporary constructions of whiteness. It should by now be clear that the National Trust, above all other countryside organisations in England, provides an institutional bridge between historical and contemporary, nation and location, institution and individual.

The research has also always been collaborative in its approach. The part funding of this thesis by English Nature is indicative of the organisational interest and involvement from the very beginning. It has also relied heavily upon the collaboration of National Trust staff at local, regional and national levels to access people, places and documents. In early discussions with staff from both English Nature and the National Trust, it became clear that their interest was more inclined towards contemporary rather than historical research and towards quantitative as oppose to qualitative information. As commentators have noted elsewhere, 'in an area such as the study of 'race' and racism where policy issues are to the fore...policy-makers and practitioners want statistical evidence and tend...to privilege quantitative applications over qualitative ones' (Phoenix 2004: 49). Consequently, the research has been influenced and shaped by policy concerns at every stage from proposal to presentation.

Like most research that bridges academia and policy, issues of presentation and dissemination have proved to be crucial considerations. It became clear from an early stage that the rationale for the study, couched in the largely academic vocabulary of 'whiteness', would need to be framed differently to address policy concerns and audiences.¹ As Jo Little has pointed out 'where research is motivated by a strong desire to address inequality, real problems exist in presenting output of contemporary cultural research in a manner that is compatible with rural policy and practice' (1999: 439). While the recent impulse for research to be 'useful' and accountable to funding bodies has often meant the 'privileging of white, middle class, male discourse...arguably, the current focus on whiteness provides one opportunity to challenge those bastions of white academic...culture' (Gabriel 2000: 179). The

¹ The research has been presented to a range of different academic and policy-oriented audiences that have each demanded different emphases and helped shape the research. As well as presentations to the Rural and Historical Geography Research Groups of the RGS-IBG, a policy-oriented paper was presented to the Open Space: People Space Conference in Edinburgh on the 29th October 2004. See: <http://www.openspace.eca.ac.uk/conference/proceedings/summary/King.htm>

thesis aims to provide evidence to support Rydin's recent argument (2005) that discourse studies and cultural analyses have a positive role to play in policy analysis.

In order to analyse the historical and geographical, institutional and individual nature of whiteness in the English countryside, the thesis used a combination of different methods. While it may now be a matter of course for researchers to make use of a 'mixed methodology' (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998), to deploy 'methodological triangulation' (Mason, 1996: 25), it has been less common for empirical studies of whiteness to use a 'bricolage' (Alasuutari 1995: 2) of qualitative and quantitative methods. However, using a mixture of three main qualitative and quantitative methods – documentary/ archival research, key informant interviews and visitor surveys/ interviews – enabled a balance to be struck between policy-makers' desire for quantitative information on countryside visitors and qualitative analysis more typically suited to cultural geographical research, particularly to sensitive issues of race and ethnicity. While it is hoped that the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative information may help to address the scepticism of some policy-makers in valuing and embracing ethnographic research, a multi-method approach fundamentally facilitated a multi-layered analysis of the complex formulations of English whiteness.

3.3 Research methods

While the rest of the chapter proceeds to analyse each of these methods in turn, it is important to stress that they were used interchangeably throughout the research process. For example, while archival research is typically associated with historical inquiry, this research made use of documents to develop an understanding of both the historical and contemporary National Trust. While documentary and archival sources enabled institutional formations of whiteness to be interrogated, they also unveiled individual attitudes from those of the Trust's founders to central figures within the contemporary Trust. Similarly, although interviews of key informants and visitors drew out contemporary attitudes and values, they also shed historical insight into the specific sites and the National Trust beyond that accessible from documents.

3.3.1 Documentary/ archival research

Documentary/ archival research was used to tease out implicit discourses of whiteness within institutional narratives of the National Trust. As sites of social and institutional authority, archives² hold particular value for reinterpreting dominant narratives, institutional discourses and 'traditional historical assumptions...embedded in the evolution of social organisations' (Stanfield II and Dennis 1993: 273, 283). Thus, archival and documentary research is highly suited the post-modern, ethnographic project of critiquing unproblematised narratives of the past (Davies 1999: 163), including the narrative construction of the countryside. By using national, regional and local organisational archives of the National Trust and a number of other documentary sources (see Appendix 1), this thesis intends to expose and critically explore 'tacit narratives' (Ketelaar 2001) embedded in the English countryside, to trace normatively white racialised discourses through the evolution of the Trust from its origins in the late nineteenth century to today. Although archives have been the subject of philosophical attention (for example Foucault 1972; Derrida 1995; Ketelaar 2001), until recently documentary and archival research has received scant treatment in methods textbooks and literature (Burgess 1990: 123). This thesis aims to further illustrate the importance and value of archives, not only in historical and cultural geographical research (Lorimer and Spedding 2002; Withers 2002; Lorimer 2003a; Lorimer 2003b), but also 'in historically oriented social scientific studies of race and ethnicity' (Stanfield II and Dennis 1993: 273).

While archival research opens up the possibility of analysing typically inaccessible powerful institutions and groups (Hood, Mayall et al. 1999: 1), accessing archives and documents can present particular problems when studying powerful organisations (Stanfield II and Dennis 1993) like the National Trust, and even more so when research is sensitive (Kitchin and Tate 2000). As the Trust, by its own admission, 'has relatively little publicly available information about its policies, practices or views' (The National Trust, 1995b: 9), the negotiation of access to the Trust's own archives and records proved to be a central and complex part of the research process. Given that, in this case, processes of negotiating access were almost as revealing as the 'data' itself, it is important to outline such processes in some detail.

As is typical in archival research, I first read published books about the National Trust in order to gain an indication of the wide range of material held by the Trust and (less successfully) to find out where its archives were stored. While the focus on particular sites of Derwentwater in the North West Region and Gibside in the North East enabled Trust

² The term refers dually to the place where documents are stored and preserved and to the documents themselves.

Record Officers to give me a relatively good indication of the kind of material stored at each of the regional offices, there was a lack of consensus about where the Trust's main archives were stored. The (to be sure genuine) uncertainty within the Trust about the location of its own archives speaks volumes about the lack of internal, let alone external knowledge about organisational practices and procedures. Although a series of organisational reviews from the 1960's have repeatedly emphasised the need for the Trust to become more transparent and open (see section 6.2), it still has a way to go with fulfilling these objectives. It is precisely because of this lack of transparency that the National Trust particularly invites and warrants academic attention.

During the time of my inquiries and requests for archival access, the Trust was going through a period of organisational overhaul, through the Blakenham Governance Review (see Chapter 6). The processes involved in trying to secure access to the Trust's various records, and particularly to its 'central' archive brought into sharp relief the discrepancy between the timely philosophical context of researching an organisation that has already begun to turn the mirror upon itself, and the practical problems of investigating an organisation in upheaval. Although Trust staff were co-operative and supportive of the research from the outset, and were willing to grant access to their archives, the internal instability within the organisation at the time meant that the process was somewhat slowed. The absence of a publicly accessible catalogue or database of material also meant that the process of formulating a detailed archival request required for access was speculative and problematic. In this context interviews with a range of 'gatekeepers' from administrative staff to people at the helm of the organisation (see Appendix 3) proved invaluable in helping to pinpoint particular documents and files. Although the following section goes on to detail the differentiated use of 'key informant' interviews, the important point here is the particularly useful application of interviews as a tool for accessing the archive. In my experience, making relations and building trust with gatekeepers proved crucial to the process of negotiating and gaining access to non-public or institutional archives. My positioning as a member of the National Trust also helped afford me access to people and places within the organisation.

While the location of the Trust's central archive remained uncertain and my requests for archival access were shifted between outgoing and incoming staff, I began work at the North West and North East Regional Offices in order to build up information on the two case study sites. Although sifting through the Trust's records in various places has been considered a 'daunting' task by other researchers (Workman 1979), periods at the respective Regional

Offices³ enabled a wide variety of documents to be accessed. I also used a range of public records offices (from the Public Records Office to county records offices) and libraries (local history libraries) in order to supplement privately held organisational documents (see Appendix 1). This 'triangulation of archives' (Stanfield II 1993c) enabled me to tap into a wide range of different kinds of records (see Appendix 2), to get more angles from both inside and outside the National Trust, to corroborate information and build a richer base for analysis.



Figure 3.1: Unlike the Trust's central archive, the location of the Trust's regional offices were well way marked
Source: From author's own photograph collection

In the process of working at different Trust offices and speaking to a range of people within the organisation, the general verdict was that the Trust's main archives were based in Cirencester, at its Estate Department. However, when I got there, it transpired that it was only 'open' un-archived documents, produced over the past two years that were held at the Cirencester office. The rest of the Trust's files were 'closed',⁴ securely stored in a repository called 'Wansdyke'⁵ in Wiltshire. Although this could have been an abortive attempt to access the Trust's archives, with the help of archive lists and staff at Cirencester,⁶ it was possible to order particular boxes from the archival store to work through in the comfort of an office

³ This would not have been possible without the permission and assistance of Trust staff at 'The Hollens' (NW) and 'Scot's Gap' (NE) regional offices, particularly Linda Bowden and Julia Curry.

⁴ The distinction between 'open' and 'closed' files was made by the Trust to refer to recent and current un-archived documents and older files that were archived and stored in Wansdyke.

⁵ The Trust's archive takes the name of Wansdyke Security Ltd. that manages the largest underground vault complex in the United Kingdom. See: <http://www.wansdyke.co.uk/index.html>

⁶ I would like to thank Bernie Allen and Jane Lund for processing my requests and helping to target relevant documents.

environment, to access a wide range of archival and documentary material exogenously.⁷ Working in the office carried the other advantages of enabling contact to be made with people in the Trust, learning about the organisation from an insiders perspective (particularly at a time of internal turmoil), observing how the organisation functioned on a day-to-day basis and accessing individual stores of documents.

Ironically, the internal upheaval within the Trust that impeded my early inquiries also created the circumstances in which I was able to access the Trust's main archive, an all but inaccessible repository. As part of the staff turnover, the Trust appointed a new Records Officer, Lisa Tollen,⁸ who saw my requests for archival access as an opportunity to acquaint herself with the way the Trust stored its information. 'Wansdyke', a disused mine in the small Wiltshire village of Monkton Farleigh where the Trust's archives are stored, was literally and metaphorically a minefield.⁹ Our visit was remarkable given that Wansdyke is strictly inaccessible to the public and apart from rarely authorised people, is not visited at all. The photographs below (see Figure 3.2) give a sense of the strong 'gated' security and sheer scope of the place that could be best described as a grid of seemingly endless underground vaults.



Figure 3.2: The underground vault complex of Wansdyke secure repository
Source: Wansdyke Security Ltd. Website <http://www.wansdyke.co.uk/index.html>

⁷ The generosity extended to me by staff at Cirencester, not least giving me a room to work in and free use of the photocopier, was warmly received and much appreciated.

⁸ Without Lisa, this crucial in-situ archival research would almost certainly never have been able to take place. It is testimony to her energy and enthusiasm that it ever happened.

⁹ 'Wansdyke' was a carved out stone mine hundreds of feet underground that had been used as a Ministry of Defence Depot and wartime munitions store before taking its current use as the largest and most secure underground vault complex in the United Kingdom (Wansdyke Security Limited 2005).

While it was hardly surprising that I was the first member of public to access the Trust's archive given the nature of Wansdyke, it seems paradoxical and somewhat ironic that an organisation that prides itself in providing public access to otherwise private land and buildings has not applied the same standards to its own property.¹⁰ As the Trust's 'archive' is all but inaccessible it is no wonder that there remains a cloud of uncertainty about its work, even among its members and most ardent supporters (as we shall see in Chapter 7). The inability to access its archives also perhaps goes some way to explain the lack of academic attention on the organisation, despite its size and significance, and the way that its history has tended to be narrated from inside the organisation.

Due to the inhospitable and particular conditions of the mine, a closely choreographed performance was orchestrated in order to ensure our safety, comply with the strict security standards, and to optimise our visit. After a briefing from Joe,¹¹ the Manager of Wansdyke who organised and oversaw our visit, this began with a steep descent down countless hundreds of steps, equipped, as the miners would have been, with hard hats and headlamps. As the National Trust vault was literally miles from the mine entrance, we were then transported, via a thrill-filled buggy ride, from the mine entrance to the vault. Given that the mine was dark, cold and dusty, and was far removed from the facilities on the surface, we had to work in intensive sessions with regular breaks, going into, and out of, the mine numerous times a day. Such experiences turn popular perceptions of archival research as inactive, individual and uninspiring on their head.

In the vault, we (Joe, Lisa and myself) set up a temporary workstation and worked closely together, each with specific roles. Lisa searched the Trust's internal database of records on her computer according to my archival request, which Joe then cross-referenced with the Wansdyke database to target the boxes in which particular files and documents were stored (see Figure 3.3). Even though the two databases were used together, doubling the accuracy, the process of locating files within boxes and finding relevant boxes proved to be problematic as the box descriptions often bore little relationship to its contents. While such issues highlighted the Trust's difficulties in fulfilling research requests, they also emphasised the importance of physically being 'in the archive' in order to rummage through numerous boxes to find particular files and documents. Surely then, there is a compelling case for unlocking at least a selection of the Trust's archives (a point to which Chapter 8 will later return).

¹⁰ When I presented this disparity to the Executive Committee at the National Trust Annual General Meeting in 2004, I was assured that the Trust plans to 'open' its archive, although little else was said about when and how this may be achieved.

¹¹ I am extremely grateful to Joe from Wansdyke who made our visit both possible and pleasurable.



Figure 3.3: Inside the vault: the box storage system

Source: Wansdyke Security Ltd. website: <http://www.wansdyke.co.uk/index.html>

Once box codes were identified, Joe pulled the boxes from the vast number of shelves in the vault (see Figure 3.3). Before I could consult the documents and archives stored in the boxes, Lisa scanned the contents for any confidential or sensitive information. Through the vetting of confidential documents, or what has been termed 'surveillance by chaperonage' (Lee 1993: 125), the National Trust exercised control over the documents I could access and consult. As some critics have pointed out, it is often the silences within documents that are the most revealing (Hoggart, Lees et al. 2002: 167). In this case, the perceived threat of documents that make direct reference to race is revealing of the way that beneath its façade of authority lies an anxious Trust that guards against criticism in general and avoids confrontation with racial issues in particular. Although the classification of a significant proportion of correspondence and primary material as confidential restricted the archives I could access, the diversity of documents stored in the Trust's Wansdyke repository meant that I was able to consult a range of official and unofficial, public and private, published and unpublished materials from annual reports to appeals, correspondence to conference proceedings, legislation to leaflets, press articles to position statements (see Appendix 2 for a list of documentary and archival material used in the thesis).

After Lisa vetted the boxes, I trawled through their contents, keeping a careful record of reference numbers and using what has been termed a 'metaphorical knife; to cut through [and] select...materials in a systematic way' (Stanfield II 1993c: 279). While I took notes, as much information as possible was photocopied for time and accuracy purposes.¹² In the

¹² The use of the photocopier was particularly invaluable as it would have been impossible to cover the sheer quantity of information made possible by photocopying relevant material.

evenings, I made 'methodological notes' (as recommended by Burgess 1990 and others), which recorded and reflected on the complex processes and procedures involved with archival research. This analysis has aimed to show that far from being an individual endeavour, archival research relies on the help and support of others. In focusing particularly on the tightly synchronised performances in the Wansdyke archive, it has also sought to stress the rituals and performances involved in archival research. Far from being static and frozen entities, this research aims to illustrate that archives are 'dynamic and virtual concepts' (Cook 2001: 4). In so doing, the thesis contributes to the recent paradigm shift that has understood archives less as stereotyped images of 'dustiness, fustiness and the dead past' (Williams 1992: 221), but rather as 'part of a dynamic and constantly updated continuity between a living present and a living past' (Williams 1992: 221).

The research has also emphasised the importance of using different archives to explore historical narratives through a range of different sources and perspectives. As a range of archival sources and documents were triangulated, different kinds of analysis were deployed (Hoggart, Lees et al. 2002) including 'surface-level' coding of themes, content analysis of themes or associations, textual analysis of social and cultural meanings, discourse analysis of rhetoric and deconstructive readings of texts in order to 'tease out the wider meanings held within the sources' (Kitchin and Tate 2000: 225). As the process of gaining access to the National Trust's archives and its 'Wansdyke' archive revealed, these complex meanings can often only be untangled by making links across methods, between archives, documents, interviews and interactions. The next section goes on to highlight the value of interviews in gaining cultural and physical access to institutional and individual archives.

3.3.2 Key informant interviews

A series of interviews with 'key informants' within the Trust (see Appendix 3) were undertaken in order to gain an insight into the philosophy, policies and practices of the organisation, beyond that available in published accounts or unpublished documents.¹³ While I interviewed fifteen key informants in total, at national (Cirencester Estates Department), regional (the North West and North East Regions) and local property (Borrowdale and Gibside) level, time spent at the respective Trust offices and properties also enabled me to speak to many more staff and volunteers from different sections of the organisation. Interviewees were purposively selected through a process of snowballing, according to their involvement with issues such as education, recreation and interpretation.

¹³ I am indebted to all the key informants who agreed to be interviewed, who generously gave their time to help the research.

The interviews took a number of forms, from structured to unstructured, organised to impromptu, depending on their situation and purpose. While the key informant interviews were face to face, many phone interviews and conversations also greatly aided the research by snowballing interviewees and contacts.

The interviews fulfilled a range of different purposes and functioned in different ways. They enabled a deeper understanding to be discerned of the Trust's past, present and future policies and practices than available in the academic literature. The interviews drew on the knowledge and experiences of a range of people in the organisation, not only in terms of scale of involvement (national, regional, local level) and role (from Head of Access and Recreation to Property Manager and Warden), but also crucially in terms of length of service for the Trust. While some interviews (marked with an asterisk in Appendix 3) tapped into informants deep working experience of the Trust, on historical policy development as well as future policy directions, others, with more recently joined members of staff provided insight into the Trust's current and future priorities and policies. By tapping tacit knowledge about the policies and preoccupations of the Trust at various times and at different scales, interviews played a crucial role in situating this research within the wider policy frame. As well as providing a detailed insight into some of the Trust's policies, projects and priorities in the past, present and future, and at different scales, the interviews also served several procedural roles (see Appendix 3).

Interviews functioned as one of the main mechanisms of gaining access to documents and research sites. As already noted, some interviews, particularly in the absence of a publicly accessible catalogue, provided an alternative and effective way of targeting and ultimately accessing institutional archives. Moreover, as most staff within the Trust tend to keep their own personal records and documents that relate to their specific area of work, interviews with relevant members of staff also enabled access to be gained to personal stores of public and mostly non-public documents that would otherwise have remained unlocked and untapped. Introductory orientation interviews with property managers and other staff also enabled me to build trust and negotiate access to the National Trust properties of Borrowdale and Gidside as the empirical sites for research. As the interviews fulfilled as much of a procedural and an analytic role they were noted rather than taped and were not subject to textual and discourse analysis reserved for visitor interviews.

The interviews were not just extractive, but they crucially provided a forum for discussion and negotiation, for me to give respondents an understanding of my research in order to gain their support, trust and collaboration. They also provided a vital mechanism of gauging

how the research may be received among the Trust. Due to the general unreceptiveness of the Trust to criticism observed by people both inside and outside of the organisation (noted in the previous chapter), general but searching questions were asked about the Trust's public image, appeal and social inclusion (see Figure 3.4). Although this indirect approach enabled interviewees to talk about sensitive and contentious issues of race, it was also limited as it meant working by inference, which was also the case with the visitor survey.

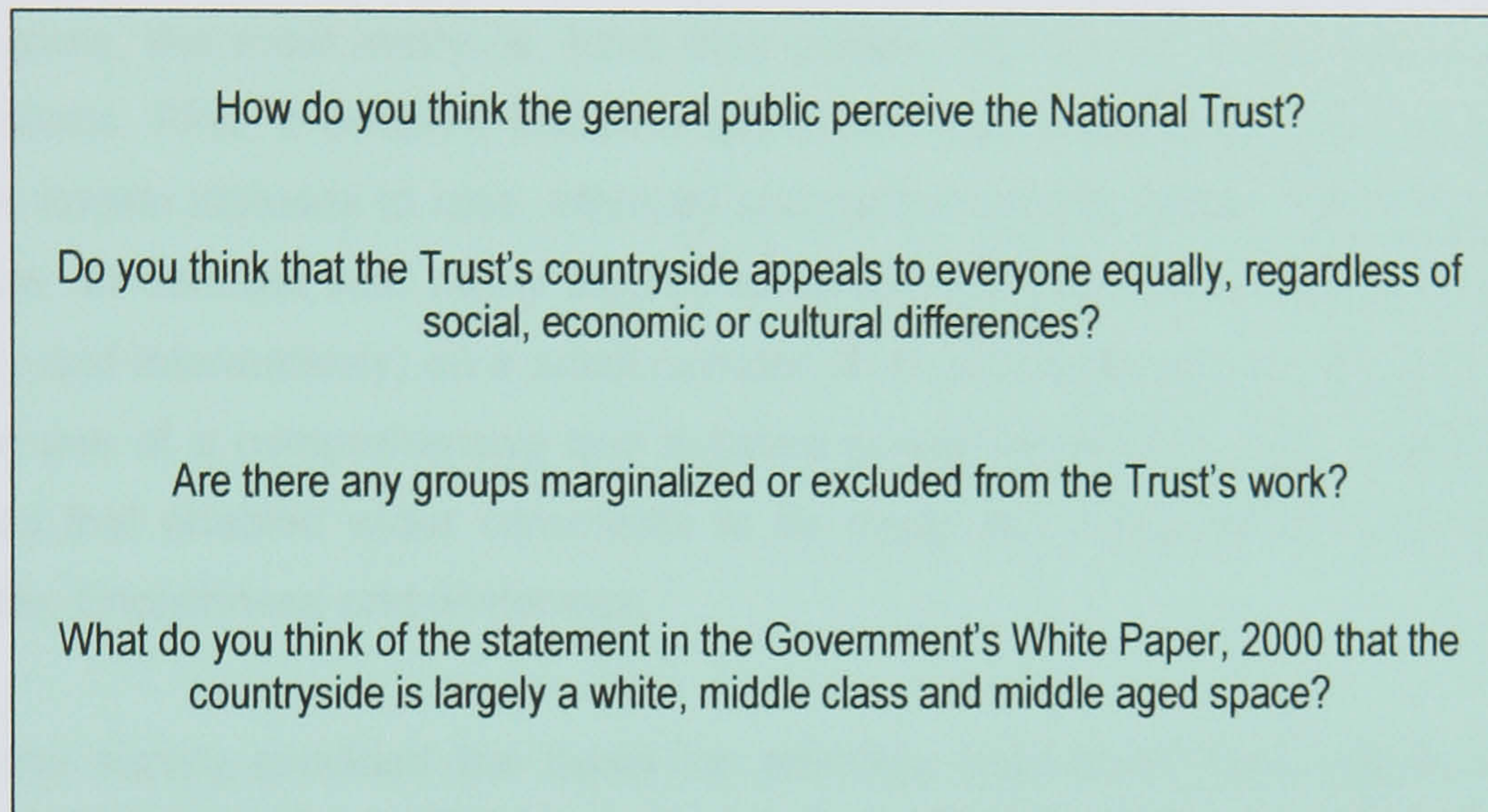


Figure 3.4: Examples of interview questions used to indirectly 'get at' race and whiteness

Like the survey of visitors, key informant interviews exposed a degree of resistance and reluctance to criticise the National Trust and an element of defensiveness about discussing issues of ethnic in/exclusion. For example, one high-profile member of the Trust said of ethnicity 'I find this a very difficult issue, we're going into deep water'. However, the interviews revealed a general receptivity to thinking about issues of cultural and ethnic in/exclusivity. In fact, one informant recognised that Julian Agyeman's interpretation of the English countryside as a 'white landscape' could be extended to the Trust as guardians of that countryside. Another interviewee acknowledged 'the ethnic problem' – the under participation of visible minority communities in the countryside – as one that the Trust needs to address in order to challenge monocultural characterisations of the countryside. As we shall see in Chapter 6, this research aims to feed into such an already reflexive shift within the Trust, to contribute to policy debates on social in/exclusiveness in the English countryside.

3.3.3 Visitor survey/ interviews

A survey of 400 'white' visitors to the English countryside was administered at both sites to reveal the attitudes and identifications of 'white' countryside visitors. It responds to the lack of critical attention to 'white' peoples' attitudes about race and ethnicity in the countryside by contributing detailed qualitative and quantitative research of 'white' visitors' multiple attitudes to the countryside, the National Trust and issues of race and ethnic identity. Although questionnaires, like most methods, have their pitfalls, the survey methodology fulfilled two main functions. First, it enabled baseline qualitative and quantitative data to be collected about little known attitudes to race, ethnicity and racism among 'white' visitors to the English countryside. In contrast with many studies of whiteness that have tended to focus (albeit intensively and informatively) on a small number of respondents (Frankenberg 1993b; Twine 1996), the use of a comprehensive and detailed survey drew out a wide range of attitudes and values that enabled wider comments to be made about the intersecting meanings of countryside, Englishness and whiteness.

Second, the survey provided the basis for anything from short discussions to extended interviews. As it was easily adapted to different situations 'in the field', it facilitated a flexibility of approach. Rather than subscribing to the survey as a total package, from random sampling through to statistical analysis (Alasuutari 1995: 3), this research used it in a more flexible fashion. The survey was principally treated as a conversational tool and sparked a spectrum of different levels of engagement with visitors, from self-completed surveys to face-to-face structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and extended conversations (as shown in Figure 3.5). Although some surveys were self-administered (6% in the Lake District and 7% at Gibside) due to unfavourable weather conditions, time constraints or the case of group interviews (where respondents self-completed the survey in response to interviewer questioning), the vast majority took the form of interviewer administered, face-to-face interviews that ranged in length from a minimum of 10 minutes to a maximum of an hour and a half. The survey facilitated face-to face contact with people who may otherwise have been hard to access and approach. Although questionnaire surveys have been criticised for tending 'to ask a rigid set of simple questions which 'force' or push the respondents answers into particular categories', the flexible use of surveys in this project indicated that questionnaires, like interviews, can also be 'sensitive and people-oriented' as they proved to be a useful mechanism of broaching sensitive issues of race, ethnicity and national identity and provided an opportunity for visitors 'to construct their own accounts of their experiences...in their own words' (Valentine 1997: 110-111).

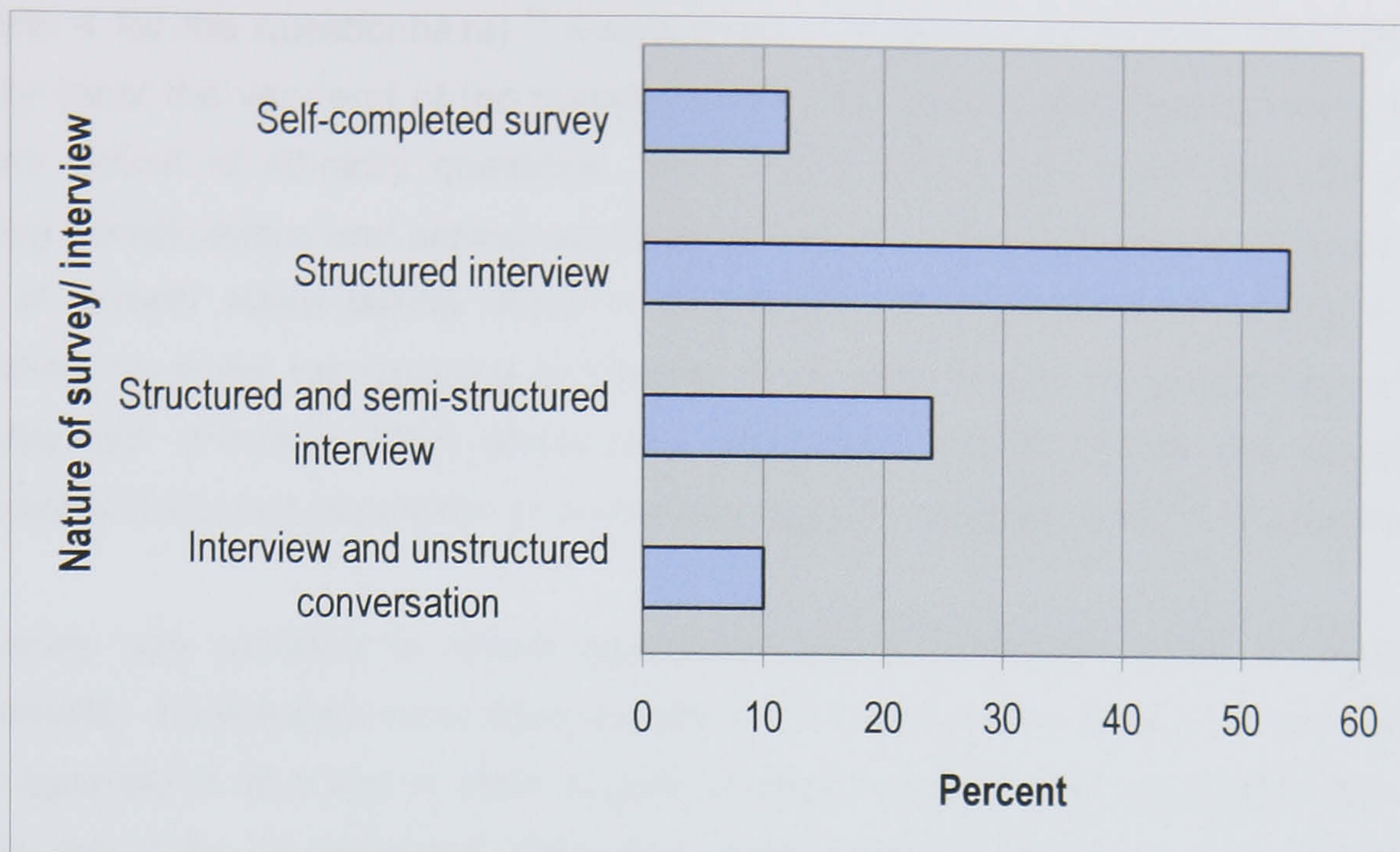


Figure 3.5: Different implementations of the survey

Recognising that '[A]sking ethnicity questions is somewhat akin to walking with bare feet on broken glass – no matter how elegantly you cross the space... somewhere along the line you know there is going to be pain' (Hoggart, Lees et al. 2002: 104), the survey employed a number of strategies to ask such sensitive questions. One of the main strategies used was to embed questions about race, ethnicity and racism in more general questions about the countryside, in order to minimise the threat to visitors, as recommended by Lee (1993: 75). The survey also combined direct statements with indirect questions, enabling some supposedly straightforward attitudes to be unpacked in order to unveil how apparently value-neutral views are subtly inflected by race. Another core strategy used was the positioning of sensitive questions near the end of the survey. By leading up to more controversial questions through a series of questions about countryside and English national identity, that visitors felt not only comfortable, but also passionate about, respondents were encouraged to express their strong beliefs before issues of race and ethnicity were broached. Building up to sensitive questions gave time to build trust and rapport with respondents to enable them to express their opinions as freely as possible. This proved to be a generally effective way of getting people to vocalise their views without fear of embarrassment or judgement.

The questionnaire was structured around five main sections that were designed to discern (in order): details of the visit, attitudes towards and behaviours in the countryside, attitudes about the countryside, national and ethnic identity and the National Trust, perceptions of the National Trust and personal characteristics of the visitor, including ethnic self-definition (see

Appendix 4 for the questionnaire).¹⁴ Furthermore, asking respondents to define their own ethnicity (near the very end of the survey), rather than forcing them into a pre-determined category typical of ethnicity questions, went some way to get round the difficulties of imposing classifications and asking questions about race. Although the survey uncovered a sense of anxiety about talking about race and a reluctance of 'white' people to define themselves as white (as explored in Chapter 7), it also served to successfully stimulate 'everyday talk' (Phoenix 2004) about race and racism, which throws into question the conventional (too) neat separation of methodologies into 'questionnaires' and 'interviews'.

The survey was sensitive to ethical considerations of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality. Participants were informed about the purpose and general content of survey before agreeing to take part in order to gain 'informed consent' (De Vaus 2002: 60). Apart from in the case of extended interviews where visitors revealed much more about themselves, visitor anonymity was preserved and for all participants confidentiality was honoured. For analytical purposes, visitors' were attributed numbers (from 1-400), which have been maintained in order to attach particular views to individual visitors while also preserving confidentiality (as in Chapter 7).

Rather than using statistical, representative or random sampling characteristic of quantitative approaches, the sampling was both use-determined to represent the diversity of countryside uses and activities, while also being dependent on practical considerations. The survey attempted to generally strike a balance between male and female visitors (43% and 57% respectively) and members and non-members of the National Trust (48% in comparison with 52%). The sample unit selected was a 'party', be it an individual, (predominantly) a couple, a family or a group of people visiting the site together. Where possible, respondents were purposively sampled to attempt to tap the variety of users and activities at each of the sites, from the everyday (dog-walkers, strollers, berry-pickers) to enthusiasts (climbers, mountain bikers, birdwatchers). In order to speak to different types of visitors, the survey was done at different times in the year from March to October, including during school and bank holidays and during weekends and weekdays. Also events like Gibside's 'Heritage Open Day' (see Figure 3.6) and Borrowdale's Derwent Island open weekend, specifically intended to pull in more than the core constituency of visitors, were targeted to attempt to access the widest possible range of visitors from the frequent to the first time. Crucially, in the context of these busy open days that tend to attract a wide range of visitors, many people that would otherwise not have been accessible participated in the survey.

¹⁴ A pre-test was undertaken to air out any structural inconsistencies, breaks of flow and to check timings.



Figure 3.6: Supervised access to Gibside Hall as part of Gibside's 'Heritage Open Day', 13th September 2003
Source: From author's own photograph collection

Although there was a conscious effort made to speak to a wide variety of visitors (in terms of age and activity), there was an inherent bias within the survey because it demanded that visitors had time and inclination to talk, which meant catching people during moments of pausing, resting or contemplating. However, as both sites had visitor hubs where all different kinds of people began and ended their visit, a range of visitors could be interviewed, not just the less active and elderly. As a popular 'honey pot' site that attracts a variety of visitors, the vast majority of Derwentwater interviews (78.5%) were administered along the popular Keswick lakeside section from (but not including) Crow Park to Friar's Crag (see Figure 3.7 showing one of the most common interview sites). As it provides a number of amenities including a car park, toilets, shop, café and the Keswick launch (that ferries people to different points around the lake throughout the day), the 'lakeside' acts as a hub for all different kinds of visitors and was therefore an ideal location to speak to a wide range of people. Similarly at Gibside, almost all visitors spent some time around the focal area of the shop, café, information centre and child's playground, which provided an opportune place to speak to visitors. Even though the majority of surveys were administered in this general area, visitors' were interviewed at various points throughout the wider estate in order to speak to all different kinds of people, from those visiting Gibside for lunch in the teashop, to holidaymakers staying at Gibside in the Landmark Trust's 'Banqueting House'.



Figure 3.7: The visitor hub of Derwentwater lakeside
Source: From author's own photograph collection

The survey generated a wealth of categorical data through 400 responses (a quota of 200 at each site) to a range of open ended, closed and scaled¹⁵ questions. However, as the survey was used iteratively and flexibly as a conversational tool, it also generated a mass of comments from respondents, ranging from the pithy to the prolific. The categorical data was inputted and processed through the use of the SPSS computer package. Interview material was partly post coded and analysed using the programme and partly analysed through the use of content and discourse analysis. Impromptu informal interviews were additionally used to glean information from other relevant informants, for example from National Trust employees and volunteers at the sites who shared their observations and experiences about a range of issues from changing visitor trends over time to motivations for volunteering. As the interviews were largely opportune – either stemming from the questionnaire or functioning as stand-alone targeted conversations, they were informally noted rather than formally taped. Observation was also important in order to get a flavour of different usages of nature-spaces, of how people act and react in the countryside and of the different interactions between National Trust staff, volunteers and visitors at each of the sites. Overall, the varied application of a survey method – one familiar with the general public – was a useful (albeit limited like any method)¹⁶ tool used in rendering whiteness intelligible.

¹⁵ The Likert scaling procedure was used to determine visitors attitudes to a range of statements on a five point scale, from 1 for strongly agree to 5 for strongly disagree.

¹⁶ One such limitation was the 'Hawthorne Effect' where respondents behaved differently because they were being investigated (Hoggart et al. 2002). For example, even visitors who espoused some of the more overtly racist views were anxious not to be seen to contravene political correctness.

3.4 Conclusion

In combination, archival research, key informant interviews and visitor surveys/ interviews enabled historical and contemporary, national and local, institutional and individual inflections of white racial formations to be analysed. Like any research, it was limited by time, money and labour power, but the synchronous use of different methodologies enabled discourses of whiteness to be traced through institutional narratives and individual attitudes in order to analyse the cultural complexities of whiteness. By raising some of the complexities of researching whiteness, the chapter has aimed go some way to counter the tendency to neglect the 'often messy and complex sets of issues that confront researchers in the sensitive field of race and ethnicity research (Bulmer and Solomos 2004: 11). If a 'sensitive topic' is defined as one that 'seems to threaten the alignments or interests of those being studied' (Lee 1993: 8), then critical studies of whiteness, which 'seek to disinter their object...excavate its empty normativity, and call for transcending its status, nomenclature and content altogether' (Bhatt 2004), undoubtedly fall under this banner. Moreover, by bringing dominant whites and institutional formations of whiteness into critical scrutiny in line with the recent shift from studying the subaltern to qualitative studies of elites (Crang 2002: 648), this research is arguably even more 'sensitive' as it seeks to destabilise and disrupt dominant discourses of national and ethnic identity.

While the reception to the Parekh Report provides sure indication that any attempt to relate whiteness to Englishness is likely to be a controversial and sensitive manoeuvre, the thesis is not intended to be threatening. Rather, as already noted, the thesis not only aims to contribute a nuanced historical and empirically grounded analysis of whiteness to an arguably a-historical and a-theoretical field of race research (Stanfield II 1993c: 283), but also to make a positive contribution to existing policy concerns about social in/exclusion in the countryside. While the Trust, in the words of one of its employees, is 'only just starting to dip...[its] toes into the water' of ethnic environmental inclusion and outreach work, this thesis seeks to feed into and develop the growing recognition among the Trust and other organisations that the countryside is racialised. The next chapter takes up exactly this point by arguing that from the mid to late nineteenth century, the discourse of preservation in general, and the National Trust in particular, has been implicitly inflected by race.

Chapter 4

Institutional whiteness: Preservationism and The National Trust

4.1 Introduction

'(T)he beauties of the common home of the Anglo-Saxon race'

(The National Trust, Fourth Annual Report of the Council, 1898-1899: 14)

'I have been forced to reconstruct from fragments, and to infer'

(Ignatiev 1995: 179)

The chapter advances a two-pronged analysis of the historical co-construction of whiteness and countryside in the period from the mid to late nineteenth century through the discourse of preservationism and the philosophy of the National Trust. In so doing, it takes up Vron Ware's challenge to produce a two-layered 'radical analysis of whiteness' (2002b: 199). First it explores the central role of the National Trust in the construction of a nationalist narrative of the countryside and in the process of white nation building through the acquisition of places it deemed, in one of its early annual reports, to be representative of 'the common home of the Anglo-Saxon race' (see the above quote). Second, the chapter – having demonstrated the signal importance of the National Trust in this process – proceeds to productively complicate our understanding of that nationalist narrative. It argues that, even within such a powerful organisation of the Trust, whiteness is an ambivalent, anxious condition. Thus, the chapter attempts to hold in tension these two dimensions of racialised whiteness – both its normative strength *and* its provisional and precarious condition.

Although the chapter mainly focuses on the Trust's formative and early years (from its foundation in 1895 through to the institutionalisation of its constitution in the first National Trust Act of 1907), it is by no means solely confined to this period and where appropriate references are made to other episodes in its history. The chapter draws on a variety of primary and secondary material (see Appendix 2), predominantly on foundational documents of the organisation such as legislation and early Annual Reports, but also on other sources produced at various times throughout the Trust's history, including contemporary

commentaries and retrospective accounts that help shed insight into the philosophy of the Trust. As the above quote from Ignatiev signals, like other historical analyses of white racialisation, the fragmentary nature of the Trust's archives has demanded a certain degree of inference from a range documents. Based on the recognition that it is impossible to understand the Trust without framing it within the wider preservation movement, the chapter first attempts to make whiteness intelligible as a jointly authoritative and anxious discourse within preservationism.

4.2 The ambivalent discourse of preservationism

'(P)reservationists use binary absolutes in their statements both to raise the stakes and claim a clear and absolute authority over the landscape.'

(Matless 1998: 26)

'Englishness is here revealed, in the moment of its vanishing, as whiteness.'

(Baucom 1999: 15)

A group now definable as 'preservationists' played a crucial role in codifying and constructing the countryside as the idealised essence of (white) England. Although 'preservationists' were far from a united, organised group of people and preservationist precursors existed in the form of various Societies of Antiquities since the end of the eighteenth century (Murphy 2002: 100), in the late Victorian period preservationist ideas gained cultural authority, became increasingly institutionalised within a diverse preservationist lobby and inspired public support to a greater extent than ever before. Whether preservationism, as one of its leading figures judged at the time, was the preserve of a 'newly embattled little band of conservationists' (Williams-Ellis 1975: 1, first published 1928) or whether, as some have assessed with the benefit of hindsight, it had become 'hegemonic within English culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' (Burchardt 2002: 99), it certainly played a part in the nationalisation of history and shaping English national identity around an idealised image of the English countryside.

As we saw in Chapter 2, the advent of rapid urbanisation, industrialisation and modernisation in the late nineteenth century gave rise to 'a need for a rootedness in the past' and particularly 'for roots in the countryside' (Walsh 1992: 127). By deploying binary oppositions and positing the bucolic, Arcadian countryside against the city, preservationists played a crucial role in forging an idealised portrait of rural England. Preservationists mobilised imagined divides between city and country – between the polluted, crowded, chaotic and

ugly city and the pure, ordered, natural and beautiful countryside (see Figure 4.1) – in order to add urgency to their campaigns to preserve rural England and to add affective authority to their claim to speak on behalf of the nation. The landmark preservation plea *'England and the Octopus'* in its very title, and indeed its cover imagery, epitomises the way that preservationism constituted (and relied for its logic upon) dichotomous oppositions that posited the idealised rural nation of 'England' against the invasive urban sprawl of the 'Octopus' (Williams-Ellis 1975, first published 1928, see Figure 4.1).

White countryside- 'England'	Black cities-the 'octopus'
England	Britain
Natural	Unnatural
Native	Alien
Ours	Theirs
Moral	Corrupt
Order	Disorder/ chaos
Purity	Pollution
Beauty	Beast/ ugly
Old	New
Past	Present/ future
Tradition	Modernity
Continuity	Change
Consumption	Production
Leisure	Work
Individual/ solitude	Communal/collective
Spiritual	Material
Freedom	Confinement
Quiet	Noisy
Security	Danger
Health	Illness

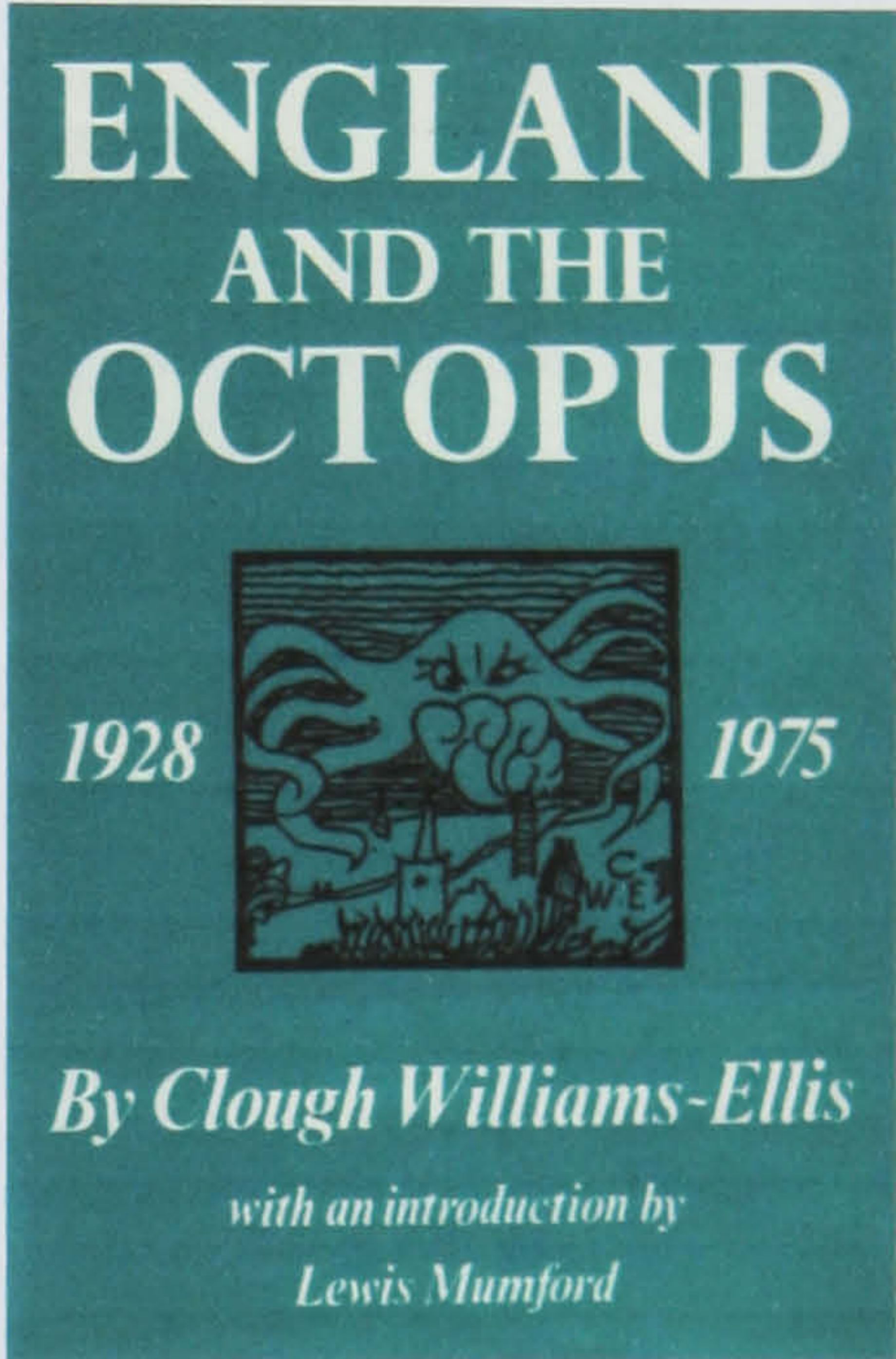


Figure 4.1: 'England and the Octopus': The dichotomous discourse of preservationism
Source: (Right) 'England and the Octopus' dust jacket (1975 edition first published 1928)

Leading preservationists like George Trevelyan, who played an influential role in the Trust, overlaid such binary absolutes, equating, for example, the 'old...with the beautiful, and the new with the ugly' (1929: 14). Moreover, as we see in Wordsworth's *'Prelude'*, the rural England so eloquently evoked in his poetry stood in stark contrast to cities peopled by 'all specimens of man/ Through all the colours which the sun bestows' (Wordsworth 1971: 262, lines 222-3). In opposition to the multicultural city, which we have already seen to be associated with moral and racial decline in Victorian times, the countryside was implicitly coded by pioneering preservationists as a site of moral, spiritual and racial purity. In its conflation of the rural past with racial purity and the modern city with multiculturalism, the preservationist discourse enlisted the 'white past/ multicultural present' binary in the

historical understanding of Britain, which has served to erase the fact of a long-standing non-white presence from the national geographical imagination of England (Naidoo 2005; Littler and Naidoo 2004). As Bruce Braun has argued (2003: 197, emphasis added):

'Consistent with a discourse that linked nonwhites with degeneracy and...with the city, nature was troped as a site of moral and racial purity: the true foundation of the nation, and the true home [of its white citizens]... The journey into nature was in part how whiteness was constructed'.

Thus, as we will go on to see, given that preservationists bestowed particular 'spiritual and aesthetic values' (Trevelyan 1929: 21) on the English countryside, implicitly associated with racialised notions of moral and ethnic purity, the process of preserving idealised tracts of the countryside as part of national heritage and identity was certainly a part of how whiteness was constructed.

Although preservationists enrolled binary absolutes to stake a powerful claim over the English nation, their authority was inextricably bound up by late Victorian anxieties over the decline and degradation of rural, 'deep', 'old' England. The famous cartoon shown in Figure 4.2 by Trust supporter Kenneth Bird powerfully captures the discourse of English decline that motivated the preservationist lobby from the mid to late nineteenth century onwards. It vividly illustrates preservationist foreboding of a decline, if not disintegration of Englishness, of a futile future where England no longer exists, or at least only as a cultural artefact, in poetry and painting. As the eminent historian and Trust Vice-Chairman George Trevelyan questioned in his impassioned plea on behalf of the National Trust (1929: 15):

'Where, men will say, was this England that we read of in the old poets from Chaucer to Rupert Brooke, that we see depicted in the old landscape painters, the England which men crossed the ocean to visit on account of its delicate beauty, the England which the young men went to die to save in the...War?

Such emotive preservationist pleas established the preservation of rural, old England as an act of patriotism. By positing the 'native soil' of the English countryside, with its rolling fields, quaint houses, statuesque churches and abundant trees as under threat by 'alien' factories, chimneys, tarmac and telegraph poles, preservationists played on (wartime) fears about the loss of Englishness. In Williams-Ellis' preservationist doctrines, England was rendered mortally defenceless against such urban encroachment – against the sprawling 'octopus' (Williams-Ellis 1975, first published 1928) of ribbon development, or the 'beast' (Williams-Ellis 1937a) of urban expansion. Other influential figures at the time also extended this imagery, personifying rural England as a corpse mutilated by animate invaders:

'the towns are throwing their ever lengthening tentacles of brick and mortar over the country; round every corner pops up a perky new villa, and the green face of England's landscape comes out in an inflamed rash of angry pink' (Joad 1937: 81).

The countryside was not only considered susceptible to 'rash' 'disfigurement' and 'disease', at the mercy of 'invasive' processes associated with 'urbanity', 'impurity' and 'blackness', but it was also codified in a gendered rescue narrative as a vulnerable and violated land that needed urgent preservation (largely by patriotic, paternalistic white men like Mr Smith).

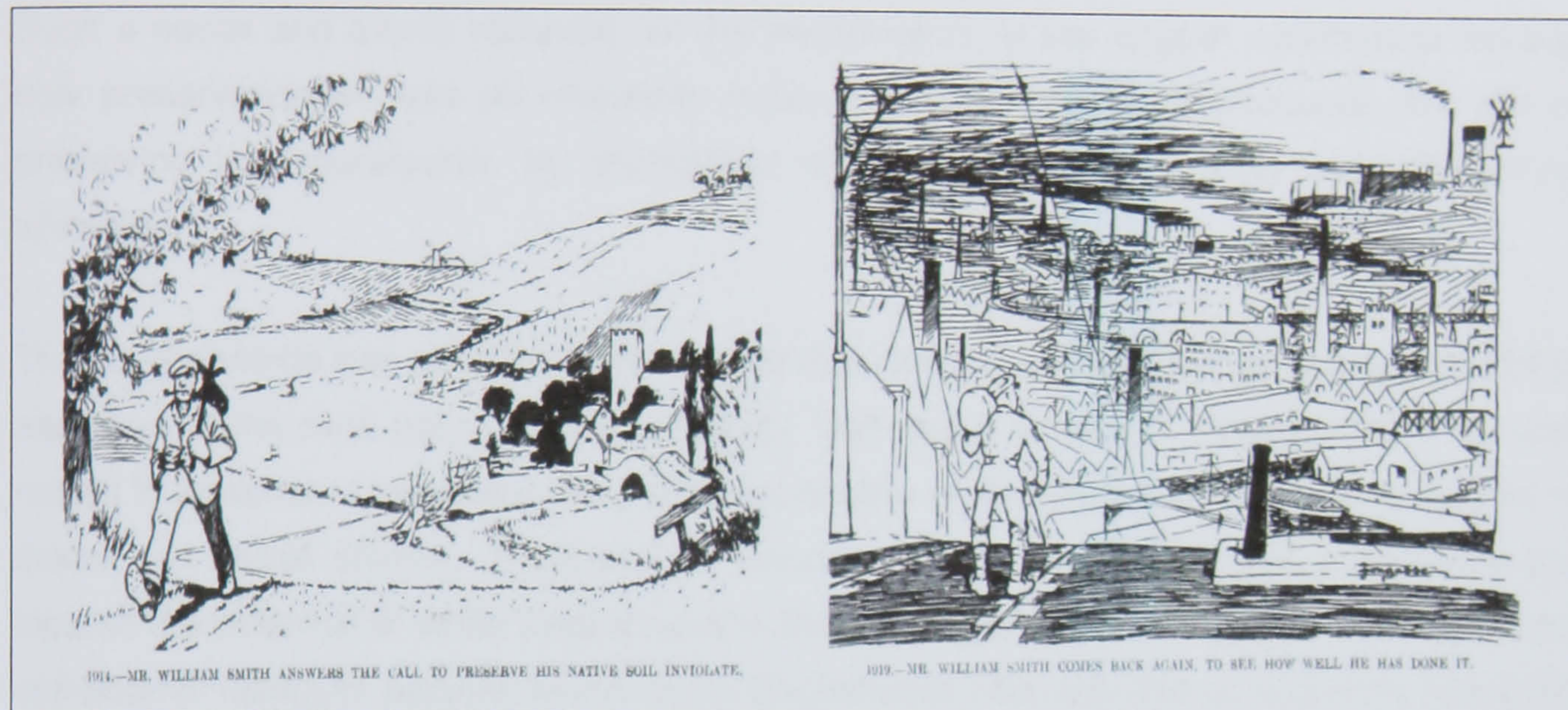


Figure 4.2: Preservationist anxiety

Source: Originally appeared in *Punch*, here from Waterson 1994: 261

The reproduction of this cartoon as the frontispiece of *England and the Octopus*, which became 'the flying banner of the ecological movement' (Mumford 1974: ix), indicates how preservationists harnessed such images to articulate their anxieties over what Williams-Ellis described as the 'mass violation' (1975: 19, first published 1928) of rural England. Such fears for the loss of the rural landscape were inextricably intertwined with anxieties over moral and racial decline and the loss of 'native' white Englishness as:

'Fears of *imperial decline, racial degeneration and class warfare* laid the foundation stones for a variety of bodies in these years – from Baden Powell's Boy Scouts to Cecil Sharp's Folk Dance Society – all *anxious* to counter the unhealthy physical and mental conditions of urban life by bringing its 'victims' into contact with the natural world' (Trentmann 1994: 585, emphasis added).

In contrast to the city, the countryside was not only coded as a place of purity (in the moral, spiritual and racial senses), but also as a *purifier* – as a remedy for urban malaise, particularly of the (not-quite 'white') working classes, as highlighted in Chapter 2. In fact, as we see from George Trevelyan's preservationist polemic *Must England's Beauty Perish?* (1929: 20), the preservation of the countryside was considered less important for its own sake, on environmental and ecological grounds, than for the necessary preservation of the English race:

'Whether trees or animals, ought to be preserved "for their own sakes" is an interesting question on which different opinions might be held. But the argument for the preservation of natural scenery and the wild life of English fauna and flora may be based on motives that regard the welfare of human beings alone...To preserve the bird life of the country is required in the spiritual interests of the human race, more particularly of the English section of it'.

Such a social and ethnic rationale for the preservation of the English countryside reveals how preservationism was an inherently nationalised and racialised discourse. The act of preserving the countryside, by implication, was related to the anxiety over preserving whiteness.

This brief analysis has aimed to demonstrate that rather than only ever entailing a confident assertion of the rural nation, preservationists' 'self-styled authority' (Matless 1998: 38) was rooted in anxieties surrounding the perceived decline of the English countryside and fears of moral and racial dilution. According to Baucom (1999: 15), given that preservationists located the essence of white Englishness in the countryside, in such an anxious and fearful condition of losing its pastoral foundations, Englishness was exposed as a specific formation of racialised whiteness. While the chapter has so far argued that preservationism was an implicitly and ambiguously racialised discourse, it develops by analysing the interlocking discourses of 'white authority' and 'white anxiety' through the organisation of the National Trust.

4.3 The discourse of white authority

'Perhaps the central overarching theme in scholarship on whiteness is the argument that white identity is decisively shaped by the exercise of power and the expectation of advantages in acquiring property.'

(Roediger 2002: 2)

As one of the pioneering and most powerful preservation organisations, which in its second year attributed itself 'the credit of initiating a movement [preservationism] which is now found to correspond to a general need' (The National Trust 1897:13), the National Trust has played an important part in authorising the nation – precisely through the exercise of legislative power and the resultant acquisition of property referred to by David Roediger. By analysing the role of The National Trust in the making of the white racialised countryside in England, particularly its unique constitutional powers of 'acquiring property', the thesis contributes to Roediger's (2002) postulated 'central overarching theme' of critical whiteness scholarship.

4.3.1 Narrating the nation

With the twin recognition that the 'nation' is an 'imagined political community' (Anderson 1991: 6), and that it was during the last quarter of the nineteenth century that English national identity and culture were imagined, the question of 'whose account of Englishness and the national culture was authorised during this period' (Dodd 1986:1) becomes central to understanding the process of nation building. This section argues that the Trust played a particularly important role in 'narrating the nation' (Bhabha 1990) around the powerful central plot of an idealised, mythological white racialised English countryside. Although '[T]he late nineteenth century saw a sudden and sustained flowering of societies and committees for protecting and preserving pieces of old England from urban and industrial depredations' (Marsh 1982: 39), the Trust carved out a unique role for itself in national life. Whereas other early preservation organisations tended to be based around singular issues (see Table 4.1) and to be geographically limited (many were either London or Lake District focused), the National Trust embraced a multiplicity of issues and diverse concerns on an unprecedented, 'national' scale. By projecting a host of different national concerns – from the preservation of areas of historic interest and natural beauty, to the provision of public access – the Trust had a wider influence (and stake) in defining and materially ascribing the constitutive elements of English national identity than any of its predecessors.

In fact, as set out in its *'Report of the Provisional Council'* (1895:3), the Trust was established precisely because other preservation organisations (see Table 4.1) lacked the power to 'hold lands or houses for the national benefit' (The National Trust 1895: 3). Through their involvement in other early preservation organisations, all three founders of the Trust – Robert Hunter, Octavia Hill and Hardwicke Rawnsley – acknowledged the need for an organisation with powers of landownership. As solicitor to the Commons Preservation Society (CPS), Robert Hunter targeted the need, in his *'Essay on preservation of the commons'* (c.1866: 371), for 'the creation of an influential body, whose duty it should be to protect the interests of commoners and the public in open spaces, and to see that they were used in the manner most conducive to general enjoyment'. Around the same time, Octavia Hill, the housing and social reformer, appealed to 'the conscience of the nation' to support the 'attempt to keep them [the commons] open' to the public (Hill 1877: 11). Similarly, through his Lake District Defence Society (LDDS), Hardwicke Rawnsley campaigned to safeguard the Lake District 'for the lasting benefit of the nation' (Rawnsley 1920: 7), as a crucial part of the *'Nation's Heritage'*. Each of the founders foresaw the need for a 'corporate body to hold lands or houses for the national benefit' and, as recorded in its Provisional Report, joined forces to 'supply this want' in the guise of the National Trust (The National

Trust 1895: 3). As we shall see, through its unique powers of landownership, the Trust played an unparalleled, authoritative role in defining national heritage and securing the rural as a symbolic landscape of the authentic nation (Bonnett 2002: 359).

Year founded	Organisation	Main purpose
1865	Commons Preservation Society (C.P.S)	Secure public access to open spaces near towns
1871	Guild of St. George	Provide schools, build museums, acquire land
1877	Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings (S.P.A.B)	Preserve ancient buildings
1878	Kyrle Society	Secure access of poor people to beautiful objects and small urban spaces
1882	Derwentwater and Borrowdale Defence Committee	Defence of Borrowdale against development or visual spoliation
1883	Lake District Defence Society (L.D.D.S)	Defence of the Lake District from railway and urban development
1884	The National Footpaths Preservation Society (N.F.P.S)	Preserve footpaths and defend public rights of way
1889	Society for the Protection of Birds (S.P.B)	Protect and conserve threatened species of birds
1895	The National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty (NT)	Preserve places of historic interest and natural beauty for the benefit of the public through private ownership

Table 4.1: The principal pioneering preservation organisations 1865-1895

The Trust's particular power and cultural authority was due in no small part to its ability to bridge the deep-seated divide between private property and public interest. While the Trust's governing object, laid down in its first few Annual Reports, was 'to acquire and hold beautiful and interesting places' (The National Trust 1897: 3), to preserve property 'for the use and enjoyment of the nation' (The National Trust 1896: 2), it did so through private land acquisition and ownership. From the outset, the Trust established preservation as a public concern within the relations of private property. For example, in one of his many books on the Lake District, Rawnsley envisaged that while the public would benefit through access to a wide range of otherwise inaccessible landscapes and buildings, 'free at all times to all comers' (1894a: 2), landowners also stood to benefit as 'keeping the land *in statu quo*' (1894a: 2, original emphasis) offered them the opportunity to avoid having to sacrifice their land to private enterprise or to the uncertain future of public ownership. By assuming the power to define and classify what constituted (so called) 'public' interest and according itself the right to act 'for the benefit of the nation', the Trust has, from its outset, been a crucial actor in the making of a nationalist narrative of the countryside.

Moreover, by fusing the historically constructed categories of 'historic interest' and 'natural beauty' and deploying them as constituents of the 'nation', the Trust performed an important role in defining national heritage. In its '*Second Annual Report of the Council*', we see how the Trust regarded preservation to be a patriotic imperative, central to the 'colonising' mission:

'England, without the places of historic interest or natural beauty that are continually being threatened, would be a poorer country and less likely to attract and hold the affections of her sons who, far away, are *colonising the waste places* of the Earth...The work of the Society, however humble, claims to be a *work of true patriotism*' (The National Trust 1897: 8, emphasis added).

It was not in opposition to, but *in spite of* its apparently humble concerns, that the Trust set itself up as a pervader of patriotism. The Report also starkly exposes the Trust's ascription to the central assumption that justified the 'imperial mission' – that countries are no more than 'waste places' prior to colonisation. The preservation of places of historic interest and natural beauty (the antithesis to 'waste places') was, by implication, integral to, not disconnected from the project of imperialism. Thus, the combination of 'historic interest' and 'natural beauty' institutionalised within the Trust served not only to naturalise an aesthetic, intellectualised, bourgeois interpretation of history and society into 'national' culture (Wright 1985), but arguably, based on such a patriotic and imperialistic rationale, a *white* bourgeois culture into national culture.

4.3.2 Whiteness as cultural capital

The National Trust was partly encultured as a white organisation through links with other preservation societies, by gaining institutional credibility and cultural capital through association with already influential English establishments. The three organisations in which the founders of the National Trust were involved reveal this interlocking membership and organisational overlap. While Robert Hunter was the Solicitor to the Commons Preservation Society, he also served as honorary legal adviser to the Open Spaces Committee of Octavia's Kyrle Society. Similarly, outside her own organisation, Octavia was also an active member of the Open Spaces Society Executive Committee. Rawnsley's brainchild, the Lake District Defence Society, which worked in close collaboration with both organisations, had a similar support base drawn primarily from the ranks of the professional and intellectual elites (Marshall and Walton 1981; Murphy 2002). Although each organisation had their own aims and objectives (see Table 4.1), they importantly shared 'an interlocking membership and an overlapping vocabulary' (Dodd 1986: 2) we might call "white national identity", which became further institutionalised and cemented within in the overarching, umbrella organisation of the National Trust.

As the Trust was a composite of these three institutions and individuals, and a host of others besides, it was a cocktail of already powerful and prestigious people like John Ruskin, drawn from the upper echelons of English public and political life. By fusing the concerns of a fairly diverse preservationist lobby and using contacts to the full, the Trust had an automatic and highly accomplished support base that bestowed authority, legitimacy and power on the organisation from the outset. At a time when institutions were so pivotal in defining Englishness, when English national identity was strongly rooted in and equated with 'establishment' organisations, the founders of the Trust realised ahead of their time that in order 'to belong to the national life one had to belong or affiliate to certain English institutions: the Anglican Church – Oxford or Cambridge University' (Dodd 1986: 3). For example, in its *'Fifth Annual Report'*, the Trust stressed that 'The Council have long felt that the hearty co-operation of Archaeological and other societies throughout the United Kingdom was essential to the achievement of the objects for which the Trust exists' (The National Trust 1900: 9). Based on such a recognition, the Trust spent three years handpicking eminent people to serve on its Council who it envisaged would 'lend weight to the action of the Society' (The National Trust 1898: 3). The extract from the *'Report of the Provisional Council'* (see Figure 4.3) shows the assemblage of aristocrats, academics, artists, architects, archaeologists and the like that were selected to work 'for the benefit of the nation'. Even some aristocratic members of its Council, such as the Earl of Antrim (the Trust's Chairman from 1965) retrospectively recognised that 'the Trust had been a self-perpetuating oligarchy from the day of its first meeting at 1 Great College Street in January 1895' (cited in Weideger 1994: 65). By associating itself with individuals and institutions that were considered to be bastions and custodians of English national culture, the Trust embedded itself in the aesthetic and intellectual elite, and occupied an authoritative position snugly nestled in the 'lap of the English establishment' (Weideger 1994: 3). Its high profile backing brought with it a respectability and credibility that served to 'invoke whiteness by way of its appeal to bourgeois characteristics' (Moon 1999: 182).

While the Trust gained cultural capital through its association and affiliation with esteemed organizations and individuals, in turn those concerned also gained cultural capital. In this exchange of respectability and prestige the employees of the Trust profited more from social status, moral virtue and cultural privileges than financially. As James Lee-Milne, Country House Secretary from 1936 explained in his retrospective account of the Trust (1992: 5):

'Certainly we felt privileged to be working for the National Trust. It was not a career – we were paid next to nothing – but a dedication like nursing or being in Holy Orders. We were united by a strong missionary zeal to proselytize the caring and acquire more properties'.

At least until Lee-Milne's era in the mid thirties, when the National Trust was still a very small affair and had few staff, working for the organization that was graced with high-powered committee chairmen and public figures, carried a psychological wage or prestige and a moral virtue that compensated for the poor monetary wage. Such, according to Roediger (1991), were the 'wages of whiteness'. Similarly, the whiteness enshrined in the Trust could be acquired by supporting the Trust through either gifts of money (property, donations or membership contribution) or what the Trust, in its seminal document on volunteering, called '*Gifts of Time*' (1985). Rather than any material privileges, donors and members received cultural capital in the form of the highly-prized Trust virtue of 'spiritual enrichment' (The National Trust 1983: 12) we might call moral whiteness. By becoming members, by joining a 'white club', privileged people who had time or money to spare, acquired the status of whiteness and 'became white'. The process of acquiring cultural capital emerges within the National Trust as the 'acquisition of a racialised notion of bourgeois respectability' (Moon 1999: 182) attained through subscribing to and supporting the Trust's values.

PROVISIONAL COUNCIL.	
His Grace the Duke of DEVONSHIRE, K.G.	
*His Grace the Duke of WESTMINSTER, K.G. (President).	
The Most Honourable the Marquis of DUFFERIN AND AVA, G.C.B., G.C.S.I.	
The Most Honourable the Marquis of RIPON.	
*The Right Honourable the Earl of CARLISLE.	
The Right Honourable the Earl of ROSEBERY, K.G.	
The Right Honourable the Lord HOBHOUSE.	
The Right Honourable the Lord TENNYSON.	
The Right Honourable Sir JOHN LUBBOCK, Bart., M.P.	
The Right Honourable G. SHAW-LEFEVRE, M.P.	
The Right Honourable JAMES BRYCE, M.P.	
The Right Honourable LEONARD COURTNEY, M.P.	
The Right Honourable T. H. HUXLEY.	
Sir FREDERICK LEIGHTON, Bart., President of the Royal Academy.	
THOMAS BURT, Esq., M.P.	
Sir GEORGE REID, President of the Royal Scottish Academy.	
THE MASTER OF TRINITY, CAMBRIDGE.	WALTER BESANT, Esq. JAMES BRITTEN, Esq., F.L.S.
THE MASTER OF BALLIOL COLL., OXFORD.	*G. E. BRISCOE EYRE, Esq., J.P. Mrs. FAWCETT.
THE PRESIDENT OF MAGDALEN COLL., OXFORD.	*PHILIP LYTTTELTON GELL, Esq. ALBERT GOODWIN, Esq.
THE PROVOST OF ETON.	W. H. HILLS, Esq.
THE PRINCIPAL OF OWENS COLL., MANCHESTER.	G. B. LONGSTAFF, Esq., M.D., L.C.C.
Sir HENRY ACLAND, Bart.	*C. E. MAURICE, Esq.
Sir Wm. FORWOOD.	*HERBERT PHILIPS, Esq.
G. F. WATTS, Esq., R.A.	R. W. RAPER, Esq.
*A. WATERHOUSE, Esq., R.A.	*J. ST. LOE STRACHEY, Esq. Mrs. HUMPHRY WARD.
W. HOLMAN HUNT, Esq.	*Miss HARRIOT YORKE (Treasurer).
Professor HERKOMER, R.A.	*Sir ROBERT HUNTER (Chairman of Executive Committee).
W. B. RICHMOND, Esq., A.R.A.	*Miss OCTAVIA HILL.
Professor R. C. JEBB, M.P.	*The Rev. Canon RAWNSLEY (Hon. Sec.).
The Hon. T. C. FARRER.	
Professor DOWDEN.	
Professor KNIGHT.	
Professor BALDWIN BROWN.	

* Those marked with an asterisk form the Executive Committee.

Figure 4.3: Originally annotated list of Provisional Council Members, 1895
Source: The National Trust (1895) Provisional Report of the Council

4.3.3 'Hyperwhiteness': axes of authority

While the Trust was set up to hold land for the long-term benefit of the nation, particularly for the poorest and most needy classes, the organization was established and managed by a small elite class of the 'liberal intelligensia' (Cannadine 1995: 13). As such, during its formative years, the Trust might be regarded as a distinct 'carrier' of (white) Englishness – a minoritarian preserve of a predominantly white, middle-class, middle-aged, male and urban elite. In combination, these 'axes of authority' produced 'a bourgeois whiteness [that] came to provide the category's hegemonic meaning' (Bonnett 1998a: 321). Indeed the 'hyperwhiteness' of the fledgling National Trust bears some further demonstration (later in the chapter we will also see how the early Trust could equally be interpreted as an intersection of not supreme 'hypowhite' anxieties). The prefix 'hyper', used by Baudrillard in 1983, is here used to signify that whiteness is not a given, but an artificially (re)produced category located at the intersection of distinct modalities of identity and power – those of class and gender.

From its foundation in 1895, the National Trust has always been a class-based formation. Although some like Roger Chorley, Chairman of the organisation from 1990, have recognised that an 'aristocratic tinge...always existed in the Trust' (cited in Jenkins and James 1994: 96), published work on the National Trust has tended to relatively ignore the middle-class privileges and practices of class prejudice exercised by the 'founding fathers' (Murphy 2002). Even Octavia Hill, who was most noted and widely remembered for her heartfelt concern for the urban poor, was given to class prejudice of a kind. For example, in a letter she wrote to her lawyer in 1903 about an impending purchase, she made it very clear that the Trust:

'by no means plan to give access to the tramp, the London rough, the noisy beanfeaster... [rather its intention was to] preserve land in its natural beauty for the artist, the professional man, and such of the public as appreciate and respect natural beauty' (cited in Weideger 1994: 66).

Such sentiment was hardly in keeping with her vision laid out in *'Our Common Land'*, to enable 'great gifts of open spaces to be made for the rich and poor to share alike' (1877: 94). Although she championed the public right to common land and open spaces, she was quick to qualify who did and who did not fall within the possessive pronoun 'our'. By authorising access to some 'professional' and educated members of the public and denying it to others, such as the homeless and disadvantaged, we see how the Trust's version of the 'nation' hinged around specific moral and aesthetic values of appreciating and respecting natural beauty.

In its aim to 'improve' the lives of the poor and foster among them an aesthetic appreciation of nature, the founders assumed a position of superiority over the poor and ascribed to an assimilationist discourse. Whatever good intentions prevailed, the poor were considered to hold inferior standards and were marginalized, if not excluded, from the symbolic formation of whiteness in late nineteenth century England. Take the following excerpt from Octavia Hill's book that pre-dates the formation of the Trust (1877: 4-5) as an example of the perceived separation between 'us' (privileged whites) and 'them' (disadvantaged, 'not white' poor):

'To us the Common or forest looks indeed crowded with people, but to them the feeling is one of sufficient space, free air, green grass and colour, with a life without which they might think the place dull'

Octavia's vision, which became inculcated within the Trust, was not one of equality, but of moral 'improvement' of such an urban underclass who were perceived to need charity. Charity, in turn, functioned as a mechanism of 'good citizenship', as one of the preconditions of being white in a peculiarly English class-based conflation.

This inextricably class-based bourgeois whiteness was also inflected by gender. For example, the list of provisional Council Members (see Figure 4.3), which shows that only 4 out of 50 original governing members of the Trust were women, is in itself indicative of the gendered norms of middle-class whiteness and the intersection between middle class-ness and masculinity as axes of white authority. Even the most eminent woman in the Trust – Octavia Hill – envisaged that the Trust's council should be comprised of leading cultural and intellectual male figureheads. She was so steadfast in her belief that politics was a man's domain that while most other female reformers of the time were campaigning for the right to vote, Octavia openly voiced her lack of support. It could also be argued that this was one of the reasons she was the only of the founders not to take up a position on the Trust's Executive Committee. Perhaps more than being a consequence of her self-effacement, as her biographer Gillian Darley (1990) has suggested, Octavia's decision not to take a leadership role could be explained by her conviction that English politics should be enacted not only by white bodies but male ones as well. As such, her decision exemplifies the *specificity* of the embryonic National Trust as a cultural formation. In the face of little resistance then '(p)reservationism was a professional and gentlemanly activity...an upper-middle-class idealism' (Weiner 1981: 70-71). Given that '(a)n increasing number of spokesmen in the mid-nineteenth century asserted that gentlemen by definition were white...[and that] white skin became an essential mark of a gentleman' (Lorimer 1978: 15), there is reason to argue that whiteness was a gendered formation as it was a class-based one.

4.3.4 White trusteeship: stewardship/ guardianship/ custodianship

The idea of landownership, of becoming ‘trustees and guardians of the rights of the public’, as Robert Hunter put it (c. 1866: 370), was the *raison d’être* of the National Trust. Hence, the Trust’s First Resolution moved:

‘that it is desirable to provide means by which landowners and others may be enabled to dedicate to the nation places of historic interest or natural beauty and that for this purpose it is expedient to form a corporate body, capable of holding land, and representative of national institutions and interests’ (cited in *The Times*, 17th July 1894: 12).

With the unanimous acceptance of this resolution in January 1895, ‘The National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty’ was registered under the Joint Stock Companies’ Acts, so ushering in the first organisation in the country to hold such powers and ambitions of ‘national’ landownership. The constitution (see Figure 4.4 for an early version), which has only been fine-tuned a few times over the Trust’s entire history, defined the institution as ‘national custodian’ (The National Trust 1907c: 4) guardian and steward of places of historic interest or natural beauty.

*EXTRACT from the First Report on the Constitution of the
“National Trust.”*

“The governing object of the Trust, as set forth in the Memorandum of Association,* is ‘To promote the permanent preservation, for the benefit of the nation, of lands and tenements (including buildings) of beauty or historic interest; and as regards lands, to preserve (so far as practicable) their natural aspect, features, and animal and plant life; and for this purpose to accept, from private owners of property, gifts of places of interest or beauty, and to hold the lands, houses and other property thus acquired, in trust for the use and enjoyment of the nation.’ No lands or tenements of beauty or historic interest, given or bequeathed to or acquired by the Trust for the benefit of the nation, ‘shall,’ the Memorandum of Association declares, ‘at any time, whether upon the winding up or dissolution of the Trust or otherwise, be sold or otherwise dealt with in a manner inconsistent with the objects of the Trust’; thus the Association affords ample security for the permanent safe custody of all property committed to its care.”

Figure 4.4: Extract from the First Report on the Constitution of the National Trust
Source: The National Trust (1896) First Annual Report of the Council, March 1896–July 1896

The Trust secured its role in English national life not only through the power to acquire land, but also by recognising, from its very foundation, the importance of ‘permanent preservation’ (The National Trust 1895: 4), which later became instituted through the concept of

inalienability in the first National Trust Act of 1907. The power to hold land literally 'for ever', unless otherwise over-ruled by Parliament, cemented spectacularly its institutional power and cultural authority. This singular authority allowed the Trust to confidently speak and act 'ex officio in the name of the Good and the Beautiful' (Hodge 1957: 180), for what (as we saw at the outset of this chapter) it declared in its *Fourth Annual Report* to be '(t)he beauties of the common home of the *Anglo-Saxon race*' (The National Trust 1899: 14, emphasis added). Just as some commentators have pointed out that 'a form of institutionalised racist rhetoric emerged' in early debates over the preservation of ancient British and Celtic remains that were not deemed to be as worthy of preservation as English monuments (Walsh 1992: 71), we see also in the Trust's restricted remit to England (albeit including Wales), how its version of the nation was specifically Anglo-Saxon and implicitly white racialised. Although 3 of its first 10 acquisitions were located in peripheral, 'Celtic' regions of Wales, Cornwall and Northern Ireland (see Table 4.2), the vast majority of the Trust's early acquisitions were distinctly Anglo-Saxon, and apart from those in the Lake District, had a specifically southern positioning, indicating the particularity of the Trust's 'nation' (see Figure 4.5).

Date acquired	Property	Nature of property Natural Beauty (NB) or Historical Interest (HI)	Mode of ownership
1895	Dinas-o-leu"	NB: 4 ½ acres of Barmouth cliff face in Wales	Given by Mrs. Fanny Talbot
1896	Alfriston, Sussex	HI: Pre-Reformation Clergy or Priests House	Bought for £10
1897	Barras Head	NB: 15 acres of cliff land at Tintagel, Cornwall	Bought for £505
1897	Salisbury: The Joiners' Hall	HI: Ex-City Livery Company Hall dating from 1500	Bought by loan
1897	Newbury	HI: Memorial to soldiers who died	Given by Newbury Field Club
1898	Toy's Hill	NB: Land on a Kentish hillside	Given to the Trust
1899	Wicken Fen	NB: 2 strips of primeval fenland-4 acres in total	1 st bought, 2 nd donated
1899	Ide Hill	NB: 15 acres of wooded hillside	Bought by donations
1899	Duffield Castle	HI/ NB: Remains of the castle keep and pleasure grounds	Given by Strut and Strutt Esq.
1900	Kanturk Castle	HI: Fortress in County Cork, Northern Ireland	Donated to Trust

Table 4.2: Cliffs, castles, hills and halls: the first acquisitions of the of the Trust from 1895-1900
Source: Compiled from The National Trust's Fifth Annual Report 1899- 1900, Appendix C: 18-19

Through the process of acquiring a portfolio of places, including hills and halls, cliffs and castles deemed iconic of Anglo-Saxon 'Albion' – possibly, as Peter Ackroyd suggests, meaning 'the white land' (2002: xix) – the infant Trust not only secured its status as a 'national watchdog' (The National Trust 1968) of natural and built heritage, but also played a central role in defining a particular rural, idealised and white racialised version of national heritage. By pronouncing particular places such as Alfriston Clergy House as 'national

treasures' (The National Trust 1895: 3), the Trust has, from the outset, served to 'monumentalise English political, religious (Anglican) and literary traditions' (Hall 2003b: 345), making an authoritative stamp on the countryside and on the nation. According to the conservative philosopher and popular commentator, Roger Scruton, National Trust properties in general and country houses in particular 'rather than any parliament or palace, breathe the mysterious magic whereby power becomes authority, and authority, power' as they provide 'the last signs of what England was like' in a pre-industrial age (2000: 240). Other commentators agree that '[t]he Trust's claim to authority in this regard [in defining national heritage] rests on its ownership of the crown jewels of British conservation' (Lowe 1995: 91). Although the chapter has so far argued that, from its very foundation, the National Trust has played a powerful role in authorising the nation through the acquisition of places of historic interest and natural beauty, the next section aims to demonstrate that its formation also exposes the fractures and instabilities of an apparently homogeneous, hegemonic white Englishness.

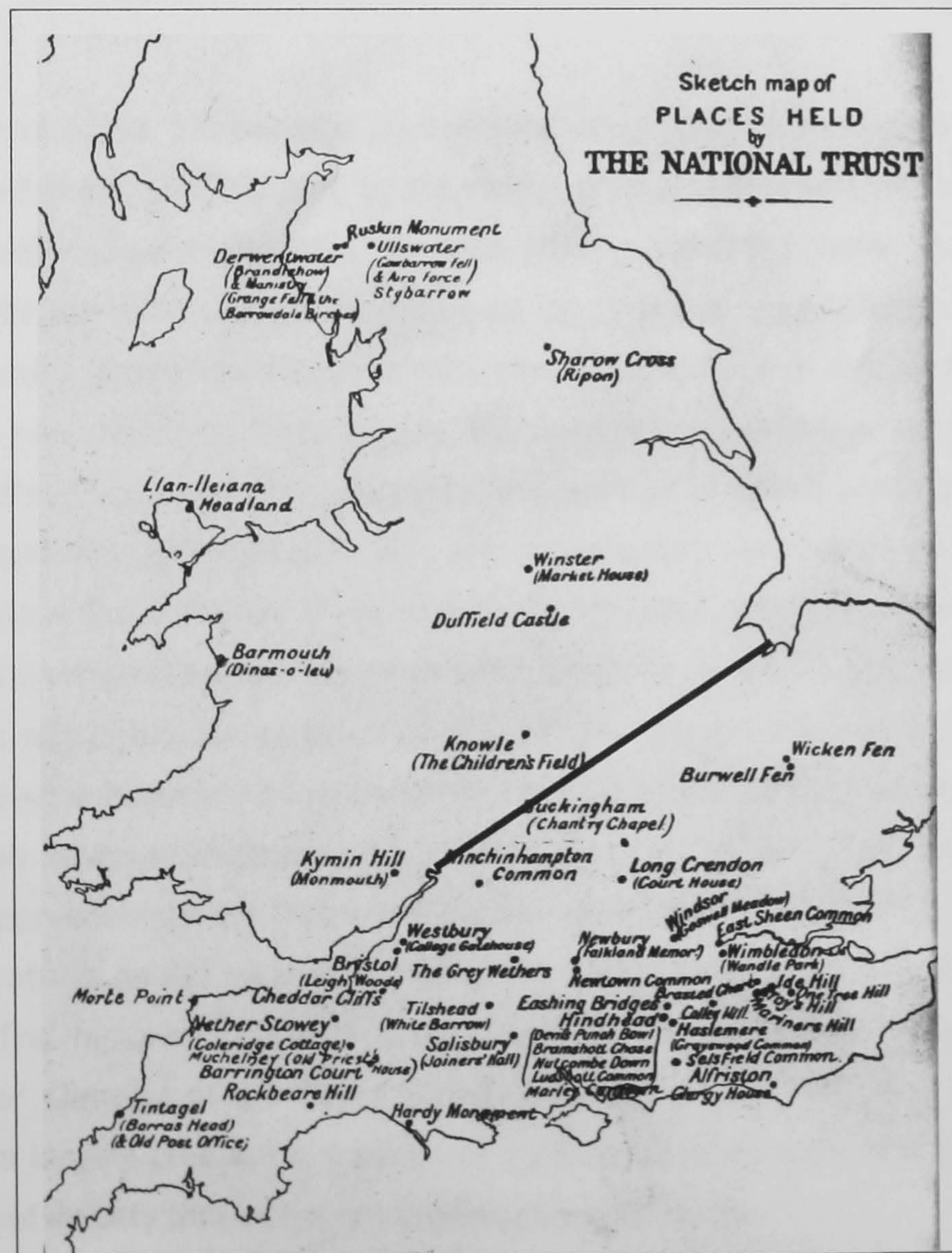


Figure 4.5: The southern specificity of the Trust's 'nation', 1912
Source: Modified from Record of the National Trust 1906-1912

4.4 The discourse of white anxiety

'We should not be deceived into thinking that this heritage is an acquisition...rather, it is an unstable assemblage of faults, fissures and heterogeneous layers that threaten the fragile interior from within or underneath... it fragments what was thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined consistent with itself.'

(Foucault, 1971 quoted in Matless, 1998: 9)

'(T)he National Trust is very generally saluted, though it appears to some in the doleful guise of England's executor, the pious curator of rare little remnants of loveliness, ticketed specimens of what we have already largely lost or wantonly thrown away.'

(Williams-Ellis 1937: xvi-xvii)

'There is no use being angry, but there is every reason to be anxious.'

(Trevelyan 1929: 15)

While it may be true that 'the heritage preservation component of the countryside movement has been overwhelmingly dominated by the National Trust' (Bunce 1994: 182), the heritage it preserves, rather than comprising an uncontested, contrived core of English national identity, could be more accurately described as 'an unstable assemblage of faults, fissures and heterogeneous layers' (as Foucault reminds us). This section argues that although the National Trust has, however inadvertently, constructed the countryside as a normatively racialised, idealised hegemon of Englishness, the process of nation building has also been a thoroughly precarious and anxious one. No organisation embodied this state of 'white anxiety' more than the National Trust, due to its complex and contradictory constitutional composition. Individual fears and apprehensions became collective anxieties over the threat to Englishness within the institution of the Trust. As Clough Williams-Ellis' quote attests, although the Trust is generally congratulated, it has appeared to some as an embodiment of anxious English decline (Williams-Ellis 1937b: xvi-xvii). In fact, the recognition among pioneering preservationists like George Trevelyan that there is 'every reason to be anxious' (1929, see the above quote) has set the tone of the Trust throughout its history. For example in one of the first histories of the National Trust, former Historic Buildings Secretary and Deputy Director General of the Trust, Robin Fedden, pointed out that while the Trust's Annual Reports largely propagate a sense of confidence in its work and support, they also signal a sense of anxiety that belies the organisation (1974: 38):

'The annual reports of the Trust year by year, while telling of achievement, record also in sombre detail the fateful appearance of developments inimical to the countryside. Everything that has affected the landscape...finds a melancholy place in the records of the Trust'.

The following section focuses on such a discourse of 'white anxiety' embraced within the institution of the Trust from its inception.

4.4.1 Constitutional ambiguities

Despite the centrality of the Trust to English national identity, by its very nature, it has always been ridden with contradiction and internal tensions. Rather than functioning as a unitary site of (white) authority, as a trope of white domination, 'a particular ambivalence that haunts the nation' (Bhabha 1990:1), also haunts the National Trust. Beneath its façade of unity (of 'trust') and its coherent (national) image, the National Trust was, from its very formation, a paradoxical organisation on many accounts. It is a 'national' organisation and yet is instrumental at local and regional scales and further still, has an international bearing as it has provided a model for a host of other 'Trusts' across the world, from 'Albania to Zimbabwe' (Leonard 2004, see also Table 8.1). As a preservation organisation, it also prioritises public access; it holds land for the benefit of the nation, for the public interest, and yet does so through private land ownership; it is a voluntary organisation, that has always had a commercial arm, it's a membership organisation and yet is far from democratic; it claims to be a-political but is thoroughly entrenched in English political life; it aims to be 'for everyone' and yet advocates 'appropriate' use of it's land (see Table 4.3 for such jostling facets of the Trust's philosophy).

From the outset, the Trust embraced competing discourses within its institutional formation, constituting and transgressing spatialities of urban and rural, nation and locality, public and private. While the case has been made by the Trust's First Area Agent, Bruce Logan Thompson, writing shortly after his retirement, that the 'Trust's powers and privileges are derived from National Trust Acts' (1946: 54), so too were the internal ruptures and tensions embedded within its constitution. By illuminating these tensions within the organisation, this section aims to demonstrate that even within such a powerful organisation as the National Trust, whiteness emerges as far from an all-powerful, homogeneous discourse but rather as a complex and contradictory cultural construction, as an unstable category vulnerable to internal incoherence. In what follows, each of the constitutional discourses shown in Table 4.3 are briefly explored to reveal how the apparently unified 'national' organisation that commands 'trust' was, from its very foundation and by its own admission, 'particularly anxious' (The National Trust 1897: 14).

'English'	<i>But constitution based on</i>	American model
'National'	<i>But also instrumental at</i>	Local, regional and international scales
'Countryside', rural organisation	<i>And yet an</i>	Urban innovation
Preservation	<i>Yet also securing</i>	Access
For the benefit of the public	<i>Through the process of</i>	Private landownership
Voluntary organisation	<i>Yet always had a</i>	Commercial arm
Membership organisation	<i>But with</i>	Limited democracy
'For everyone'	<i>In principal, but regulates</i>	'Appropriate' use
Non-governmental	<i>But relationship with</i>	State
A-political, independent	<i>And yet is inherently</i>	Political

Table 4.3: Discursive tensions embedded within the institution of the National Trust

Although the Trust has typically been perceived and paraded to be a distinctly English institution, analysed by commentators as a peculiarly 'English establishment' (Weideger 1994: 3), its early Annual Reports reveal that it was based on an American organisation, "The Trustees of Public Reservations, Massachusetts" (The National Trust 1896: 12), founded in 1891 to hold land for public interest. The presence of representatives from the American 'Trustees' on the Trust's governing council indicates their continued influence on the English organisation. However, just as the English National Trust was influenced by its American precursor, the fact that Canon Rawnsley and C.R. Ashbee of the Executive Committee visited the U.S. in only the Trust's fourth year of operation, as recorded in the *'Report of the Council 1898-1899'*, signifies its early ambitions to extend its work out to America. In its first few years of existence, the infant Trust was anxious to develop what it recognized as a 'strong and growing feeling for preservation' in the United Kingdom and America in order to engender 'a much wider movement' (The National Trust 1900: 14). Although the Trust was, from its very outset, dedicated to upholding 'the continuity of English rural life' (The National Trust 1901: 8), we see from its very *'First Annual Report'* that its ambitions reached 'beyond...this side of the Atlantic' as it considered English antiquity to be more broadly 'interesting and inspiring' (The National Trust 1896: 12) to other nations, particularly, although not exclusively, to America (Hall 2003b: 345).

Thus, while the Trust always envisioned its role as a 'national' organisation, established 'for the benefit of the nation', from the very beginning its work breached local, regional and even international scales. Just as the Trust aimed to extend its work overseas, it also acknowledged, from its very inception, that it could not achieve truly national status without being locally active. The Trust anticipated in its *'Sixth Annual Report'* that if its work 'is to become national in extent as well as in aim, it must largely depend on local assistance' (The National Trust 1901: 24). In order to gain such assistance and recruit support from regions of Northern England where it was less active in its early years, we see in the Trust's *'Report of the Council 1904-1905'*, how it held meetings and formed committees in Edinburgh, Manchester, Newcastle and Leeds towards the end of its first decade (The National Trust 1905: 4). From its formative years, the Trust was attentive to the need to work at local and regional levels in order, as it put it, to 'obtain the confidence of the public and to become a National Institution' (The National Trust 1914: 4). As we shall see in Chapter 7, by preserving sites of national importance that promote a sense of collective belonging, the Trust has not only played a pivotal role in providing 'the nation with shared values, symbols and traditions' (Palmer 2005: 10), but it has also shaped individuals' personal sense of identity and belonging.

Furthermore, the Trust has also bridged both 'urban' and 'rural' spatialities. Although it has tended to promote itself and to be viewed as 'essentially a countryside organisation' (Willes 1995: 44), it was founded primarily by urbanites united in their desire 'to improve the quality of life for people living in cities' (Murphy 2002: 125). Like early preservationists more generally, the founders were predominantly (ex)urban residents – from a mobile, middle class and privileged section of the urban population – whose idealisation and invention of the 'countryside' was therefore urban in origin. As indicated in a memorandum from the Historic Buildings Secretary in 1990, although the Trust has presented itself as the guardian of rural England, its use of the urban-derived term 'countryside' is telling of its urban origins:

'Country people never use the word "countryside". It is a townsman's word expressing a sentimental view of rural Britain...By using the word countryside we, unwittingly, take the stance of the urban dweller and thus, I suggest give subliminal emphasis to one role at the expense of the other' (Historic Buildings Secretary 1990)

Despite its desire to balance urban and rural perspectives, by sponsoring an idealised fantasy of the countryside, contrasted against the harsh realities of urban life, the Trust inadvertently served to reinforce what Street branded at the time as the 'great difference between the attitude of the townsman and the countryman' (1937: 122). With its undeniably urban roots and its preservation of a rural version of the nation, the Trust has variously breached senses of urbanity and rurality.

The Trust's constitution was equally hinged between discourses of preservation and access. It was ambitiously and ambivalently founded on the premise of reconciling the dual aims of preservation and public access. These competing objectives have been an enduring source of 'anxiety in the Trust' (Murphy 2002: 105) first expressed at the 1894 inaugural meeting by Lord Carlisle who warned that '(s)ometimes a well-meaning landowner, in his endeavour to give access to a beautiful spot, spoilt the whole country' (cited in Murphy, 2002: 105). The National Trust has continuously been aware, as summarised in its guide to properties in the Lake District, that the 'balance which needs to be kept between access and preservation is a delicate one' (The National Trust 1980b: 5). Although the Trust has generally prioritised preservation over access, because, according to the maxim of its once Chairman John Bailey (1923 to 1931) 'preservation may always permit access, while without preservation access becomes ever impossible' (cited in Fedden 1974: 33), in truth it has always been torn between its two cardinal principles. As we have already seen, this tension penetrates to the very roots of the organisation that from its formation anxiously embodied the preservationist/conservationist lobby (S.P.A.B, Society for the Protection of Birds) and the access lobby (C.P.S, N.F.P.S). Even in Victorian England, the institutional amalgam of the National Trust incorporated multiple interpretations and identifications with the countryside, from the 'popular, even working class interest in the appreciation [and study] of nature' (Bunce 1994: 177), to 'upper-class, radical liberals' (Bunce 1994: 179) whose aesthetic appreciation of nature led them to campaign for wider access, and most prominently, conservative, traditionalist members of the intellectual and artistic establishment who 'sought the preservation of all that represented an older and supposedly gentler order' (Bunce 1994: 182). There is reason to argue therefore that the 'ambiguity over the relationship between its central mandate for preserving areas for their heritage value and promoting their use for recreation' (Bunce 1994: 183) evident in its Annual Reports was reflective of the ambiguous class-based white identities embodied within the institution.

Moreover, where even similar preservation organisations tended to side with either public concern (Commons Preservation Society) or private landed interest (The Gamekeepers Association), the Trust fused the two together. As the 'power to purchase...lands and other property' was the prime mechanism of ensuring 'permanent preservation for the benefit of the nation', as specified in The First National Trust Act (1907a: 2, 3), the Trust's constitution brought together these conventionally conflicting concerns of public and private interest. While the chapter has already suggested that the transgression of public and private interests afforded the Trust the unique power to preserve places in perpetuity, attempts to reconcile public and private have also proven particularly controversial at various points in its history, not least during the 'Country House Reactionary Period' (Cannadine 1995) from the

mid thirties to seventies. Although 'private property, the public interest and the national imagination *seem to be* so perfectly harmonized' (Wright 1985: 56, original emphasis) in its places of historic interest and natural beauty, by characterising itself as the reconciliatory body that mediates the public/ private discourse, the Trust has portrayed an idealised, all too harmonious image of itself that as we shall see, has proved to an enduring source of anxiety within the organisation.

As a body that holds property privately, yet does so 'in what it also works to establish as the national and public interest' (Wright 1985: 52), the Trust has also juggled voluntary and commercial elements of its constitution. On the one hand, Rawnsley's early estimation of the Trust as a 'corporate body' (1894a: 2) indicates how, even from its very imaginings, the organisation has always embraced a commercial dimension. Yet on the other hand, Octavia Hill's response to fellow founder Robert Hunter's proposal to form a corporate company under the Joint Stock Companies' Acts indicates the discomfort with presenting itself as a commercial organisation from the outset:

'I do not know if I am right in thinking that it would be called a Trust. But if it would, I think it might be better than 'Company' – you will do better, I believe to bring forward its benevolent rather than its commercial character' (cited in Murphy 2002: 101).

We see in these foundational wranglings over the portrayal and positioning of their new organisation how the tension between the commercial and voluntary character of the Trust reaches back to its origins. While the Trust was instituted as at once a commercial and voluntary organisation in Articles 3 and 5 of the National Trust Act respectively (The National Trust 1907a), its registration under the Companies Act, without 'Limited' status, as a non-profit making organisation, enabled it to transgress the two potentially competing elements of its constitution. Although the commercial, 'accountant's mentality' has constantly loomed over the Trust (Weideger 1994: 300), it has taken seriously Octavia Hill's advice by consistently branding itself as a voluntary organisation, not least in its influential '*Gifts of Time*' report (The National Trust 1985: 6). By openly differentiating itself from a business, the Trust has presented itself as a moral and public-spirited voluntary organisation despite its capitalist, commercial interests in ownership and exchange.

Balancing such constituencies has also meant that the Trust has always had an anxiously ambiguous relationship with its members, one that has provoked a certain degree of controversy and re-evaluation. While membership was one of the Trust's cardinal principles, the organisation has also largely remained a law unto itself in which its members have had very little real power. The Trust's constitution made it clear who was in charge, declaring that 'the entire business of the Trust shall be arranged and managed by the Council' (The

National Trust 1971). The only real influence that the members have been, and continue to be granted, is to elect half of the 52 Council members, the other half being 'nominated by learned bodies and kindred societies in the country' (Trevelyan 1929: 11). Beyond that privilege, even in the assessment of senior personnel appointed to review the more contemporary organisation, 'the membership was conceived as having a very limited role – exercising a degree of control over the composition, but not the working, of the effective organs of the Trust' (Oliver 1993: 8). While the membership has, by the Trust's own admission, been the driving force of the organisation, it has effectively, in the judgement of founder Hardwicke Rawnsley's grandson, been 'treated as a captive source of money' (Conrad Rawnsley, cited in Weideger 1994: 148), without real power. As the former law Lord, Lord Oliver, spelled out in his constitutional review of the organisation (1993: 10):

'provision has been made in the Acts for the involvement of a membership consisting of persons interested in providing financial support for the work of the Trust. There is however, no statutory provision governing the rights of or conferring privileges upon persons who become members'.

Although the Trust has always been a membership organisation, it has been anxious in its insistence, even at times when its relationship with its members and the public has come under critical scrutiny, such as during the Arkell Review, that '(t)he members do not own the Trust, nor do they represent any constituency other than themselves as individuals' (The National Trust 1983: 13).

This raises the crucial issue of accountability. While the Trust has proclaimed to be '*for everyone*', the very first page of its constitution expressed a distinct concern that 'no adequate powers exist for regulating the use of...or for controlling the persons using' the Trust's property (The National Trust 1907a: 1). In its recognition of such an inadequacy, we see how ideas about countryside use penetrate to the core of the organisation. Although foundational, fundamental concerns about regulating its land were not formalised until later, the First National Trust Act in 1907 Act provided for the future legislation of byelaws (instituted in 1955) that listed prohibitive uses of Trust property and stipulated how its land could *not* be used (see section 5.4.6). While in principle, the Trust preserved places of historic interest and natural beauty for everyone, for the benefit of the nation, in practice the Trust has controlled how their land should be used, and by whom – exercising the right to decide who is included and excluded from their version of the nations' countryside. Despite its readily-deployed inclusive, universalist rhetoric, the Trust's '*Eighth Annual Report*' reveals how, even from its formative years, the organisation encouraged 'the best class of visitor' to enjoy its properties (The National Trust 1902: 11). As the thesis will go on to argue, although white countryside citizenship was theoretically open to everyone, in practice, it could only be achieved by sharing the Trust's particular 'appreciation of the value of beautiful and

interesting things' (The National Trust 1901: 15). We shall go on to see in later chapters how the Trust not only scripted a regulated countryside, or what David Matless (1995) has termed an 'art of right living', but by stipulating how its land should not be used, the Trust's vision of 'an inclusive nation rested upon exclusion' (Matless 1998: 68).

In addition to deploying the rhetoric of inclusion, the Trust has also emphasised its status as an independent charity in order to present itself as an organisation that works for the benefit of the nation. The Trust, while non-governmental in essence, has always had a complex relationship with the state. We see in its *'First Annual Report'* how the Trust anticipated that its work 'may be recognised by the Government of the country as constituting a claim upon the national purse' (The National Trust 1896: 13). Although the Trust was eager to reap the financial benefits of state-affiliation, it was also anxious 'not to jeopardise the respect...[it] enjoyed...as a worthy and essentially independent body' (Lowe 1995: 88). Thus, in order to distance itself from public association with the state and from other 'establishment' organisations, high-profile figures within the Trust like the Earl of Antrim (Chairman from 1965) have continued to stress that 'it fulfils a national need without being in any way part of the state' (1974: 10), or without directly engaging in politics.

As an extension of its ambivalent position regarding government, the Trust has also been torn between the desire 'to stand aloof from all partisan interest in politics', as affirmed in its *'Report of the Council 1909- 10'* (1910: 14), and yet to control how its land is used, to influence policy and protect its own interests. This has enduringly presented a fine balance for the Trust, as recognised by Jennifer Jenkins, its Chair from 1986-1990:

'The Trust must never be party political, but neither should it be inhibited from speaking out forcefully from time to time on matters of general conservation policy as well as in its own interests' (Jenkins and James 1994: 329):

The Trust has been anxious to rise above banal politics in order to avoid alienating any group from its potential support base that would limit its effectiveness to represent (or at least be seen to represent) public interest. However, as a national landowner, it has proved impossible for the Trust to dissociate itself from politics. Indeed, as already suggested, from the outset the organisation embraced a wide spectrum of political opinion, incorporating elements of a reforming liberal ideology, a radical socialist character and a traditionalist, conservative perspective. For example, during the mid 1920's to mid 1930's, the Trust closely oriented towards Baldwinite Conservatism that stimulated a 'cult of the countryside' and rooted 'Englishness' in unchanging rural life (as summarised in Baldwin's famous eulogisation of rural England cited on page 25). However, 'while preservationist idealisations of country and past certainly merged quite explicitly with Baldwinite Conservatism in the

twenties' (Wright 1985: 54), and while preservationism is by its very nature conservative with a small 'c' (Walsh 1992: 70), preservation organisations like the National Trust have variously captured the imagination of different political ideologies, according to the changing mood of the country.

Thus, from its foundation the Trust was an intrinsically ambivalent and complex organisation, at once independent and inclusive, universal and unique, non-governmental and national. Its constitution prescribed that it transcend traditional dichotomies of urban and rural, public and private, preservation and access. The Trust has been anxiously positioned as both voluntary and commercial, reliant upon membership and yet self-governing, independent and yet inextricably related to the state, as a-political and yet with influence. Cross cut by so many discourses the National Trust emerges as a fragile, differentiated and complex organisation, never wholly confident or complete, but always caught in the fretful process of (re)formation and re-invention.

4.4.2 Hypowhiteness(es): axes of anxiety

As signalled earlier, it would be misleading and simplistic to argue that English preservationists in the late nineteenth century were a unitary band of white, middle-class, middle-aged, urban-dwelling men. Some critics, most compellingly, David Prynne (1976) in his analysis of the Clarion Clubs and Holiday Associations from the 1890's, have challenged such a crude claim, arguing that the concern for and involvement in the countryside was not just a preserve of the educated elite, but rather a more populist preoccupation. While authors like Prynne (1976) and Matless (1998) have advanced a more complex narrative of preservationism, such accounts have focused on interwar, or post war England (Matless 1995; 1998) or on particular groups like the Clarion Clubs that were distinctly more socialist in nature (Prynne 1976). This analysis aims to further such readings of preservationism as an internally incoherent and culturally complex discourse, even within the apparently dominant organisation of the National Trust.

Although the Victorian National Trust enshrined a hegemonic, 'hyperwhiteness' 'the core of which has always been Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, propertied, and male' (Segrest 2001: 45), this 'core' was far from necessarily and always secure. Rather, as the Trust has been stigmatised and criticised for being an establishment organisation comprised of middle class men, the self same 'axes of authority', acquired through the harnessing of cultural capital and social prestige, have also functioned as 'axes of anxiety' that have jeopardised the Trust's ability to uphold their claim to work 'for the benefit of the nation'. The prefix 'hypo',

deriving from the Greek word meaning 'under' or 'below', is used here to signal the underlying anxieties of whiteness(es) that have tended to be a secondary focus (in favour of exposing whiteness as a hegemonic and powerful identity) in the sub discipline of whiteness studies, and have particularly escaped attention in relation to studies of institutional constructions of whiteness.

As we have already seen, from its seemingly humble origins and vision of providing, in the words of Octavia Hill's now much quoted idiom, 'open air sitting rooms for the poor' (1877: 107), the Trust has been complexly entangled with class. The Trust has always been anxiously suspended between its affiliation with the aristocratic and aesthetic classes on the one hand, and its concern with the rights of the working classes to open spaces on the other. Even thirty years before the formation of the Trust, Robert Hunter, writing in an essay on the preservation of the commons, anticipated the contradictory class positioning of the future organisation. While he envisioned the Trust 'would really stand in that position which a lord of the manor did originally', he believed its duty 'should be to protect the interests of commoners and the public in open spaces' (Hunter c. 1866: 371). Thus we see not only that such class-based tensions underscored the organisation from its very conception, but also how the Trust has been anxious to reconcile class contradictions in order to avoid alienating any class in particular. For example, although the list of Council Members at the opening of the Trust's Annual Reports reads as a roll of eminent figures drawn from the landed gentry and upper-middle classes (as shown in Figure 4.3), the Trust has sought to mediate class interests by emphasising the public spirited nature of its trustees, describing them in its *'Eleventh Annual Report'* as 'far seeing philanthropists who are accustomed to give their powerful aid...to the permanent amelioration of the conditions of national life' (The National Trust 1906: 4).

While, as we have already seen, the Trust's association with powerful people bestowed cultural authority on the organisation, its association with members of the leisured classes has also proved to be a source of anxiety for the Trust. Throughout its history the Trust has been haunted by its association with the 'squirearchy' (Lee-Milne 1992) that has been seen to fundamentally undermine the social and moral ethos upon which the organisation was founded. Particularly since the adoption of the Country Houses Scheme in the 1930's, when the organisation was rather damningly criticised from the inside as 'one of the surviving institutions of feudalism and a protégé of the old landowning class' (Commander Conrad Rawnsley, cited in Jenkins and James 1994), the Trust has been overshadowed by its class-ridden image and has been anxious to shed its reputation as an elite, establishment organisation. However, as well as coming under fire for its increasingly tight associations

with the landed gentry, the Trust also faced criticism from the self-same landed elite, from leading members of its own staff like James Lee-Milne who 'regarded the Trust...as a sinister little group of left-wing dissidents edging a way towards wholesale take-over of private property' (1992: 6). Such class-based controversy surrounding the Trust's country houses period from the thirties to the seventies is more generally reflective of the class contradictions condensed within the constituency of the National Trust.

While the 'institutional whiteness' embedded within the Trust has been contradictorily and complexly cross cut by class, it has also been anxiously inflected by gender. As a result of its association with, in Octavia Hill's words, 'good practical men of business' (1885, cited in Waterson 1994: 32), the Trust has been haunted by its image as an 'old-boy network' (Legg 1990: 4). The pre-eminence of men in the Trust has served to overshadow the smaller number of women who were instrumental in the organisation, from its most renowned founder, Octavia Hill, its first treasurer, Harriet Yorke, first property donor, Fanny Talbot, and one of its most famous supporters, Beatrix Potter. While the Trust's self-confessed association with 'illustrious Englishmen' (The National Trust 1902: 3) has, particularly in recent times, constituted an image problem and proved to be a source of criticism for the Trust, its association with upper-middle class, conservative women, has arguably left an anxious legacy. As we shall go on to see in Chapter 6, despite its aims and attempts to become more socially inclusive the Trust continues to project a particular domesticated, Victorian and stereotypical version of femininity through its female gift culture.

4.5 Conclusion

'The image of cultural authority may be ambivalent because it is caught, uncertainly, in the act of 'composing' its powerful image.'

(Bhabha 1990: 3)

'(E)ven the most confident narratives of national identity and imperial power were haunted by anxieties'

(Wilson 2003: 12)

This chapter has argued that whiteness has ambiguously functioned as a jointly authoritative and anxious discourse within preservationism and the institution of the National Trust from the mid nineteenth to the early twentieth century. As the Trust 'mobilized not only confident assertions about the superiority of [rural] English culture... but also protracted, recurrent and obsessive fears about ... [the decline] of national identity and the virtue of the national character' (Wilson 2003: 6), it exemplifies arguments made by critics like Homi Bhabha and

Kathleen Wilson (see above quotes) that even dominant discourses of national identity have been ambivalent and anxious. Through analysis of the Trust's early Annual Reports, its legislation and other primary and secondary material, the chapter has argued that far from being hegemonic and homogenous, the whiteness embedded within the institutional formation of the Trust appears rather as a complex cultural construction, highly vulnerable to internal incoherence and hinged around interrelated axes of authority and anxiety. In the chapters that follow, the thesis aims to further explore the historical and contemporary complexity of white racialisation within the institution of the National Trust and contrasting countryside spaces in its care.

Chapter 5

Locating and historicizing whiteness: The cases of Derwentwater and Gidside

5.1 Introduction: locating/ dislocating whiteness

'Studying whiteness from the perspective of "politics of location" is important because it provides us with yet another way to particularize, localize, and historicize the discourse of whiteness and in the process disrupt its claims to universality.'

(Shome 1999: 127)

While the previous chapter located whiteness within the complex cultural formation of the National Trust, this chapter further locates and historicizes that 'national', institutional whiteness in particular landscapes, in the contrasting countryside spaces of Derwentwater and Gidside, both owned and managed by the Trust. Based on a range of archival and documentary material, including primary and secondary sources, this chapter traces the discourse of whiteness through two such 'quintessentially English locales' (Baucom 1999: 12) in an attempt to critically unveil whiteness in the otherwise deracialised countryside. It aims to illustrate how two sites, 'seemingly representative of a shared national identity' (Palmer 2005: 9) are also 'seemingly innocent sites of white ethnic identity formation' (Gabriel 2000: 176). In so doing, it responds to calls of critics like Raka Shome (see above quote) to historically specify *and* geographically situate whiteness in order to destabilise it from a dominant, normative position. By tracing discourses of 'white authority' and 'white anxiety' through the contrasting countryside mythologies of Derwentwater and Gidside, this chapter aims to reveal something of the complexity of whiteness in the English countryside and in the process to disrupt its claims to universality.

5.2 Contrasting mythologies within the Northern English countryside: Derwentwater in the Lake District and Gibside landscape garden

'It falls under two heads: the Wild Country and the Tame; the former implies the ability to wander over unenclosed mountain, moor, valley and coastline; the latter suggests the restricted access which will not interfere with highly organized cultivation of the ground'

(Abercrombie 1959: 217)

'There have always been two kinds of arcadia: shaggy and smooth; dark and light; a place of bucolic leisure and a place of primitive panic'

(Schama 1996: 517)

As the quotes above indicate, scholars have broadly discerned two prevailing 'landscape aesthetics' (Andrews 1989) in England – the wild and the tame, the ordered and the ragged, the wilderness and the garden. While these two contrasting aesthetics or 'symbolic landscapes' (Cosgrove 1998) of Englishness have typically been transposed onto North and South, where the South represents the 'garden of England' and the North an upland wilderness (refer back to Figure 2.3 and Table 2.2), this thesis aims to challenge the well-rehearsed, all too neat divide between North and South landscape metaphors by exploring the 'two kinds of arcadia' (Schama 1996: 517) or 'two pastorals' (Matless 1998: 41) *within* Northern England (see Table 5.1). By tracing the discourse of whiteness through the upland, western, 'sublime' 'wilderness' of Derwentwater and the lowland, eastern, 'beautiful' eighteenth century landscape garden of Gibside, this chapter highlights that the two pervasive versions of the normatively racialised English countryside – open countryside (Derwentwater) and country estate (Gibside) – are not so neatly aligned with the fixities of 'north' and 'south' but are historically embedded *within* the 'mythological north' (Shields 1991: 245).

The importance of Derwentwater in Cumbria's Lake District and Gibside in Tyne and Wear should, by now, be clear. While Derwentwater and the Lakes more generally were established as an idealised icon of English national identity by eighteenth century poets and painters, not least William Wordsworth who infamously branded it a 'sort of national property' (1977: 92, first published 1835), the attention paid to the 'Romantic North' of the Lake District in the recent television series *'A Picture of Britain'* indicates the enduring importance of the Lakes as the home of the Romantic Movement and as an emblem of Englishness. Although Gibside is a less spectacular, peri-urban landscape, as 'one of the most notable landscape layouts of the [eighteenth] century' (Arnold 1957: 16), it provides an example of another

central icon of Englishness – the landscape garden, which has also given inspiration to poets and painters (Hardyment 2000), most famously to J.M.W. Turner. As noted in Chapter 1, it is no coincidence that these two pastoral mythologies of Englishness – of the ‘natural’, ‘wild’ unenclosed countryside and the designed, ordered garden – also correspond to the National Trust’s two main concerns for preserving ‘natural beauty’ or ‘historic interest’. By concerning itself with apparently disparate elements of the English countryside, the Trust was involved, from its early years, in the complimentary, though not always coincidental interests of radical, reforming nature lovers and public-spirited landed grandees’ (Jenkins and James 1994: 1) and as such can be considered to have held in tension different senses of rural Englishness, of national heritage and identity.

DERWENTWATER	GIBSIDE
Upland	Lowland
Western	Eastern
Wilderness	Civilization/ Garden
Sublime	Beautiful
Nature	Culture
Spiritual	Rational
Irregular	Ordered
Open access	Restricted/ limited access
Rugged leisure pursuits	High culture
‘Natural beauty’	‘Historic interest’

Table 5.1: Derwentwater and Gidside as contrasting rural mythologies within Northern England

While Derwentwater and Gidside may symbolise two contrasting mythologies of the English countryside, of the wild and the tame, they don’t neatly signify ‘opposing values but variations within an overarching national landscape’ (Matless 1998: 18). Although it may be ‘tempting to see the two arcadias perennially defined against each other...they are, in fact, mutually sustaining’ (Schama 1996). Together, the different ‘idealised countrysides’ (Bunce 1994: 34-36) embody the variation of the ‘imaginative geography’ (Matless 1994:7) of the symbolic English countryside. In order to analyse these two ‘rural mythologies’ (Humphreys 1995) of Englishness it is necessary to take a wider historical approach, beyond the principle focus on the period marked by the National Trust’s existence. As well as analysing Derwentwater and Gidside’s ownership and management by the Trust, it is also essential in both cases to explore the origins and evolution of their place myths in order to understand how they have been historically constructed as normatively white racialised countryside



mythologies. The chapter explores each of the cases in turn, through two broadly chronological periods – first from the eighteenth century until the formation of the National Trust, and second through the period of the Trust’s interest and involvement from the late nineteenth century onwards.

Part A: The white mythology of Derwentwater in the Lake District

The county now known as Cumbria and particularly the region famously referred to as the ‘Lake District’ has inspired arguably more literary and artistic attention than any other region in England. Since the eighteenth century ‘Guides’ that introduced (an elite band of) tourists to the scenery of the Lakes, over 50,000 books have been written on the area (Whiteman and Talbot 1989: 15). As much of the printed material on the Lakes has been repetitious (Bott 1994), describing ‘the geology, the natural history, the antiquities, the architecture and so on of the Lake District’ (Thompson 1946: 1), this chapter brings a fresh perspective to an already well-developed corpus of material on the Lake District countryside. Like accounts of the National Trust, much of what has been written about the region has been celebratory in tone, witnessed by the ‘scores of books which delight in the loveliness of the Lake District’ (Barringer 1984: 10). Indeed, there have been, and continue to be ‘a steady stream of publications of all kinds extolling the scenic beauty and the pastoral joys of this uniquely lovely part of England’ (Gambles 1975: 8)

Much literature has also focused on the ‘*Literary Associations of the English Lakes*’ (Rawnsley 1894b), on ‘Wordsworth’s Lakeland’ (Sands 1984), ‘Beatrix Potter’s Derwentwater’ (Bartlett and Whalley 1988) and ‘*Ruskin and the English Lakes*’ (Rawnsley 1902). While some scholars have critically explored the literary construction of the Lakes, particularly by William Wordsworth (Squire 1988; Bicknell 1992; Whyte 2000; Whyte 2002), but also by more contemporary writers like Beatrix Potter (Squire 1993), the institutional making of the Lake District and the role of the Trust in culturally constructing the Lakes as an idealised and mythologised space has generally escaped critical attention. Given that events in the Lake District propelled the formation of the National Trust and that the Trust has played such an influential role in preserving, managing and representing the Lake District (as the owner of a quarter of the National Park, including William Wordsworth’s birthplace and Beatrix Potter’s ‘Hill Top’ farm), it is remarkable that so few accounts have critically explored the interrelationship between ‘*The Lake District and the National Trust*’ (Thompson 1946 see also Hodge 1957; Weideger 1994; Denyer and Martin 1995). Likewise, although the Lake District has been pivotal to the symbolic construction of the English countryside, in the main it has escaped critical attention as a racialised space. Aside from Ingrid Pollard’s powerful

photography that conveys her personal sense of alienation from the Lake District landscape (see Figure 2.4), few commentators have analysed the area within a racialised frame of reference.¹ Consequently, the co-production of Englishness, whiteness and the Lakes countryside has gone largely unreported and under-researched.

The following account advances a broadly chronological analysis of how the Lake District countryside has been variously constructed as a normatively white-racialised space. First, it briefly examines the period prior to the National Trust's formation, from the mid-eighteenth century picturesque reappraisal of the landscape. Given that the Trust inculcated a particular picturesque aesthetic of landscape appreciation, exemplified in its appeal to 'lovers of the picturesque' in its *Twelfth Annual Report* (1907b: 17) and has continued to represent the Lakes as an idealised 'dramatic and grand landscape' (The National Trust 1993d: 232), it is important to understand how the Lake District was implicitly coded as a normatively racialised and culturally specific landscape through the discourse of the picturesque. While accounts of the picturesque movement have highlighted the class-specificity, and to a lesser extent, the particularly gendered dimension (Bicknell 1992; Whyte 2002) of such an aesthetic appreciation of landscape, so far connections between discourses of racialisation and the picturesque remain critically unexamined. This analysis argues that the place myth of the Lake District to which many visitors still subscribe today was constructed through a particular residentially biased (urban), religious-inflected (Christian), class-based (upper-middle class) and (white) racialised discourse of the picturesque. Second, the analysis focuses in more detail on the period from the formation of the Trust in the late nineteenth century. It makes the case that as the cult of the picturesque 'was never violently dethroned from popular approval...but has more or less just slowly faded' (Hodge 1957: 65) and filtered into preservationist organisations like the National Trust, preservationism was also an implicitly racialised discourse.

¹ In contrast with other definable 'regions' of England that have been reinterpreted as racialised spaces such as Vernon's analysis of Cornwall and blackness (1998), the Lake District has escaped analysis as a racialised landscape.

5.3 The construction of the Lake District through the 'hyperwhite' discourse of the picturesque

'Until the second half of the eighteenth century nobody thought of the Lakes as forming a district...because historically and administratively the district is not an entity, being in the three counties of Cumberland, Westmoreland and Lancashire. It is only since tourists began to come here to gratify the artistic sense that the Lake District has been conceived as such'

(Thompson 1946: 1)

As signalled in the above quote by the Trust's First Area Agent, Bruce Logan Thompson, it has been widely acknowledged, including among the Trust, that there was no such thing as a 'Lake District' until the eighteenth century when 'early excursionists' (Beard and Beard 1980: 1) re-imagined the Lakes as a geographically unified 'district' that possessed 'united powers' (Brown Reprinted 1985) of picturesque beauty (Thompson 1946; Murdoch 1984; Andrews 1989; Nicholson 1995). While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to re-narrate the already well-documented story of the '*Discovery of the Lake District*' (Murdoch 1984), by tracing the discourse of whiteness through the picturesque 'invention' of the district, this analysis contends that the Lake District has been a racialised construction from its very imaginings. As Wordsworth and others before him singled out Derwentwater as the 'most perfect' lake (1977: 97, first published 1835) due to its resemblance of a classical, 'vast amphitheatre' (Sherlock 1772: 6) of Arcadian Greece and Rome (see Figure 5.1), and Keswick became reputed as 'the capital of the Lake District' (Ladyman 1885: 5), the area is particularly important in the construction of the Lakes as a 'white mythology' of Englishness.



Figure 5.1 'A View of Derwentwater from Crow Park' 1761, engraving by Thomas Smith of Derby
Source: Murdoch 1984: 12

Taking a particular focus on 'the Guides' (applying doubly to the writers themselves and their guidebooks), this chapter argues that from its very imaginings as a district, the Lakes enshrined what Richard Dyer has termed the 'moral and aesthetic resonance of whiteness' (1997: 70), of how to view and act in the landscape. By prescribing how the Lake District should be seen and experienced as a picturesque composition, be it through the use of a Claude glass (which expanded the foreground and reduced the threatening hills in the background, see Figure 5.2) or by pausing at designated 'stations' to see specific views, the Guides defined the boundaries of countryside citizenship, already shown to be bound up with a normatively racialised notion of English national belonging.



Figure 5.2: Looking through a Claude Glass: Gainsborough's sketch of a man sketching
Source: Bicknell, 1992: 13

Each of the 60 or more guides written between the late eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century² (see Figure 5.7 for a selection of some of the most influential) represented the Lakes as an idealised, dramatic landscape, which may or may not have been variously and subtly underpinned by discourses of racialisation. Nowhere was the largely concealed racialised thinking more explicit than in Harriet Martineau's unpublished mid nineteenth century (c. 1855) history of the Lake District. Her account made direct reference to the racialisation of the region by describing the Lakes as 'conservative of races and manners, and traditions' (Martineau c. 1855: 4). Going further, she claimed that, in comparison to rest of the country, the Lakes were racially pure:

² The recent republication of a number of Guides is indicative of their enduring importance in the way the Lakes are described, imagined and enjoyed today (for example see Rollinson, 2000; Wordsworth, 1977; Martineau, Reprint 1995).

'Almost everywhere else in England the English and Normans mingled, and intertwined...but it was not so among the Fells' (Martineau c. 1855: 10).

According to Martineau, the Lakeland fells were almost uniquely racially pure 'retreats' (Martineau c. 1855: 4) in contrast with the rest of England. As her Guide distinctively took equal interest in the social conditions of Lake District residents as much as the scenery, her explicit reference to the ethnic purity of the Lakes more implicitly reverberated through other guides' depictions of the Lakes as a place of aesthetic, moral and spiritual purity.

Date	Guide	Name
1724-7	Daniel Defoe	A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain
1753	Dr. John Brown	Description of the Lake and Vale of Keswick
1769	Thomas Gray	Journal in the Lakes
1772	William Gilpin	Gilpin's Northern Tour
1774	Thomas West	A Guide to the Lakes
1776	William Hutchinson	Excursion to the Lakes...
1787	James Clarke	Survey of the Lakes
1797	William Gell	A Tour in the Lakes 1797
1819	William Green	Tourist's New Guide
1823	Jonathan Otley	A Descriptive Guide to the English Lakes
1835	William Wordsworth	A Guide through the District of the Lakes
1855	Harriet Martineau	Complete Guide to the Lakes

Table 5.2: Guiding the white gaze

This is exemplified by the way the Guides invariably and variously deployed rhetorics of purity and nativism to describe the Lakes. For example Thomas Gray's journal of his tour in October 1769 records his observation of the 'shining purity' of Derwent (quoted in Merchant 1951: 9) in contrast to the dark fells. Similarly William Gilpin described the Lakes as 'a vista of mountains *purifying* each other' (1792:176). Whether the Lakes were mythologised as a white space in contrast to the 'blackness' of the weather (Ludlum 1985: 8), the fells, the city, or even the 'darkness' of an emotional solitude, racialised metaphors of darkness and lightness, of blackness and whiteness, native and alien, were consistently used in descriptions of the Lake District.

Moreover, by association with the Lakes, which were codified as a zone of purity and purification, the largely urban-residing Guides 'in search of the picturesque' (Andrews 1989) projected the qualities of the landscape onto themselves, defining themselves as morally and culturally superior to townspeople who were rendered to be 'morally corrupted' (Martineau c. 1855: 22-23). As the cultural practice of making a picturesque tour of the Lakes was considered to be 'a purification and cleansing process, half physical, half religious in tone' (Burgess 1982: 45), the elite band of educated aesthetes who toured the Lakes

achieved a status of 'moral and... aesthetic superiority' (Dyer 1997: 70) that were essential components of attaining whiteness. By pronouncing the religious imperative of visiting the Lakes, early tourists like Dr. Brown who professed to 'make an annual voyage to KESWICK, not only as an innocent amusement, but a religious act' (1753, Reprinted 1985: 8, sic), coded the picturesque tour as a performance and enactment of religious, and specifically Christian faith. As this faith was bound up with notions of spiritual, moral, aesthetic and even racial purity, with the process of cleansing that was central to achieving whiteness, arguably, from the very invention of the Lake District, whiteness was attained through the embodiment and performance of Christianity. Despite Wordsworth's proclamation of the Lakes as national property 'in which everyman has a right and interest' (1977: 92, first published 1835), it was only the 'literary intelligentsia of the day' (Taylor 1983: 140), 'the privileged few' (Hodge 1957: 29) deemed to be capable of appreciating the Lakes who were brought into the fold of a moral and aesthetic whiteness. Thus, not only did the Guides define the boundaries of the 'district', but also in the process of doing so, they inadvertently delimited the boundaries of a particular performed, aesthetic, religious and class-based white identity.

Although Derwentwater was frequented by the most 'intrepid travellers' (Wyatt 1991: 55) drawn from the 'educated English gentry' (Marsh 2000: 10) and was constructed as the symbolic heart of the Lake District, the so-called 'Elysium of the North' (Andrews 1989: 177), it was also paradoxically home to the darkest of residents. Travellers from Wesley to Wordsworth regarded the 'aboriginal colonists' (Wordsworth 1977, first published 1835) that became the 'natives' of the region to be 'primitive' (Burgess 1982: 44), and 'backward wild [not white] men' (Wyatt 1991: 55). We see in more recent literary works, such as Arthur Ransome's *Swallows and Amazons* (2001, first published 1930) how an imperialistic discourse has been projected on to the Lakes, where Lakeland residents are described as 'natives' and 'savages' (2001: 22, 34, first published 1930). Borrowdale people in particular were regarded as 'simple and unsophisticated' (Ramshaw 1996: 31), as intellectually and morally inferior to the 'observant travellers' who toured the region (Gard 1989). Although racially white, the darker complexion of hill sheep farmers and agriculturalists that worked out of doors, accorded them lowly status and rendered them inferior. While the invention of the 'Lake District' was synonymous with a recreational, leisurely version of whiteness, differentially possessed and acquired by visitors, working class residents were depicted as being simple and closer to blackness, or at least outside the fold of authorised whiteness, which calls into question any mythical notion of a unitary, uniform 'white' identity.

By the late nineteenth century the Lake District had become so idealised and mythologised that 'symbolically, it came to stand for England's green and pleasant heart and soul' (Weideger 1994: 279), as emblematic of Blake's infamous 'green and pleasant land'. So when the Lake District landscape was threatened by railway proposals (for example the proposed development of a railway into the heart of Borrowdale in 1883), and access restrictions (like the threatened closure of Latrigg to the public in 1887), its preservation became an issue of national importance. In the context of threats to the Lakeland landscape, '[A]lmost overnight, the long-cherished aim to create a 'National Trust' seemed realizable' (Fedden 1974: 18).

5.4 The discourse of whiteness(es) within the institution of the National Trust

'The Lake District has always represented the heart of the Trust'

(Jenkins and James 1994: 204)

'The Trust regards its many holdings in the Lake District...as a single estate to be managed according to certain broad principles'

(The National Trust 1980a: unpaginated)

The fact that threats to the Lake District propelled the foundation of the National Trust indicates the importance of the region in the evolution and establishment of the Trust and in the preservationist movement more generally. As we see from the second quote above, the way in which the Trust tended to approach its properties in the Lake District as a single entity (The National Trust 1978b; 1980a) indicates how its ideology stemmed from the picturesque tradition that constructed the Lakes as a definable 'district'. While it could be argued that the Trust generally reinscribed an idealised version of the Lake District equated with picturesque and aesthetic practices of landscape appreciation, as its Lake District Annual Reports demonstrate, 'the tendency of Trust properties to extend their boundaries' (The National Trust 1911: 3) served not only to extend the boundaries of its landownership, but also the boundaries of a white rural Englishness. This analysis highlights elements in the history of the Trust in the Lake District in order to argue that whiteness has been far from unitarily inscribed within the organisation, but has been variously manifest in different times and spaces. Given that 'no acquisition by the Trust explains so clearly the social and moral objectives that motivated the founders' (Waterson 1994: 45) as the Trust's first Lake District acquisition of Brandlehow on the shore of Derwentwater, it is used to here to argue that discourses of whiteness were variously embedded within the institution of the Trust from its early years.

5.4.1 The differentiated nature of whiteness: The case of Brandlehow

Although the Lake District was central to the very foundation of the Trust, it was seven years (in 1900) before the Trust acquired its first Lake District property of Brandlehow, a 108-acre tract of park and woodland on the Derwentwater lakeshore (see Figure 5.3). As the Trust's Annual Reports from 1901 to 1907 reveal, the Trust seized on the acquisition of Brandlehow by public appeal to demonstrate its cross-class support and appeal. We see how, even in its infancy, the Trust bridged both aristocratic and working class constituencies. On the one hand, the Brandlehow appeal reinforced the Trust's connection and affiliation with the royalty as Princess Louise officially inaugurated the site and provided a public face of the campaign. On the other hand, the Trust was anxious to point out that as the large donations of the rich were supplemented by the small gifts of the poor (The National Trust 1905), the appeal also received 'extensive support...by the small donor, and particularly by the donor of the working class' (The National Trust 1906: 4). As the Trust emphasised in its '*Ninth Annual Report*' of the Council, the Brandlehow acquisition revealed how, from its very outset, the Trust gained 'support and assistance from all classes' (The National Trust 1904: 5), indicating its universalist desire to be seen as all things to all people.

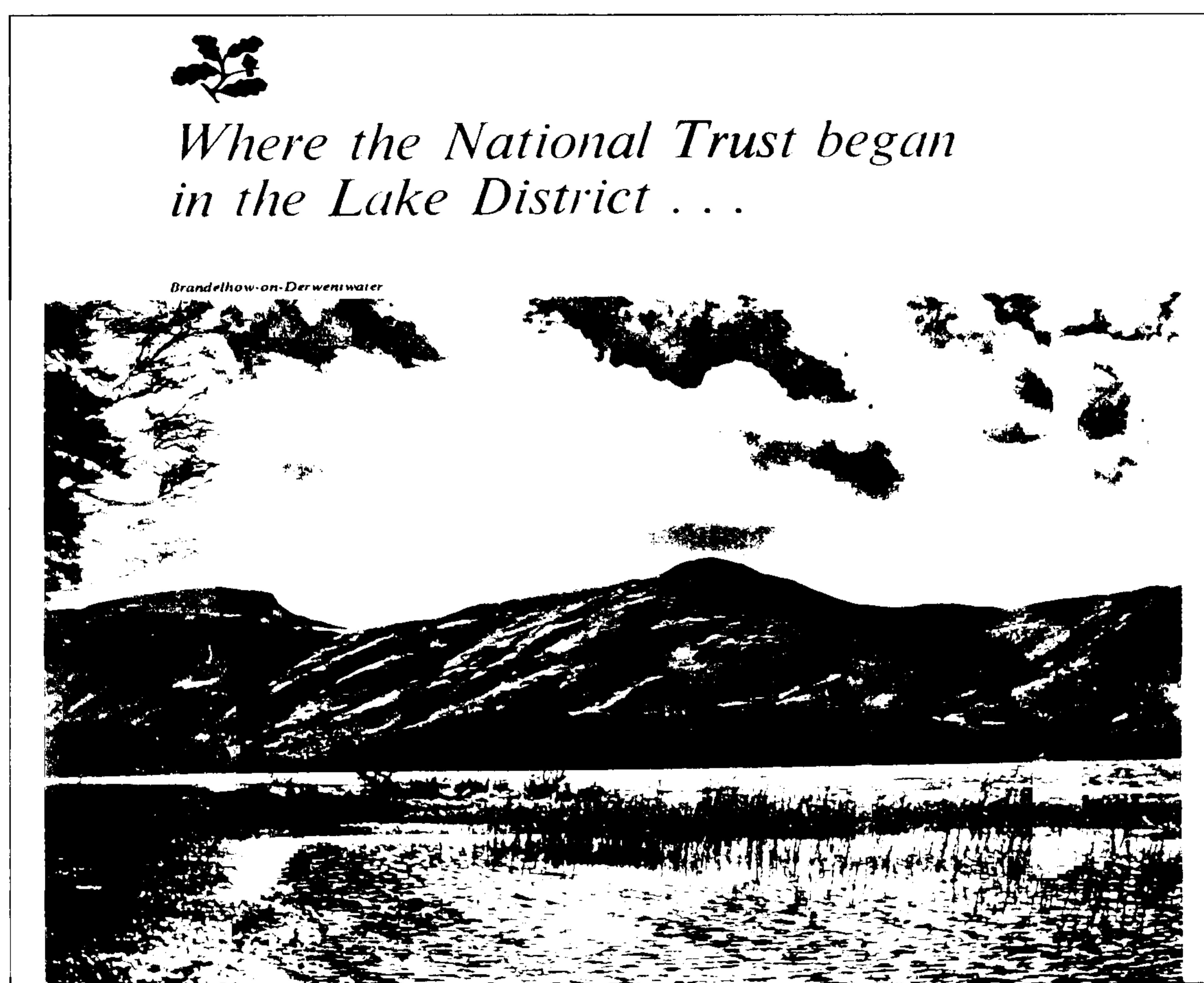


Figure 5.3: 'Where the National Trust began in the Lake District...Brandlehow on Derwentwater'
Source: Lake District Report 1968-1970: 6

The acquisition of Brandlehow reinforced the Trust's inclusive mission, to secure public access to open spaces, which was reflected in Octavia Hill's declaration at the opening ceremony that 'it belongs to you all and to every landless man, woman and child in England' (quoted in Waterson, 1994: 45). Rawnsley's sonnet also written for the 'Opening of Brandlehow' had the same message that the land was for those who needed it most, for the city-dweller who had little access to open countryside (cited in Waterson 1994: 48):

'And here may mortals, weary of the strife:

Of inconsiderate cities hope to come:

And learn the fair tranquilities of Earth'

However, Rawnsley's hope that city-bound, morally depraved 'mortals' would 'learn' from the countryside provides further indication of the Trust's desire to reform or improve the working classes, as mentioned in the previous chapter. By deploying moralising discourses and binary oppositions between city and country, the Trust's founders arguably subscribed to, and even reinforced the idea that the countryside possessed what may be described as a whitening potential.

Brandlehow exemplifies the harnessing of this potential. First, by preserving places as idealised icons of Englishness, the Trust, however inadvertently, played a part in 'whitewashing' working and industrial histories from the landscape. Although Brandlehow hosted a prominent lead mine, which was at its peak productivity in 1885, when the Trust acquired the site only seventeen years later, it was preserved as a place of 'natural' beauty. Needless to say, Brandlehow was not acquired on the grounds of preserving its nationally (and internationally) important role in lead mining (just as Gibside was not acquired for its important role in coal mining), but rather on the grounds of its natural beauty and the unique opportunity it provided for public access to the lake. Whiteness therefore emerges, not only as a way of seeing and being, but also as a complex set of processes of remembering (and equally of forgetting), of constructing a collective consciousness hinged around the powerful notion of the rural idyll. As the mining heritage of Derwentwater and (as we shall see later) Gibside, has tended to be written out of the countryside, both sites can be understood as landscapes of erasure (see Chapter 6). Second, by taking strict interest in how their land was used the Trust, from the outset, played a crucial role in shaping ideas of 'appropriate', countryside conduct. The way in which the Trust regarded Brandlehow, in its *'Eighth Annual Report'*, as an 'experiment' that would test 'whether the people who visit it... can be trusted to use it in the right way' (The National Trust 1903), indicates how the process of acquisition upon which the Trust's authority rested, was equally bound up with anxieties about appropriate land use.

5.4.2 The Neo-Wordsworthian National Trust: The early years

The Trust's early Annual Reports reveal that in its first decade or so, from the acquisition of Brandlehow in 1902 to the beginning of the First World War, the Trust, in a Wordsworthian vein, focused on preserving lakeshores against both the 'invasion' of mass tourism facilitated by railway extension and equally against their gentrified development by rich commuters – marking two outposts of whiteness. By contrast, the infant Trust was hardly interested in built heritage as it couldn't provide the spiritual enhancement or moral improvement that the countryside could. It didn't possess what has already been referred to as the 'whitening potential' of the countryside. The Trust, and particularly Hardwicke Rawnsley's early emphasis on preserving threatened tracts of land in the Lake District, ensured that little after ten years of existence, the organisation owned and safeguarded a quarter of Derwentwater lakeshore (The National Trust 1908). Such was the extent of the Trust's ownership of the lake that only a few years later, in its *Report of the Council 1909-1910*, the Trust had reason enough to claim that Derwentwater 'in effect...[had become] national property' (The National Trust 1910: 10). The way in which the Trust echoed Wordsworth's famous proclamation of the Lakes as 'a sort of national property' (1951: 92, also see Countryside Commission and Victoria & Albert Museum 1986) highlights how the Trust took on Wordsworth's role 'as a propagandist for the Lake District [and] for England's virtues' (Weideger 1994: 276). By preserving crucial stretches of lakeshore and open spaces (see Table 5.3), the Trust not only established the Lake District as a thoroughly national concern, as an important part of English heritage and identity, but also established itself as an important force in the preservation of the Lake District and as a guardian of rural England.

Date	Property	Description
LAKESHORE AND OPEN SPACES		
1902	Brandlehow Park Estate	108 acres on the western shore of Derwentwater
1908	Manesty Park	94 acres between Brandlehow and the River Derwent
		1913-further 10 ½ acres of parkland
1910	Grange Fell and Borrowdale Birches	310 acres around Derwentwater
1913	Druids Circle	9 acre field containing prehistoric stone circle
MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS		
1900	Ruskin Monument (2 nd Monument)	Slate memorial to Ruskin on Friars Crag, Derwentwater
1917	Peace Howe	A viewpoint near Grange in Borrowdale
1920	Castle Crag	Hill 900 feet high at the head of Derwentwater and entrance to the Borrowdale valley
1921	Friar's Crag, Lord's Island and portion of Calf Close Bay	Well known viewpoint, familiar island and strip of shore on Derwentwater

Table 5.3: Lakeshores, open spaces, monuments and memorials: some of the Trust's main acquisitions in Borrowdale during its first few decades

Source: Compiled from The National Trust Annual Report 1923- 1924: 18-32

5.4.3 Memorialising the Lake District

As indicated in the table above, after the First World War, the Trust further secured its role in national life by receiving and holding properties donated as natural memorials to those who had fought and died in the war, such as Castle Crag and Peace Howe. Memorials to people like Mr Smith who fought to 'preserve the native soil' of England (refer back to the cartoon in Figure 4.2, page 74) provided visible markers of a nationalist sentiment of sacrifice, which the thesis has already argued was connected with a particular patriotic white rural Englishness (see section 4.2.2). However, even before its post-war acquisition of land in the Lake District 'for public benefit in memory of the war dead of the region' (The National Trust 1920:5), the Trust had a penchant for erecting memorials, signifying its desire to stamp authority on the landscape. It is by no coincidence that, one of the Trust's first acts in the Lake District (in 1900) was to build a memorial to John Ruskin who was one of the main inspirations behind the formation of the Trust and a personal mentor to all of its three founders. The memorial not only symbolises the Trust's power of cultural representation and celebration, but the inscriptions on the Ruskin monument are indicative of the values inculcated in the countryside (see Figure 5.4). By eulogising Ruskin's nostalgic recollection of childhood, strongly allied with the romanticised concept of the rural idyll and his religious convictions (shown in the previous chapter to be associated with notions of moral and spiritual purity) the Trust preserved a particular romanticised, idealised and religious version of the English countryside.

In the process of preserving places associated with literary figures, be it the place Ruskin visited as a child of only 5 ½, Wordsworth's House, or Beatrix Potter's farms (as we shall see in the following section), the Trust implicitly reinforced a literary, artistic discourse of whiteness long embedded in the landscape, further exemplified by Rawnsley's book on the *'Literary Associations of the English Lakes'* (1894b). Ironically, on his death in 1920, Rawnsley, prolific writer (for example Rawnsley 1902; 1906; 1909; 1911; 1913; 1920) and so-called 'watch-dog' of the Lakes, also became memorialised within the landscape.³ As Stuart Hall has argued in his address to the Arts Council *'Whose Heritage'* Conference in 1999, this process of 'selective canonisation' – commemorating particular people and places in its history – not only confers authority on the landscape difficult to revise, but enables institutions like the National Trust responsible for selectively defining the meaning(s) of heritage to 'develop a deep investment in their own 'truth'' (2005: 26).

³ Friar's Crag, Lords Island and a stretch of the lakeshore in Great Wood were acquired as a memorial to Rawnsley.

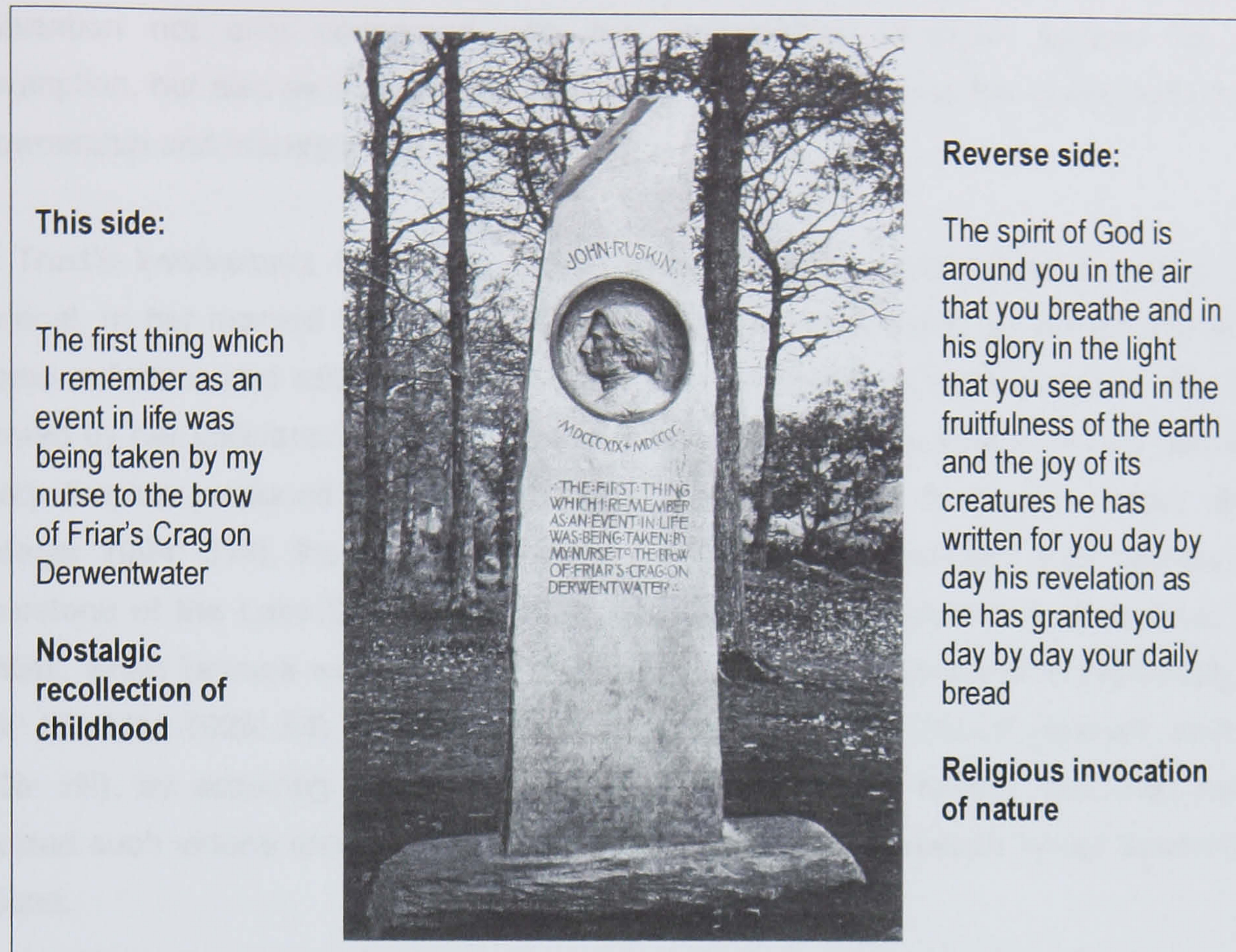


Figure 5.4: Ruskin Monument: the inscription of values on the English countryside
Source: Centre image taken from The National Trust Annual Report 1900-1901: 9

5.4.4 Farms, Beatrix Potter and acquisitions: broadening countryside constituency

The Trust's Annual Reports through the twenties recorded, almost year on year, new acquisitions in the Lake District (The National Trust 1920; 1921; 1923; 1925; 1927; 1929) and consequently, much of Borrowdale was brought under the care of the Trust. However, it was not until 1929, the so-called '*annus mirabilis*' (Thompson 1946: 45) of the Trust in the Lake District (and a landmark year in many senses),⁴ when the Trust acquired 'some of the most important properties' (The National Trust 1929), including its first fell farms, that the organisation began to embrace a wider range of publics and broaden the constituency of the countryside. While the publication of George Trevelyan's 'powerful and convincing plea on behalf of the National Trust' (The National Trust 1929) in 1929 bestowed new members and success upon the organisation, his purchase (in the capacity of Trust Vice-Chairman) of three farmland properties in the Lakes in the same year had an equally profound impact on

⁴ This year was not only distinguished by the publication of George Trevelyan's preservationist polemic '*Must England's Beauty Perish?*', but also the foundation of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (C.P.R.E.) and the formation of the Addison Committee, which recommended the establishment of National Parks.

the organisation. Through the acquisition of its first farms, the Trust was established as an organisation not only concerned with the preservation of open spaces for public consumption, but also as one actively engaged in the production of the countryside through the ownership and management of farm land.

The Trust's involvement in farming owed more to Beatrix Potter than any other single individual. In her married life as Mrs Heelis she retired from being an author and artist to become a farmer and estate manager and made an important contribution to the Trust.⁵ Informed by her insistence that 'if you lose the sheep farms, you lose a *race* of people, the society they've produced and the landscape they've helped to create' (Potter cited in Weideger 1994: 314), the Trust considered the hill sheep farms and their farmers to be cornerstone of the Lake District character, and as such of Englishness. At a time, in the twenties, when farmers were generally regarded to be 'a population of exceptionally good stock' (Geddes 1928: 54), who embodied 'noble, Anglo-Saxon virtues' (Corbett, Holt et al. 2002b: xiii), by acquiring farmland and taking on the role of farmer, the Trust not only projected such virtues onto itself but also posited itself as the saviour Anglo-Saxon (white) England.

When all of Beatrix Potter's farm estates passed to the Trust on her death in 1943, the institution not only acquired its largest property in the Lakes during the first fifty years of its existence, but also inherited her strong values on the protection of hill farms and the Lakeland landscape. Although Beatrix Potter, herself a distinctly middle class, well-healed 'off-comer', embodied a highly cultivated white Englishness, the Trust's association with her reveals some of the ambiguities within the organisation. On the one hand, the Trust translated particular personal heritages like Beatrix Potters 'Hill Top' Farm into public heritage, becoming 'a vehicle through which to experience 'Old England', the rural and picturesque' (Squire 1993). In short, the preservation of particular places, like Beatrix Potter's 'Hill Top' estate, was bound up with the preservation of particular attitudes and values that were constitutive of white Englishness. On the other hand, by further expanding and diversifying its role, becoming engaged in the production as well as the consumption of the Lake District countryside, the Trust encompassed multiple, potentially contradictory senses of white national belonging between farmers and fell walkers, landowners and leisured aesthetes, private estate owners and different sections of the public. Such is the ambiguity embedded within the complex cultural formation of the National Trust.

⁵ The naming of the Trust's new headquarters 'Heelis' after Beatrix Potter's marital name is testimony to the important role she played in shaping the organisation. For details on the Trust's new office see www.nationaltrust.org.uk

By acquiring different kinds of properties from valleys to villages, the Trust opened up the definition of what classified as 'natural beauty' or 'historic interest', of what warranted preservation 'for the benefit for the nation'. The Trust became more receptive to different interpretations of 'the nation' and began to represent a wider range of classed identities in its acquisitions of both built and natural heritage, signalling the expansion of institutionalised whiteness from a literary, artistic and religious elite, to an increasingly populist formation. However, even as the Trust and its representation of national heritage became more diverse, it was inherently fraught with the tensions of building a nationalized Englishness and, as we shall see in the next section, continued to enshrine a particular moral and aesthetic landscape ideology.

5.4.5 Politics of the Lakeland aesthetic

By the thirties, with increasingly diverse interests and a significant landholding in the Lake District, the Trust acknowledged the need for an area representative to take control of their properties in the North. The fact that Bruce Logan Thompson, the appointed Northern Area Representative in 1932, became the first full time member of staff to be based outside London is testimony to the Southern-bias of the institution from its inception (as we saw in Figure 4.5), despite the centrality of the Lake District in the ethos and evolution of the Trust. Although his appointment represents the gradual extension of the Trust's concerns and constituency, by aiming to create the impression that the Lake District is a natural landscape, to 'give the sense of nature unworked by man' (The National Trust 1958: 3-4), the Trust enduringly embraced Wordsworth's landscape aesthetic and ideology not only in its formative years, as has already been shown, but to varying extents throughout its history. The way in which Bruce Thompson's book – the first to comprehensively chart the relationship between *'The Lake District and the National Trust'* (1946) – advanced a detailed description of the 'right' countryside aesthetic of 'good taste' (Thompson 1946: 51), which could almost have been directly lifted from Wordsworth's *'Guide'* (1977, first published 1835), is testimony to the Trust's institutionalisation of Wordsworth's peculiar purist landscape aesthetic in its first half century.

In the tradition of Wordsworth, who prescribed certain 'rules of taste for preventing...bad effects' in the Lake District countryside (1951), Bruce Thompson described the Trust's aesthetic code in great detail, defining what was in and out of place in the landscape, from designs of houses, to kinds of trees (see Table 5.4). For example, just as Wordsworth recommended 'ancient models' of houses and buildings, of mountain cottages built of 'native stone' (1977: 60, 76, first published 1835), the Trust also favoured farmhouses and cottages

that provided 'the best evidence of a local style' (Thompson 1946: 9) and condemned those that contravened its meticulously defined aesthetic principles:

'A house may be an eyesore because it is over ornamented or has *bad* fenestration or has ugly chimneys. It may be too conspicuously sited, it may be built of the *wrong* materials or it may be the *wrong* colour. The greatest possible offence is to build a tall, red-roofed, red brick house high on a bare hillside' (Thompson 1946: 8, emphasis added).

Similarly, in the vein of Wordsworth, who condemned the planting of conifers and larches as 'gross transgressions', 'discordant objects' and 'bad taste' (1977: 72, first published 1835), the Trust has also widely favoured 'native' tree species like oak (hence their oak leaf symbol) over 'exotic' species. As other authors have argued, such discourses and aesthetic judgements about what is 'native' and 'alien' in nationalised landscapes like the Lake District 'have a curious tendency to bleed into discourses concerning the threat of alien races and cultures to the native people and culture' (Olwig 2003: 16). For example, while outsiders of acquired cultivation like Beatrix Potter and Octavia Hill, apparently well versed in countryside manners and conduct, became naturalised and 'at home' in the countryside, fears abounded that common tourists would threaten the aesthetic purity and atmospheric qualities of the countryside. The Trust not only concerned itself with preserving the aesthetic purity of the Lakeland landscape by resisting what Thompson regarded to be alien 'disfigurements' (1946: 21) such as roads, railways, coniferous plantations, advertisements and so on, but also with stipulating and regulating appropriate countryside conduct and cultural practices. In so doing, the Trust prescribed not only *what*, but also *who* was 'native' and 'alien', in or out of place in the countryside (see Table 5.4).

	In place/ 'native'	Out of place/ 'alien/ exotic'
	Slate cottages	White houses
	Deciduous trees	Conifer trees
Countryside aesthetic	Small, subtle (non-commercial) signs	Large, bright signs and advertisements
	Right/ good	Wrong/ bad
	Active	Passive
	Quiet enjoyment	Noisy
Countryside conduct	Solitary or small group appreciation	Large groups
	Intellectual appreciation	No appreciation

Table 5.4: Politics of the Lakeland aesthetic: racialised rhetoric of nativism and exoticism

5.4.6 Byelaws: defining and policing right/ 'white' countryside conduct

As suggested in the previous chapter, from its inception the Trust was concerned with regulating the use of its land. The Lake District in particular, where the Trust owned vast swathes of countryside and where the very ethos of preservationism was rooted, became 'a forcing-house for new ideas about the proper relationship between man, property, morality and environment' (Marshall and Walton 1981: 219). With the establishment of the Lake District National Park in 1951, and fuelled by fears that 'large numbers of the wrong people...[would]...spoil the enjoyment of those who are really appreciative' (Cumberland Herald 1944), the Trust professed in its *'Lake District Annual Report 1959- 1962'* to turn its attention to controlling 'the impact of the public' (The National Trust 1962), resulting in the institution of a series of byelaws in 1965. The byelaws specified not how the Trust's land *should* be used, but how it *should not*, stipulating an almost exhaustive list of offending articles that were considered to be 'beyond the pale' (Ware 1992, see Figure 5.5).

No "unauthorised person" shall:

- Fell or cut trees or brushwood, dig up or injure growing plants, or light a fire likely to cause damage
- Light a fire likely to cause damage
- Leave any bottles, egg-shells, orange peel, waste paper or other litter
- Injure, deface or remove any building, seat, fence or notice board, or cut or write on any tree
- Put up advertisements or notices
- Catch or kill any bird or animal, or take birds' eggs, or shoot or hunt or fish
- Motor across any Trust land so as to injure the turf or shrubs or leave a car or caravan on the land, or to take off or land in an aeroplane or glider, or erect tents
- Use a wireless or gramophone so as to disturb any person using the Trust land
- Hawk or offer for sale any article or thing
- Hold any meeting
- Bathe in an unauthorised place
- Dogs shall be kept under proper control; riding may be stopped if it cuts up the turf so as to be a nuisance to walkers; and if parking places are provided cars must not be parked elsewhere

Figure 5.5: The main provisions of the Trust's byelaws

Source: The National Trust Byelaws, 1965: 1-6

Although the Trust upheld an inclusive ideology, maintaining that the Lake District was not just for the 'privileged classes' (Thompson 1946: 58) 'by restricting particular activities from taking place...through the imposition of by-laws...a particular kind of contemplative and intellectualised enjoyment of the countryside...[was] promoted that meshes well with notions of moral affluence' (Harrison 1991: 9-10) class and indeed race. Through reinforcing divides between a 'social and anti-social geography' (Matless 1998: 68), coding some cultural practices and embodied performances as more consistent with the district's character than

others, the Trust implicitly produced a graded hierarchy of countryside constituencies within a normative whiteness. For example, while walking was considered to be the best way of experiencing the Lakes, a mechanism even of going 'back to the old racial experience' (Symonds 1933: vii-viii), any activities that breached the most cherished 'Lake Country characteristic' of 'quietness' (Thompson 1946: 23) by being noisy or 'riotous' were condemned as 'evil' (Thompson 1946: 22) and were prohibited by the Trust's byelaws (see Figure 5.5). As the next chapter will go on to argue, by coding some practices as 'in place' and others 'out of place', the Trust morally differentiated between those who belonged and those who didn't belong in the countryside.

5.4.7 Tensions in Trust: ambivalent approaches to Lake District preservation

Due to the persistence of a particular Wordsworthian landscape aesthetic and related ideas about countryside use, the organisation has been criticised for projecting a 'negative attitude' (Battrick 1987: 14) to preservation in its first fifty years, resisting change and almost 'fossilising' the Lake District 'in something like the landscape of Wordsworth's day' (Whyte 2002: 7). In response to such criticisms circulating at the time and to the changes wrought in post war Britain, the Trust (under the leadership of newly appointed Area Agent, Cuthbert 'Cubby' Acland) proclaimed a new 'constructive approach' to Lake District preservation from 1945 to 1973 (The National Trust 1954: 3-4). While the image of masons at work on the front cover of the *'Lake District Report 1953- 1954'* indicated the Trust's recognition of the importance of the Lake District as a working landscape, the report also reinforced how the Trust regarded Lake District preservation to be central to preserving the 'traditional way of life' and 'familiar appearance' of the countryside (The National Trust 1954: 4).

Lake District Reports in the early fifties signalled the ambiguous positioning of the Trust that on one hand endeavoured to preserve the unique Lakeland landscape aesthetic, characterised by its traditional farmhouses and native deciduous woodland, and on the other confronted practicalities of land management such as the expense of building in the traditional style and the need for commercial forestry to produce revenue for its work. While the Trust had, under Thompson's stewardship until 1945, typically put 'aesthetics before practical and financial matters' (Thompson 1946: 61), the post-war 'constructive' Trust, as stipulated in the *'Lake District Report for 1951 and 52'*, aimed to balance 'the claims of agriculture and landscape, residents and visitors, the practical and the aesthetic' (The National Trust 1952: 3-4). The need to reconcile conflicting interests was more acute than ever before as the Trust's post-war landholdings vastly increased (by roughly 100%) in comparison with its pre-war properties (see Figure 5.6). As a consequence, the Trust was

faced with 'growing complexities of modern estate management' in the seventies and eighties (The National Trust 1980a: 2).



Figure 5.6: National Trust properties acquired pre and post 1948 in the Lake District
Source: Lake District Annual Report 1963-64

By 1980, with quarter of the National Park in its ownership and a new Regional Director, the Trust reassessed its priorities in its first 'Strategy Plan for the Lake District' (The National Trust 1980a). Although the plan reinforced the organisations 'continuity of purpose' it also signalled the Trust's increasing concern with its relationship with various sections of 'the public' (The National Trust 1980a: 1). While such a focus on its public role and responsibilities could be interpreted as an attempt to project an increasingly populist, practical and inclusive nation rather than an elite, aesthetic and exclusive Englishness, this analysis has attempted to demonstrate that the organisation has held in tension elite and popular discourses of whiteness throughout its history. The following analysis of Gibside estate in the North East of England aims to further exemplify the ambiguous nature of institutional whiteness within the National Trust. As Gibside estate only began to be acquired by the Trust from the mid sixties, it extends these core arguments through analysis of the later organisational history.

Part B: The white mythology of Gibside estate

‘Among the peculiar features of the English landscape, may be added also the embellished garden, and the park scene’.

(Gilpin 1792: 10)

‘[T]he garden...behaves as a myth, holding forth promises of harmony with nature’

(Helmreich 2002)

As the historically divergent quotes above signal, the garden has, from Gilpin’s time through to the present day, functioned as a pervasive feature of the English landscape and has become a metaphor or myth of English national identity. Landscaped gardens, parks and their country houses have, according to Conforth, come to be appreciated as one of the greatest British contributions to European civilisation’ (1998: 1). While Gibside could hardly be considered a ‘key site’ like some of the grandest country estates of Stowe, Rousham or Stourhead, such sites that ‘loom so large in the literature are often a poor guide to the gardens created by the majority of landowners’ (Williamson 1995: 6). Gibside, fondly described by one of its designers, James Paine, as ‘one of the finest places in the north of England’ (quoted in Beamish 1990b: 5), is more representative of estates created by the mass of landed gentry that have been relatively under-studied. As, even in the assessment of the Trust’s Historic Buildings Representative in the mid eighties, Gibside has tended to be one of the Trust’s lesser-known and less popular properties (Whitworth 1984), it has unsurprisingly attracted less scholarly and literary attention than Derwentwater.

However, like Derwentwater, much of what has been written about Gibside has tended to celebrate a particular historical narrative, focusing on its architectural development and the shifting sagas of its various owners – the Bowes, Strathmore and Bowes-Lyon families, ancestors of the late Queen Mother. While the architectural and family history of Gibside has now been well documented, not least by Margaret Wills (1988; 1995; 1996; 1998), aside from her factual historical narrative, the published work on Gibside is relatively sparse. Although the few accounts that do exist have described the relationship between the places and people of Gibside, they have (albeit unintentionally) tended to eulogise the landscape and its rich family history, and consequently Gibside has so far escaped critical attention, let alone analysis as a racialised landscape. This account attempts to analyse some of the processes through which Gibside – as the site of a Jacobean country house, a Palladian chapel and other architectural features within an eighteenth century landscaped garden – has been constructed as a terrain of not only class-based, but also of racialised Englishness.

By arguing that Gibside landscape garden has, from its very eighteenth century design, been inflected through the discourse of race, this chapter suggests that historical processes are crucial to understanding why gardens are disproportionately visited by white, upper-middle class people in contemporary England (Wong 2001).

Moreover, although the National Trust has played a crucial role in preserving Gibside, the late nineteenth and twentieth century history of the estate, let alone the Trust's intervention in the site, has received scant treatment in comparison with the detailed accounts of its eighteenth century history, possibly explained by the nature of archival material. While the Strathmore Papers⁶ contain a rich archive of information on the eighteenth, and to a lesser extent the nineteenth century history of Gibside, there is a dearth of documents on its twentieth century history.⁷ The chapter aims to uncover some aspects of Gibside's twentieth century history in order to tease out the discourse of whiteness from the eighteenth century construction of the estate through to the period of the National Trust's ownership.

The following analysis is split into two periods. The first, from the eighteenth to the end of the nineteenth century, traces the authoritative and anxious discourse of whiteness through the historical making of Gibside estate. The second, from the foundation of the National Trust, its involvement with country houses in general and more specifically its acquisition of Gibside, explores the role of the National Trust in mediating Gibside landscaped garden. While this section does not dismiss the common assessment that the preservation of the country estate is synonymous with the preservation of a dominant, aristocratic version of the nation, it contends that such an interpretation has masked the more ambivalent, anxious story of how aristocratic heritage became variously equated with a normatively racialised national heritage. Although accounts have tended to analyse country houses and their gardens as 'landscapes of power' (Zukin 1991), as icons of aristocratic authority (Freeman 1952) we shall also see how their preservation was also 'fuelled, in part, by anxiety' (Helmreich 2002: 25), or rather a host of nested anxieties. This analysis attempts to show how the preservation of a place that combined the Trust's joint themes, of historic interest and natural beauty, also variously mediated elite and popular discourses of whiteness.

⁶ The Strathmore Papers (Bowes-Lyon Family, Earls of Strathmore family and English Estate Papers) are held at Durham County Records Office in a number of volumes and are electronically catalogued, available online at: <http://www.durham.gov.uk/recordoffice/>

⁷ Harry Beamish, the archaeologist who has spent years researching Gibside, also supported this view. I would like to thank Harry for sharing his immense knowledge of Gibside and taking me on a guided tour of the site.

5.5 The idealisation of Gibside landscape garden as a 'hyperwhite' discursive terrain

'All the gentlemen are planting and adorning their Seats, but nothing comes up to the grandeur and magnificence of what Mr Bowes has done'

(Montague, 1753)

The moral impulsion of such... improvers as ...Bowes at Gibside was to demonstrate the validity of their political philosophy by showing its effectiveness in the aesthetic field of landscape'

(Hussey 1952)

Although Gibside has been a coherent estate since the thirteenth century (see Table 5.5 for a summary of its shifting landownership), it was not until the estate passed into the Bowes family in the eighteenth century, specifically when George Bowes inherited the estate that the landscape was 'improved' and planned out as what Hussey (1952) branded one of the grandest idylls created in the eighteenth century. As the quotes above signal, commentators from eighteenth century tourists like Edward Montague, to country house advocates like Christopher Hussey in the mid twentieth century have emphasised the master narrative of Gibside – that of its design and creation by George Bowes. While accounts of Gibside have typically focused on the design and development of the estate, on its architectural and landscape features (see Figure 5.7), this analysis aims to expose some of the ways that the landscape of Gibside 'represents the architecture of social class, gender and race relations' (Zukin 1991: 16). It first briefly focuses on the iconography of Gibside estate before drawing some connections between the physical and cultural architecture of the landscape to suggest that a fragile mix of aristocratic, masculine, Christian, liberal and leisured identities variously informed the making of Gibside.

Dates	Owner	Summary
c. 1200	Marley family	Held Gibside and adjoining Marley Hill for centuries
1540-1713	Blakiston family	Built Gibside House c. 1600-1625
1713-1722	William Bowes	Gibside passed to Bowes family through marriage
1722-1760	George Bowes	Design and construction of Gibside landscape garden
1760-1800	Mary Eleanor Bowes	1) Consolidation of estate 2) Neglect and despoilment of Gibside
1800-1820	John Bowes, 10 th Earl	Renewal and restoration of estate
1820-1885	John Bowes	Basic upkeep but lack of maintenance and gradual decay
1885-1974	Earl of Strathmore and Bowes Lyon family	Uninhabited, continued period of decay, neglect and degeneration
1974-today	National Trust	Chapel and Grand Walk acquired in 1974, with gradual expansion since

Table 5.5: The main periods of ownership and phases in the history of Gibside from the twelfth century to today

Gibside provides a rare example of the transition in landscape design, between the formal and uniform seventeenth century pleasure garden, characterised by vistas punctuated with statues (the Grand Walk, the Statue of Liberty), and the late eighteenth century more irregular and 'natural' appearing landscape designs associated with William Kent and Capability Brown (Porteous 1996: 82-83; The National Trust Undated g). The estate 'represents a compromise between continental formality and...informal English parkland' (Green, Pendlebury et al. 1995: 15) and is the product of the 'amalgamation of...formal and...natural styles' of garden design (Helmreich 2002: 37). As such, it is symbolic of the shift in aesthetic sensitivities of garden design from 'tight, enclosed spaces, with geometric lines of vegetation [the tree-lined mile-long avenue], towards a more expansive sweep of turf and trees, with vistas of lake [and] lawn' (Short 1991: 68). The way in which Gibside presented a 'subtle mixture of old and new ideas, combining straight, formal vistas, such as the Long Walk, with the more irregular planting and meandering paths and streams that epitomise the eighteenth-century English landscape garden' (The National Trust 1999b: 4) provided part of the rationale for the Trust's preservation of the estate over other potential sites like nearby Ravensworth and Axwell estates.

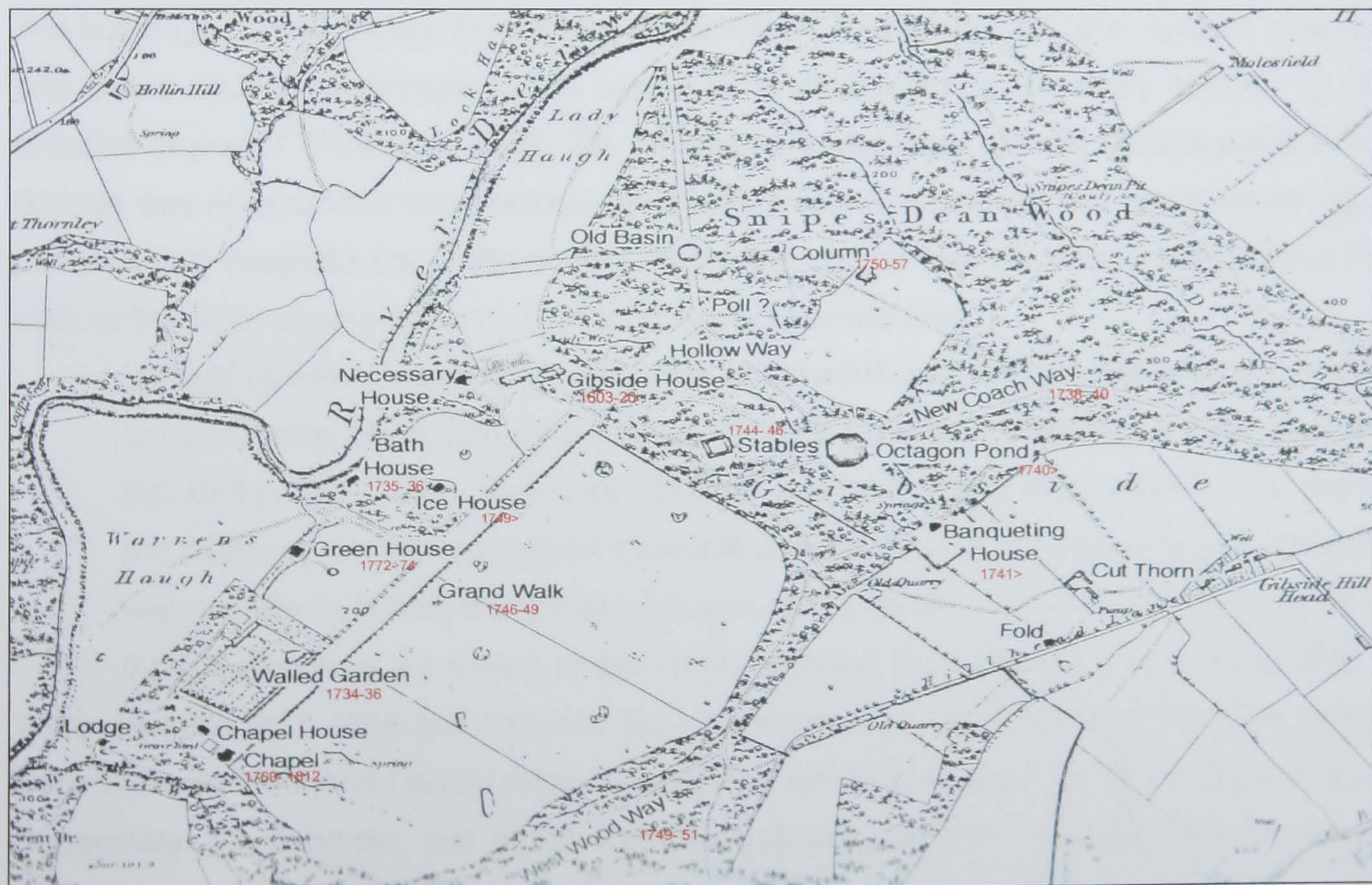


Figure 5.7 Gibside estate, its main features and development
Source: Modified from Wills (1995: 17), originally from OS Map, 1862

Although it is beyond the scope of this analysis to focus in any detail on the unique pastiche of styles combined in the landscape of Gibside, including Jacobean (Gibside Hall), Gothic (Banqueting House) and Palladian (Gibside Chapel), the fact that the estate has embraced such different architectural and aesthetic fashions is, in itself, indicative of the multiple rather than monolithic nature of Gibside's heritage. According to Helmreich such 'varying garden styles can be understood or read, concomitantly as expressions of the competing professional agendas of different kinds of designers...and articulations, through the vehicle of nature, of competing visions of the nation' (2002: 1). As a mixture of garden styles were brought together in the landscape of Gibside – the classical and the picturesque, the old and the new, the formal and natural – it can be read as a cultural product of different versions of aesthetic rural Englishness hinged around various idealised representations of nature. Arguably, the differentiated design styles and architectural ambiguity of Gibside estate are reflective of the cultural complexity of whiteness that has been cross cut by categories of class, gender, religion, politics and recreation.

As a countryseat of successive generations of the aristocratic Bowes and Strathmore families, Gibside might be regarded as the cultural product of a class-specific Englishness. The buildings and landscape layout as a whole are inextricably bound up in notions of power and status and are testimony to the way that 'white identity is decisively shaped by the exercise of power' (Roediger 2002: 23). While accounts have broadly recognised that the Gibside was an aesthetic manifestation of Bowes' political, economic and social power, as a powerful coal magnate and politician, few have focused on how the estate was built on the back of the poor, provoking some recent analyses to stress that:

'It should be remembered that their [the Bowes family] wealth was made possible by women, children and men working underground in intolerable conditions and for disgracefully long hours. The miners and their families lived in slums, underground disasters were commonplace and hundreds of men, women and children died in the most dreadful circumstances in the pursuit of coal owners wealth. This wealth made possible the building of a splendid eighteenth century mansion...at Gibside, the creation of one of the most spectacular and dramatic landscapes of that century' (Sunniside Local History Society 2005).

While coal literally fuelled and financed the development of Gibside, visible signs of mining were 'whitewashed' and literally removed from the landscape, much in the same way as at Borrowdale. For example, one of the first things Bowes did after inheriting Gibside was to remove the settlement that had grown to serve the mines (Dodds 1996: 71). The construction of Gibside as an emblem of idealised, rural Englishness was reliant on separating it from its thoroughly industrialised location. By alluding to such elements of Gibside's lesser-studied working history and exposing its class specificity, this analysis argues that the dimensions of class cannot be separated from the making of the rural estate.

Neither, for that matter, can gender, as Gibside could equally be interpreted as an articulation of masculine power, designed by men (from George Bowes and his designers including Stephen Switzer, Daniel Garrett and James Paine, to the estate labourers), *for* men, as 'a male preserve' (Wills 1995: 18).

As in the case of the Lake District countryside, whiteness was also articulated through the discourse of Christianity. The nature and positioning of the Chapel in particular indicates the importance of religion in the construction of Gibside. While the Chapel was symbolic of the family's staunch Christian, Protestant faith (Newman 1999), functioning as a place of worship and a family mausoleum, it was also the climax and centrepiece of the landscape design, purposefully situated to provide a dramatic contrast and symmetry to the imposing Column of Liberty at the opposite end of the Great Walk. Although its façade was elaborate and classically designed, inspired by buildings of Roman antiquity and the churches of Palladio, the interior had a Georgian simplicity in its style (see Figure 5.8). In this way the situation and design of the Chapel exemplified 'the conflict between religious and secular concerns' (Wills 1995: 61), also a crucial connecting tissue between elite and popular identities. As Gibside Chapel, unlike other Palladian churches of its nature and era, brought together the landowning family and the estate labourers (Wills 1995), Gibside was a space that condensed – albeit in tension – elitism and popularism in the whiteness that became identified with a sanctioned Protestant Englishness.



Figure 5.8: The interior and exterior design of Gibside Chapel
Source: National Trust Gibside leaflet, 2003 (left) and author's own photograph (right)

Whiteness was also a distinctly politicised formation within the landscape of Gibside. As Christine Newman (1999: 19) has argued in relation to Gibside, it is impossible to separate religion and politics and equally to separate the ownership of a country estate from the possession of political power. The Column of Liberty, designed at the time to be the tallest in Britain (with the exception only of Wren's Monument commemorating the Great Fire of London) was the most visible symbol of Bowes' power, wealth and influence as much as a direct 'expression of Bowes Whig politics' (Green, Pendlebury et al. 1995). By adorning the column with a statue of liberty, it celebrated the concept of freedom and symbolised Whig supremacy (Wills 1995: 47). However, as some have pointed out, the workmen who had to convey the tons of stone up the steep hill and hoist it up the scaffolding may have had different ideas about Bowes' liberalism.⁸ As National Trust Archaeologist Harry Beamish acknowledged in a file note, the allegorical figure of 'Liberty', built during the same period that the National Anthem and Rule Britannia were written, symbolised fervent nationalism as well as Bowes' wealth and power (1990a: 2). Moreover, at a time when slavery was prevalent in Britain and the empire, the column to liberty (constructed 1750-57, see Figure 5.7) was clearly not a symbol of freedom for all, but was a monument to *white* liberty.

As '[t]he country house is where the trend for using the countryside for recreation and retreat originates' (Bunce 1994: 78), it is a crucial part of the story of how the English countryside was constructed as a particular white, middle-class recreational space. Like the Lake District, Gibside became a focal point for 'the intelligent traveller of the eighteenth or early nineteenth century' (Muirhead 1952: 6) who had knowledge of 'taste' and shared cultural values of 'politeness' (Williamson 1995: 17). During George Bowes' ownership the grounds were opened to 'outsiders of acquired cultivation' (Mandler 1997: 9), for 'the pleasure of people of taste', as reported in the *Newcastle Chronicle* in 1795 (cited in Durham County Council 1980: 32). Visitors ranged from influential clergymen like The Dean of Durham and Bishop Richard Pococke who included Gibside in their tours of Northern England in the mid eighteenth century (Hunter Blair 1951; Green, 1995: 16; Durham County Council, 1980: 30; Beamish 1990b), to eminent artists like J.M.W. Turner who 'fell in love with the beautiful landscape and immortalized it' (Moses 1929) in two picturesque depictions of the estate during his tour from 1775 (see Figures 5.9 and 5.10).

⁸ Gardening Telegraph: 'Strength and beauty – the lasting legacy of a gentleman industrialist' (filed 24/01/2004) See: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/gardening/main.jhtml?xml=/gardening/2004/01/24/hgib24.xml&sSheet=/gardening/2004/01/24/ixgmain.html>



Figure 5.9: Gibside from the South c. 1817 by J.W.M. Turner
Source: Bowes Museum website: www.bowesmuseum.org.uk/ (last updated 29/ 11/ 05)



Figure 5.10: Gibside from the North c. 1817 by J.W.M. Turner
Source: Bowes Museum website: www.bowesmuseum.org.uk/ (last updated 29/ 11/ 05)

Even accounting for artistic license, Turner's paintings represented Gibside as a fantastical, Italianate, Arcadian landscape far removed from its 'unpleasant' and 'mean' industrial character described thirty years earlier in Hutchinson's (1787) *History of Durham*. The portrayal of Gibside by Turner (and to an extent sustained by the National Trust) as a rural idyll is particularly remarkable given the thoroughly industrial history of the Derwent Valley in which it is situated. By the time Turner painted a paradisiacal, picturesque portrait of Gibside and its surrounds, the Derwent valley was already distinctly industrialised (Meadows and Waterson 1993). In fact since 1690 the area was home to Europe's first integrated manufacturing plant of Winlaton Ironworks (Wilkinson 1998: 6). Furthermore, shortly after Turner's bucolic depiction of the landscape, the development of vast steel and coke works in the Derwent Valley transformed the meadow painted by Turner into an immense spoil tip, leaving the 'artist's lush glade...contaminated with pools of toxic fluid' (Wilkinson 1998: 6). However, such was the power of Turner's landscape paintings that even amidst an 'early Industrial Revolution' (Wills, 1995: 1), the scenery of Gibside was described and imagined as 'bold, grand and truly picturesque' (anonymous contributor to the *Gardener's Magazine* in 1834, cited in The National Trust 1998a: 2). Although the Derwent Valley was one of the first sites of British iron and steel making and Gibside coal was the best on the London market, the erasure of such an 'essential aspect of the story of the estate' (Durham County Council 1980: 34) has enabled Gibside to endure as a highly mythologised landscape more resemblant of 'natural' rolling countryside than a purpose built pleasure grounds located in a thoroughly industrialised and polluted valley. Similarly, while some commentators have drawn upon what little evidence there is to point to other groups of people who visited Gibside from the eighteenth century, including 'poachers and other nocturnal watchers' (Yeats 1975: 16), alternative uses of Gibside have largely been unrecorded at the expense of a narrative focused on the Bowes family.

While Gibside has so far been analysed as a site of authority during its eighteenth century construction, its nineteenth and twentieth century history has been dominated by decline and deterioration and during this time could more accurately be described as a site of anxiety. Before focusing on the Trust's intervention in Gibside, the chapter briefly turns to the nineteenth and twentieth century decline of the estate that provides the context for its needy rescue by the Trust from the mid sixties onwards. It also illustrates the case that Gibside held in tension multiple articulations of white identification, beyond an elite strand of authoritative 'hyperwhiteness'.

5.5.1 White anxiety: The nineteenth and twentieth century decline of Gibside estate

'The promulgation of the garden as a symbol of England's national identity was fuelled, in part, by anxiety generated by suspicion that the status quo could no longer be maintained'

(Helmreich 2002: 25)

In the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, far from resembling 'Turner's rural idyll' (Wilkinson 1998: 7), Gibside became a scene of decay and industrial despoliation (Desmond 1994: 50). The separation of the landscape garden from its industrial, cultural foundations could no longer be sustained as the coal that Gibside was physically and financially built upon, quite literally undermined the estate. Although the first few decades of the nineteenth century proved to be a period of renewed investment and improvement of the estate by the 'careful steward' (Wills 1995: 80) John Bowes, subsequent periods of neglect resulted in gradual decline and decay. Contrary to many accounts that have depicted the country house and its landscaped garden as manifestations of cultural power and authority, Gibside exemplifies how anxieties about the decline of country estates provided the impetus for their rescue and acquisition by organisations like the National Trust as icons of national heritage.

Despite its degraded and dilapidated state, with its buildings standing 'desolate and deserted, like ghostly spectres of the past' (Charlton 1987: 38), Gibside's essential design features remained largely in tact and the estate continued to retain some of its appeal as a landscape garden and pleasure grounds. One visitor in 1789 observed the enduring appeal of Gibside even in the face of rapid decline:

'no Man of the least Feeling can see this charming place without being sensibly affected with the rapid desolation everywhere taking Place around it, yet it has even now, after 9 years Neglect, sufficient majesty to engage the Attention of every Traveller fond of romantic Scenery' (cited in Wills 1995: 81, sic).

Exactly one hundred years later, in 1889, the *Monthly Chronicle for North Country Lore and Legend* recorded the persistent interest in and popularity of Gibside in the nineteenth century, proclaiming '[F]ew gentlemen's seats in the immediate neighbourhood of Newcastle are more interesting than Gibside...Gibside has continued to the present day to be a favourite resort of pleasure parties' (1889: 390-391). As we shall see, it was precisely Gibside's propensity to survive 'the ravages of time, felling, and replanting' (Pevsner 1983), to retain charm and appeal in spite its degraded condition, which provoked the Trust's interest and involvement in the estate.

5.6 The National Trust, Country House Scheme and Gibside

'Gradually, the National Trust is restoring George Bowes's noble conception'

(The National Trust 1999b. 32)

In contrast to the Lake District, the National Trust's ownership of Gibside has largely escaped scholarly attention. In fact, the vast majority of historical accounts, curiously including those published by the organisation itself, terminate at the acquisition of Gibside by the Trust (The National Trust 1966; The National Trust 1978a; Durham County Council 1980; The National Trust Tyne and Wear 1987; Wills 1995; Dodds 1996). By focusing on the role of the Trust in the management and representation of the estate, this analysis of Gibside extends beyond the narrative frame of most accounts. As the changing fortunes of Gibside estate have complexly intersected with general shifts in country houses on a national scale (see Table 5.6), it is within this national frame that the locality of Gibside is analysed.

Given that the Trust's governing object specified its intention to acquire buildings and houses from private landowners as well as tracts of open countryside, its acquisition of country houses in the nineteen thirties was not a new departure as some commentators have suggested. Rather, the fact that the Trust had a representative from the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings on its Council from 1895 indicates its interest in the preservation of built heritage from the outset. However, the relative importance of buildings as opposed to countryside has provided an enduring source of tension within the organization. While, as we saw in the case of the Lake District, the preservation of the countryside was associated with the moral and spiritual purity of the Trust's founders, the preservation of the country house brought the Trust in closer alignment with the aristocracy and landed elite, with private landowners rather than the public and as such has proved to be a continuing source of anxiety for the Trust. As this account will go on to demonstrate, the Trust's commitment to rescuing country houses was jointly bound up with discourses of white authority and anxiety.

Time period	National Trust and Country Houses	Gibside
> C 19 th	Private homes of the landed gentry Aesthetic appreciation by owners and circle of aristocratic visitors	Gibside designed and developed Private home of various owners, mainly the Bowes family Aesthetic appreciation by owners and circle of aristocratic visitors
Mid C19 th >	Popularised as symbols of national identity	Deterioration and decline
Late C19 th -1935	Little heritage value invested in country houses	Decline and decay Military camp
1935-1945	Country House Scheme Country houses as national heritage	Continued decline and decay War camp
1945-1965	National Land Fund Renewed importance on country houses	Further stagnation
1965-1987	Increased critique of country houses scheme	Acquired by National Trust Preservation as acquisition
1988-1997	The rise of the country house	Gibside Strategy Plan Professionalisation of approach Newcastle Inner City Project

Table 5.6: The National Trust's involvement with country houses in relation to the periods within Gibside's nineteenth and twentieth century history

5.6.1 The ambivalent discourse of whiteness within the Country House Scheme

In the thirties, when wartime destruction and death duties threatened the future of country estates, the National Trust turned its attention to safeguarding historic houses and their gardens from ruin. At a time when writers like Vita Sackville West (1941) and Ralph Dutton (1935) drew attention to the importance and vulnerability of country estates, so bringing them into 'a new position of public prominence' (Muirhead 1952: 5), historic houses and their parks and gardens came to 'represent a priceless and irreplaceable heritage of national importance' (The National Trust 1941: cover). Gibside, converted into a military training camp during wartime, had been mobilised as a patriotic propagandist tool in the First and Second World Wars. As the postcard in Figure 5.11 illustrates, patriotic wartime iconography seized on idealised images of rural England like the Statue of Liberty as a symbols of peace and freedom that every 'true Briton' should fight for. The superimposition of a picture of the camp and a jingoistic verse onto an existing photograph of the Liberty Monument harnessed the patriotic power of the countryside and was used to bolster support for the war. Thus, from the First World War, Gibside was not simply equated with an aristocratic, elite heritage, but was aligned with English national identity in a different sense, with a populist, patriotic white Englishness.

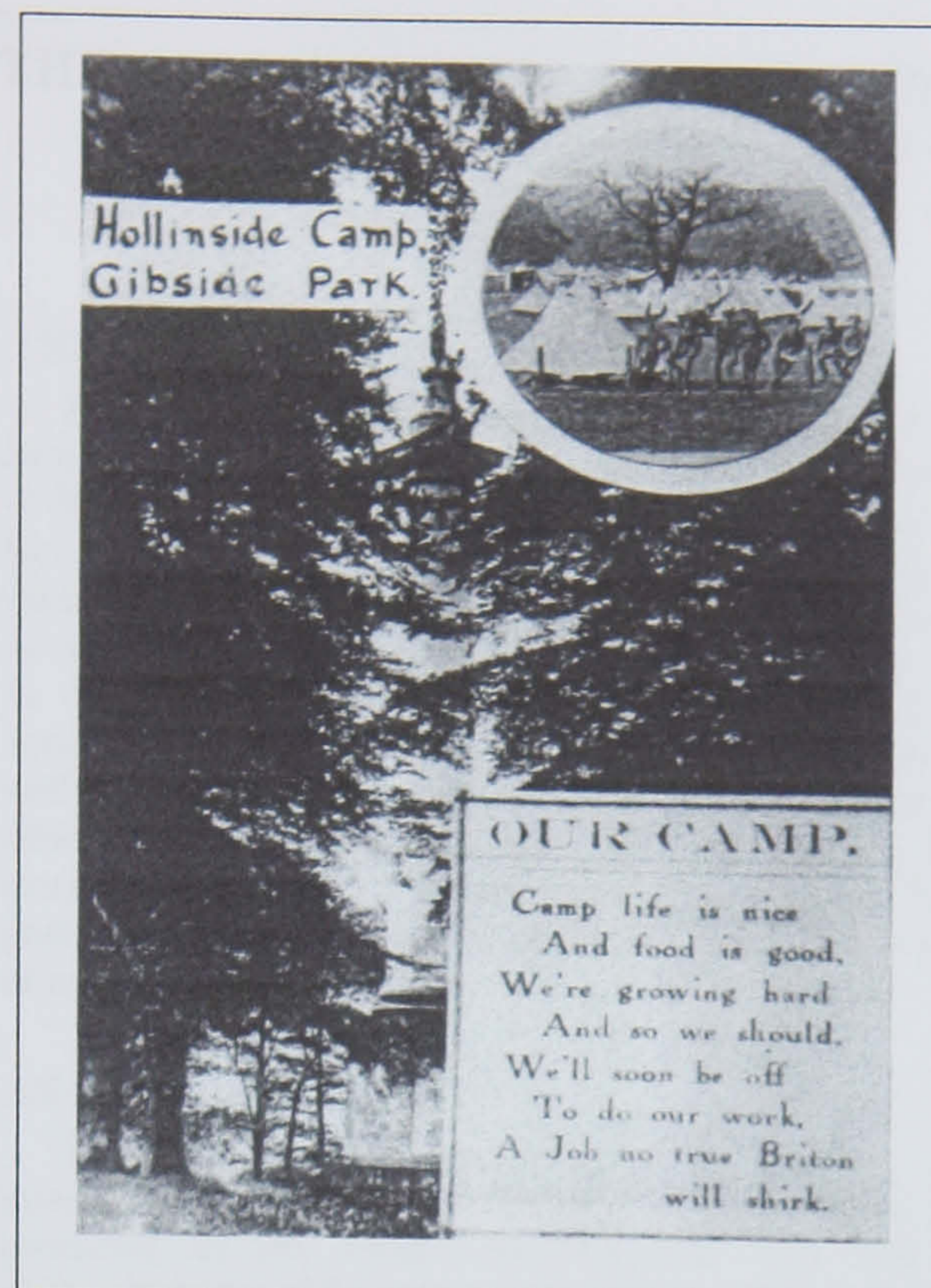


Figure 5.11: One of a number of postcards issued for use of the troops camping at Gibside
 Source: Rippeth (1991) Rowlands Gill in old picture postcards: unpaginated

Although Gibside was not acquired until the later years of the period when the Trust committed itself to rescuing country houses (1935 to 1970), it was certainly in the wake of such a shift in emphasis from open spaces to historic houses that the Trust became concerned with Gibside. As illustrated in Figure 5.12, an extract from *'The National Trust and the Preservation of Historic Country Houses'* Report (1941), the Trust presented its Country Houses Scheme as 'an answer' to 'the threat' posed to historic houses and their estates, positioning itself as the savior of such emblems of Englishness. A number of scholars have argued that by acquiring country estates as icons of national identity, locating Englishness in the treasure houses of the aristocracy, the Trust, however unintentionally, translated an elitist, exclusive version of (white) Englishness into national heritage (Jenkins and James 1994; Waterson 1994; Weidiger 1994; Cannadine 1995). Despite the fact that the country house period from the mid nineteen thirties has so powerfully influenced the Trust's public image that it is still alternatively branded with the title the Society for the Preservation of the Aristocracy, the Country House Scheme also played a crucial role in opening up such private estates for public access and enjoyment. Thus, even during this characteristically class-based period in its history, when the Trust has been criticised of elitism and exclusivity from inside and outside the institution, contrasting discourses of white English identity, between public and private, elitist and populist, authoritative and anxious, were negotiated within the organisation.

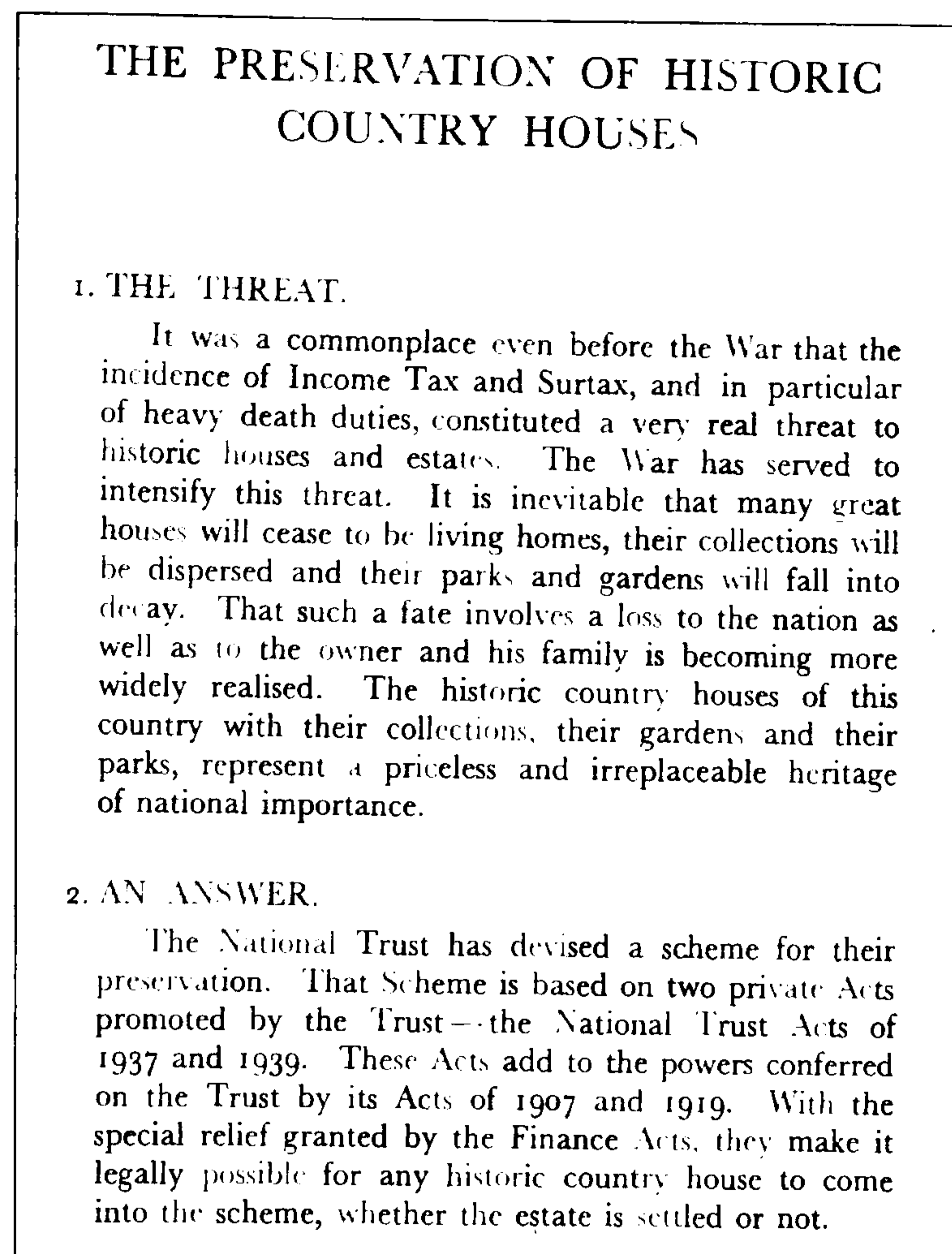


Figure 5.12: The National Trust and the preservation of historic country houses
Source: The National Trust (1941: cover)

5.6.2 The National Land Fund: the acquisition of Gibside

Given that the Trust had become more closely allied with the aristocracy and had gained the reputation of an elite country lobby as a result of its Country Houses Scheme (Mandler 1991: 466), it was understandably anxious about preserving its place in post-war, socialist Britain. However, when Hugh Dalton, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (and President of the Rambler's Association) set up the National Land Fund (NLF) in 1946 to enable public and public-spirited bodies to buy properties for public enjoyment, the Trust, with its unique powers of landownership, became the main beneficiary of the fund and became part of the apparatus of the post-war welfare state. Remarkably, when the Trust was at its most politically and culturally C/conservative ebb, it was able to reposition itself as 'a semi-nationalized custodian of land and buildings in the public interest' (Mandler 1997: 336). The acquisition of country houses not only brought the Trust into closer alignment with aristocratic/ landed interests, but also, the process of bringing private land into public ownership revealed the Trust's egalitarian/ philanthropic ethos. While the Trust possessed the capacity to reconcile apparently conflicting discourses within what the Secretary of the

National Trust (in correspondence relating to the NLF, 1949) reaffirmed to be its central aim of 'inalienability', by the fifties, attitudes towards its country house policy became sharply divided between its supporters and its critics. The Trust itself was bifurcated between people who supported the country houses scheme and the associated preservation of traditional private landed values, and those who opposed the way that the scheme pandered to and propped up the old landowning class. The Trust was therefore fully implicated in mediation and representation of different class inflected formations of whiteness.

It was during this highly politicized period, a time in the mid sixties that also corresponded with the Trust's refreshed focus on gardens (Jenkins and James 1994),⁹ that Gibside was offered to the Trust. Correspondence and legal notes from the sixties confirmed Lord Strathmore's intention to offer Gibside Chapel, the avenue and land surrounding the chapel to the National Trust (for example Orde 1963; Browne-Wilkinson 1967). However, such proposals were not without controversy as some questioned whether Gibside warranted charitable acquisition, fearing that its inheritance by the Trust would reap more benefit for the Earl of Strathmore than for the nation (Anon 1966). Hence, in an information booklet the Trust produced the year after it assumed responsibility for the historic core of the estate (The National Trust 1966: 4), it was anxious to stress the case for intervention in the site premised upon the degenerate state of Gibside. The acquisition of Gibside, as with country estates in general, was positioned as a direct response to their decay, which the Trust considered to constitute an irreplaceable 'loss to the nation' (The National Trust 1941: 1).

Although Gibside was neither large or intact enough to attract the interest of the Country Houses Committee in the thirties, the Trust considered Gibside worthy of preservation because it provided 'a rare survival of...formal and informal elements' of eighteenth century garden design (The National Trust Committee for Northumbria 1988), 'a rare survivor from this transitional period' (The National Trust Tyne and Wear 1987: 2). In one of its appeal pamphlets the Trust emphasised the importance of securing Gibside's future due to the way that it fuses 'the formal vistas found in French and Dutch gardens and the English irregular use of woods, hollows and streams to create a more 'natural ' landscape' (The National Trust Undated g). By preserving Gibside as 'an example of a largely unmodified pre-Brownian landscape garden in the same category as Studley Royal and Castle Howard' (The National Trust North East Region 1998b: 22), one which 'represents the link between the formal gardens influenced by 17th century France and Holland and the informal

⁹ By the late nineteen sixties, the Trust had unintentionally become the owner of the largest collection of historic gardens in the world (Jenkins and James 1994: 209).

landscapes of William Kent and Lancelot 'Capability' Brown' (Fairhurst 2002: 3), the Trust has asserted its iconic and emblematic status. The Trust also valued the chapel on its own merit as a fine example of the Classical Palladian style (The National Trust 1966: 6), as 'one of the finest Palladian buildings in England' (The National Trust Northumbria Newsletter 1984), and as the building that eclipsed the destroyed 'grand house' as the architectural centrepiece of the estate. So when the National Trust accepted the sixteenth Earl of Strathmore's offer of the Chapel and the tree-lined avenue it gained the heart of Gibside estate 'for the benefit of the Nation', as formally declared in the property conveyance (Trustees of the Earl of Strathmore 1974: 1).

5.6.3 Reunifying and recreating the Bowesian landscape of Gibside

As a result of the 'piecemeal disposal' (The National Trust Committee for Northumbria 1988: 2) of the Strathmore estate, a number of other institutions and individuals also staked their claim over composite parts of Gibside, including the Forestry Commission which acquired forested parts of the estate in 1954 and was tasked with the 'rehabilitation of...large areas of woodland' (Orde 1963) and The Landmark Trust that bought the Banqueting House in 1980 and converted it into a holiday home. With many vested interests projected on to the estate, from the commercially minded forester to the tenant farmer, from the herpetologist to the holidaymaker, preservationists to the public, Gibside embraced multiple, not monolithic identities. As such, the Trust was anxious to carve out its role and stamp its authority on Gibside. With the overriding aim of reunifying the protected landscape (Nature Conservancy Council 1990) and its listed buildings (Parkes 1986), the Trust made 'increasingly vigorous attempts to extend its influence within the estate' (Desmond 1994: 50).

According to its patchwork of landownership and landscape features, the Trust has classified Gibside into 'four main character areas', as shown in Figure 5.13 (The National Trust North East Region 1998a: 6). The 'Inner Pleasure Grounds', mainly owned by the Trust, including the Hall, Orangery, Walled Garden, Chapel, Long Walk and the Park Fields, although eighteenth century in origin, were significantly replanted and altered in the nineteenth century and consequently differ from the rest of the eighteenth century landscaped garden (The National Trust North East Region 1998a: 6). By way of contrast, the 'Outer Pleasure Grounds' or so-called 'Forest Garden', which includes 'the formal vistas, the 'eye-catcher' buildings (Column, Banqueting House, Stables), and water features' (The National Trust North East Region 1998a: 6) remain characteristic of George Bowes' original eighteenth century landscape design. Third, the more remote parts of the estate principally owned by the Forestry Commission where commercial forestry predominates have been grouped

together as 'The Carriage Drives', which provide a visible reminder of the fact that the apparently 'natural' garden is inevitably and inescapably commercial. Fourthly, 'The Wider Estate' that comprises agricultural land (parts of which are owned by the Trust like Cut Thorne Farm) is testimony to the 'relations of production behind an ideology of easy consumption' (Pugh 1988: 26-7). As a landscape of consumption and production, one that incorporates a number of eighteenth and nineteenth century design conventions and is owned by a number of different organisations, Gibside enshrines a plural rather than unitary notion of Englishness.



Figure 5.13: Plan of Gibside showing the inner (white) and outer (dark green) pleasure grounds
Source: The National Trust (1999) Gibside (booklet, inside sleeve)

In its first decade or so, the Trust sought to open up the estate to the public by reopening a network of paths through the grounds and gradually developing public facilities (car park, toilet, information centre, café). The Trust recognised, even in its survey of biological importance, the recreational value of Gibside in providing the opportunity for people to walk over the estate so close to the city of Newcastle (Lister and Alexander 1986). While the Trust has increasingly attempted to tap Gibside's potential as 'a valuable amenity to the local community' (Fairhurst 2002: 1), it has still, as evident in the *'Gibside Conservation Plan'*, continued to encourage 'the quieter forms of recreation' (The National Trust North East Region 1998a: 22). By advocating and providing for particular cultural practices like walking, sightseeing and bird watching and opposing other more intrusive and noisy practices like shooting, the Trust have tended to implicitly as well as explicitly (through byelaws) regulate use and conduct on its land, defining who laid inside and outside the boundaries of performed and enacted countryside belonging. While the Trust inadvertently served to reinscribe a 'hyperwhite' elite rural Englishness by preserving Gibside as part of national heritage, the establishment of a very active volunteer group, the 'Friends of Gibside' (The National Trust Committee for Northumbria 1988), exemplifies the way that country house appeal has not remained confined to high culture but has rather become more broadly popular.¹⁰

Although the Trust's low key approach to managing Gibside in its first decade or so successfully secured public access to the estate, in the early eighties Gibside suffered a dramatic decline in visitor figures, as reported by its Historic Buildings Secretary in the National Trust Northumbria Newsletter (Whitworth 1984). Such a decline, on top of the 'multiplicity of interests at Gibside and the Trust's aspirations of increased access suggested the need', as the Trust recognised, 'for a formal strategy which would seek to ensure that this great landscape is preserved for future generations to enjoy' (The National Trust 1989: 2). Fuelled by Marcus Binney's article, which made the compelling case that 'Gibside needs a plan', the Trust devised its first *Strategy Plan for Gibside* (1988) that reinforced its overriding management objective of reunifying and restoring the estate by becoming the 'senior partner' in the ownership and management of Gibside (The National Trust Committee for Northumbria 1988: 2). While the 1988 Strategy set out the Trust's desire to extend its interest in the estate, when the freehold for the rest of the Strathmore estate became

¹⁰ The Friends of Gibside (FoG) was set up in 1985 by the husband and wife team, Ken and Joan Gardener, who were then in charge of the estate. While it began as a small group of local people who wanted to help preserve Gibside (pers. comm. with Ken Gardener), now, almost twenty years later, it has hundreds of members drawn from as near as Newcastle and as far as New York or New Zealand (pers. comm. with Dorothy Vardy, Chairperson FoG). They help organise the Chapel's events programme, raise funds for Gibside projects and help the Trust with stewarding, recruiting and promotional work (The National Trust 1987: 14).

available in 1989, the Trust revised its strategy to extend its ambitions of acquiring 'all the original ornamental grounds' of Gibside (Binney 1987: 27). The way in which the Trust asserted itself as 'the one body which can gain the support and co-operation of all the parties involved' (The National Trust 1989: 4) has led some to argue that in its hundred-year history the Trust has rarely shown such determination to acquire a property and outbid other interested parties (James 1991: 46) than at Gibside. Such was the Trust's resolve to restore and reunite the eighteenth century landscaped garden of Gibside. In 1993, when the Trust successfully gained the remaining freehold of Gibside with the help of the National Heritage Memorial Fund (previously the NLF), it went further to fulfil its aim of reunifying the landscape of Gibside.

The Trust's ultimate aim of restoring Gibside emerges as a complex and highly politicised process of rebuilding history and forging narratives of national identity. By representing Gibside as part of English national heritage, the Trust has simultaneously and paradoxically contributed to the preservation of a particular aristocratic English nature and yet has popularised and diversified the constituency of Gibside. On the one hand, by pursuing the aim of resurrecting, restoring and reuniting the eighteenth century landscape garden to its former glory the Trust has guaranteed the survival of the 'long-enduring idyll created by George Bowes' (Wills 1995: 99). As the 'salient architectural past is seen through *National Trust*...rather than *local* lenses' (Lowenthal 1991: 209: emphasis added), the Trust has been deeply implicated in the process of translating dominant histories of rich and powerful individuals like George Bowes into national, public heritage. In so doing, the Trust has implicitly reinscribed and reified an idealised image of a paradise lost, a rural, nostalgic vision of the nation that has already been shown to hold an elite, class based whiteness at its core. On the other hand, by opening up the estate to the public, the Trust transformed a private country retreat into a publicly accessible green space on the urban fringe. Thus, as in the Lake District, the Trust has played a crucial role in mediating private and public, local and national, elite and popular heritages within the constituency of English whiteness.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to go some way to critically unveil the normatively racialised character and constituency of contrasting countryside spaces in England. It has traced discourses of whiteness through the place myths of Derwentwater and Gibside to argue that the English countryside has been implicitly and inextricably inflected by race. While analysis of Derwentwater and Gibside has indicated how a particular class-based, nationalised 'hyperwhiteness' has been inscribed in the fabric of the English countryside, the cases have

also revealed that whiteness has been ambivalently inculcated within contrasting countryside locales as a concurrently authoritative and anxious discourse. Analysis of one of the oldest and largest preservation organisations (not only in England or Britain, but also in Europe and the World) has revealed that the National Trust has, by conserving, commemorating and celebrating idealised icons of Englishness and editing out working class and racialised histories, played an important role in historically constructing a mythology of white Englishness hinged around the rural idyll. While attempts have been made in this chapter to highlight and retrieve some alternative histories of Derwentwater and Gibside, the next chapter explores how the Trust itself has begun to challenge and contest dominant discourses of heritage and identity over the past decade in order to reinterpret the countryside beyond its pervading image as a white middle-age and middle-class space.

Chapter 6

Reflexive Trust:

Towards a socially inclusive English countryside?

6.1 Introduction

'The Trust stands at a critical moment in its development...what we do is hugely important to England, yet the context within which we work and the pressures we face are changing rapidly'

(The National Trust 2002b: 4)

So far, the thesis has offered a reading of how the discourse of whiteness has been historically embedded within the National Trust and within two contrasting countryside spaces in its care. This chapter focuses on the critical yet under researched period in the Trust's history – from its centenary year in 1995 to the present day – in order to analyse its contemporary role in reconstructing and reimagining the nation. It draws on a range of primary materials, from national policy documents to local interpretation as well as upon interviews with key informants in order to illustrate how the Trust has, in its second century, begun to rethink meanings of heritage and countryside to widen its appeal and become more socially inclusive. However, this analysis asserts that despite its socially inclusive aims, the Trust still has some way to go to fully challenge the 'unreflective reproduction of white dominance' (Tyler 2004: 291) hinged around the idealisation of the English countryside.

Due to the Trust's self-acknowledged centrality in contemporary English society (see above quote and Table 6.1) it is arguably more pressing than ever before to analyse its role in representing and renarrating the nation. As the third largest landowner in England and Wales (only the Ministry of Defence and the Forestry Commission have larger landholdings), the largest membership organisation in Europe, one of the largest volunteer forces in the U.K. and the nation's largest farmer, the Trust certainly is 'hugely important to England' (The National Trust 2002b: 4). To get a sense of its cultural significance, the Trust's 3.4 million membership is larger than the number of people who regularly worship as members of the Church of England and of the membership of all the political parties in Britain put together. Thus, the Trust has eclipsed bulwarks of Englishness such as Parliament and the Church, to

become one of the nation's most supported and influential institutions. As such, the Trust continues to be instrumental in processes of narrating the nation, in the politics of defining national heritage and shaping 'cultural memory' (Harvey 2003: 475). Given that the process of defining national heritage and identity is 'intimately related to the exercise of power', the National Trust, as a powerful mediator of heritage and a guardian of rural Englishness, has been implicated in 'defining criteria of social inclusion and by extension – social exclusion' (Graham, Ashworth et al. 2000: 34).

THE CONTEMPORARY ROLE AND SCOPE OF THE NATIONAL TRUST	
Landholdings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages largest (617, 500 acres) and most diverse collection of nations open spaces • Owns and manages 700 miles of coastline (20% of the coastline of England, Wales and Northern Ireland); 166 fine houses; 49 churches and chapels; 47 industrial monuments; 37 pubs and inns; 25 castles
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The largest membership organisation in Europe with approx 3.4 million members • Recruit at least one new member per minute-a faster rate than babies are born in the U.K.
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the largest volunteer forces in the U.K • Almost 40,000 volunteers
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly 50 million visitors to open air properties each year • Approximately 12 million visitors to pay on entry properties every year • The vast majority of the British public will visit a NT property at least once a year
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide public access to 820 square kilometres of land • Provide public access to over 300 historic houses and gardens • 80% of the population of Britain live within 20 miles of a Trust property
Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage 6% of SSSI's • Conserve 40% of species protected by the UK Biodiversity Action Plan
Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nation's largest farmer (250, 000 hectares of farmland) • Over two thousand farm tenants
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of Britain's largest outdoor classrooms • Over 500,000 visits by schoolchildren per year
Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe's largest network of holiday cottages and gift shops • Works with over 40,000 companies
Other properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust manages 1 in 10 of the nation's museums • Other properties include 22 dovecotes and 2 lighthouses • Own other quirkeries like the national lawnmower collection, George Bernard Shaw's Oscar, 19 Turner paintings, 26 sets of samurai armour and a gold mine

Table 6.1: The contemporary role and scope of the National Trust
Sources: Range of sources including the National Trust¹ and BBC website²

¹ National Trust: www.nationaltrust.org.uk (accessed 28/07/2005)

² BBC Four Documentaries: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour/documentaries/features/trust-facts.shtml> (accessed 14/01/2004)

The chapter begins by pointing out that although the Trust has prioritised issues of social inclusion to a greater extent than ever before over the past decade, it has long recognised the need to broaden its image and appeal in order to fulfil its aim of working for the benefit of the nation. It then aims to illustrate how the second-centennial Trust has become more self-consciously critical and receptive to criticisms of its social and ethnic exclusivity. We go on to see how the Trust has begun to reflexively re-present and reinterpret national heritage in order to include people typically marginalized from its work. By reinterpreting its properties, the Trust has sought to widen the definition of what is understood as historically interesting and naturally beautiful, of what constitutes national interest and public benefit and as such has contributed to a process of reimagining the nation, of *'Imagining the New Britain'* (Alibhai-Brown 2001). The chapter focuses on specific examples from Derwentwater and Gibside to demonstrate some of the ways that the Trust has attempted to broaden its image and appeal to become more socially inclusive and representative of the nation in all its diversity. It takes on Naidoo's call to 'delve behind the frenetically repeated buzzwords of 'inclusion' and 'diversity' (2005: 37) to critically examine some of the Trust's attempts to represent the countryside and redefine meanings of national heritage in a more inclusive manner. It argues that despite the Trust's recent emphasis on education, access and outreach, the organisation could go further to redress its exclusive character and composition, to reach out to and engage marginalized, minority groups and particularly to encourage ethnic environmental participation. The chapter concludes by contending that if the Trust is to fully address the problem of being socially and ethnically inclusive, it must do so from the recognition of its own predominantly white, middle class, middle aged and able-bodied constituency.

6.2 Moments of critical reflection: organisational and constitutional reviews

'[M]oments of critical reflection highlight how the often unreflective reproduction of white dominance is in key critical moments destabilized, opened up and confronted'

(Tyler 2004: 291)

The Trust's history has been punctuated by 'moments of critical reflection' (see Tyler's quote) marked by a series of organisational reviews from the mid fifties onwards (The National Trust 1968; The National Trust 1983; The Hornby Working Party 1984; The National Trust 1993a). The way in which these reviews – from the first constitutional re-evaluation, the Nichols Review in 1956, through to the latest (2001-2003) Blakenham Governance Review – have consistently responded to concerns over the Trust's representativeness, accountability and public image highlights not only the enduringly

problematic relationship between the Trust, its members and the public, but also the Trust's receptivity to such problems. For example, as early as the sixties, the Benson Report recommended that 'the public relations effort should in future be directed to a greater extent to non-members of the Trust and to the public generally' (The National Trust 1968: 151) in order to become more representative of the nation it claimed to benefit. Since then, the Trust has recognised the importance of communicating with members and the public (The National Trust 1974) and has pursued policies to widen access and involvement in the countryside. The Trust's concern to encourage a broader constituency of people to visit its properties and become members (The National Trust Council 1974; The National Trust 1976) was shared by countryside organisations more broadly (Harrison 1991: xiv), as signalled by the '*Countryside for All*' Conference held in the late seventies, which created a dialogue on opening up and broadening access to the English countryside (Countryside Recreation Research Group 1978).

When the Trust attracted its millionth member in 1983 it became more concerned about its relationship with its members and the public and set up the Arkell Committee, which took a more critical approach than others before it, and concluded that there was significant scope for the Trust to improve communications with the public through strengthening regional management. As the first region to have its own Area Agent, the Lake District Committee was looked to as an example, but like the other regions, the Arkell report judged that it fell short of representing people 'from all walks of life, with differing backgrounds of education and upbringing...from different localities in the region...and a wide age-spread' (The National Trust 1983: 18-19). While the report advocated a 'wider mix of membership' according to different personal characteristics of age, education, place of residence and gender, ethnicity was glaringly present in its absence. Although the recommendations implied that the Trust's committees and membership needed to become less 'white, male and middle-class' (Hall, C. 1992), ethnicity received no mention and was masked by general comments that articulated 'the desirability of creating links with as broad a cross-section of the community as possible' (The National Trust 1983: 24). Thus, whiteness continued to function as an unmarked category within the Trust, in spite of the organisations' socially inclusive aspirations. By recognising and responding to criticisms directed against it, of being overly bureaucratic, paternalistic and too narrow in its social composition, the Arkell (1983) and Oliver (1993) Reports in particular set the stage for the Trust's increased emphasis on inclusion over the past decade.

6.3 The Trust's centenary: a critical, reflexive turn

'The National Trust's centenary is not just a time for celebration, but also a time to reflect on the future'

(Lord Chorley, Chairman of the National Trust, welcome speech to Centenary Countryside Conference cited in The National Trust 1995c: 3)

'[I]t may well be that, unknown to its management and its members, a new era in the Trust's history is already beginning'

(Cannadine 1995: 28)

'The past is not fixed. It is constantly reinterpreted or reinvented'

(The National Trust 1995a: 11)

While the Trust has embraced a critical consistency throughout its history, it has never been so engaged in the process of internal reflection than in its second century, from 1995 to the present day. Over the past decade, the Trust has increasingly been concerned with its social role and responsibilities (The National Trust 1995d), epitomised by its centenary 'battle cry' (New 2001: 67) 'for ever for everyone'. Just as Lord Chorley, the Chairman of the Trust at the time acknowledged, the Centenary not only presented a cause for celebration and for the reinforcement of its core principles, it also provided an opportunity to take stock of the organisation and to critically reflect on both its past and its future (The National Trust 1995c: 3). Thus, while a number of books were published to celebrate the Trust's hundred-year history (Jenkins and James 1994; Waterson 1994; Cannadine 1995; Denyer and Martin 1995; Willes 1995), the period around the Trust's centenary was undisputedly one of 'reflexive thought about the Trust's work' (The National Trust 1995a: 3), defined by the publication of two major policy reviews and culminating in the Centenary Countryside Conference in 1995 (The National Trust 1995c). In combination, the '*Open Countryside*' Review that highlighted the need to respond to the changing recreational requirements of the future and cater for demands for wider access (The National Trust 1995b: 3), the '*Linking People and Place*' Report that stressed the Trust's social role and responsibilities and the *Centenary Countryside Conference* that opened up critical discussion about the Trust's work, helped 'to set a new agenda for the Trust' (Russell 1995: 1) and usher in a 'new era' in its history (Cannadine 1995).

The review, report and conference all highlight how the Trust unprecedentedly provoked and encouraged critical reflection in order to forge 'a renewed, forward looking...more open organisation' (Russell 1995: 1) in its '*Next Hundred Years*' (Newby 1995). The Centenary

Conference in particular was indicative of the Trust's growing receptivity to criticisms from inside and outside the organisation, including from the House of Lords (Elis-Thomas 1995; Parker 2001) from journalists and writers (Porritt 1995; Watson-Smyth 1998; Worsley 2001), from academics (Fowler 1995; Hewison 1995; Lowenthal 1995) and even its own council members and staff (Binns 2000; Mead 2000; Heal 2001; Slay 2001; Hunt 2001). Faced with mounting criticisms that 'the Trust has become a middle class preserve, run largely by an upper class, landowning elite' (Hetherington 2003: 11), the Trust has come, 'in its second century, to appreciate that the heritage it conserves should not only be that of the rich and powerful holders of cultural capital, but also of the many who have felt dispossessed' (Howard 2003: 173) and excluded from a narrow portrait of national identity.

This chapter argues that the Trust has attempted to fulfil the second part of its centenary mantra, 'for everyone', through three main processes – by reinterpreting its properties, placing emphasis on education and broadening access through outreach projects – which have all contributed to transforming the public image of the organisation. As part of a broader re-evaluation of the significance of the countryside (The National Trust 1995c: 1) and prompted by the popularisation and radicalisation of countryside politics, the Trust has placed increased emphasis upon its social role and responsibilities. In so doing, it has aimed to link its places not only with its traditional support base, but also with many whom it perceives to 'hold a dispassionate view of its work' (The National Trust 1995a: 2), with people who consider the Trust to be 'remote or even irrelevant to their lives' (The National Trust, 2001a: 1). Before focusing on examples of the Trust's education and outreach projects at Derwentwater and Gibside, the chapter analyses how the Trust has begun to reimagine and reinterpret the countryside and by extension, its version of the nation.

6.4 Reinterpreting 'whitened' histories, reimagining the countryside

'[E]ven apparently singular histories and geographies may be open to varying interpretation, even appropriation by those once marginalized in, or excluded from the dominant national culture'

(Daniels 1993: 210)

'Enduring place myths are...susceptible to revision. Place meanings are always being radically and subtly reterritorialized through a reworking of their past'

(Schurmer-Smith, 1994: 47)

'Reconceptualising histories and refiguring racialized landscapes are political acts in themselves'

(Frankenberg 1993a: 242)

Like cultural geographers and whiteness studies scholars (see above quotes), the National Trust has also recognised the importance of reinterpreting and reworking the past in order to successfully reach out to new audiences and to convince parts of society still largely excluded from the organisation of its relevance (Slay 2001: 71). By acknowledging, as it has in its *'Linking People and Place'* Report, that it has tended to present 'aspects of the heritage in ways which broadly sustain the illusion of unchanging values' (The National Trust 1995a: 11), the Trust has embraced the understanding that the past is not fixed or static, but fluid and open to reinterpretation. As part of a broader 'democratic revitalisation of heritage' (Littler 2005: 3), or what Stuart Hall has termed the 'democratisation process' (2005: 27), the Trust has sought to re-present the past by preserving 'not only the great monuments, the fine houses and the rare species' (The National Trust 1995a: 11) but also everyday places that enable the histories of ordinary working people to be told (The National Trust Undated c: 22). Properties like 'The Workhouse' at Southwell in Nottinghamshire (see Figure 6.1), Paul McCartney and John Lennon's childhood council houses in Liverpool and back to back houses in Birmingham have been showcased to exemplify how the Trust is beginning to reassess the meaning and value of history, moving away from an almost obsession with spectacular people and places, to an equal interest in vernacular, everyday people and places.

The Workhouse
Nottinghamshire



From a building that nobody wanted to enter, the Trust has endeavoured to create a heritage attraction that anyone would want to visit and where everyone is welcome. The Workhouse at Southwell was built in 1824 to designs by the Rev. John Becher and for more than 150 years housed the local poor. It also became the prototype for a national system of more than 600 workhouses.

The meaning and value of heritage

Opening new properties
Another key objective is to enrich people's lives through their enjoyment and understanding of our heritage. To continue to engage people's attention, we need to find ways of humanising and personalising the ways in which people engage with our heritage, to make the experience more meaningful, memorable and rewarding.

Figure 6.1: 'The Workhouse' as an example of the Trust's reinterpretation of the meaning and value of heritage
Source: Modified from The National Trust (2002) Annual Report to Members 2001-2002: 12

Moreover, by reinterpreting its existing properties, the Trust has begun – albeit tentatively – reimagining or ‘reheritagising’ (Macdonald 2003) the countryside. The Trust’s recent insistence that its properties are ‘*More than a Pretty Place*’ (The National Trust 2004c) signals its increased attempts to pick out the multiple and complex meanings of its places. As the chapter will go on to argue, in its strategic aims to ‘re-present, explain and re-interpret... heritage in fresh and appealing ways’ (The National Trust, 2001a), to stretch ‘the definition of national heritage’ (Reynolds 2004a), the National Trust has a crucial role to play in the process of ‘heritage negotiation’ (Harvey 2003: 476), in reimagining and reinterpreting the typically monocultural (hi)story of the English countryside in order to reveal its multicultural reality.

The Trust’s recent plan to develop a new signing system (pioneered and piloted at different sites in the Lake District)³ provides some indication of how the organisation has begun to represent its properties and to re-project its own image. By setting out to replace its information-heavy panels and negative management messages with a welcome message, orientation and other interesting information (Sale c. 2001, for an example of these components, albeit on an older sign at Gibside, see Figure 6.2), the Trust aims to project a more positive, welcoming, inclusive image in order to appeal to traditional and non-traditional visitors alike. The Trust’s new ‘flexible signing system’ (Sale 2002), designed to enable the same site to be repeatedly reinterpreted, reflects the Trust’s increased receptiveness to the need to interpret multiple and dynamic meanings of heritage. For example, as Nigel Sale, the scheme’s architect explained, during the school summer holiday months of July and August, the blank boards with self-adhesive messages could be specifically targeted at children rather than at an assumedly middle-aged, middle class and educated audience (interview 17th October 2002). Through its growing recognition that ‘[w]e can never hope to fully understand the past, but we can at least recognise that history is open to wildly different interpretations’, as stated in its ‘*Organisational Review Report*’ (The National Trust 2004b: 2), the Trust has rejected a singular notion of heritage and has opened up the possibility for what many have labelled ‘rural others’ (Little 1999; Halfacree 2003) – individuals or communities who have typically been excluded from an idealised, nostalgic, ‘whitewashed’ version of the countryside (see section 2.4.5) – to reclaim their heritages.

³ From interview with Nigel Sale, Countryside Interpretation Officer for the Northern Regions, 17th October 2002.



Figure 6.2: 'Welcome to Gibside' interpretation panel
Source: From author's own photograph collection

Furthermore, by placing significance on 'the industrial past' (The National Trust 2002e), the Trust has begun to challenge sanitised 'false histories' to unveil multiple layers of landscape meaning and identity, thus opening up the countryside to different interpretations likely to hold resonance with a wider range of people (Howard 2003: 19). The recent statements of significance for Borrowdale and Gibside, which provide the basis for management plans and policies, are indicative of the Trust's attempts to recover the industrial histories of seemingly 'natural' rural landscapes. In its current statement of significance, the Trust has considered Borrowdale to be important not just for its natural beauty, aesthetic contrasts, recreational appeal and ecological value but also for its mining heritage as an important site of copper, lead and zinc mining (The National Trust 2002e: 3). As we see in the *'Borrowdale Management Plan'*, by conserving the industrial archaeology as well as the natural beauty of the Borrowdale valley, the Trust aims to broaden its appeal in the Lake District. The Trust's plan to 'open up' Force Crag mine⁴ in order to provide 'a fascinating insight into the mining and processing of ore' (The National Trust 2002e: 4) exemplifies its engagement in the political act of redefining what constitutes categories of 'historic interest' and 'natural beauty' that comprise the nation.

⁴ Force Crag Mine is the last working metal ore mine in the Lake District that closed as recently as 1991

Similarly, the Trust has attributed Gibside's significance not just to its importance as an eighteenth century landscape garden, to its natural beauty, architectural interest and family heritage, but increasingly to its labour history and contemporary recreational value. Although the (hi)story of Gibside has largely been told through the master narrative of the Bowes family, even that apparently unitary and idealised family portrait has recently been complicated by interpreting it as a contradictory history of 'enterprise, wealth, taste and achievement laced with tragedy, vanity, indulgence and cruelty' (The National Trust North East Region 1998a: 20). In response to the recognition that '[m]ost visitors are not driven by the intricacies of its family or natural history or the splendours of its landscaping and architecture' (The National Trust North East Region 1998a: 21), the Trust has identified the need to widen representations of heritage, beyond singular, aristocratic narratives. As the Trust's statement of significance for Gibside has acknowledged (2002g: 21-22):

'Indeed there is another history of Gibside which has been neglected. It deals with the men and women who actually made Gibside, those who with skill and muscle and determination made it possible for their successors, especially those living locally, to enjoy its recreations... Their story does not encompass the heights of the London season... or picture collecting in Paris, but it is a story which deserves to be told'

Although such a story may remain largely untold to date, the very recognition that alternative, working histories of landscape production need to be unveiled signals the Trust's growing concern with renarrating national heritage and identity.

The Business Plan for Gibside (2002) is further evidence of the way that the Trust is committed to unveiling 'hidden histories' (Gilroy 1987: 12) and opening the landscape up to multiple interpretations (The National Trust 2002g). In particular, the Trust's plan to stabilise the stables and give them a new lease of life by restoring them as an interpretation and education resource, including provision of dormitories for working holidays, volunteers and school groups (pers. comm. with Tony Dawson, Warden and Tony Walton, Property Manager) indicates the way that the Trust (with financial backing from the Heritage Lottery Fund) are investing in restoring and representing different elements of life at Gibside. Rather than just rekindling and resurrecting the aristocratic lifestyle of George Bowes and successive owners of Gibside, the Trust also aims to revitalise the working lives of stable boys and labourers, as indicated by the existing interpretation panel for the stables (see Figure 6.3). Likewise, its plans to secure and provide access to the Orangery have specified that the original "backroom areas" should be made visible in order to tell 'both the 'upstairs and downstairs' stories' (The National Trust 2002g: 9). In paying more attention to life 'below stairs' and uncovering the work of 'invisible hands' (Samuel 1994: 17), the Trust seeks to offer 'more points of access to 'ordinary people' and a wider form of belonging' (Samuel 1989: xiv). Overall, the *'Gibside Business Plan'* (2002) symbolises the Trust's reflexive

realisation of the need to reinterpret and renarrate traditionally hegemonic histories. It reflects the Trust's growing sensitivity to subaltern stories and working class heritage that provides the basis for reimagining locales of identity like Gibside beyond their common conception as preserves of elite, Edenic England.

THE STABLES

I am the head stable boy and have 20 or more horses to look after here...When Mr George Bowes built these fine stables in 1751 a lot of his visitors thought it was a great house, little did they know that behind that smart front was a cobbled court yard full of steaming horses, carriages and carts. If I was not up and moving the horses to where they were needed before 5 o'clock each morning there would be quite a jam in here!

The stables are being restored now and there will once again be horses and activity where I used to live and work.



Figure 6.3: Recovering hidden histories: Gibside's history from the perspective of a stable boy
Source: Photo and text from 'The Stables' interpretation panel at Gibside, author's own photograph collection

The Trust's aims and attempts to reinterpret Derwentwater/ Borrowdale and Gibside indicate how the organisation has been thoroughly embroiled in the politicised processes of reconceptualising histories of normatively racialised place myths. In attempting to complicate dominant representations of national heritage and to broaden understandings of built and natural heritage, the Trust has become engaged with challenging "historical forgetfulness" (Ware 2002b: 199), with confronting processes and practices of 'white' 'Anglo-Saxon amnesia' (Lowenthal 1991: 208). As we shall see, the process of questioning to whom heritage belongs has not only involved contesting dominant representations of the countryside, but has also demanded a commitment to actively encouraging traditionally marginalized or excluded people to access their heritage in order to provide the widest possible benefit to the nation, beyond those who possess cultural, intellectual and economic capital.

6.5 'For ever, for everyone': towards a socially inclusive Trust

'We do our utmost to welcome, engage and excite everyone, whatever their background, reaching out to new communities'

(The National Trust 2004d: 1)

The Trust has attempted to appeal to 'everyone', and particularly to reach out to 'new communities' by placing greater emphasis on education to broaden its image and appeal and through targeted outreach projects to widen access. The cases of Gibside and Derwentwater/ Borrowdale exemplify these two main ways that the Trust has attempted to fulfil its socially inclusive, second centennial slogan, 'for ever, for everyone'. While the pioneering Newcastle Inner City Project hosted at Gibside has been hailed as a model of how the Trust can effectively work 'to remove barriers which prevent people's appreciation of the...countryside' (The National Trust 1995a: 28), Borrowdale has been benchmarked for its education work. This section first explores the Trust's attempts to broaden its conceptualisation of access through a focus on the Inner City Project and second illuminates some of the educational initiatives and schemes in Borrowdale that have aimed to recast the Trust's image and broaden its appeal.

6.5.1 Access/ outreach: The Newcastle Inner City Project and Gibside

The Newcastle Inner City Project (ICP) exemplifies how the Trust has sought to confront not only physical, but also intellectual and psychological barriers to access in order to work towards a more socially inclusive countryside. As Gibside mainly attracted white, middle aged, middle class visitors, the Newcastle ICP was set up in 1987 to enable young people aged 16-24 from some of the poorest areas of inner city Newcastle to access and enjoy the landscape of Gibside (interview with Ken Gardener who instigated the project). Although the outreach initiative followed in the long tradition reaching back to Octavia Hill of paternalistic projects that aimed to improve the moral and spiritual condition of the urban poor, the ICP took a new approach by placing emphasis on intellectual and cultural as well as physical access and by fostering an ethos of empowerment. According to Liz Fisher (2002: 30) who single handedly ran the project from 1988-1996:

'The work of the National Trust Inner City Project (ICP) is unique because it employs suitably qualified Youth and Community Workers to develop educational programmes to meet the needs of the individual, and facilitates their learning through the use of the countryside and Trust properties.'

Rather than simply taking alienated or excluded groups into the countryside, which does little to challenge embedded power relations, the ICP, with the overriding aim of community

development, sought to encourage members to develop confidence and skills and to enable participants to take on responsibility for running their own group (see Figure 6.4 for an overview of the work of the project).



THE WORK OF THE PROJECT		
<p>YOUNG PEOPLE</p> <p>The project takes young people into the countryside to enjoy activities such as orienteering, hill walking, overnight 'bivvies', and conservation projects.</p> <p>During these activities workers use informal education to encourage young people to learn about themselves, how they work together and achieve a better understanding of the factors affecting their lives.</p> <p>Young people also gain new knowledge, skills and attitudes by gradually taking on responsibility for the running of their own groups.</p>	<p>LIVING AND WORKING TOGETHER</p> <p>Housed mostly in National Trust base-camps in Northumberland and the Lake District, the Project puts particular emphasis on residential work, believing it to be the most constructive period for all groups.</p> <p>The group members are encouraged to organise their own 'residential', plan their activities and raise funds to pay for them.</p> <p>Participation in and the organising of these weeks or weekends away gives groups and individuals opportunities to gain new knowledge, skills and attitudes that are not normally attainable in their normal daily lives.</p>	<p>BEYOND RETIREMENT</p> <p>Older people also enjoy many of the activities enjoyed by the young. Group members have taken part in Abseiling, canoeing, sailing, horse-riding orienteering, hill walking and mountain biking.</p>
<p>CONSERVATION</p> <p>The project aims to involve people of all ages in conservation tasks. This is mainly on National Trust properties with tasks ranging from footpath restoration and tree felling to raking hay and clearing leaves. Projects are suited to the abilities of the groups offering a constructive and challenging activity for all taking part.</p>		 <p>Always open to new opportunities, project members have taken part in various training courses such as hill walking and map reading, first aid, art and photography.</p> <p>As is common with all project groups, members are encouraged to take on responsibility for running their own group themselves.</p>

Figure 6.4: The work of the Newcastle Inner City Project

Source: The National Trust (Undated d). The National Trust Inner City Project in Newcastle Upon Tyne (leaflet).

What began as a single worker pilot project aimed at increasing the involvement of young people from poor areas of Newcastle in the countryside, outdoor activities and the work of the Trust has become a benchmark for the Trust's youth and community work. The ICP now has more than a hundred members (aged 12-80+), employs a team of full time and part time staff (The National Trust 2002h) including Gerard New, the Property Manager, and has a permanent base in the Holy Jesus Hospital, an important landmark in the centre of Newcastle (The National Trust 2004e). For all its successes and continued informal education work with young people (mainly aged between 13 and 25), the ICP has more recently expanded to enable older people (aged 50 plus) to also gain access to and enjoy the countryside on their doorstep. To groups such as the 'Walker Walkers' from the deprived ward of Walker and 'West End Wanderers' from the west of Newcastle (see Figure 6.5), the ICP has offered opportunities to meet new friends, stay mentally and physically active, and

gain a new lease of life during retirement and beyond. Through a combination of taking part in outdoor activities from abseiling to walking, getting involved in conservation tasks, participating in and organising residential trips and learning from training courses such as first aid and photography, the ICP has provided social, educational, health and personal benefits to young and old inner city residents alike.



Figure 6.5: An Inner City Project walking group on a map reading course
Source: The National Trust (2001) Views 34, page 67

Despite the 'strong degree of resistance' that the project initially faced (interview with Ken Gardener) and the reluctance of Trust to embrace what was at the time a radical 'groundbreaking' project (New 2001: 67), the ICP has had a 'big impact on the Trust' (Liz Fisher at the NT AGM 2004). As the Trust's pioneering community and outreach project, it set a precedent for what is now a catalogue of community, education and outreach initiatives, listed annually in the Trust's *Directory of Community Initiatives* (The National Trust 1996). With its second centennial emphasis on social inclusion, the Trust has showcased the ICP in many of its public documents (see Figure 6.6) as an exemplar of its ability to 'reach out to the wider community in a proactive way' (Fisher 2002: 30). It is no coincidence that at a time when the Trust is becoming ever-increasingly concerned about projecting an inclusive image, broadening its appeal, and reaching out to new audiences, that it not only placed the work of the ICP in the spotlight at its 2004 Annual General Meeting (AGM), but also that it chose to hold its AGM in the marginalized and relatively deprived area of Newcastle. Both seemingly depoliticised manoeuvres are indicative of the Trust's recent renewed emphasis on its social role and responsibilities.

Reaching new communities

'Across the country, Community, Learning and Volunteering teams are developing outreach programmes. For 15 years the pioneering Inner City Project, based in Newcastle's Holy Jesus Hospital, has made contact with local people who have no connection with the Trust. It involves them in our work through training and self-development under the guidance of community development staff.'

Extract from the Trust's Strategic Plan 'Looking to the Future 2004-2007': 24

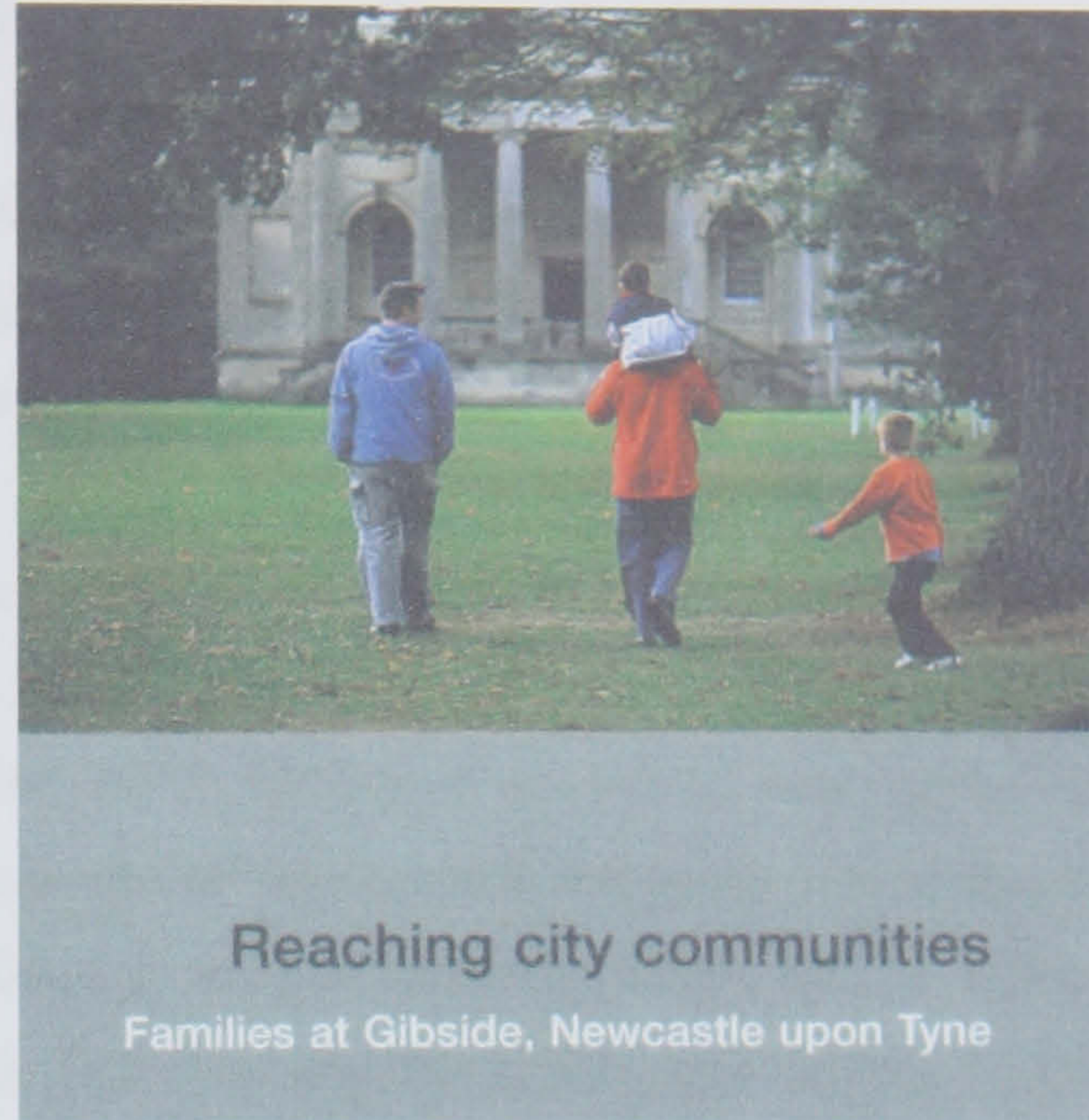


Figure 6.6: Showcasing Gibside as an example of the Trust's work in reaching out to new, city communities
Source: Left: Extract from the Trust's most recent Strategic Plan (2004d: 24), Right: from 'History and Place: Informing the Future' (The National Trust 2004b: 21)

In addition to the work of the pioneering ICP, the Trust has also sought to widen access to and enjoyment of Gibside through a carefully designed programme of events. Particularly over recent years, by increasing the number (from 18 in 1998 to over 70 in 2002) and diversifying the nature of events, the Trust has enabled less traditional audiences as well as its stalwart supporters to access and enjoy Gibside (The National Trust 2002e). While traditional and typically popular events like guided walks and seasonal celebrations are still part of the events programme, other, less conventional events like open air concerts, mushroom picking and brass in the park are also regular features in the increasingly innovative and imaginative calendar of events (see Figure 6.7). In fact, the Trust have regarded the community and outreach work at Gibside to be so successful that the Director General of the Trust, at its hundredth AGM in 1995, earmarked Gibside as an example of where he wanted to see the Trust's work progressing in the future:

'Gibside is increasingly a place where people from the surrounding cities come for walks, special events...educational activities and enjoyment of the marriage of architecture and landscape. This and other initiatives to enhance the quality of life for those living in cities and towns is a major and exciting avenue for the Trust in future' (Stirling 1995: 7).

While, by virtue of its local visitor base and location in a predominantly 'white' area, Gibside was never likely to be a property noted for ethnic environmental participation, due to the success of the ICP and its events programme in reaching out to new communities, Gibside 'has been chosen to be a centre of excellence attracting people who are not normally

associated with heritage and the countryside and providing them with informal education and experiences' (The National Trust 2002e: 3). For example, a range of people have become involved in conservation work at Gibside, including people on the Government's 'Welfare to Work' Scheme, socially disaffected young people and people with physical or mental disabilities.⁵ Such initiatives have also been supported by improvements to the physical accessibility of Gibside. Well in advance of the final implementation of the Disability Discriminations Act in October 2004, the Trust catered for people in wheelchairs and visitors with limited mobility by removing almost all the steps around the estate and by providing a pioneering four-wheel drive wheelchair carrier, which facilitates access to even some of the remotest parts of the property. Thus, initiatives at Gibside provide example of how the Trust has attempted to broaden physical and intellectual access to its properties and to reach out to people traditionally alienated from its work. The next section highlights how the Trust has also aimed to broaden its image and appeal through education initiatives, that have been particularly well-developed in the North West Region, including in Borrowdale.



Figure 6.7: Targeting new and existing audiences: The highlights of Gibside's event programme 2004-5
Source: The National Trust (2004) Events at Gibside in 2004/5 (leaflet)

⁵ The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) defines a disabled person as someone with 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities' (www.disability.gov.uk)

6.5.2 Education/ image: Broadening the base in Borrowdale

'[I]f you think the National Trust is only about the middle-aged and elderly shuffling tweedily round dusty country piles and formal gardens, think again. Its work with young people – the future – is eclectic, dynamic and pretty imaginative'

(Elkin 2005: 53)

In the same way that the heritage and museum sector have, over the past few decades, challenged dominant conceptions of heritage (Littler 2005: 3) and reinterpreted the culture of museums to reach out to non-traditional visitors (O'Neill 2003), countryside organisations like the National Trust are now fighting the same 'image battle' (Macdonald 2003). As the quote above highlights, the Trust's education work has provided one of the main mechanisms through which it has begun to confront and challenge its middle age, elderly and middle class image. However, the survey of visitors to Gibside and Derwentwater (that forms the focus of the next chapter) reinforced previous research findings (BDRC 1997; BDRC 2002) that in spite of its efforts, the Trust still has an 'image problem' (Sale c. 2001: 9), suggesting that the rhetoric of social inclusion is still a long way off the reality. Despite the Trust's vast landholdings of over a quarter of the Lake District National Park (see Figure 6.8) and over eleven thousand hectares of land in Borrowdale alone, there has been a lack of public awareness of the Trust's ownership, role and responsibilities in the Lake District (The National Trust Undated a; The National Trust 2002d). Consequently, in the North West Region the Trust has particularly taken seriously the message of '*Linking People and Place*' (The National Trust 1995a), that communication and education are paramount to helping people understand and appreciate the Trust's role in the countryside (The National Trust 1999a; The National Trust 2001a).

The production of a specific strategy paper on '*Broadening the Appeal of the National Trust in the North West Region*' is indicative of its national aim to communicate and engage with a wider section of the public than its traditional supporter base who, by the Trust's own admission have tended to be older and richer than the national average (The National Trust, 2001f). By viewing Derwentwater and Borrowdale as a huge 'outdoor classroom', the Trust has recognised that it owns an unparalleled educational resource and that it has a unique opportunity to enable 'a wider range of audiences' (The National Trust 2001e), 'from toddler to scholar' (The National Trust 2004d: 22), to access, enjoy and learn about the historic and natural environments in the Lake District (Platt 1999; The National Trust 1999a; Lawler, Barlow et al. 2001; The National Trust 2001d; The National Trust 2001e; The National Trust 2001f; The National Trust 2002d).

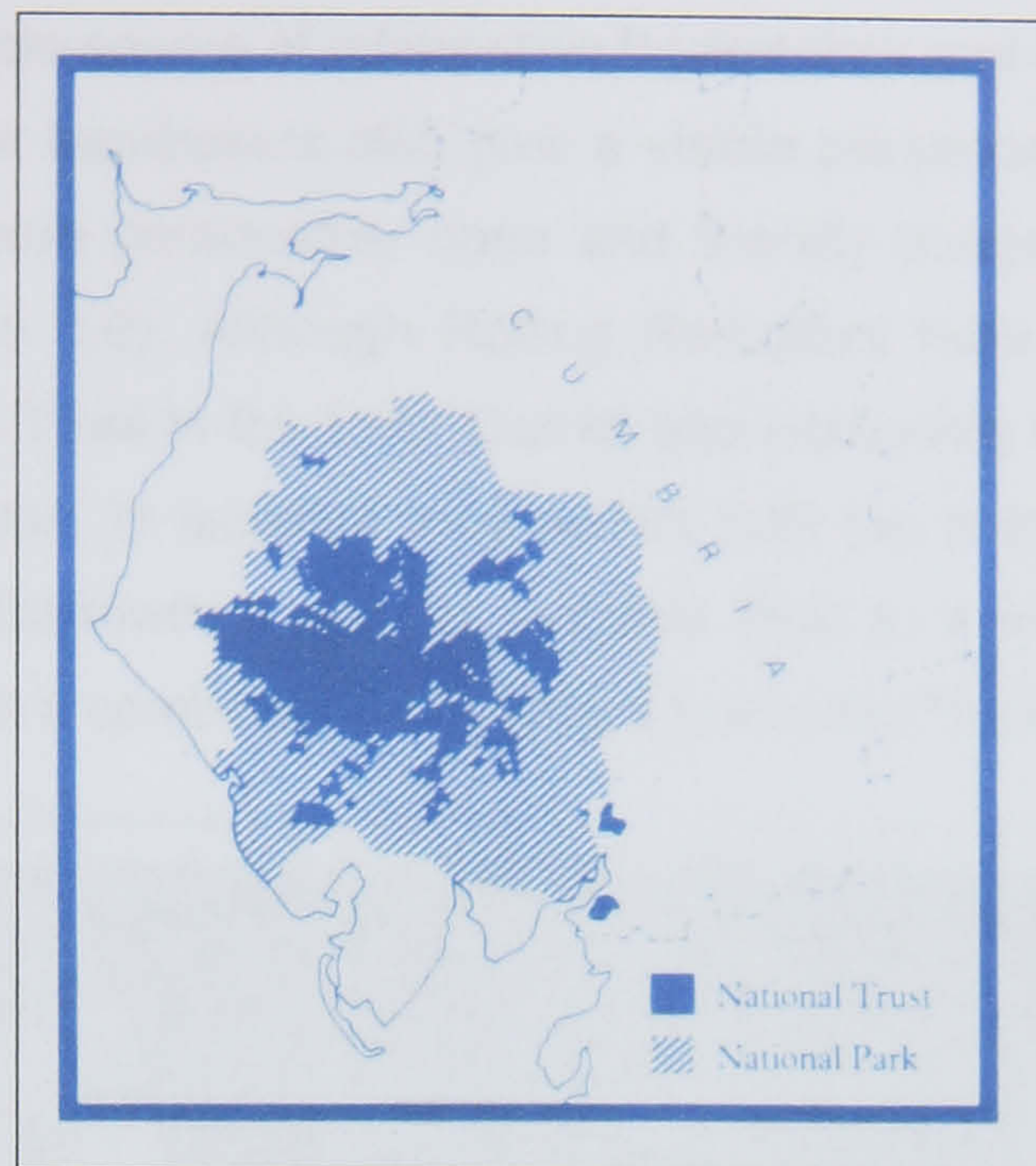


Figure 6.8: National Trust landholdings in the Lake District National Park
Source: The National Trust (1993c) Friars Crag leaflet

One of the main ways that the Trust has successfully sought to include young people in its work is through a national Guardianship programme, instigated in its centenary year, set up to enable local schools to adopt a Trust property in order to support curriculum learning. At Borrowdale, as at about 70 other properties throughout the country (The National Trust 2001d: 2), the Trust has forged a link with a local school to enable children to get involved with looking after and caring for the environment in their local area. While the Trust already provides one of the largest out-of-school classrooms, with half a million school visits each year (The National Trust 2004d), and has made an important contribution to fostering a sense of guardianship among young people, the twenty-first century Trust has set itself the even more ambitious challenge of developing a programme that enables every child, at some point in their school life, to access a potentially life-changing experience at one of its properties (The National Trust 2001d).

Moreover, at Derwentwater and in the Lake District more generally, the Trust has used 'Roving Recruiters' (mobile staff who position themselves and their now symbolic green Landrovers at various tourist hubs) as a way of closing the gap between itself and the public. Although the 'Roving Recruiters' may initially have been introduced to recruit new members to the cause of the Trust in the Lake District, as implied by their name, they also fulfil an important educational and public relations role. The Recruiters provide one of the main information channels at Derwentwater by displaying and disseminating a range of information to visitors in the form of leaflets, maps and guides (Sale c. 2001: 18). As well as

providing an indispensable source of information for first time and frequent visitors alike, the uniformed staff and their Landrovers also give a visible presence to the Trust in the Lake District, presenting a more personable, open and friendly image of a typically enigmatic organisation (see Figure 6.9). Although Roving Recruiters have played a crucial role in raising the profile of the Trust in the Lake District and increasing the public knowledge and appreciation for the region, in isolation they cannot fulfil the long term educational aim of promoting 'the story of Borrowdale and the National Trust to a wider audience', which can only be achieved through a combination of different methods (The National Trust 2002d).



Figure 6.9: 'Roving Recruiter' Steve Lloyd giving information to a visitor at Friars Crag, Derwentwater
Source: From author's own photograph collection

As at Gibside, the Trust has sought to raise public awareness and support for its work through a series of targeted events. The events organised in Borrowdale alone range from mountain biking to map reading, farm open days to fell walks, from events pitched at adults like slide presentations and lectures to those directed specifically at children like Easter egg trails (The National Trust 2002g). Particularly after the popularity and success of the Brandlehow centenary celebrations in 2002, which coincided with the hundred year anniversary of the publication of Beatrix Potter's first book *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, the Trust has increasingly recognised and begun to harness the potential of interesting and inspiring events to reach out to different audiences, particularly to children and families (The National Trust Undated a).

In combination, these community, outreach, access and education initiatives at Gibside and Derwentwater indicate how the post-centennial, and particularly post-millennial Trust has in the words of its Director General, begun to roll out 'an ambitious community learning... programme' (Reynolds 2004b: 5) in order to fulfil its vision of preserving places of historic interest and natural beauty 'for ever, for everyone'. However, even in the light of such inclusion initiatives, there is need for continued criticism in order to examine how far the reality really meets the New Labour rhetoric of 'social inclusion'.

6.6 For everyone: how far social inclusion?

'Looking after our special places 'for ever' must always be our top priority'

(Reynolds 2004b: 5)

'The Trust has developed a remarkable reputation for preserving and protecting, world renowned even. Why though, haven't we got a similar reputation for providing benefit for the nation when it is, after all, part of the same sentence? It seems that although the intention was there, 'in the beginning', with the Trust's founders, we have dismissed the latter part of the sentence. Maybe we were supposed to tackle that bit last, maybe, and it seems more likely, we believed that this would take care of itself. Clearly it hasn't.'

(New 2001: 67)

The two quotes above highlight that despite the Trust's socially motivated second centennial slogan 'for ever, for everyone', it has not placed equal value on the two elements of its vision. While the Trust's unique power of inalienable landownership has enabled it to build a world-renowned reputation for preserving places in perpetuity, the Trust has not been as successful at fulfilling its other legal duty of preserving places 'for the benefit of the nation'. Even Fiona Reynolds, who has brought a fresh social consciousness to the Trust, has made no secret of the fact that the Trust prioritises preserving its properties 'for ever' over preserving them 'for everyone' (Reynolds 2004b: 5). The differential importance assigned to the two parts of the Trust's promise, and indeed their separate treatment in the Trust's latest Strategy Plan (The National Trust 2004d), raises questions about the Trust's priorities. For example, despite the Trust's clear intention to repeat and develop the Newcastle ICP in other places (The National Trust 1995a: 28), there have, as yet, been few attempts to replicate it, which casts doubt over the value of such groundbreaking outreach work (New 2001: 68) and the Trust's commitment to realising its socially inclusive vision. Although the range of events and warm welcome offered at Gibside recently earned it the accolade of

'Small Attraction of the Year' in 2005,⁶ visitor figures since 1997 show that consistently, over 60% of visitors to Gibside are Trust members, which raises questions about its success in reaching out to non-members (The National Trust 2000). Indeed, as Gerard New, the manager of the ICP has suggested, the Trust seemingly supposed that the second part of its centenary mantra would follow directly on from the first. Its aim to preserve special places for everyone rested on the assumption of 'heritage universalism' (Graham, Ashworth et al. 2000: 54), that the heritage it preserves has a certain universal appeal. New's critical assessment of the Trust, published as a feature article in its internal magazine '*Views*', indicates that the organisation continues to fall short of its (cl)aim to be 'for everyone', even in the judgement of some of its own staff.

The Trust's journal '*Views*' in itself signals the limited extent of the 'step-change' (The National Trust 2002b), or what is termed here the 'reflexive shift' within the organisation. While the launch of the journal in 1984, that encourages the free exchange of ideas, experiences and practices, is testimony to the Trust's growing receptivity to internal reflection and critical thought, the fact that it is not in public distribution (although some articles that are electronically accessible) means that the Trust's pioneering work and more radical views are concealed from public view. By presenting a celebratory, glossy portrait of itself in publicly accessible materials, particularly in its Annual Report to Members, summoning the founders' laudable philosophy in much of its published material and repeatedly showcasing its acquisitions and achievements, the Trust has not simply projected a positive public image, but has presented itself as almost 'impenetrable' and 'dogmatic' (Weideger 1994: 154). While the change in format of the Trust's Annual Report to Members to a less glossy version does perhaps, as Fiona Reynolds suggested at the 2004 AGM, represent a first step in the way the Trust projects its image to the public, the ability for members and the public to access (in printed or electronic form) articles such as those in '*Views*', which provoke a more direct and critical engagement with the Trust's policies and practices, would enable the Trust to encourage more open and informed debate about its work, to close the gap between itself, its members and the public.

Despite the Trust's egalitarian aim, the two main ways it has responded to criticisms of its cultural specificity and exclusivity – by widening access through outreach initiatives and by changing its image through education – provide further indication that the Trust has placed more emphasis on being *seen* to respond, rather than being prepared to fully respond to such criticisms by changing its organisational culture. The underlying assumption behind one

⁶ The National Trust website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk (accessed 03/03/06)

of the Trust's main 'Organisational Review' objectives – 'to communicate what we do and its value to the nation more clearly' (The National Trust 2002b: 12) – is that the Trust has not conveyed its importance enough to the public, that its 'image problem' is a result of the public's lack of awareness and understanding of its work, and thus that it is an external, rather than internal problem. The Trust's emphasis on communication can therefore be considered to be motivated not only by a genuine desire to contribute to educational standards of the public (its educative ethos arguably still carries elements of the Victorian impulse to refine the sensibilities of the vulgar or 'uncultured'), but also as a public relations exercise that emphasises its importance and relevance to contemporary society.

Moreover, the Trust's community and outreach work is based on the assumption that the millions of people who 'have never experienced the inspiration of a visit to a National Trust property' (Reynolds 2004b: 5) would like to do so and would welcome being 'reached out' to by the organisation. This premise removes agency from people, allocates responsibility onto 'them' for not visiting and in the process, once again, transfers the problem from an internal into an external issue. Academics (Howard 2003) and heritage practitioners alike (Pendergast 2004; O'Neill 2003) have cautioned that in aiming to 'reach out' to apparently culturally disenfranchised and socially excluded groups, including black and minority ethnic communities, organisations like the Trust need to be alert to the danger of projecting a patronising, paternalistic impression or taking an assimilationist approach. The Trust needs to be careful not to falsely assume that people are socially excluded by definition of not visiting the countryside, but rather to differentiate between people who choose not to access the countryside and people who would like to visit but may face a whole range of social, economic, cultural or political barriers to access. While the *'Diversity Review'* (The Countryside Agency 2003) blew away the assumption in the environmental sector that people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds are disinterested in accessing the countryside (John 2004), organisations like the Trust also need to be wary of targeting particular ethnic groups regardless of their interest. Moreover, the very language of inclusion, while prescribing to progressive multiculturalism, can also imply assimilation into a seemingly sealed set of national and racial norms rather than a genuine commitment to diversity. As the next section goes on to argue, however advanced the Trust's rhetoric of inclusion, in its attempts to reach out to marginalized sections of society, the organisation has broadly failed to confront and unsettle historically rooted assumptions about countryside use.

6.6.1 Normatively racialised codes of practice

Although the Trust has aimed to widen access to its properties and reach out to new audiences, it has done so without challenging embedded notions of 'appropriate' countryside conduct, as prescribed by its byelaws (see section 5.4.6). The Trust's initiatives to broaden access and enjoyment of the countryside have been based upon normatively racialised and class embedded assumptions about how the countryside should be used. By continuing to define 'acceptable activities' on its land, and enforcing 'codes of practice' through a series of 'management mechanisms' (The National Trust 1995b), the Trust has explicitly and implicitly regulated countryside use, becoming part of the broader purposes of 'governmentality' that induces particular conduct from the national citizenry (Hall 2005: 24). While the centennial '*Access Review*' was fuelled by the Trust's desire to broaden access, by reaffirming the importance of regulating countryside conduct (The National Trust 1995b: 47), apparently in practice, the Trust has found it hard to distance itself from particular performative, embodied practices of 'white' right countryside use.

Moreover, while the Trust is gradually moving towards the 'flexible signing system' described earlier, many of its countryside properties like Brandlehow on Derwentwater continue to be distinguished by the characteristic omega sign accompanied by the 'NT 6' sign⁷ of its byelaws (see Figure 6.10, left). By continuing to display a list of unauthorised and impermissible uses of Trust property on its land, particularly at countryside sites like Brandlehow where such signs often stand alone with little or no supplementary information, the Trust serves to reinscribe its moral code of countryside use, that meshes closely with the more broadly applied 'country code' (see Figure 6.10, right). Critics from both inside (Sale 2000) and outside (Harrison 1991) the Trust have increasingly pointed out that by displaying a list of prohibited uses of its land, that 'attempts to dissuade us all from littering, floral pilfering, arson and who knows what else by the implied threat of the by-laws' (Sale 2000: 65), the organisation has tended to give an unwelcoming, defensive 'negative and faintly threatening' impression (Sale and Burgon 2002: 2), ironically, to precisely those people unfamiliar with its work to whom it seeks to 'reach out'. As we see in Figure 6.10, although the main points of the country code overlap almost entirely with the Trust's byelaws, the country code has adopted a more positive phraseology, replacing a list of small-print impermissibles with 'help' on how to 'gain pleasure from the countryside' (Parker 1985: 9).

⁷ From an interview conducted with Nigel Sale on the 17th of October 2002 at the National Trust's North West Regional Office, shortly before his retirement from a long period of service for the Trust.



Figure 6.10: Brandelhow 'omega' and 'NT6' displaying Trust byelaws (left) and the more positively presented country code (right)

Source: Left: From author's own photograph collection, Right: from Parker (1985: 9)

In its attempts to provide for an increasingly wide range of experiences in the Lake District beyond intellectualised, 'quiet enjoyment' traditionally associated with National Parks (Pearlman, Dickinson et al. 1999), the Trust has still produced a number of guides or 'codes of conduct' to stipulate how its land should be used and best enjoyed. In its very production of guides directed at particular interest groups such as anglers, boaters and cyclists (see Figure 6.11), the Trust, like other preservation organisations in the Lake District clearly continues to favour 'quiet and appropriate' uses of its land (Friends of the Lake District 2000: 5). For example, the 'Lake User Guide' in Figure 6.11 illustrates how sailing boats and canoes are embraced and encouraged as legitimate uses of Derwentwater, whereas speed and motorised boats are marked by their absence, erased from the landscape as excluded practices. Similarly, at Gibside, the provision of 'behavioural' objectives in the interpretation plan illustrates that information provides a mechanism of regulating behaviour. By actively representing Gibside as 'a place where you can walk for recreation/ health' (The National Trust Undated c) the Trust has advocated particular ways of behaving on its land and has regulated cultural and embodied practices. Even walking, which is promoted as the main way to enjoy Gibside, is regulated through a network of paths across the estate, the visitor experience controlled much in the same way as it was by George Bowes in his landscape design and by eighteenth century aesthetes in search of the picturesque more generally.

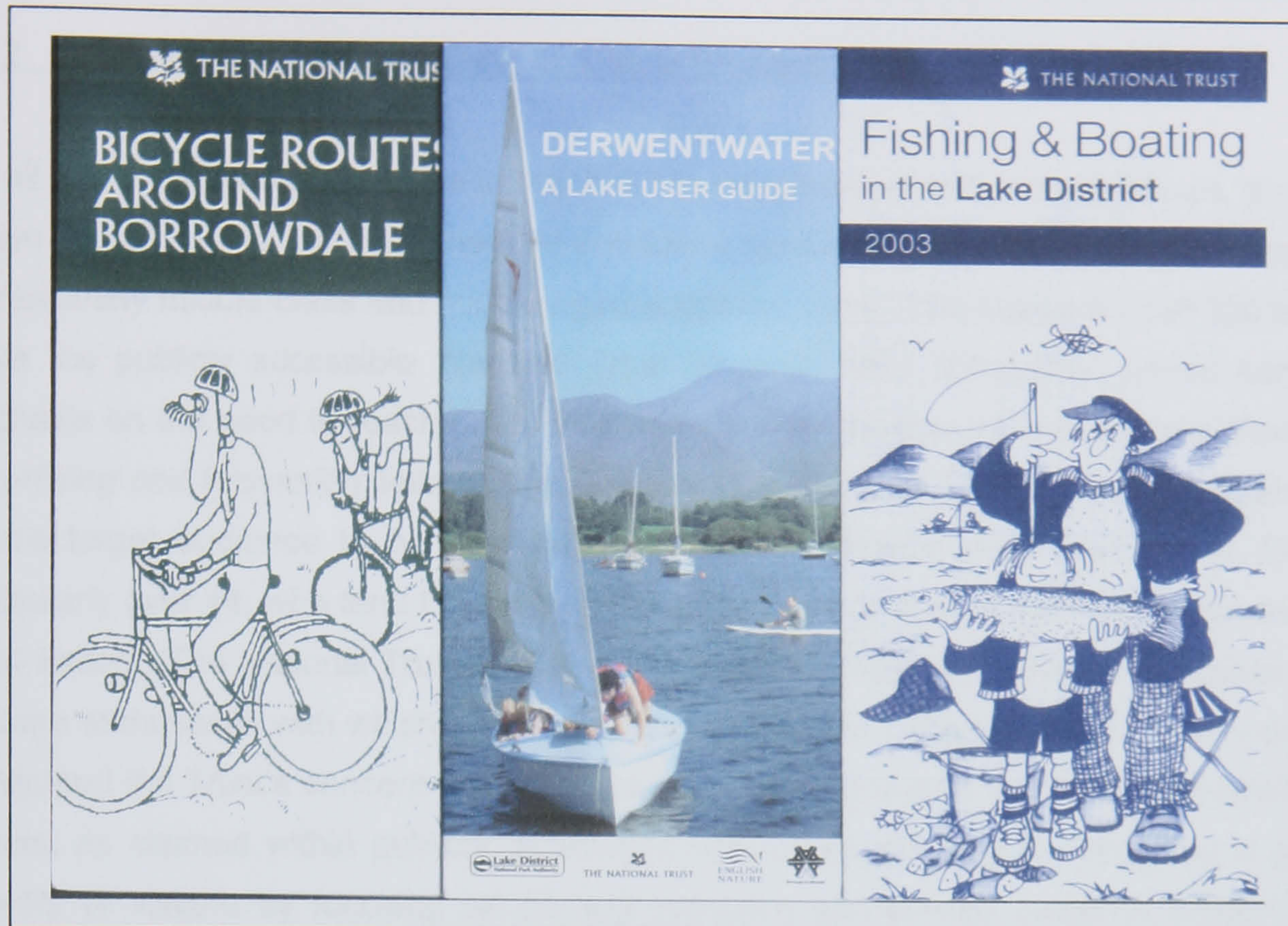


Figure 6.11: Codes of practice at Derwentwater/ Borrowdale

Sources: Left: The National Trust (undated b); Centre: Allerdale Borough Council, English Nature et al. (undated); Right: The National Trust (2003c)

Thus, despite the Trust's (c)aims to widen access and enjoyment of its properties, by reasserting a hierarchy of use of its land, the Trust could be accused of 'social engineering' (Jowitt 2004), of stipulating normatively racialised codes of practice and conduct as a condition of access. In so doing, it runs the risk of implying that there is an already sealed, pre-existing master narrative which visitors need to conform to in order to gain acceptance (Littler 2005: 12) in the countryside. For example, the programme of events at each of the properties provides a stark indication of the performative practices that act as pre-conditions of countryside belonging. By participating in prescribed events like map reading, bat watching, guided walks and tea and cake days, visitors conform to invisible social, cultural and normatively racialised codes of countryside use that enable them to feel part of a pre-existing national heritage. It follows, as Stuart Hall has recently argued (2005: 24), that people who do not participate in such events cannot properly belong. Thus, in order to engage people who feel excluded from such an apparently pre-determined heritage, the Trust needs to go beyond often-localised access and outreach initiatives by being fully prepared to challenge and confront embedded assumptions about countryside use.

6.6.2 Marketing and merchandising to 'Middle England'

For all its second centennial aims to reach out to marginalized and minority groups, the Trust is also acutely aware that its immediate and future survival rests on the continued support of its 'resolutely middle-class and middle-aged supporter base' (The National Trust 2001c: 12). While the publicly accessible '*National Trust Strategic Plan 2001-2004*' placed particular emphasis on the need to reach out to less traditional audiences, its unpublished '*Review of Advertising and Promotion*' tells a different story (The National Trust 2001c). It declared the Trust's target audience to be nine million upper and middle class adults over 35, and particularly over 44, who tend to visit built heritage sites but don't consider themselves to be Trust visitors (The National Trust 2001c) – precisely the white, middle age and middle class heritage enthusiasts with which it has become synonymous. The private marketing strategy highlighted the Trust's concern not for achieving a broader *quality* and wider composition of visitors, as claimed within publicly accessible documents, but also for attracting a greater *quantity* of visitors by focusing on an already receptive and primed audience comprised of 'affluent empty nesters', 'active retired professionals' and 'higher income families' (The National Trust 2001c: 12-13). Thus, even, if not particularly at its most critical and reflexive ebb, the contemporary Trust is torn between reaching out to marginalized groups without alienating its core constituency. Despite its aims and attempts to represent the nation in its widest sense, the twenty-first century Trust remains a culturally particular organisation.

The nature and price of goods sold at Trust gift shops (located at a number of its properties including Gibside and Derwentwater) provide a clear indication of its middle-aged, middle-class target audience, of the culturally particular and normatively racialised nature of the National Trust. Even a cursory glance at the kind of merchandise sold in National Trust shops – from Trust memorabilia to toiletries, books to biscuits, potpourri to postcards, 'floral prints and china' (Hughes 1999: 6) – is telling of its particular aged, classed and gendered character and appeal. As some critics have already asserted, the Trust's distinctly up-market shops pitch at 'Middle England' (Hughes 1999:6) and appeal to the snobbery of its predominantly upper-middle class visitors (Lowenthal 1989: 21-23). For example, the excerpt from '*The National Trust Gift Collection 2004*' in Figure 6.12 indicates how the kind of gifts sold by the Trust celebrate a particular upper (not even middle) class way of life of 'His Lordship' and 'Her Ladyship' entailing 'drying the family silver' and keeping up appearances. The Trust catalogue in general, with high-faluted language used to describe its domestic, quaint, somewhat frivolous and over-priced items (£10 for 2 tea towels!), portrays a very particular upper-middle class, age-specific and gendered image.

J. PEERLESS FOR THE PEERAGE 🐾 🏰
 'His Lordship' socks – A pairs of socks for (would be) aristocrats! 70% cotton/21% nylon/2% elastane. Fit shoe size 7-11.
 550 261 25 *His Lordship Socks* £5.00

Q-S. GIFTS FOR THEIR LORD & LADYSHIPS 🐾 🏰
 Fine ceramic mugs with understated detail around the rim and base, not to mention the unequivocal legends on the sides.

Standards must also be maintained – even if that means drying the family silver and Wedgwood oneself. Hence these suitably embroidered, waffle-weave cotton tea towels. Size 69 x 51cm.

Dressed for dinner? Then keep up appearances with top drawer aprons in 100% pure cotton, with the appropriate escutcheon embroidered in gold. Machine washable. Length 79cm.

Q. Mug
 550 250 05 *His Lordship* £9.00
 550 250 13 *Her Ladyship* £9.00

R. Tea Towels
 550 250 21 *Lord & Ladyship*
Tea Towels (pair) £10.00

S. Apron
 550 249 71 *His Lordship* £14.00
 550 249 98 *Her Ladyship* £14.00

Figure 6.12: 'His Lordship, her Ladyship' the class-entrenched nature of the contemporary Trust
 Source: Number of images taken from The National Trust Gift Collection 2004

While the products sold by the Trust in its 2004 catalogue such as wine accessories, books on after dinner speeches and gaffes, quiz games about British history, opulent tapestry furnishings, aristocratic teddy bears, box sets of Agatha Christie's BBC4 *Miss Marple* series, gardening accoutrements and pet paraphernalia reflect the thoroughly class-embedded nature of the Trust and the particular version of the 'nation' it preserves, they also reveal the persistent age-specific, gender-bound and racialised nature of the organisation. It's selection of distinctly 'nostalgic' and 'old-fashioned' gifts indicates how the Trust plays on a particular idealised idea of the rural past, projecting itself as an oldy-worldy organisation, despite its claims to appeal to everyone. Furthermore, as some commentators have already pointed out, the Trust's shops are specifically tailored towards a 'female gift culture of pot-pourris and toiletries' (Samuel 1994: 267) that subscribes to and rehearses a domesticated view of women harking back to its Victorian origins. As shown in Figure 6.13, gifts implicitly targeted at women such as china spoons, furniture polish, drawer fragrances and tea pots see women firmly equated with the home, with being a good wife (hence the book on marriage) and homemaker. In contrast gifts more explicitly directed at men (or rather for women to buy *for* men) relate to work, to outdoors activities like fishing, golf and gardening. Thus, for all its emphasis on equality and diversity, the Trust's marketing and merchandising exposes how it continues to reinscribe gender stereotypes that consign women to the private and men to the public sphere.

For her...

D. POLISH USED BY THE NATIONAL TRUST...    
...in stately homes and other outstanding buildings. Impressed? You will be; just watch it give your furniture and woodwork an 'heirloom' finish! 135g.
550 250 99 Furniture Polish £3.00

N. HERE COMES THE BRIDE  
A social history of the last 300 years showing how bridal wear has developed. Superbly illustrated and informative, it also features bridal accessories, wedding favours, etc.
Hardback, 128 pages, 24 x 22cm.

L. PETITE PERFUMED POMANDERS
Here's a delightful old-fashioned way to keep clothes fragrant. Open the two hinged pomanders; fill with pot-pourri or scented cotton wool and place in your linen drawer or wardrobe.
005 498 51 Two Pomanders £4.99

For him...

F. FOR YOUR 'PERFECT ENGLISH GENTLEMAN'...
...Burberry Touch Eau de Toilette. Redolent with exotic aromatic oils – complex yet uncompromisingly masculine.
004 361 51 Burberry Touch for Men 30ml £21.00
004 361 78 Burberry Touch for Men 50ml £28.00

C. FOR HOLE 19!
The perfect drinking companion for the keen golfer. A bottle stopper (also suitable for decanters) made from a ceramic golf ball on a gilt stem with a rubber sealing ring. Cheers!
550 260 52 Golfball Bottle Stopper £9.99

FOR OFFICERS & GENTLEMEN
Introducing a handsome and functional collection designed to help keep your desk organised. A range of high quality desk top accessories that's decidedly masculine, with a touch of the military in its bearing. The soft and smooth quality of the supple hide leather, embossed with a compass design motif, makes this range perfect for both home or business use. Stationery items and accessories illustrated are not included with any item.






Figure 6.13: For her and for him: rehearsing an age-specific, class-based and racialised version of femininity and masculinity

Source: The National Trust (2004g) The National Trust Gift Collection 2004

The montages of sample gifts on sale by the Trust in Figure 6.13 further illustrate how the Trust continues to market and thus associate itself with a particular middle-aged, middle-class, English and white section of the population, hence the address to the 'perfect English gentleman'. As signalled by the gentlemen's stationery that is 'military in its bearing' (all too reminiscent perhaps of that which would adorn officers desks in various parts of the empire),

the Trust has also commodified a particular nationalistic and patriotic version of the national past. In 'piecing together history' the Trust not only celebrates a militaristic, nationalistic heritage, reflected in the sale of plaques and jigsaws that commemorate military victories, but also venerates British imperial history through the sale of items like the map of the British Empire (see Figure 6.14). While 'empire', according to Stuart Hall, is 'increasingly subject to a widespread selective amnesia and disavowal', when it does appear it is typically narrated from the perspective of the colonisers, and even, as in this case, is celebrated as *'the greatest Empire the world has ever seen'*.

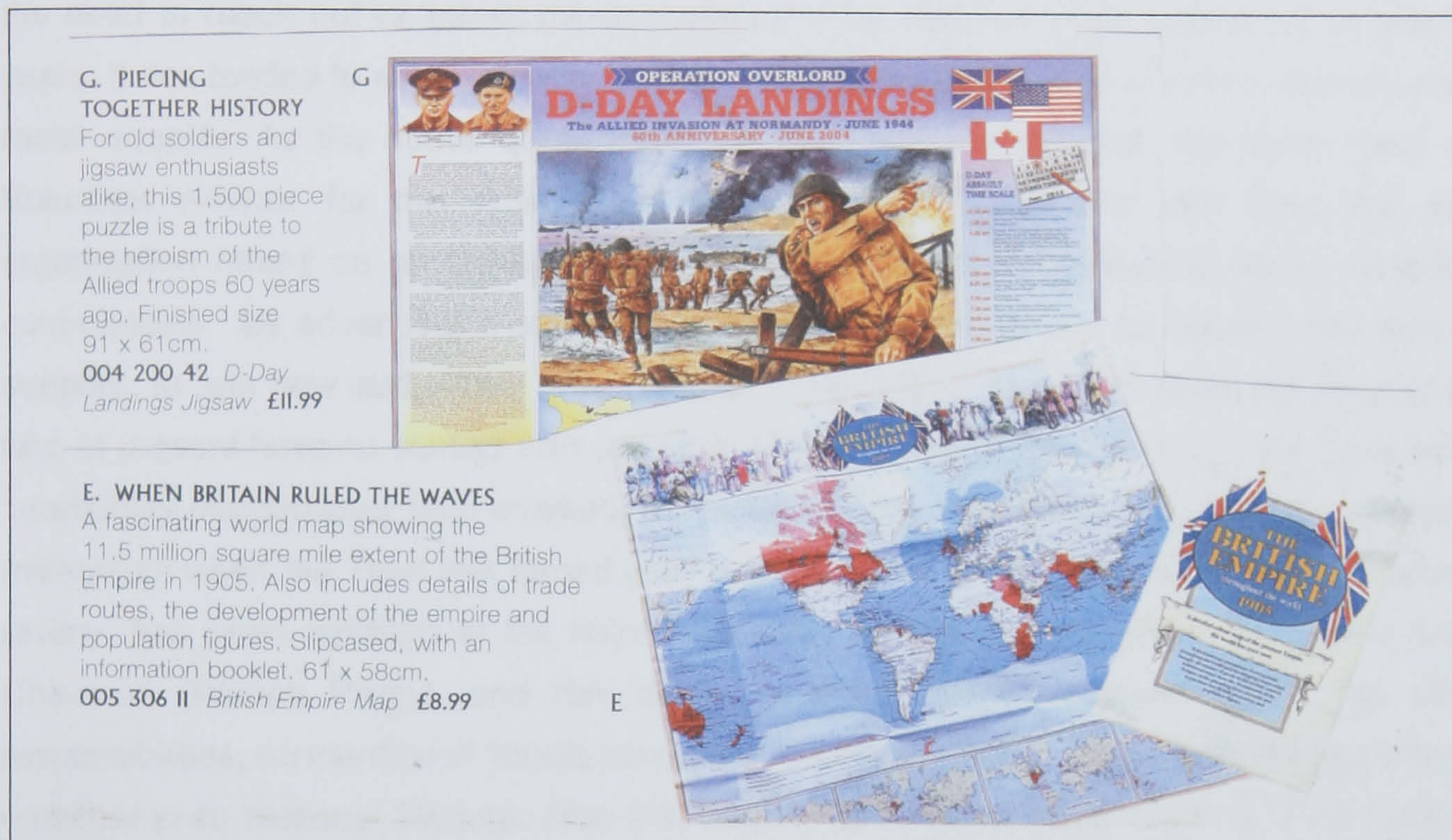


Figure 6.14: Commodifying national and imperial heritage
Source: National Trust (2004g) The National Trust Gift Collection 2004

Unless the Trust is fully prepared to rethink and revise national heritage to acknowledge its inextricable intersection with imperial histories, its somewhat disjointed and concessionary attempts to include 'others' in the countryside will remain exactly that. While some of the Trust's access and education initiatives discussed here have begun to successfully reach out to (still white) inner city and working class communities (the ICP), to disabled (provisions at both sites) and particularly young people (ICP, Guardianships, events), fulfilling the second part of its second centenary mantra demands a more radical, direct engagement with issues of 'race' in order to dislodge heritage from 'its snug position as bounded entity unquestioningly representing the interests of the white English upper- and middle class' (Naidoo 2005: 1).

6.6.3 Race evasion?

'If it is curious, it is also sad that an organisation that had constructively engaged with heritage and inclusivity before many of today's heritage industry leaders were born is now in *danger of being seen as out of touch* with those from ethnic minority groups – they too are a part of 'the nation'

(Heal 2001: 65: emphasis added)

Although, as we saw at the beginning of the chapter, the Trust has long engaged with issues of representativeness and inclusivity and although it has become increasingly sensitive to the need to reach out to 'ethnic minority groups' (The National Trust 1999a: 30) in recent years, it has tended to evade directly confronting controversial issues of ethnic diversity and racial equality. As the above quote indicates, even some of its staff, like Kevin Heal, a Volunteer Adviser for the Trust, have observed the curious and sad irony that an organisation based on an inclusive ethos could be accused of excluding ethnic minority communities. By advancing a series of generically inclusive aims – to 'deepen and widen support', to 'win new audiences' (The National Trust 2001b: 1) and 'to reach out to people who at present have no contact with our work' (The National Trust 2004d: 5) – the Trust has 'unwittingly marginalized [and masked] the issue' of race (Heal 2001: 65). Even in the new millennium when the Trust has turned itself inside out through the process of organisational review, has been replaced at the helm by a new Director-General (Fiona Reynolds) and Chairman (William Proby), and has placed renewed emphasis on its social role and responsibilities, no mention of 'ethnic minorities' has been made in its last two strategic plans – neither in its '*National Strategic Plan 2001-2004*' nor its latest vision '*Looking to the Future 2004-2007*'. By continuing to mask race within universalist rhetoric, the Trust has inadvertently masked 'the growing living presence and the recreational participation of people of colour' and in so doing has served to deny 'non-white' ethnicities 'a similar sense of attachment to the countryside, and arguably to the nation' (Agyeman and Spooner 1997: 197, 202).

Heal's quote is telling, not only of the Trust's lack of engagement with so called 'ethnic minority groups', but perhaps more so of the Trust's enduring concern for its image, its fear of '*being seen as out of touch*' with such groups. Although countryside organisations more generally are anxious to fulfil their legal responsibilities of encouraging under-represented groups to access the countryside, conferred by the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the 2000 Race Relations (Amendment) Act (Prasad 2004; Uzzell, Kelay et al. 2005), the Trust in particular, perhaps in fear of being tarnished as an ethnically exclusive organisation in the same way that it has become almost 'haunted' by its bourgeois image (Hetherington

2003), seems to remain sensitive about engaging with the emotive issue of race. The contemporary Trust has split sensitivities. On the one hand, it is sensitive to the need to engage with under-represented groups in order to provide 'benefit to the nation' in the widest possible sense, yet on the other hand, as noted earlier, it is also sensitive to the possibility of alienating its core support base in the process. By setting itself up with the impossible mission of preserving places 'for everyone' and at the same time being reliant upon its membership, the Trust is perhaps more anxiously positioned than other, less broad-based and ambitious countryside organisations. While the National Trust remains anxious to fulfil, or at least to be seen to fulfil its lofty egalitarian ideology, analysis of the Trust's outreach and inclusion initiatives has mirrored broader research findings that the rhetoric of social inclusion does not yet meet the reality (The Countryside Agency 2005).

While the post-centennial and particularly post-millennial Trust has placed concerted emphasis on positive action and outreach projects – with almost a quarter of its community initiatives dedicated to outreach in 2002 – few of its projects have directly addressed race. As shown in Figure 6.15, although the Trust has begun to specifically address the needs of a range of under-represented groups and has claimed that its outreach projects 'encompass ethnic, unemployed, disabled and other marginalized groups' (The National Trust 2002c: 1), the Trust's *Directory of Community Initiatives* reveals that in 2002 at least, no projects directly aimed to reach out to black and minority ethnic people. As highlighted by the cases of Gibside and Derwentwater, while the Trust is in its comfort zone reaching out to disabled, young and disadvantaged people, its outreach projects have tended to lack an ethnic dimension.

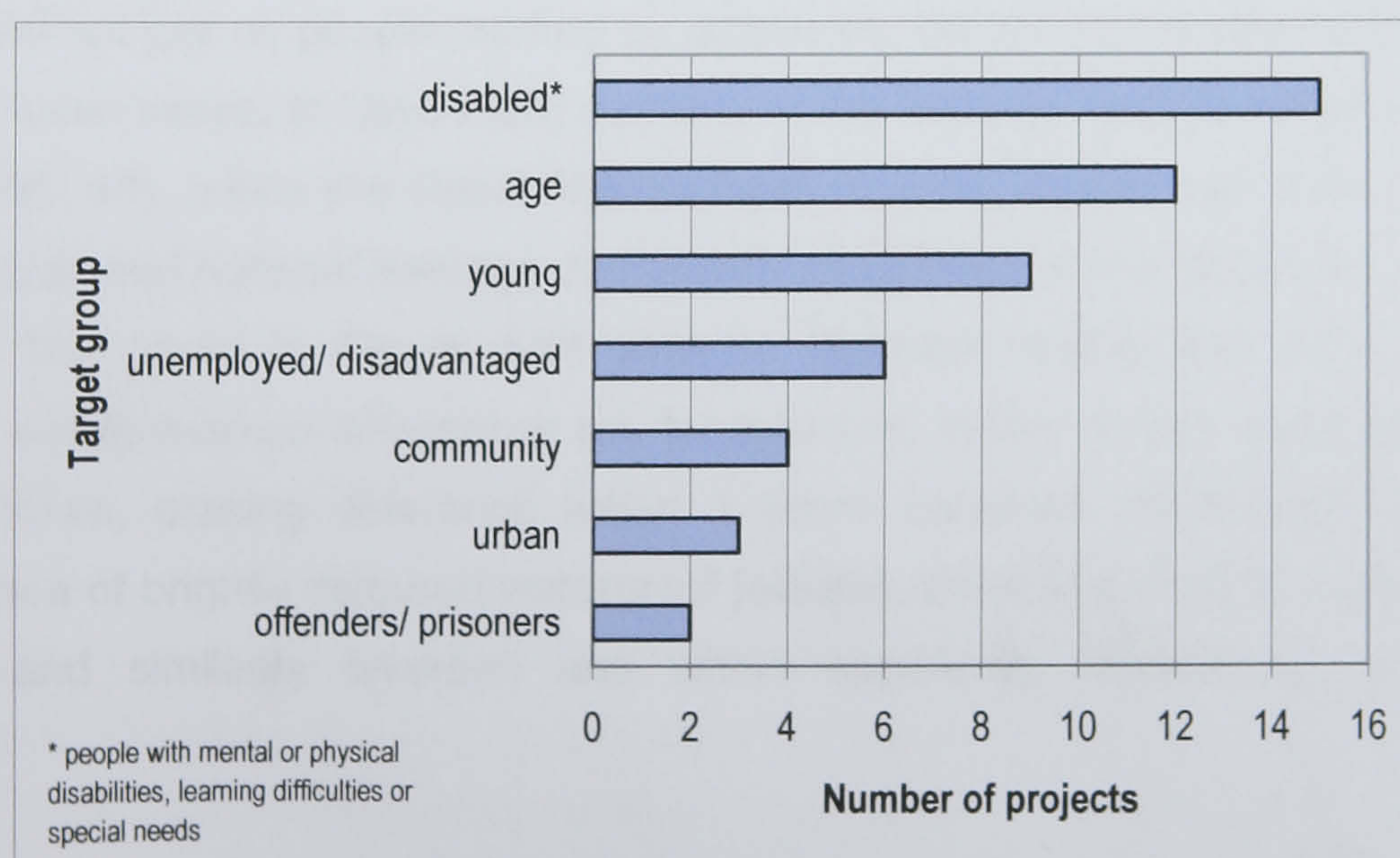


Figure 6.15: The nature of Trust outreach projects in 2002
Source: Compiled from the Directory of Community Initiatives 2002

Although the Newcastle Inner City Project breached boundaries of class (by particularly targeting deprived wards of Newcastle), residence (by working explicitly with inner-city communities), and age (by focusing particularly on groups of young and retired people), the fact that 'white' could be put in front of all these groups indicates that race has not been *directly* addressed, even within the context of such a trailblazing outreach project. Similarly, Derwentwater also provides evidence to support the Trust's 'lack of interest in ethnic diversity' (Heal 2001: 65). Despite the increased use of sites around Derwentwater as locations in Bollywood films, the recent shift 'from Hollywood to Bollywood' (The National Trust 2002a: 17) and the (possibly related) increase in visitors of Indian origin,⁸ the Trust has so far overlooked the potential of this shift in reaching out to different audiences and broadening its appeal. Although the use of the Lake District landscape as a backdrop to popular Indian films presents the Trust with an opportunity to represent contemporary cultural appropriations of the countryside alongside historically embedded literary associations with Romanticism, Wordsworth and Beatrix Potter, it has barely acknowledged, let alone celebrated alternative reimaginings and reinterpretations of the Lake District.

While dominant, normatively racialised images and ideologies of the countryside continue to go uncontested and unquestioned, so too will the popular equation of minority ethnic groups with urban areas endure, serving to reinscribe the sense that people from black and minority ethnic communities are 'strangers' in the countryside. Rather, everyday images like that shown in Figure 6.16 have the potential to challenge common-sense conceptions of the countryside and national heritage, forcing people to confront their stereotypes, expectations and assumptions in order to recognise the very real presence of 'people of colour' in rural England, and not just as people marked by difference. Based on the observation that 'being marked as Asian seems to have more currency in the heritage sector's attention to ethnicity' (Naidoo 2005: 44), critics like Roshi Naidoo have recently argued that a radical revision of the countryside and national heritage demands a recognition of our sameness as well as our difference. The photo in Figure 6.16 aims to illustrate exactly that point. Rather than rehearsing visible marked differences (of, for example, Indian women wearing saris) or, by the same token, erasing difference within a liberal pluralism (represented by traditional outdoors attire of brightly coloured waterproof jackets), there is a need to acknowledge *both* difference and similarity between and within apparently hermetically sealed 'ethnic' categories.

⁸ From personal communication with Derwentwater 'Roving Recruiters' and an interview with Alison Platt



Figure 6.16: Surprise view at 'Surprise View' overlooking Derwentwater?: Sameness and difference affirmed through clothing

Source: From author's own photograph collection

So far, although the Trust has made significant headway in communicating with a wider range of visitors through a 'programme of carefully targeted events' (Sale c. 2001: 2), through 'Roving Recruiters', outreach programmes like the ICP and educational links, by its own reckoning the Trust still has a long way to go in its aim to reach out to black and ethnic minority communities. While the Trust's public recognition of its failure to attract ethnic minority communities in its *'Annual Report to Members 2002/ 2003'* (The National Trust 2003a: 10) signals its growing readiness to confront controversial issues of race, like other countryside organisations, it has reservations about the 'political correctness' of targeting specific communities (Uzzell, Kelay et al. 2005). However, in order to translate its inclusive rhetoric into reality, the Trust needs to do more than simply including 'other' (hi)stories by tagging them onto an official white national story. Working towards a socially cohesive, egalitarian countryside demands a more radical revision of what Stuart Hall has termed 'The Heritage' (2005: 25) in order to reveal the hybridity, multiplicity and cultural diversity of national heritage and identity. Rather than paying lip service to New Labour discourses of 'inclusion' and 'diversity' through targeted, almost tokenistic inclusion projects that fail to rework the deep-rooted dominant process 'in which white (and often upper-or middle-class) Englishness is used to define the past' (Littler 2005:1), in order to realise its rhetoric the Trust needs to make a genuine commitment to reimagining national heritage by mainstreaming diversity throughout all aspects of the organisation.

Unless the Trust is prepared to challenge and confront dominant, normatively racialised images and ideologies of the countryside, including assumptions about how the countryside should be used, projects and initiatives that aim to facilitate BME access to the countryside 'could be viewed as an attempt by the dominant group to take over the heritage of others' to indoctrinate or assimilate socially excluded groups in to the dominant white national culture (Howard 2003: 48). As this chapter concludes by arguing, it is only by opening up the countryside to 'widely different interpretations' (The National Trust 2004b) that the Trust can begin to engage more fully with people 'excluded from the dominant white national culture' (Daniels 1993: 210) in order to fulfil its aim of working 'for the benefit of the nation'.

6.7 Conclusion

'At a time when people worry about social fragmentation and alienation, our special places have the gravitational pull to help build up social capital and personal self-worth'

(The National Trust 2004d: 22)

As the Trust has recognised in its latest vision for the future (see quote above), its properties, and indeed the organisation as a whole, has a huge potential to act as a cohesive force, to build social capital on a national level and enable people to develop confidence and self-worth on a personal level. Particularly in the current social, political and cultural climate, when people among the white ethnic majority and ethnic minority communities alike feel alienated from the nation, the Trust is uniquely positioned to reconnect people with their nation through enjoyable experiences of built and cultural heritage. Although the Trust has set itself up with the unrealistic mission of being all things to all people in its centenary slogan 'for ever, for everyone', by placing emphasis on its social role and responsibilities, the second-centennial, and particularly post-millennial Trust has shown that it has a crucial role to play in building social cohesion. The appointment of Judy Ling Wong (Director of BEN and an open critic of the Trust's monocultural interpretation) to the Trust's Council in November 2004 is symptomatic of the Trust's willingness to embrace and respond to criticisms of its cultural and ethnic exclusivity, and is testament to its growing readiness to confront controversial issues of race and ethnicity rather than simply sidestepping or avoiding them, as it has done until the recent past (Heal 2001).

While the Trust has clearly become more self-reflexive and socially responsive in its second century, the crucial question in assessing its 'inclusion' initiatives is whether the Trust has made a genuine commitment to radically rethinking how the English countryside is represented or whether it has pandered and responded to current sensibilities around

'inclusion' and 'diversity'? Although the Trust understands the countryside as a 'dialogical space' (Kuchler 1999: 55), where a 'never-ending dialogue between past, present and future' is played out (The National Trust 2004b: 1), so far, it has done little to challenge dominant dialogues and discourses of the countryside. As we saw in the cases of Gibside and Derwentwater, although the Trust is beginning to recover elements of working and industrial history at both properties, visitors are still largely presented with an idealised portrait of the Trust's 'special places'. While the Trust has made proactive attempts, often with much success, to reach out to groups marginalized from its work, such initiatives have tended to be localised, partial and still very much in keeping with the Trust's traditional values of universalism, tolerance and paternalism. Despite the Trust's emphasis on education, image, access and outreach, projects and initiatives to include 'others' have tended to be tacked on to, rather than fully integrated within, mainstream narratives and representations of the English countryside. As the vast majority of outreach or inclusion projects have targeted minority or subaltern whites – be it the young, the disabled, the urban-dwelling or the unemployed – the process of inclusion has, as Hall has recently argued, so far stopped short at the frontier defined by that great unspoken British value – whiteness' (2005: 28).

As we have seen, by continuing to inscribe codes of conduct on its land the Trust has served to reinscribe rather than destabilise normatively racialised assumptions about countryside use. Also, for all the Trust's professions to broaden its appeal beyond its core constituency, by continuing to market itself at precisely this group, the Trust has inadvertently reinforced its image as a typically white middle-class and middle-aged organisation. While there is a genuine recognition and commitment from the highest level within the organisation to re-evaluate the meanings and values of heritage, the Trust also has a commitment to meeting the needs and expectations of its mainstay of members. Like heritage and countryside organisations more generally, the Trust's attempts to re-define the nation in a more profoundly inclusive manner have so far tended to be 'more honoured in the breach – in the profession of good intentions – than in practice' (Hall 2005: 29). While it is playing all the right mood music, it has yet to fully acknowledge the importance and harness the potential of 'multicultural interpretation' (Wong 2002b) to enable ethnic communities to access and enjoy *their* countryside.

As one of the main barriers to black and minority ethnic people accessing and enjoying the countryside is the enduring perception that the English countryside is a white space (Agyeman 1989; Ayamba and Rotherham 2002; Morris 2003; Clegg 2005), it is crucial for organisations like the National Trust to make a concerted commitment to reimagining the countryside beyond its popular perception as a white, middle class, middle aged preserve.

Initiatives like the 'Black History Month' at Sutton House in East London which enabled people to explore the experience of black Londoners from Tudor time to the present day, and the 'Untold History' project which encourages communities to recreate and dramatise their own stories using creative methods, provide examples of how the Trust has begun to challenge dominant monocultural, 'hyperwhitened' discourses of national heritage. However, unless such projects are part of a wider reworking of the ideologies at work in the organisation, they risk implying that 'there is only one sealed and written national story, with room at the most for a little-non threatening difference' (Littler 2005: 12). As the Parekh Report pointed out, the rhetoric of inclusion is not entirely flawless as it 'inherently focuses on marginality and boundaries, and therefore fails to address the problems at the core (The Runnymede Trust: Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, 2000: 79). Thus, as this chapter, and indeed this thesis has been arguing, it is only by addressing problems at the core, challenging and exploding dominant discourses of the countryside, *and* writing racial and cultural minorities into stories of the nation, 'rewriting the margin into the centre' (Hall 2005: 31), that there can be hope of achieving a just and socially inclusive society. While the concluding chapter (Chapter 8) returns to and develops some of these points in relation to the wider policy context, Chapter 7 first advances a detailed empirical analysis of white countryside visitors, which aims to make a fresh contribution to such policy advancements.

Chapter 7

Deconstructing whiteness: The racialised identities of white people in the English countryside

7.1 Introduction

'There is a need to explore ways of deconstructing 'whiteness' and to understand the racialised identities of 'white people' within rural contexts'

(de Lima 2004: 54)

This chapter analyses the attitudes, values and opinions of 'white' visitors to Derwentwater and Gidside in an attempt to deconstruct the multiple white racialised identities in the English countryside. In so doing, it responds to the need targeted by scholars like Philomena de Lima to complement the now fairly well developed body of studies on rural minority ethnic groups and racism with analyses of white racialised identities. It argues that the question of racialised whiteness in the contemporary English countryside is nothing if not contradictory and complex. It aims to analyse something of this complexity by empirically exploring three key discourses that appeared frequently as underlying themes in visitor interviews: 'white belonging', 'white normativity' and 'white reflexivity'.

The chapter first attempts to unveil visitors' strong sense of 'white belongingness' to Northern English countryside spaces of Derwentwater and Gidside. It analyses how visitors' deep emotional attachment to the countryside explains not only their assumed authority to make status claims over the countryside, but equally helps explain how threats to these much revered sites provoke a series of white anxieties, that collectively lay the foundations for an exclusionary politics. The subsequent two sections aim to further unpack the ambiguous discourse of whiteness that on the one hand continues to function as an unmarked, unquestioned category among 'white' visitors, while at the same time a sense of loss and dislocation from the nation is projected onto the figure of white rural England. The second theme, of 'white normativity', analyses the enduringly evasive power of whiteness. It

demonstrates how some 'white' visitors do not see their own whiteness or recognise themselves as ethnic, in the same way that the countryside and the National Trust are considered by some to be ethnically or racially unmarked. However, the third theme reveals that many 'white' visitors reflexively recognised themselves, the countryside and the National Trust to be white. Thus, the story of racialised whiteness in the English countryside is far more complex than the often-undifferentiated narrative would have us believe. The survey revealed that visitors are becoming increasingly sensitive to the white racialised character of the countryside and its guardian, the National Trust. It develops some of the ideas raised in the first section by analysing the ambiguity of 'white reflexivity'. As we shall see, whiteness is a culturally complex discourse that is at the same time marked and unmarked, authorized and anxiety-ridden, secure and insecure, powerful and precarious. Before unpacking such ambiguities of white racial identification, it is first important to establish the characteristics and constituency of the 400 'white' visitors who were surveyed at Gibside and Derwentwater. The sample was split exactly between the two sites, with 200 visitors surveyed at Derwentwater and 200 at Gibside. It also roughly struck a balance between members and non-members of the National Trust (48% and 52% respectively) and between male and female visitors (43% and 57% of respondents).

7.2 White, middle class, middle aged and able bodied?: Beyond a homogenous, hegemonic 'hyperwhiteness'

While there has been a gradual and growing recognition among countryside organisations, including the National Trust, that visitors tend to be predominantly 'white middle class' (The National Trust 1990b), the racially unmarked figuration of the English countryside has, as this thesis has been arguing, largely gone unreported.¹ By drawing attention to the distinctive characteristics of contemporary 'white' countryside visitors, this research demonstrates the enduring 'whiteness' of the English-identified countryside, while also highlighting the cultural (gendered, generational and class-based) specificity of that racial formation. This research reaffirmed findings of other national and local visitor surveys (The National Trust 1990a; The National Trust 1993b; Countryside Commission 1994; BDRC 1997; Deloitte and Touche 1998; Countryside Commission 1999; The National Trust 2001c; BDRC 2002), that countryside visitors tend to be middle-aged (40% of people surveyed were 45- 64), middle class (75% of respondents were ABC1's, see Figure 7.1) and able bodied (94% of visitors surveyed), drawn from an older, higher income and more educated section

¹ Where questions on ethnicity have been included, for example in the National Trust Members Survey, 2002, the categories have tended to be more limited than the advised 2001 census classification, restricted to the labels 'white', 'Asian', 'Afro-Caribbean', 'African' and 'Other'.

of the population than the national average. Thus, unlike critical studies of whiteness that have tended to focus on marginality or 'liminal' whites (Koshy 2001: 153), this research intentionally interrogates dominant white culture in order to analyse how even apparently hegemonic and homogenous formations of whiteness are complex and fragmented.

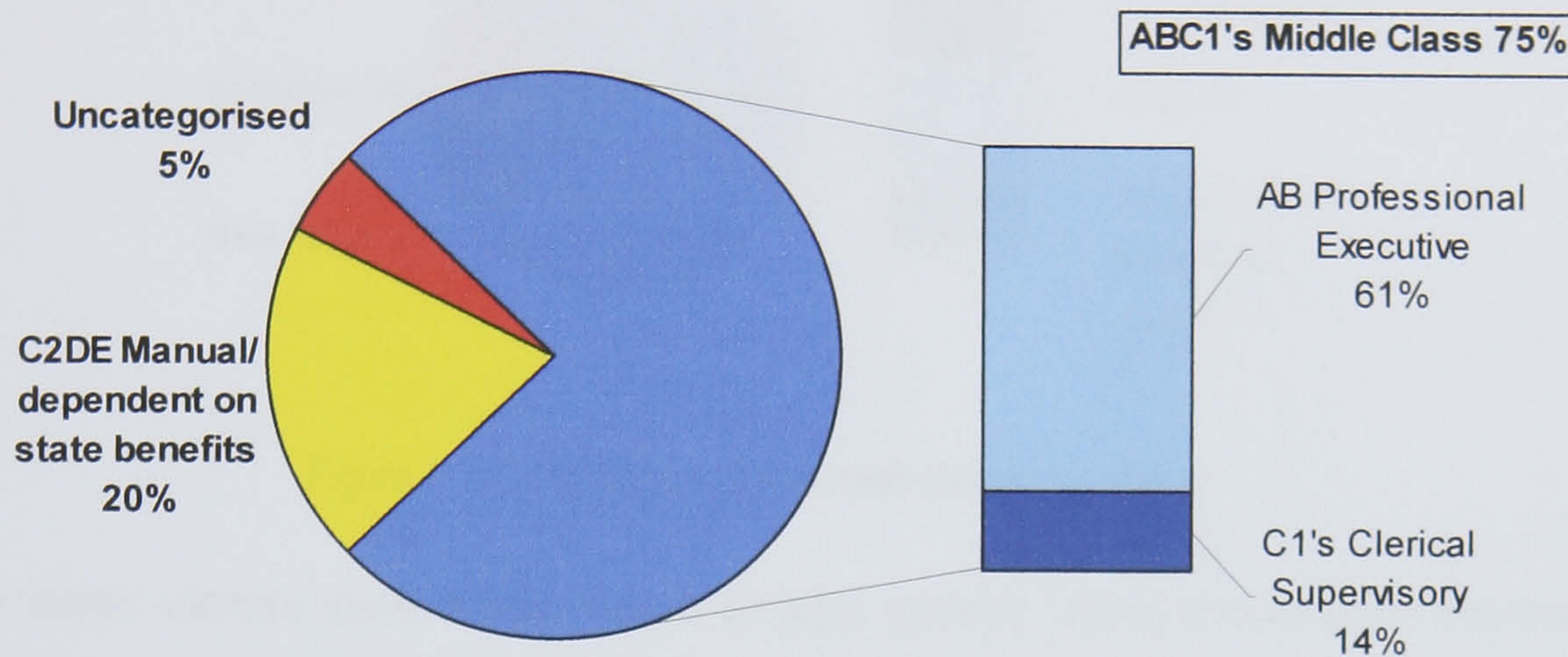


Figure 7.1: Class composition of 'white' countryside visitors

Overall, the visitors surveyed at Gibside and Derwentwater reflected the marginal gender imbalance in the national population, with slightly more female than male respondents (57% of women in comparison with 43% of men). Although visitors from a range of age groups were surveyed, between 9 and 90 years of age, the age profile of visitors, and particularly Trust members to both sites, was skewed towards the middle aged and upward, reinforcing the Trust's observation that it has an elderly membership base (The National Trust 1990a: 1). The fact that over 50% of visitors to both sites were in 'higher' or 'intermediate' occupations, over 30% have been educated to degree level and well over half are drawn from professional and managerial classes (see Figure 7.1) indicates the class-specificity of 'white' countryside visitors. In particular, the Trust's 'membership base' is distinctly middle class, primarily comprised of what the Trust calls 'affluent empty nesters' and 'active retired professionals' (The National Trust, 2001c). Moreover, the fact that 78% of 'white' visitors consider themselves to be Christians of various denominations (see Figure 7.2) suggests that whiteness also has a religious, specifically Christian dimension that other religious affiliations are marked against. The way that one visitor² lumped together 'Jewish people'

² National Trust volunteer and governing member of the Friends of Gibside (126)

with other religious and racial categorisations such as 'Muslims' and 'Blacks' is further indicative of how whiteness dovetails neatly with Christianity within the guise of dominant Englishness.

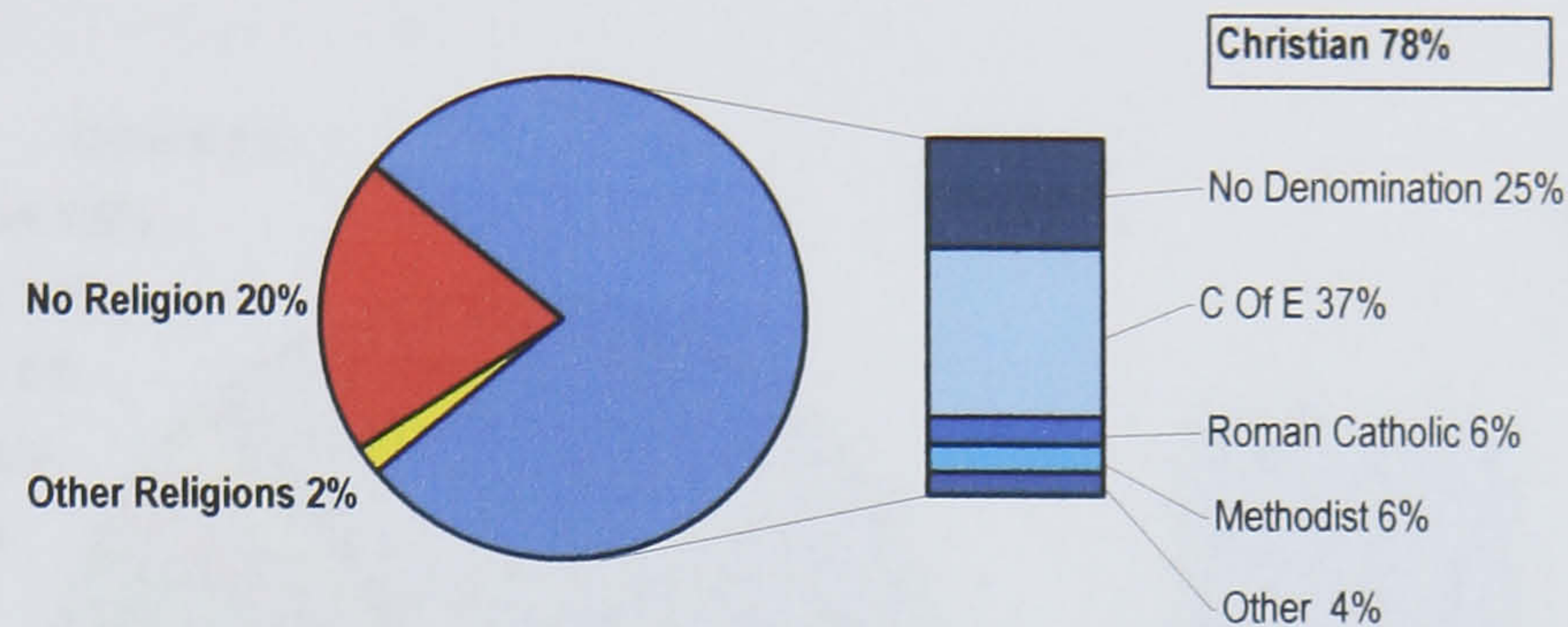


Figure 7.2: Composition of surveyed visitors by religion

While 'white' visitors were differentiated by age, gender, class and religion, the survey also highlighted that Gibside and Derwentwater attract broadly different types of visitor. Gibside has a 'very local supporter base' (Deloitte and Touche 1998: 6), whereas Derwentwater, as part of the Lake District National Park, unsurprisingly has a nationalised appeal. While 77% of visitors surveyed at Gibside were from the surrounding counties of Tyne and Wear and County Durham, visitors to Derwentwater were drawn from over 30 different counties in England, with only 9% of those surveyed living in Cumbria. Gibside predominantly attracts local visitors on a day trip from home, many of who are repeat visitors and members,³ and in contrast, Derwentwater tends to attract countryside residents (less likely to be Trust members) on a short break or holiday in the Lakes. Such distinctive features of 'white' countryside visitor's highlight the contingent nature of whiteness out of which a national narrative of Englishness has been constituted. Although the profile of visitors surveyed does little to challenge what has now become a stereotypical image of a countryside visitor, the process of ethnic self-description unveiled the differentiated, multiple identifications of 'white' interviewees. As illustrated in Figure 7.3, 'white' countryside visitors consistently described their ethnic identity through 9 main labels (in order of use) – 'white', 'English', 'British', 'white British', 'British/English', 'white European', 'white Anglo Saxon', 'white English' and 'Caucasian'.

³ For example, in the month of January 2002, the Trust recorded that 60% of the 69 thousand visitors to Gibside were members (The National Trust Marketing and Communications Department 2002).

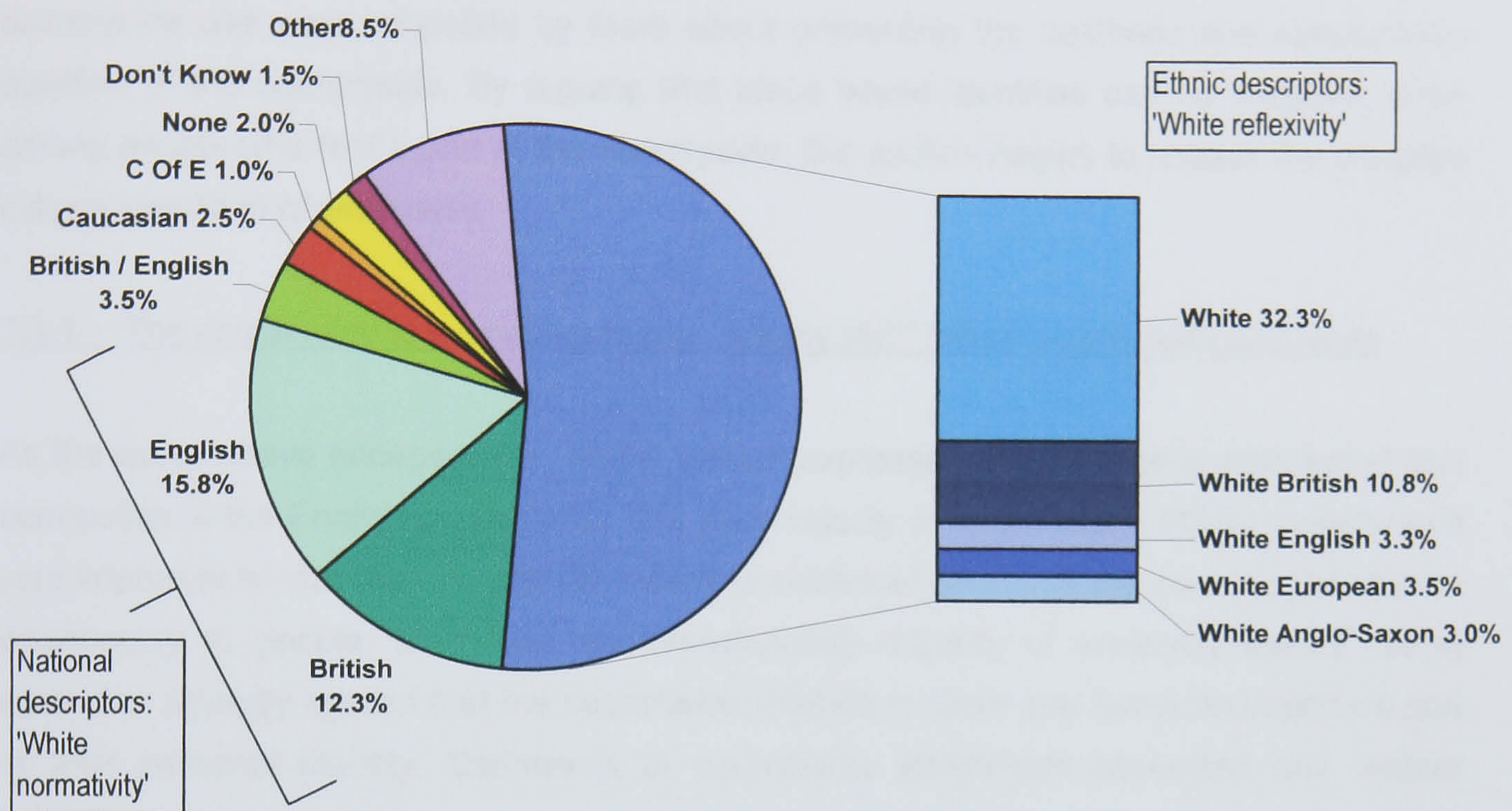


Figure 7.3: Ethnic self-identification of 'white' interviewees

The process of ethnic self-identification highlighted the ambiguous, paradoxical and complex nature of whiteness, beyond a hegemonic, homogenous 'hyperwhiteness'. On the one hand, many visitors failed to name their own whiteness, describing themselves instead through national or other categories of identification, indicating the way that whiteness functions as what Barthes has termed an 'ex-nominating phenomenon' (2000: 138) which does not want to be named and is effected and inflected through the idea of nation. However, on the other hand, over half of visitors reflexively described themselves as 'white' in some form or other, suggesting that 'white' people are not oblivious to their own racialised identity. Before going on to explore these two central discourses of 'white normativity' and 'white reflexivity' (see Figure 7.3), the chapter explores how visitors' strong sense of countryside belonging explains the ambivalently authoritative and anxious condition of whiteness.

7.3 White belonging: whiteness as inseparable senses of authority and anxiety

The survey uncovered a strong sense of belonging to the countryside among 'white' visitors. While this feeling of belonging and being 'at home' in the countryside was used as a basis for making status claims over the countryside, visitors seemingly confident assertions of countryside use were propelled by fears about preserving the aesthetic and atmospheric qualities of the countryside. By arguing that place based identities can be insecure, even among people who feel a part of the countryside, this section begins to unpack the complex cultural condition of whiteness.

7.3.1 'The countryside is everything to me...It's my life':⁴ 'white' countryside belonging

As the quote above encapsulates, 'white' visitors expressed a deep-seated attachment and connection to the English countryside. The vast majority of respondents (83%) considered it very important to visit the countryside, which is evidence alone that the countryside matters enormously to people. Moreover, an overwhelming majority of surveyed visitors (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that the countryside matters to them and forms an important part of their personal identity. Comments of countryside attachment abounded and visitors tended to speak about the countryside in very personalised terms. For example, one retired teacher on a regular visit to Gibside stressed the inseparability of countryside and her personal identity, remarking that:

'Saying I'm interested in the countryside is like saying I'm interested in my left arm. I can't separate it from my identity...I am part of it all the time...I don't visit it -- I am it and of it'.⁵

Another respondent, a long-term member of the Trust and a Druid teacher, described her deep sense of personal belonging to Derwentwater and identification with the National Trust, whose use of the acorn symbol is synchronous with the sacred status accorded to the oak (the 'King of Trees') in the Druid spirituality:

'It feels very personal to me. I saw the acorn sign and it appealed to me, it seemed to be a part of what I was somehow...I felt that I belonged here, it seemed part of my personal heritage...It was a big part of my childhood...It became part of what I was really'.⁶

While an abundance of such impassioned comments unveiled the deep affection for and attachment to the countryside, the survey also quantitatively exposed the extent of countryside belonging among 'white' visitors, from '1' representing the strongest sense of

⁴ Female Chapel Steward at Gibside and life member of the Trust, over 75 (120)

⁵ Recently retired teacher from Rowlands Gill near Gibside (146)

⁶ Cumbrian resident, regular visitor to Derwentwater and Druid teacher, 45- 54 (339)

countryside identification, to '10', the weakest (see Figure 7.4). As we can see in Figure 7.4, although members of the National Trust expressed a stronger sense of belonging to the countryside, revealing perhaps of the way that membership of Trust acts as a badge of countryside belonging, in general, respondents, whether members or not, shared a strong identification with the countryside.

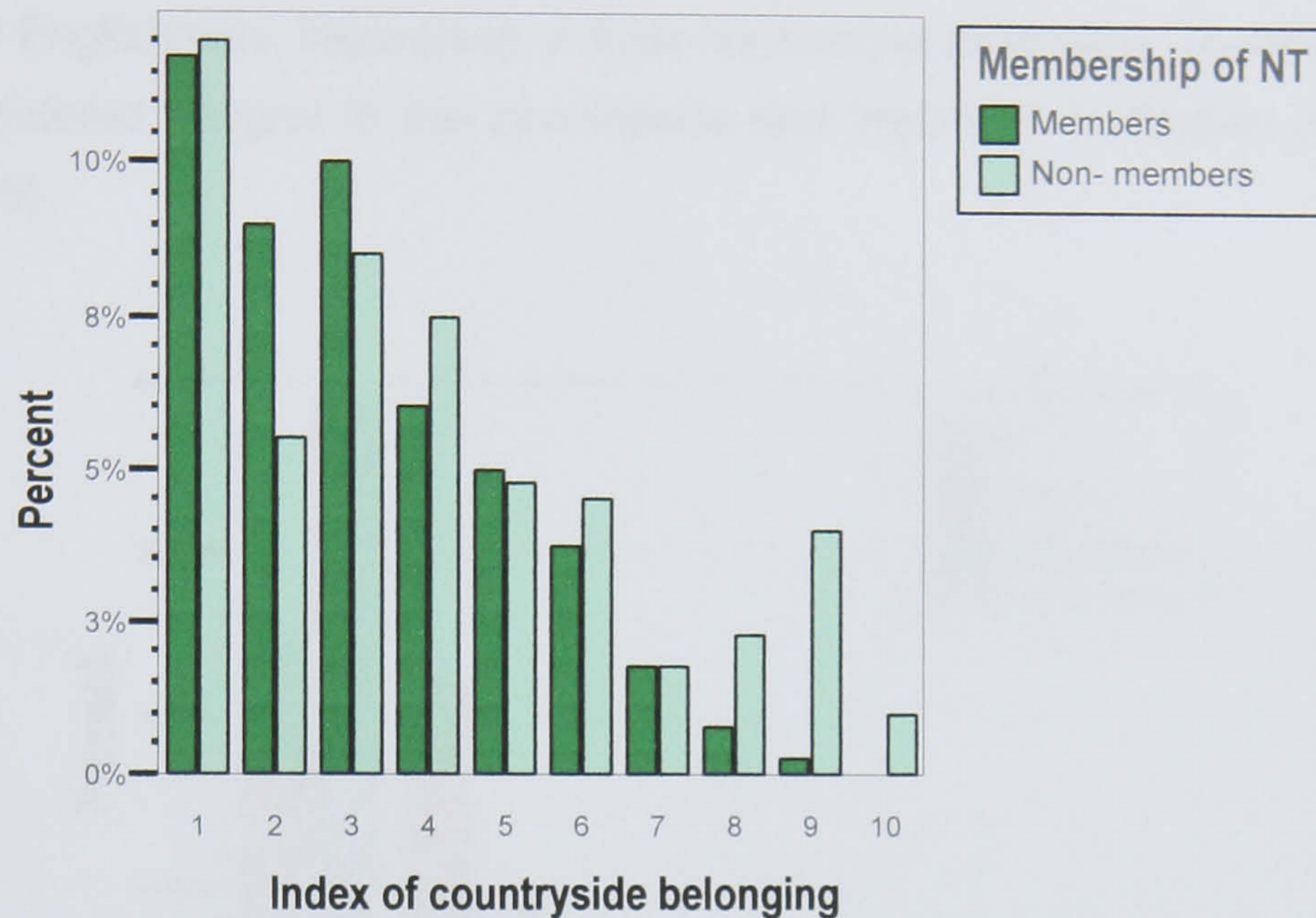


Figure 7.4: Index of countryside belonging by membership of the National Trust

This sense of countryside identification and belonging was further affirmed by the fact that the vast majority of visitors (93%) claimed to feel at home in the countryside. The perception of countryside as homespace, as a place of personal belonging reverberated through interviewees comments that 'it's a way of life for *us*',⁷ 'it's *our* playground',⁸ '[I]t's *our* heritage, for *our* children'⁹ (emphasis added), to give but a few examples. The repetitive use of plural pronouns in statements about the countryside is strongly suggestive of 'white' visitors' *shared* sense of belonging and *collective* ownership of the countryside. Such comments highlight that 'white' visitor's belonging claims over the countryside rest upon the assumption that others – an undefined 'them' – don't belong. Although few visitors made overt mention of race, by using 'English' as a marker of belonging in possessive pronouncements such as 'it's ours, it's English',¹⁰ 'white' visitors implicitly cast those who don't identify with the countryside as outside the symbolic formation of the nation, as out of Englishness and out of whiteness. In this way, the countryside is not only mobilised as a personal homeplace, but also as a 'white' national homespace.

⁷ Walker, regular visitor to Derwentwater and non-member, F (329)

⁸ Member of the Trust and a local walking group, F (185)

⁹ Long-term member of the Trust, English Heritage and visitor to Gibside, M (151)

¹⁰ A retired ambulance service employee and Trust member on holiday to the Lake District, M (316)

The survey convincingly demonstrated that countryside and English national identity are commonly conflated in the popular geographic imagination, with as many as 96% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that 'the countryside is an important part of English national heritage and identity'. Although the survey revealed that Gibside and Derwentwater continue to be imagined as different figurative and material landscapes of Englishness, regardless of their contrasting aesthetics, appeal and size, both sites are considered integral to the countryside and important to English national identity (see Figure 7.5).

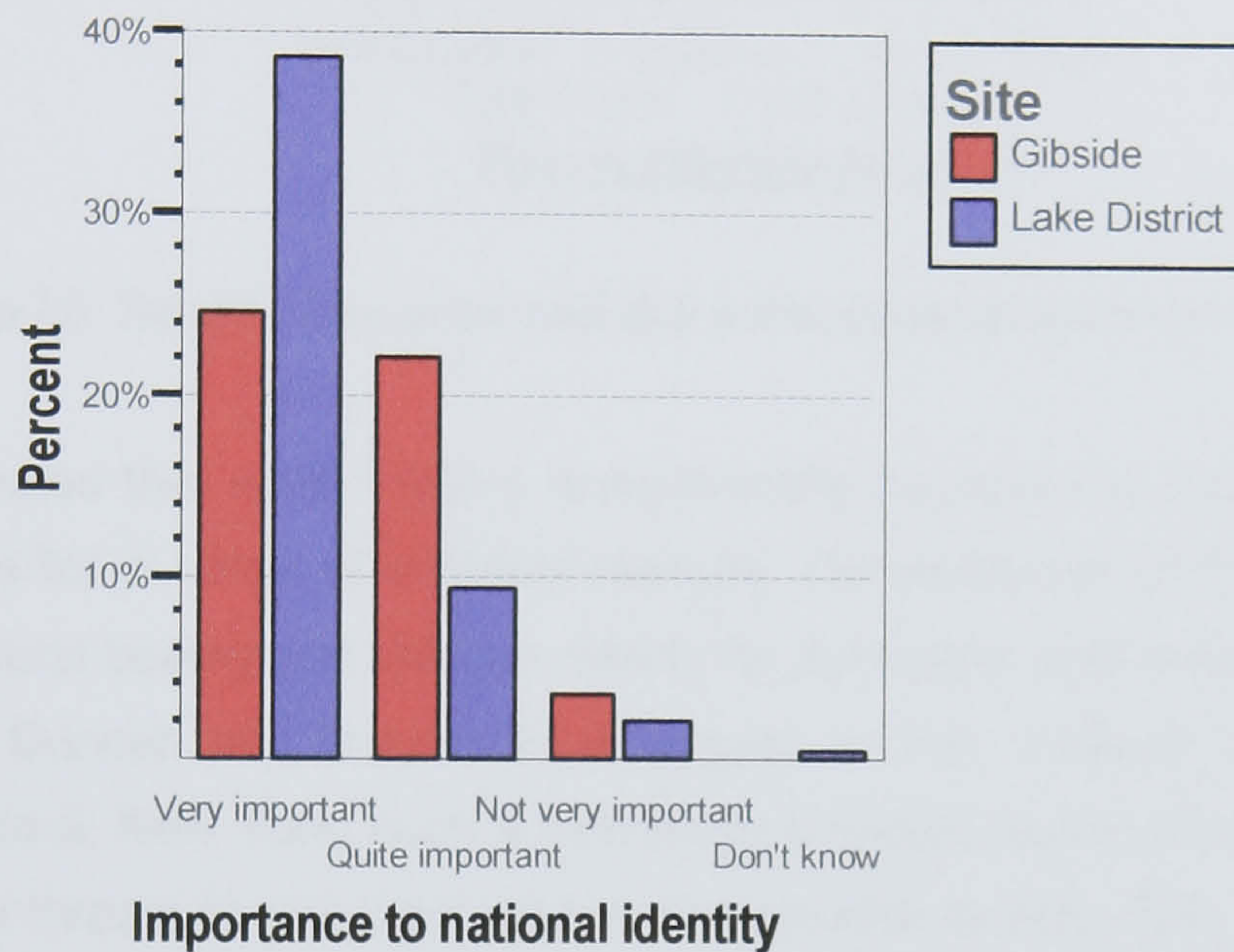


Figure 7.5: Perceived importance of Gibside and Derwentwater to English national identity

While some visitors would aver that '[T]he countryside shows people what England really is',¹¹ positing the countryside as 'real' or 'true' England, such a perception is based on an idealised conception of the countryside. The fact that 85% of respondents subscribed to the belief that the countryside is 'idyllic' (see Figure 7.6) indicates the endurance of the 'rural idyll' in the popular geographical imagination that previous chapters have shown to hold whiteness at its core. As the chapter will go on to argue, by idealising the countryside, visitors have tended to ignore or deny any issues like race and racism that may disturb such a whitewashed version of rural Englishness.

¹¹ A volunteer Chapel Steward at Gibside and life member of the Trust, F (120)

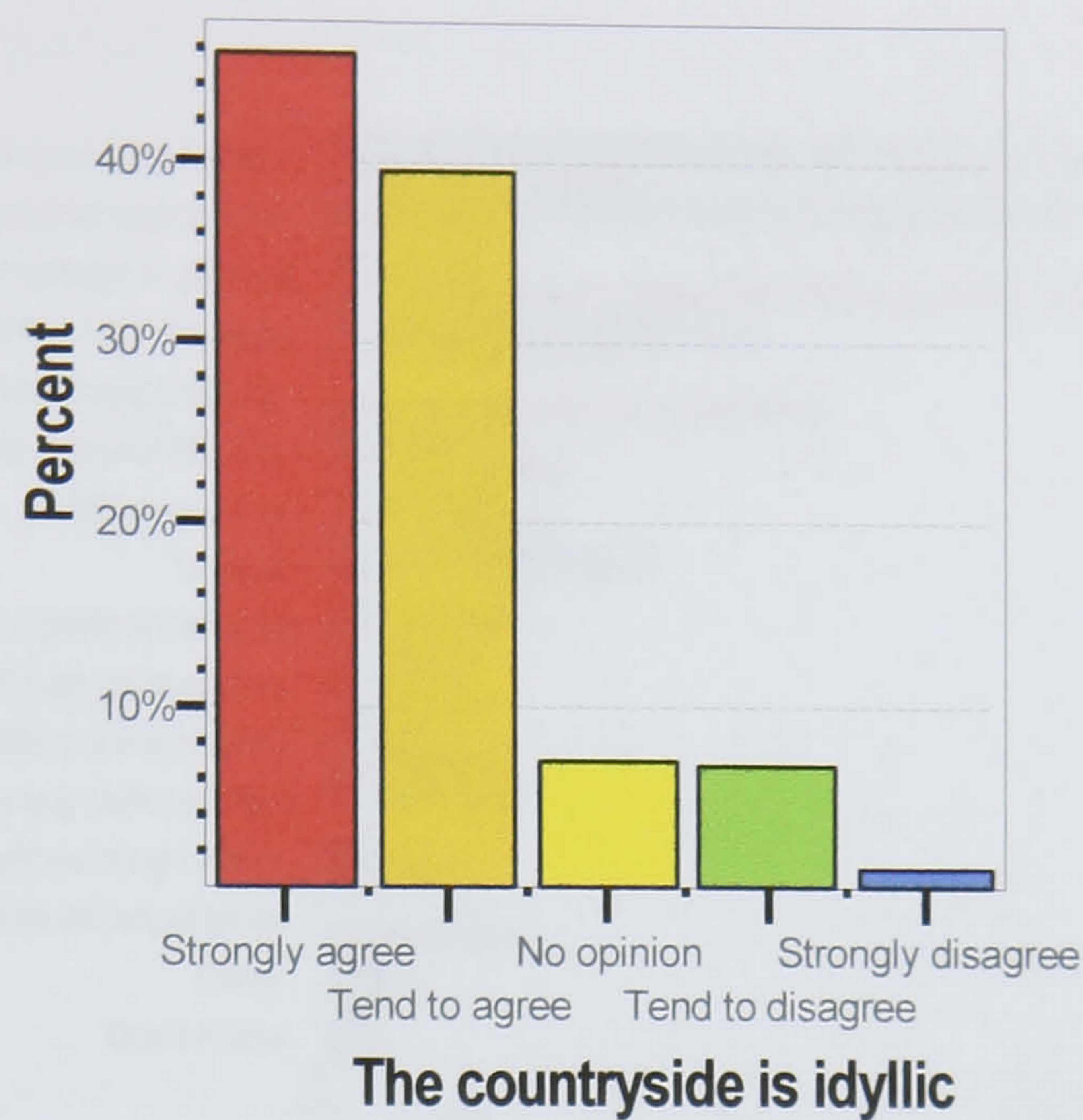


Figure 7.6: The endurance of the 'rural idyll' in the popular geographical imagination

The survey revealed that while visitors unequivocally treasure the countryside, they value each of the sites for a range of different reasons, Derwentwater primarily for its aesthetic qualities and natural beauty and Gibside mainly for its historic and heritage importance (see Figure 7.7). As Duncan and Duncan have argued in their analysis of the politics of the aesthetic in Bedford, New York, such a seemingly innocent appreciation of landscapes can help explain how threats to treasured places can provoke anxiety, fear, aversion, anger and hatred towards others and can 'become the basis for a sometimes virulent politics of exclusion' (2004: 57). In this case, as visitors' professed such a deep sense of emotional attachment to the homespace of the countryside, any threats to cherished landscape qualities – be they aesthetic infringements, access restrictions or blights to the atmospheric peace and quiet – were often construed as threats to the very substance of Englishness and even to personal identities of 'white' countryside visitors. Such a sense of white rural Englishness under threat lay the foundation for an exclusionary politics orientated around the desire to preserve the aesthetic purity of the English countryside (Duncan and Duncan 2004: 10), which the thesis has already argued to be associated with a particular moral and racial purity of whiteness. Although the landscapes of Gibside and Derwentwater are not as overtly inflected by race as in the example they draw upon, of Mount Kisco in Bedford, New York, as we shall see in the next section, by coding particular processes, practices and people as out of place in public spaces of the Northern English countryside, 'white' visitors' rehearsed tacit codes of the countryside that act as subtle, insidious and invisible mechanisms of exclusion.

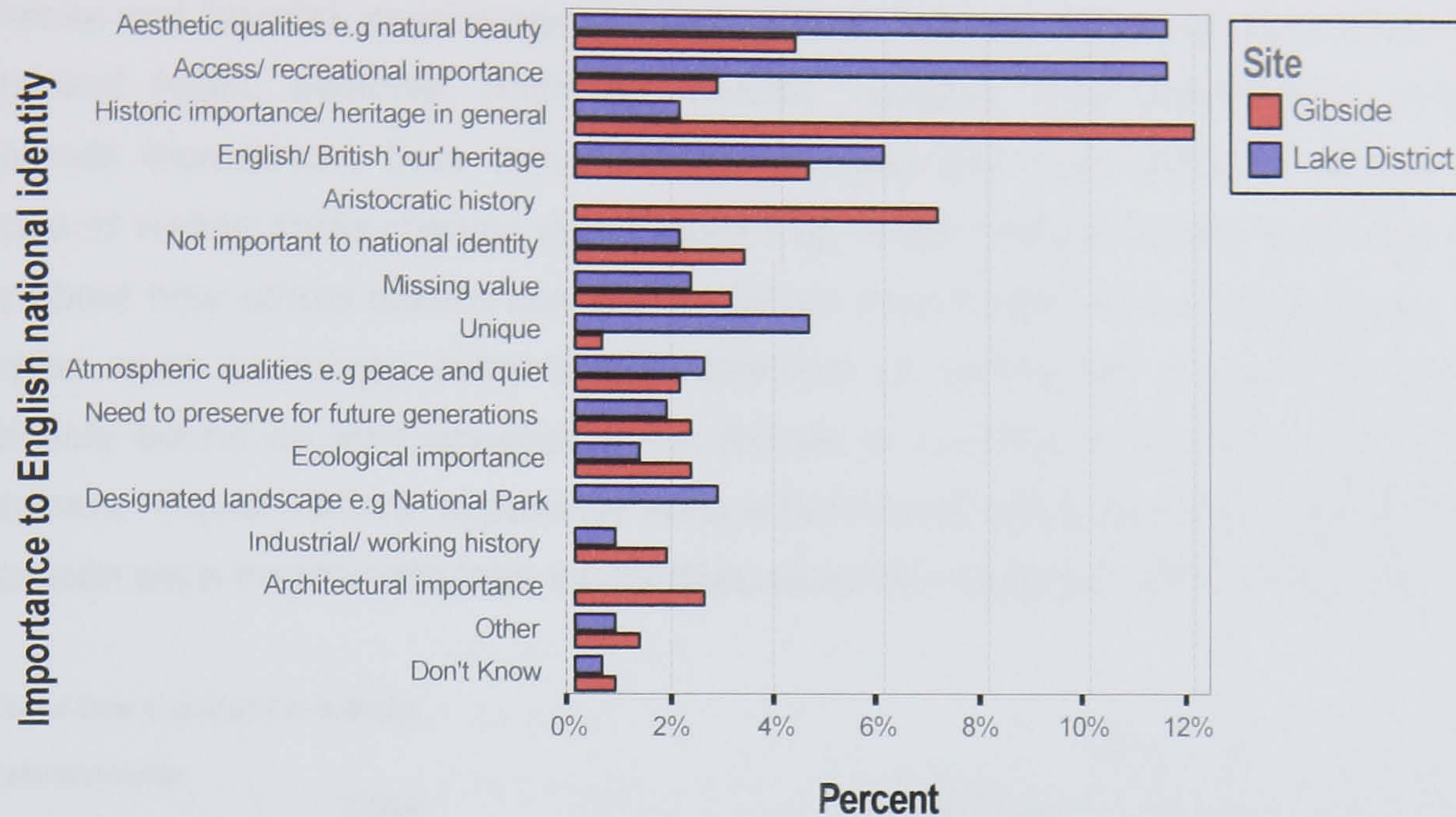


Figure 7.7: The perceived importance of both sites to English national identity

7.3.2 'People should walk and watch, not kick balls around':¹² Tacit codes of right, 'white' countryside use

As the above quote indicates, the sense, not only of belonging, but of ownership, that was captured in the survey provided the basis from which some 'white' visitors assumed the right to assert how the countryside should be used, to make stewardship claims over the countryside as part of the wider process of claiming the nation. Visitors' seemingly innocent appreciation of landscapes and their desire to protect the look and feel of the countryside was underlined by the unquestioned – and arguably normatively racialised – politics of the aesthetic that implicitly casts people who challenge tacit codes of 'right' countryside use out of place in the English countryside. In the same way that the National Trust, as self-appointed 'guardian of the countryside'¹³ assumed the right to speak and act on behalf of the nation (as earlier chapters argued), so did many of its members and regular visitors readily vocalise their views about what does or does not belong in the countryside. For example, a couple of country pursuit enthusiasts visiting the Lakes observed how an Indian family hadn't made eye contact or said hello,¹⁴ implying that they contravened an unspoken countryside conduct that rendered them out of place in the countryside and, by extension, out of the symbolic formation of the nation.

¹² Middle aged Cumbrian man, non-member (342)

¹³ A retired woman, non-member and visitor to Gibside (186)

¹⁴ Country pursuit enthusiasts and visitors to the Lakes from Northumberland (Male- 359, Female- 360)

For whatever reasons people visited the countryside (see Figure 7.8), be they social (day out, family and friends), psychological (relax, peace, holiday), economic (use membership) or physical (walk, exercise, fresh air, health), however they preferred to enjoy the countryside themselves, from active outdoor pursuits and long walks, to shorter walks, picnics and visiting stately homes (see Figure 7.9), 'white' visitors' tended to express strong views about how *others* should use and enjoy the countryside. As we shall see by way of examples, such seemingly authoritative assertions of countryside use and conduct were inextricably bound up with anxieties about threats or challenges to the tacit codes of the countryside. 'White' visitors' apparently secure feelings of belonging and homeliness in the countryside were inseparable from insecurities about the spoilation of the countryside.

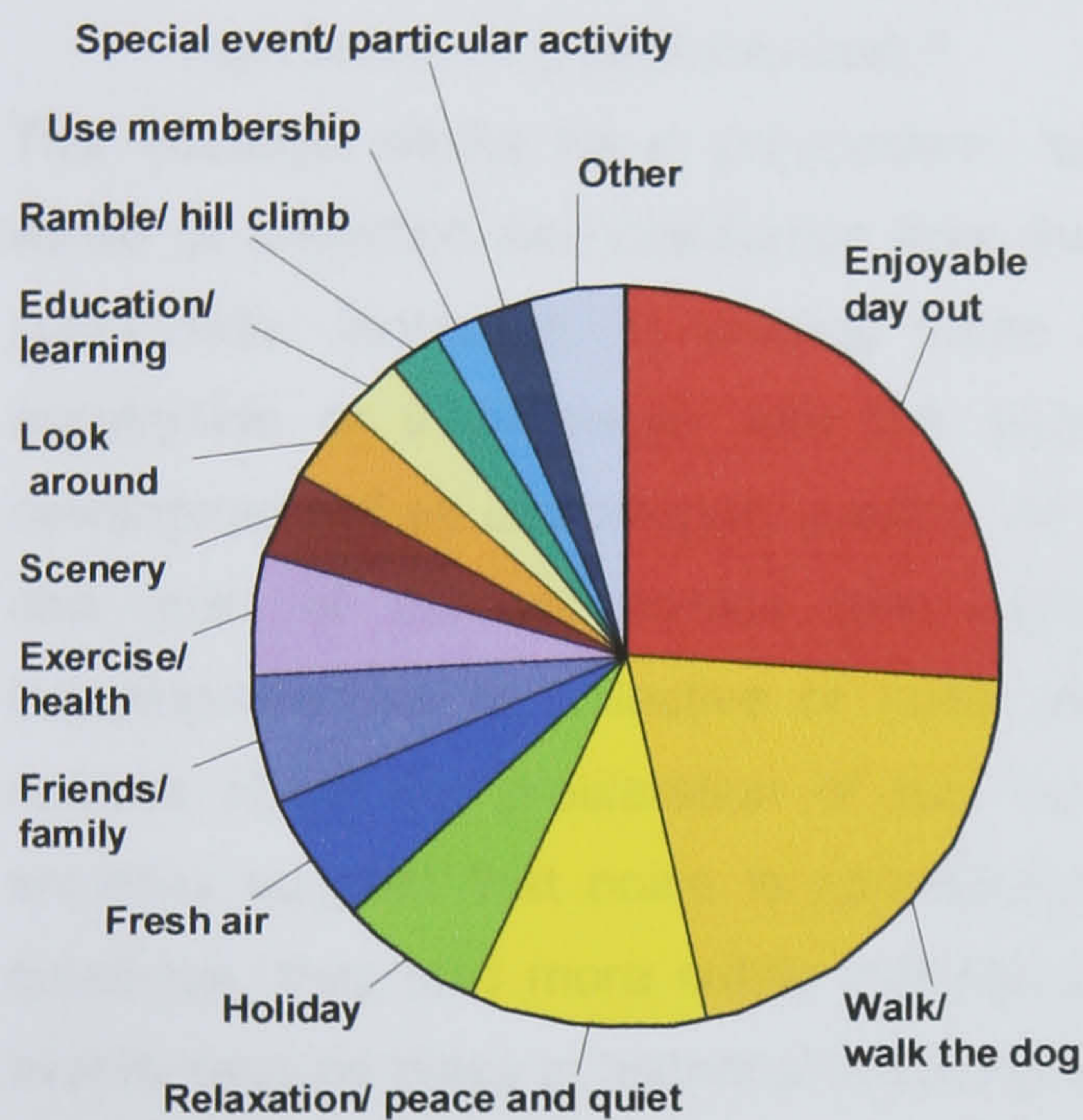


Figure 7.8: Motivations/ reasons for visit

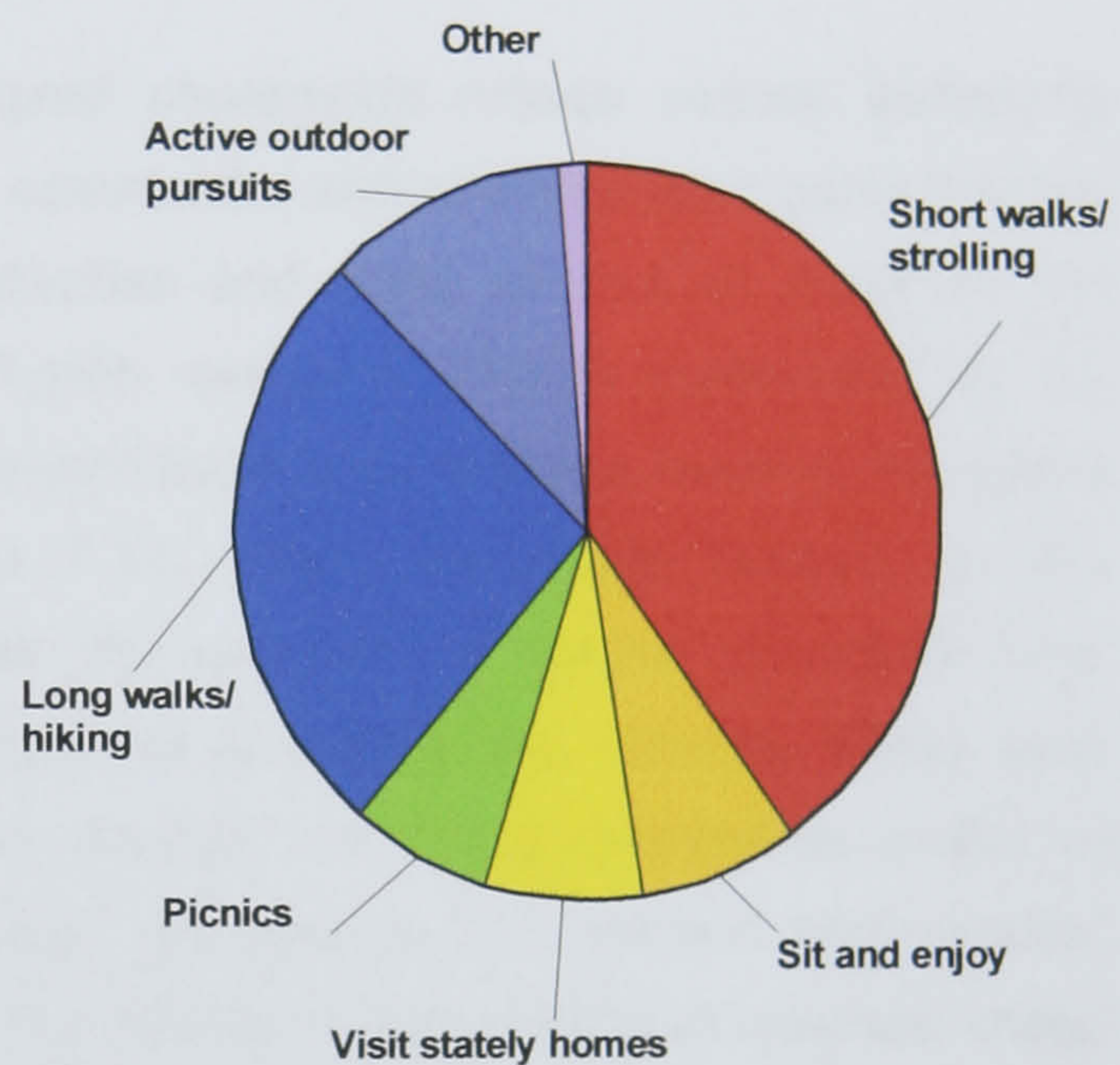


Figure 7.9: Contemporary 'white' countryside use

As visitors accorded such high value to the open space provided by the countryside (see Figure 7.10), many were anxious about its destruction due to over-use, over-development and commercialisation. Many peoples' preference to visit the Northern Lakes over the 'too crowded'¹⁵ Southern Lakes like Windermere indicates the enduring aesthetic taste for solitude, remoteness and freedom that previous chapters traced back to eighteenth century tourists' search for the picturesque. The survey revealed that the very same anxieties that fuelled preservationism in the mid to late nineteenth century continue to plague contemporary visitors also anxious to preserve the countryside from development and despoliation. For example some visitors were fearful that sites like Gibside may become

¹⁵ A local, middle-aged couple, non-members (341 and 342)

over-developed and turned into theme parks. The opposition posed by many visitors to the construction of a children's play area at Gibside, exemplifies how development, even on such a small scale, continues to be regarded as a threat to the aesthetic purity of the countryside.

Similarly, some visitors were also anxious about commercialism threatening the natural beauty and landscape aesthetic of areas like the Lake District. One twenty-five year old woman encapsulated this view by stating:

'I love going to the countryside, BUT I hate the way that many areas have become SO commercial and "touristy"... the Lake District is full to bursting of nasty tea shops, novelty trinket shops, chip shops, ice cream shops, ice cream vans etc... I want to see the ORIGINAL beauty, what people 200 years ago might have seen' (original emphasis).¹⁶

This nostalgic desire for a pre-modern, 'original' countryside reflects visitors' increasing sense of alienation and dislocation from the commercial and consumerised contemporary countryside. Moreover, by casting some activities and uses as 'out of place' in the countryside or incongruous with the countryside aesthetic, visitors contributed to the development of an exclusionary politics. As respondents assigned high value to the peace and quiet of the countryside (see Figure 7.10), many comments centred on the inappropriateness of collective or noisy uses. For example, a number of visitors were anxious about the proliferation of pop concerts at properties like Gibside. While such anxieties suggest that noise is considered to threaten the prized countryside quality of quietness, they also more subtly indicate visitors' perceptions that 'modern' and 'popular' events have no place in historical landscapes like Gibside that represent an idealised image of the countryside. The class-based specificity of the countryside aesthetic is brought into even sharper relief when it is considered that visitors specifically seized on the example of pop concerts to raise issue with noisy events in the countryside, rather than on the open air classical concerts or the (often Shakespeare) plays performed at Gibside. The way in which visitors singled out less traditional events like pop concerts as disruptive or disturbing, while silently legitimising comparably 'noisy' events, highlights how apparently neutral values attached to the countryside act as subtle mechanisms of exclusion.

¹⁶ Young woman from Newcastle on a weekend break to the Lake District with her husband, non-member (389)

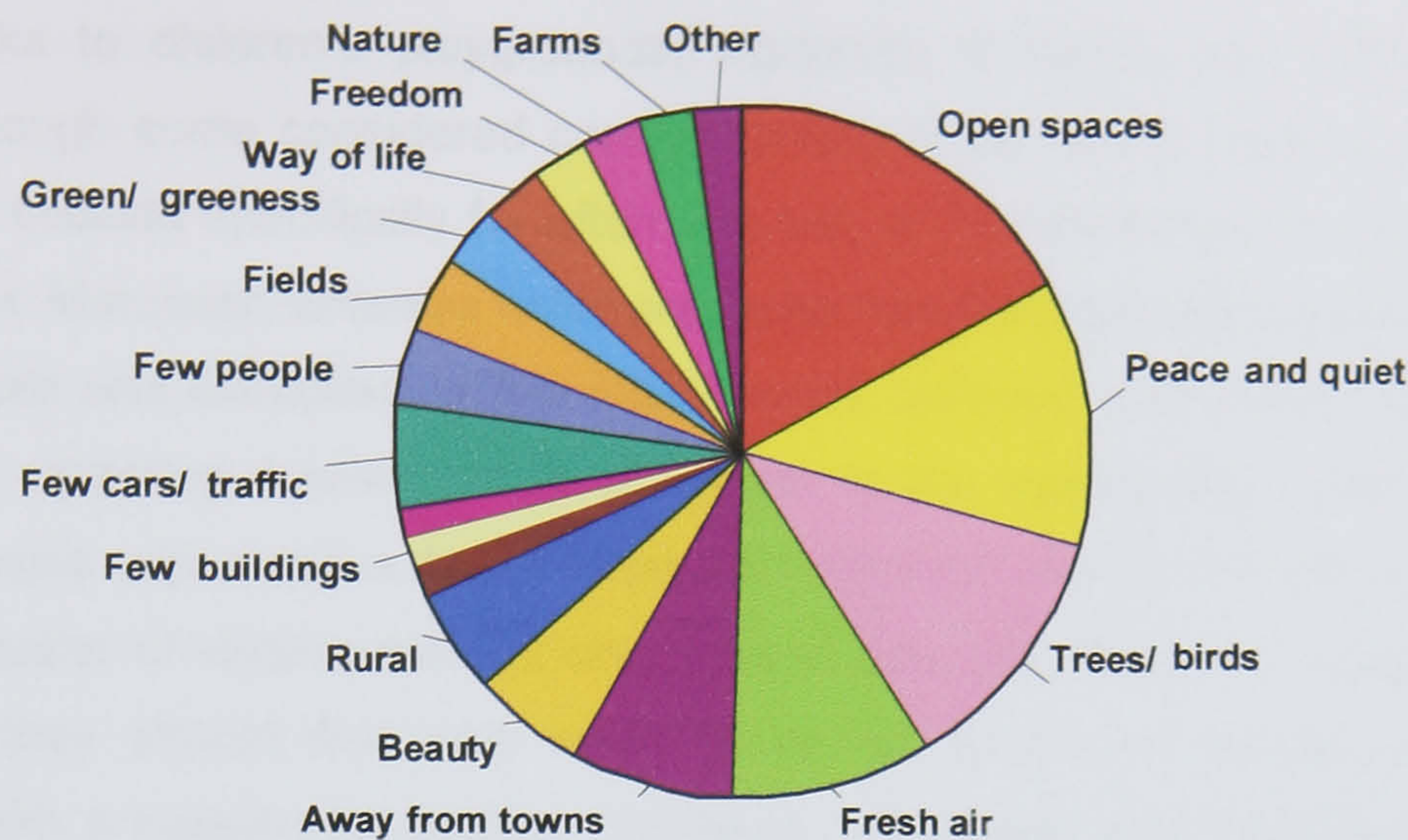


Figure 7.10: Meanings and values attached to the English countryside

While the chapter goes on to analyse the racialised dimension of such subtle politics of exclusion, this section pauses to consider how dominant aesthetic judgements about the countryside were also inflected by age. Visitors not only cast particular processes and practices out of the symbolic formation of the countryside, but also regarded specific people out of place in the countryside. Although it was only a minority of visitors who considered young people to fall into this category, the view expressed by a local couple visiting Gibside, that ‘gangs of youths would spoil the countryside’,¹⁷ indicates some visitors’ perception that young people – here negatively coded ‘youths’ – threaten to disturb the generally accepted sense of what is acceptable and unacceptable in the countryside. A number of visitors, particularly at Gibside, expressed the view that children should be controlled and contained. As one woman suggested, the National Trust ‘should set aside days for children... Children in houses should be under control’.¹⁸ As the chapter will return to later, such a desire for control and conformity, be it of children, as in this case, or of ‘non-white’ people, as we shall see later, highlights the assimilationist discourse deployed by some ‘white’ visitors, as a natural extension of their anxiety to defend the idealised aesthetic of the countryside.

The positing of particular processes (development, commercialisation), practices (noisy and collective activities like pop concerts) and people (such as youngsters and children) as out of place in the countryside was far from universal. In fact, for every person who expressed one view, another expressed the opposite. So, while many visitors were anxious about threats of development and commercialism to the countryside, others valued Trust sites like Derwentwater and Gibside precisely because of the infrastructure and facilities provided,

¹⁷ A couple of local National Trust members and regular visitors to Gibside (5 and 6)

¹⁸ A National Trust for Scotland member and first time visitor to Gibside (90).

from car parks to children's playgrounds, signposts to shops and toilets to tearooms. Similarly, although some considered commercialism to be out of place in the countryside, others visited Gibside specifically for afternoon tea, or Derwentwater as part of a shopping trip to Keswick. Moreover, whereas noisy and collective practices were generally regarded to be inappropriate and disruptive, a few interviewees believed that events like pop concerts are crucial to attracting a wider range of visitors to the countryside. Likewise, although a minority of people expressed a desire to contain children, one school girl captured the view of a larger number of visitors that not only 'should they [the National Trust] just let children come',¹⁹ but they should find new ways to appeal to young people to inspire future generations with a passion for nature. However, regardless of such attitudinal differences and contradictory perspectives, by variously asserting how the countryside should be used and enjoyed, 'white' visitors exercised 'white privilege' to define what or who is in or out of place in the countryside.

7.4 White normativity: the universal and national nature of whiteness

This section provides empirical evidence to illustrate the normative power of whiteness about which much has been asserted in the academic literature. By demonstrating how, even when questioned, some 'white' visitors fail to see their own whiteness and how the countryside and the National Trust continue to be regarded as racially unmarked among some visitors, this analysis highlights the enduring normative status of white people, white places and white institutions in contemporary English society. Whether visitors considered the countryside to have a universal or particular culture and appeal, to be multicultural or monocultural, they were united in their deployment of nationality to justify their view. In other words, while Englishness was mobilised as a universal, catch-all term that served to mask race, ethnicity and whiteness it was also understood as an ethnically inflected category, used to capture the cultural particularity of the countryside. As whiteness continues to be masked within the nationalist discourse of countryside the survey demonstrated that the discourses of countryside, Englishness and whiteness, which previous chapters exposed to be historically co-constructed, continue to have intersecting meanings today. By subscribing to and sustaining the myth of rural whiteness, 'white' visitors inadvertently evaded their own privilege and denied the relevance of race or racism in rural England. Following in the lead of scholars of racism, this analysis argues that the very evasion and denial of race acts as a form of evasive, tacit cultural racism that keeps white dominance securely in place (Pred 2000: 81).

¹⁹ A Year 6 pupil who visited Gibside on a school trip (78)

7.4.1 'We know we're accepted, we've never had to question it':²⁰ The normative power of whiteness

Whiteness, to many 'white' countryside visitors, means not having to question or name one's ethnic identity, as encapsulated by the comment above from one visitor to the Derwentwater. The survey revealed the 'ex-nominating', normative power of whiteness to not have to speak its name, as well over half of respondents (63%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I rarely think about my ethnic identity' (see Figure 7.11). In fact many people went further, qualifying: 'I've never thought about it'. The graphs below illustrate that the majority of 'white' visitors don't think about themselves in 'ethnic' terms at all. As a retired man on holiday to the Lakes remarked, 'It's only immigrants who think about it [ethnic identity]...I think about it only when I'm put under pressure'.²¹ Through this process of evasion, ethnic identity was considered a preserve of the visible minority, while the majority, however unintentionally or unwittingly; preserve their privileged position and power of not having to say they're 'ethnic' (Perry 2001).

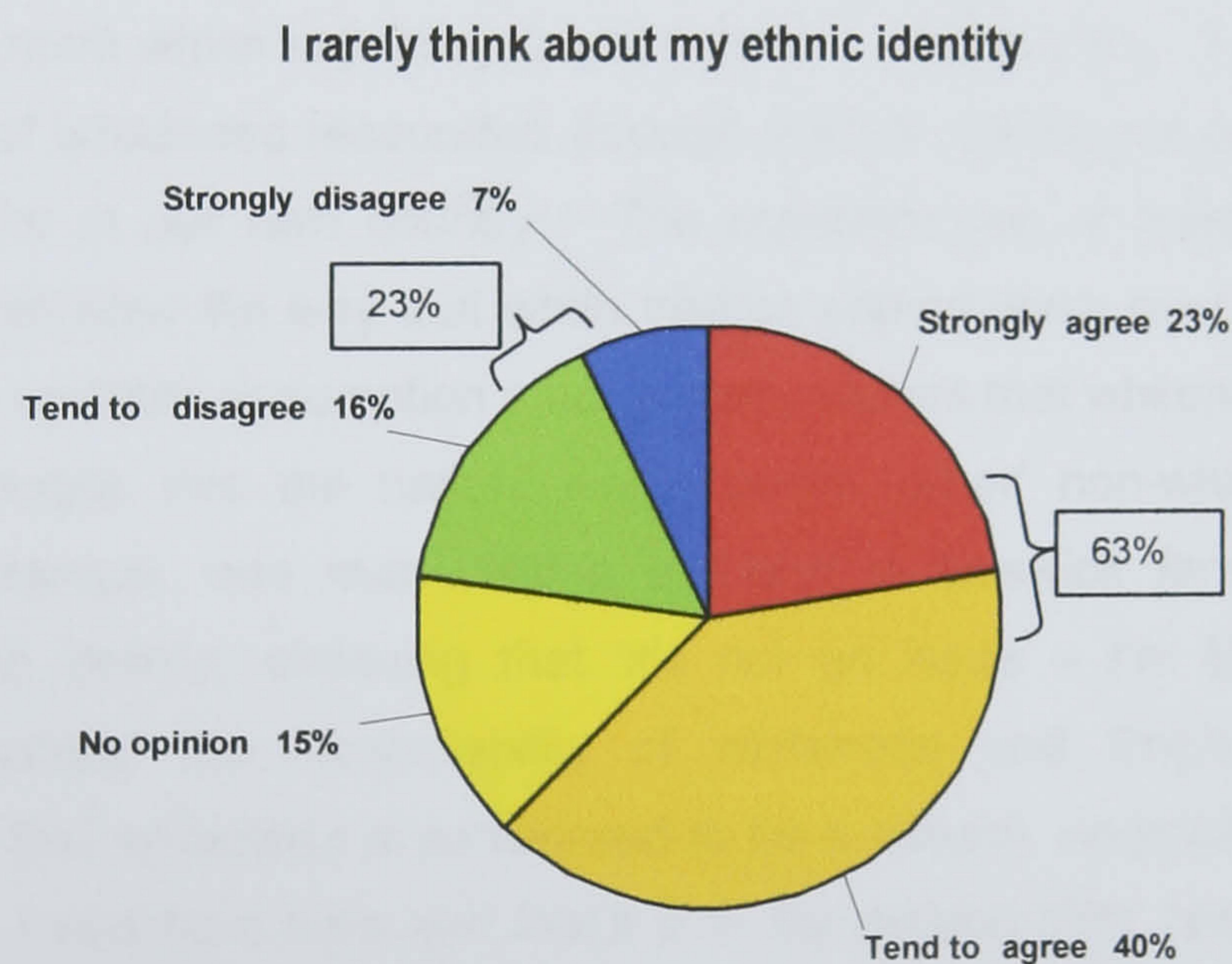


Figure 7.11: The normative status of whiteness

This projection of ethnicity onto the 'other', as a visible marker of difference, was reflected by the not uncommon use of racialised categories to describe 'non-white' people. As it is indeed 'impossible not to see that...forms of classification are forms of domination...[that] The logic of the classificatory label is very exactly that of racism, which stigmatises its victims by

²⁰ Retired woman with her husband celebrating their Ruby Wedding Anniversary in the Lakes (291 and 292)

²¹ Retired man from County Durham on holiday in the Lakes, non-member (210)

imprisoning them in a negative essence' (Pierre Bourdieu, 1990: 24-28, quoted in Pred 2000: 184), by imposing a range of loaded classificatory labels such as 'Black', 'Asian', 'coloured', 'Negro', 'Paki' or 'ethnics', the visitors in question, however unwittingly, exercised a form of domination we might call the unmarked power of whiteness. While racial and ethnic labels were readily deployed to minority groups, visitors rarely referred to themselves or other 'whites' in ethnic terms and there was a general lack of questioning of the category 'white'. Like the bourgeoisie that is the subject of Barthes' analysis, whiteness was not only defined as the ethnicity that does not want to be named but also invisibly functioned as the norm against which other groups were defined. One man from the Northeast neatly captured the taken-for-granted, exnominative status of whiteness, describing himself as 'just me', as did a teacher visiting Derwentwater who ethnically identified himself as 'white ordinary'.²² The survey highlighted that the norm that often fails to call itself 'white' can be associated with Englishness, even at its most mundane and 'ordinary'.

The way in which visitors repetitively used 'English' as a substitute for 'white' gave empirical weight to the argument that '[I]n England... ethnicities have been constructed as belonging to others, not to the norm which is [white] English' (Hall, C. 1992: 205). The naturalised and nationalised nature of whiteness resounded through visitors' comments such as: 'we know we're English – we're in our own country'.²³ The repetitive use of collective, possessive pronouns not only indicates the way that white visitors staked claim over the nation, but is also revealing of the unstated assumption among many visitors that whiteness is a marker of Englishness and merges into the nation, which posits 'other' non-white people out of Englishness. For example, one man visiting a friend in Keswick fervently denied the importance of ethnic identity, stressing that 'it's not an issue – I'm British'.²⁴ Another respondent encapsulated the inseparability of whiteness and English nationality by expressing the view that whiteness is considered to be a natural, unquestioned birthright: 'I don't think about it...I was born here and that's it'.²⁵ By making birth, blood and belonging claims to Englishness, visitors guarded against thinking about their own ethnicity as a white person in England. Such is the ex-nominating power of whiteness.

²² A teacher and conservation volunteer accompanying a group of young people on an activity day at Derwentwater (258)

²³ Man at Derwentwater who has been visiting the countryside for over 70 years, member of County Durham Association of the Trust (241)

²⁴ 55-64 year old man from Wales, visiting a friend in the Lake District, non-member (297)

²⁵ Middle-aged woman from York visiting Keswick as part of the Christian Convention, non-member (267)

I often think about the issue of ethnic identity in the countryside

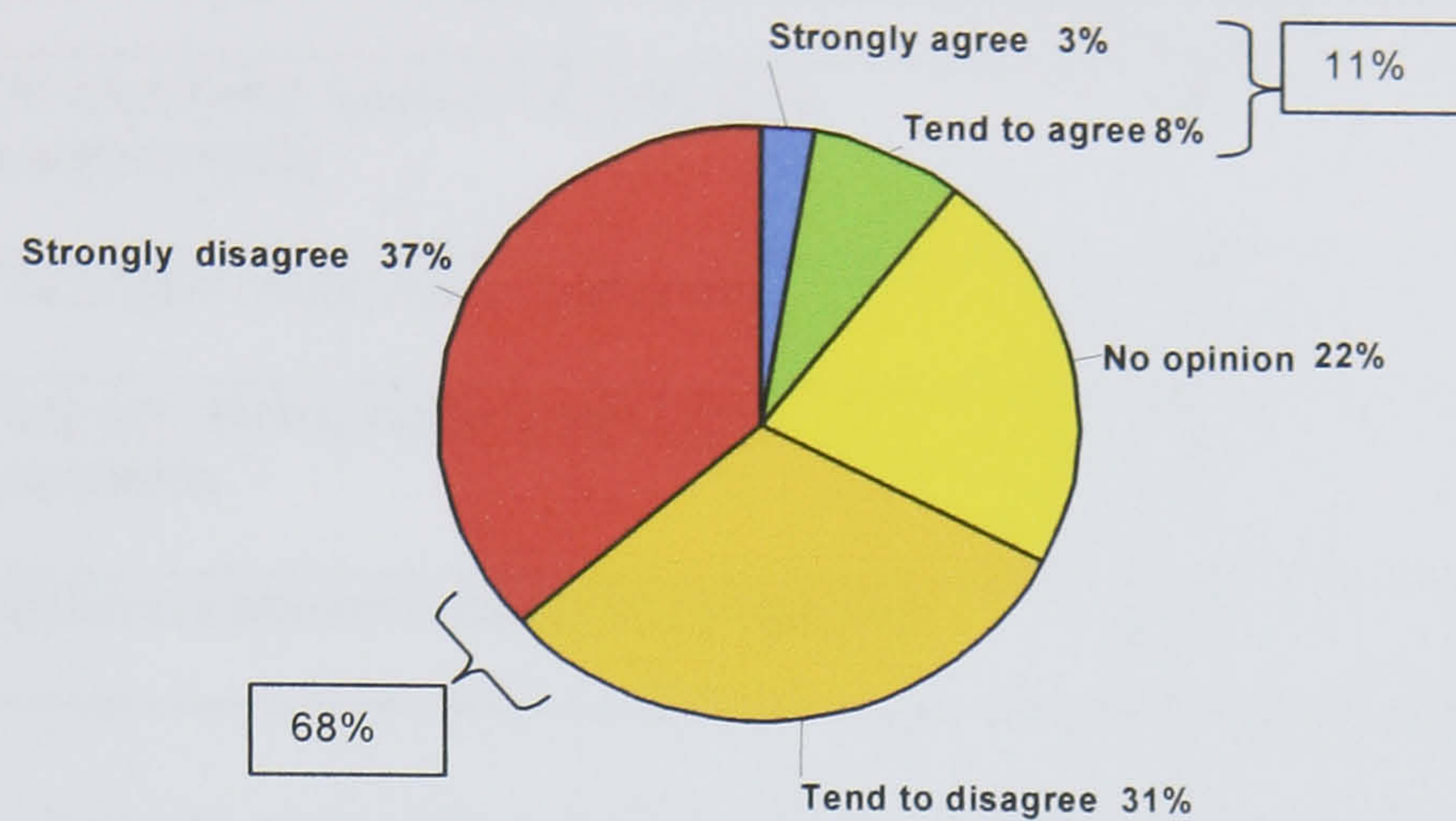


Figure 7.12: The spatial-racial logic of unmarked whiteness in the countryside

Moreover, while the majority of visitors (63%) maintained that they rarely think about their ethnic identity in general, a marginally higher percentage (68%) claim not to think about the issue of ethnic identity in the countryside (see Figure 7.12), revealing that there is a further, interesting spatial topography to whiteness in England – one that identifies as normatively white and ‘at home’ in the countryside in contrast to the city. The fact that only 11% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement ‘I often think about the issue of ethnic identity in the countryside’, illustrates that the countryside is popularly imagined as a deracialised space where whiteness remains unmarked. One visitor to Gibside expressed the incongruity of thinking about ethnicity in the countryside: ‘[Y]ou do think as you walk, but not about ethnic identity!’.²⁶ As Table 7.1 summarises and the chapter goes on to argue, visitors were almost exactly split between those who considered the countryside to have a universal, multicultural character and appeal and those who believed the countryside to have a particular culture and appeal. This divide has shaped the structure of this chapter which explores how whiteness remains normatively embedded in the nationalist discourse of countryside on the one hand, and how ‘white’ visitors are increasingly sensitive to the cultural and ethnic constituency of the English countryside on the other. As we shall see, both views were variously used to deny the relevance of race and ethnicity and the prevalence of racism in the countryside, as mechanisms of race evasion.

²⁶ Father of a Gibside volunteer and proud Trust member, 55-64 (83)

		Agree (%)	No opinion (%)	Disagree (%)
		Universalism		Particularism
Countryside culture and appeal	The countryside appeals to all cultures, to everyone equally	45	13	42
	The English countryside is multicultural	41	18	41
Relevance of race, ethnicity and racism	Race and ethnicity matter in the English countryside	17	22	61
	Racism is a problem in the English countryside	16	28	56

Table 7.1: Universalism and particularism as mechanisms of race evasion

7.4.2 'The countryside caters for everyone':²⁷ the universalist discourse of countryside appeal and use

Almost exactly half of people surveyed concurred with the view that 'the countryside appeals to all cultures, to everyone equally' and believed that 'the English countryside is multicultural' (see Table 7.1 above and Figure 7.13). By stressing that '[T]he English countryside [is] open to everyone',²⁸ 'accessible to all cultures'²⁹ and is there 'for everybody to enjoy',³⁰ these visitors subscribed to a universalistic discourse of countryside appeal and use. Some supported their view by noting that the countryside is more popular now than it ever used to be, that where '[I]t used to be old people who would visit and children who got dragged along',³¹ now '9 out of 10 people enjoy the countryside'.³² Respondents not only regarded the countryside to transcend age and generational boundaries, but to have an almost unanimous, unequivocal appeal. Even among this cluster of visitors who upheld a universalist understanding of the countryside, their common belief was based on two different viewpoints; on the culture-laden and cultureless character of the countryside.

²⁷ Nurse on a day trip to Derwentwater from Sunderland, non-member, 45-54 (357)

²⁸ Trust member on visit to Gibside from Newcastle (179)

²⁹ Man out for the day at Gibside as part of a cross country walking event, recent member (98)

³⁰ Annual visitor to Keswick for the Christian Convention, 55-64, non-member (267)

³¹ Monthly visitor to Gibside, member, brought up in a Trust property before its ownership, 35-44 (118)

³² New member and first time visitor to Gibside (72)

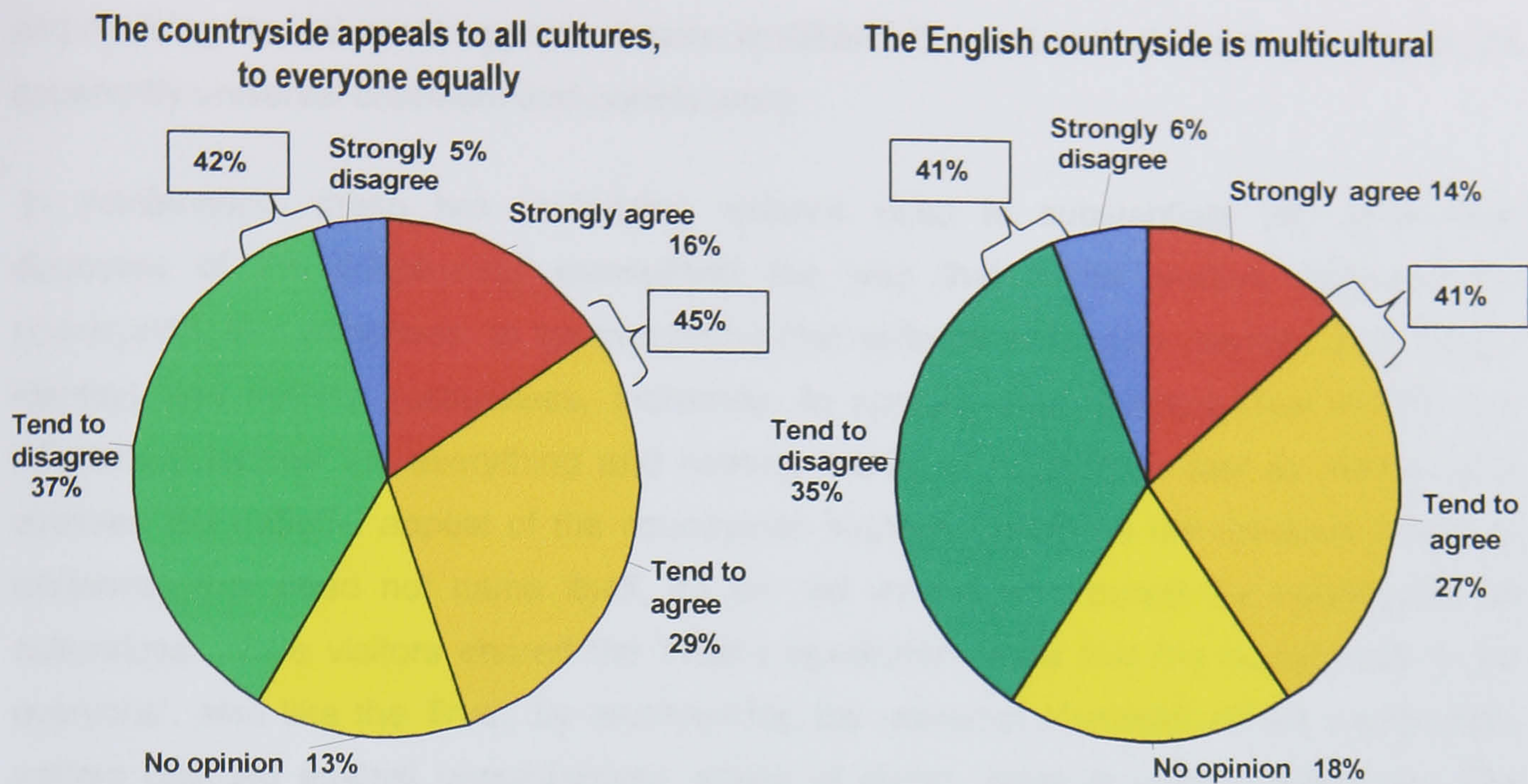


Figure 7.13: The perceived appeal and cultural character of the English countryside

Most commonly, respondents seized on the Englishness of the countryside to explain its national, universal appeal. As an extension of the belief that the countryside is an important part of English national identity, visitors assumed that it appeals to the nation in its widest sense, to all cultures. As a Cumbrian man on a cycling trip to Derwentwater put it, being interested in the countryside is part of 'being English – it's a natural sort of thing, or should be'.³³ The popular perception that interest in the countryside is innate, inbred or 'natural', that it is part, not only of what it is to be English, but also of what it is to be human, has served to naturalise and universalise 'white' visitors' interests to the point of being coincident with national interests and even with the interests of all people. Thus, we see how white people assume the power to 'set standards of humanity by which they are bound to succeed and others bound to fail' (Dyer 1997: 9).

A smaller number of visitors justified their belief that the countryside is potentially available to everyone not on the basis that it is a part of national, English culture, but quite the opposite, because it is cultureless and has no specific appeal. One visitor encapsulated this view by claiming that the countryside appeals to all cultures because it is unmarked and 'hasn't got a culture really'.³⁴ As the countryside is culturally unmarked and unspecific, visitors argued, 'culture is irrelevant in the countryside'.³⁵ By denying that the countryside has a culture, and

³³ Cumbrian man, 55- 64 (342)

³⁴ Middle aged woman and member of the Trust for over 10 years (184)

³⁵ 18-24 year old on holiday to the Lakes, first time visitor to Derwentwater and non-member (362)

emphasising its universal appeal, visitors mobilised the national discourse to explain its apparently universal character and constituency.

In combination, these two underlying reasons used to substantiate the universalist discourse of the countryside exemplified the way that 'white' visitors regarded the countryside, like whiteness, to be everything (the epitome of English heritage and cultural identity) and nothing (cultureless, indistinct), to possess what Richard Dyer (1997) has infamously termed the everything and nothing quality of whiteness. Just as visitors who stressed the national appeal of the countryside implicitly sustained the universal power of whiteness that need not name itself, so too did visitors who coded the countryside as cultureless. While visitors shared the Trust's egalitarian ethos that the countryside is 'for everyone', also like the Trust, by emphasising the universal character of the countryside, visitors guarded against uncomfortable issues of ethnic, class or cultural difference. The universalistic discourse of the countryside, to which half of surveyed visitor's subscribed, is evidently fraught with contradiction.

Although not all visitors who considered the countryside to appeal to everyone and to be multicultural dismissed the importance of race and racism in the countryside, some visitors mobilised the universal and multicultural character of the countryside to refute the relevance of race and prevalence of racism in rural England. Visitors comments that '[E]veryone can go if they want to',³⁶ '[I]t's up to people whether they take it up or not'³⁷ are illustrative of the way that the universalist discourse of the countryside is based on the assumption that everyone who wants to access and enjoy the countryside can. As the last chapter argued, such a normatively racialised assumption defers responsibility and allocates blame on people who do not visit, thus denying real or perceived barriers to access and evading the very real issue of rural racism. A regular visitor to Gibside pithily encapsulated the way that some visitors evaded sensitive issues of race and racism by castigating 'others' as the problem: 'the countryside can't be designed any better to suit other cultures. The countryside is not the problem, but people'.³⁸ By making claims such as '[S]ometimes it's the opportunity that's missed',³⁹ some 'white' people even insinuated that the choice not to visit the countryside is symptomatic of the way that so called 'ethnic people' 'haven't integrated into the countryside'.⁴⁰ In this way, the universalistic discourse of the countryside slipped all too

³⁶ A retired member from Northumberland (85)

³⁷ Middle aged woman, regular visitor to the Lakes and long term Trust member (213)

³⁸ A local woman who regularly visits Gibside, 25-34, member (7)

³⁹ Attendee of the annual Christian Convention held in Keswick, non-member, 65-74 (266)

⁴⁰ Retired civil servant and Trust member, F (136)

readily into an assimilationist model based on racialised assumptions of appropriate countryside conduct. For example, as a member of the Trust on holiday to Keswick asserted:

'[We're] all here to enjoy it – as long as they don't start building mosques and burning bodies down the rivers like in Wetherby'.⁴¹

The way in which the discourse of universalism was often accompanied by an assimilationist discourse that provided a mechanism for the rehearsal of negative ethnic stereotypes highlights how rural racisms tended to be covertly cloaked in a façade of inclusiveness, egalitarianism and tolerance.

While we have seen how some visitors stressed the universal and multicultural nature of the countryside, another cluster of visitors equated whiteness with English national identity. Although both groups (comprising over half of visitors surveyed) – those who considered the countryside to be multicultural and those who regarded the countryside to be culturally specific – departed from different perspectives, they arrived at the same view that doubly denied the relevance of race and ethnicity (about 60% of visitors) and the prevalence of racism (over half of respondents, as shown in Figure 7.14) to reinforce the unmarked and unnamed nature of whiteness in the English countryside.

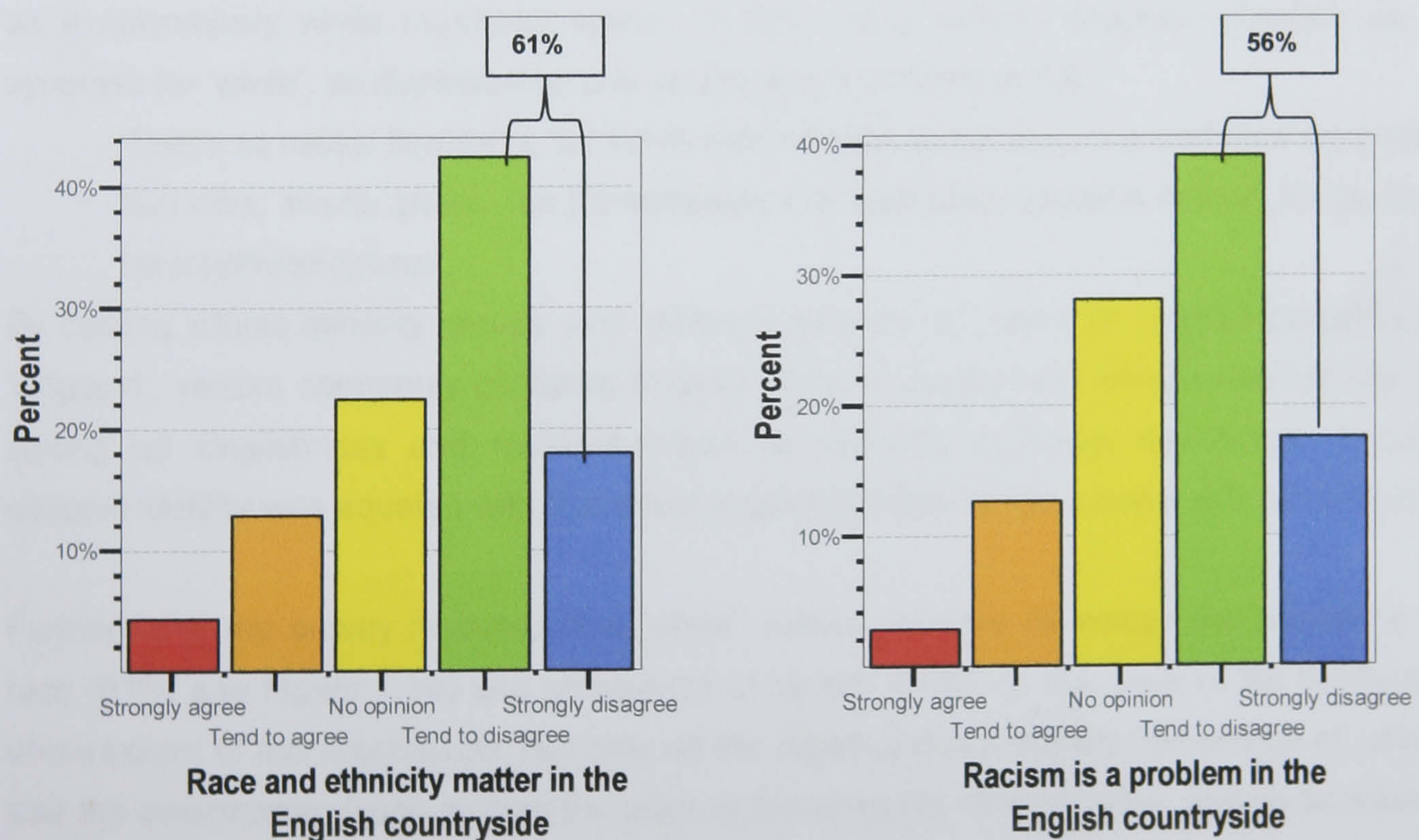


Figure 7.14: The denial of the relevance of race and ethnicity (left) and the presence and prevalence of racism in the English countryside (right)

⁴¹ Retired ambulance service employee and member of the Trust on holiday to Keswick, M (316)

7.4.3 '[I]t's very English. Ethnicity stay in their own enclaves':⁴² the nationalist discourse of whiteness

While many visitors seized on the Englishness of the countryside to support their view that the countryside has a universal, multicultural appeal, others mobilised a nationalist discourse of the countryside to emphasise its cultural particularity and deny its multicultural potential. As shown in Table 7.1 and Figure 7.13, half of visitors surveyed disagreed with the view that the countryside appeals to everyone equally (42%) and is multicultural (41%), instead considering the countryside to have a specifically English culture and character. Whereas some visitors mobilised Englishness as an inclusive, all-embracing category, the above quote exemplifies how others implicitly equated Englishness with white culture. By teaming assertions of Englishness with affirmations of the absence of so called 'ethnicity' in the countryside, visitors articulated the typically unspoken association between countryside, whiteness and English national identity, thus lending ideological force to the myth of rural whiteness. The way in which visitors conjured up the popular perception that 'you don't often see people from ethnic minority groups',⁴³ that 'you don't get a lot of ethnic people to do with the countryside'⁴⁴ to justify the uniquely English appeal of the countryside was a stark indicator of how the countryside was imagined not only in deeply nationalist terms, but also as a normatively white racialised space. In fact, many visitors deployed 'English' as a synonym for 'white', as illustrated by one young man's insistence that:⁴⁵

'There's no cultural boundaries, but there's mainly English people here...you don't often see people from ethnic minority groups. This [Derwentwater] is something that represents England, like Big Ben, but not different cultures'.

By casting 'ethnic minority groups' and 'different cultures' as 'other' to 'English people' and 'England', visitors commonly conflated English national identity with white racial identity. In setting up Englishness and multiculturalism as mutually exclusive discourses, English national identity was equated with that which multiculturalism is not, namely with whiteness.

Furthermore, the survey revealed how 'white' visitors not only dismissed the relevance of race (61%, see Figure 7.14) and prevalence of racism (56%) on the basis of the perceived universalism of the countryside, but also on the premise that relatively few people of colour visit the countryside. Such visitors focused on the absence of 'non-white' people to explain

⁴² Retired woman and member of the Trust visiting the Lake District from South Yorkshire (211)

⁴³ First time visitor to the Lakes, non-member, 25-34 (222)

⁴⁴ Monthly visitor to the Lakes and Chairman of a regional board of the Ramblers Association (351)

⁴⁵ Young, rural-dwelling man from Dorset, first time visitor to Derwentwater (222)

the majority view that racism 'is not a problem in the countryside, but in cities',⁴⁶ that 'in the countryside the colour of your skin doesn't seem to matter as much'.⁴⁷ By making such comments, visitors rehearsed the particularly English chain of association between race, ethnicity, racism and urban areas, empirically substantiating the argument that 'ethnicity is rarely an issue associated with the countryside' in the 'white' English imagination (Agyeman and Spooner 1997: 197). One visitor to Gibside⁴⁸ exemplified the way that 'white' people continue to regard race, ethnicity and racism as out of place in the countryside:

'Ethnics are not in the countryside but more in the cities...they are more the minority than the majority.....[so] we haven't had to face it [racism] yet'.

Visitors repeatedly confined and containerised so called 'ethnics' in towns and cities, as an implicit mechanism of disavowing the importance of race and racism in the countryside. By arguing that '[B]ecause there's only 0.5% ethnic minority population...I don't think there's racism at all locally',⁴⁹ that 'racism doesn't affect the countryside because you don't get ethnic groups',⁵⁰ visitor's made direct connection between the presence of 'ethnic groups' and racism. Even visitors who used overtly racist terms themselves maintained that racism is not a problem in the countryside due to the absence of ethnic 'others'. For example, a woman on holiday in the Lake District substantiated her view that race and ethnicity do not matter in the English countryside on the grounds that 'you don't see Negroes...they're more in the cities'.⁵¹ By regarding racism as an almost direct consequence of people of colour intruding upon the countryside, there was a tendency among some to characterise racism as an 'ethnic', not a 'white' problem.

The joint projection of race and racism on to other places and people provided a mechanism for 'white' people to evade race and racism in themselves and their own places. According to Allan Pred's account of racisms in Sweden (2000: 81), such denial or downplaying of the presence and prevalence of racism is one of the core strategies for securing white dominance in place. In the English countryside, just as in Sweden, 'white' people locate racial incidents and conflicts in the urban sphere, in Pred's (2000: 96) words the 'just-yesterday central-city confrontation between skinhead and migrant-youth gangs has frequently enabled people to regard racism as typical of somewhere else, of some place other than their own, of some other community, urban center, or part of a metropolitan area other than their own.' Visitors to Trust properties who generally claimed to feel a strong

⁴⁶ Visitor to Keswick, non-member, 35-44 (367)

⁴⁷ Heritage enthusiast, Trust member and first time visitor to Gibside from Kent (148)

⁴⁸ Monthly visitor to Gibside, Trust member, 35-44, M (119)

⁴⁹ Local man on day trip to Derwentwater, rock climber, donor to the Trust (372)

⁵⁰ Retired professional woman, non-member (293)

⁵¹ First time visitor to the Lake District, middle aged woman (299)

sense of identification with the countryside (as already demonstrated) readily conflated racism with cities and by implication, distanced and divorced themselves from the very idea of racism. By exonerating themselves from racism, these visitors failed to confront their 'white privilege' (Pulido 2000) or 'painless privilege' (Pile 1994), thus reinforcing the evasive power of whiteness. Given that over half of respondents evaded and denied the relevance of race and prevalence of racism, the survey uncovered that a 'no racism here' mentality prevails among the majority of 'white' visitors to the countryside. By subscribing to a universalistic discourse of the countryside that fails to recognise racial difference, or equally to an evasive, nationalistic discourse that doubly denies the presence of different ethnic groups in the countryside and the prejudice in rural England, many respondents unwittingly upheld the normative power and privilege of whiteness.

As a consequence of many visitors' failure to recognise the relevance of race and racism in rural England, one of the most common forms of racism in the English countryside was evasive. However, the survey also unveiled more overt forms of racism among 'white' countryside visitors. For instance, some visitors drew attention to the apparent absence of 'ethnic people'⁵² not only to deny the multicultural potential of the countryside, but also as an excuse to question 'non-white' people's commitment as citizens. To give but a few examples, a retired farmer from Oxford⁵³ asserted:

'There's not many people from Asia here – in country houses or on walks. They don't really walk... They're not interested in our history'.

The stark separation between 'us' and 'them' casts Asian people outside of 'our', manifestly 'white' English history, signalling the impossibility of non-white people being popularly accepted as English, despite the veneer of tolerance noted earlier. Similarly a middle-aged man from Liverpool asserted that '[Y]ou don't really see many Asian people in the countryside' because 'they have a different attitude to travel, a different way of being brought up'. By emphasising cultural differences, claiming that 'they' don't fit in to rural society, 'white' people continued to deny people of colour any distinct cultural identity in rural England. Thus, we can see how, rather than confront dominant conceptions of the countryside, visitors placed the onus on ethnic minority people to comply with tacit cultural codes and cultural practices of the countryside. By rehearsing an assimilationist discourse, this time from a basis of difference rather than sameness, 'white' visitors perpetuated a monocultural, white and ultimately exclusive narrative of the English countryside, laying bare the enduring force of cultural racism among 'white' visitors. While this section has so far

⁵² Local resident and volunteer Chapel Steward at Gibside, over 75 (120)

⁵³ Retired farmer, member of Trust and walking groups, 65- 74 (165)

aimed to illustrate that whiteness enduringly functions as a normative discourse among 'white' people who do not see their own whiteness, and that the countryside remains implicitly white racialised, the survey also revealed how whiteness has been institutionally embedded within the National Trust – the key focus through which this thesis has sought to tease out the racialised character of the English countryside myth.

7.4.4 'I don't think about it, it's just here':⁵⁴ the normative status of the National Trust

Like the countryside it preserves, the National Trust was overwhelmingly regarded to be an important part of English national identity by 95% of visitors. Even non-members interviewed at Gibside and the Lake District (52% of respondents) stressed the inseparability of the National Trust and Englishness and positioned the Trust as a stable, taken-for-granted guardian of England. One non-member summarised this popular view that '[W]ithout the National Trust there would be no English identity to visit',⁵⁵ as did an elderly Trust member who described it as 'quintessentially English'.⁵⁶ As the quote above from a regular visitor to Derwentwater testifies, a number of people claimed not to think about the Trust, precisely because it is 'just part of the nation'.⁵⁷ A man who was brought up in the Trust property of Wallington Hall argued that the Trust is inextricably linked with the nation:

'represent old Britishness...they can't represent anything else. They give an accurate representation of history and are not forging a multicultural past.'⁵⁸

The idea expressed here that the representation of multicultural history would have to be forged or faked, reveals the common sense view that English heritage and identity is inherently racialised as white. By mobilising Englishness to deny the multicultural character of the organisation in statements such as the National Trust is 'an English thing...it doesn't do enough to present a multicultural society',⁵⁹ visitors unwittingly reiterated the slippage between the meanings of Englishness and whiteness. Thus, in stressing the specifically national character of the National Trust, visitors inadvertently sustained the normative status of whiteness embedded within the organisation.

Moreover, the fact that so many as 82% of respondents (including members and non-members) considered the Trust to hold personal relevance to them, indicates how the organisation was mobilised as a marker of belonging to the countryside and the nation. So

⁵⁴ Walker, country lover and regular visitor to Derwentwater, non-member, 55-64 (329)

⁵⁵ First time visitor to Derwentwater, non-member, 18-24 (262)

⁵⁶ Regular visitor to Gibside, local resident and Trust member 55- 64, M (83)

⁵⁷ Regular visitor to Derwentwater, country-lover, non-member, 55-64, F (329)

⁵⁸ Monthly visitor to Gibside, Trust member, 35-44, M (119)

⁵⁹ Visitor to the Lakes from Bournemouth, non-member, 35-44 (294)

allied was the *National Trust* with senses of national and personal belonging that even the faintest suggestion of criticism of the organisation was construed as an assault on English heritage. Just as visitors' sense of attachment to the countryside has already been shown to be bound up with anxieties about preserving the status quo, so too was visitors' affection for the Trust inseparable from a sense of defensiveness about the organisation and the version of the nation it preserves. As visitors, and particularly members, had an emotional and financial stake in the organisation, many jumped to the Trust's defence, affirming that 'the National Trust is the National Trust',⁶⁰ '[Y]ou like it or not,⁶¹ 'it does what you expect it to do'.⁶² Thus, the percentage of visitors who considered the Trust to be multicultural and represent the diversity of England far outweighed those who displayed a readiness to criticise the organisation (see Figure 7.15). Although visitors expressed a strong degree of uncertainty about whether the Trust is a multicultural organisation or not, some were inclined to give it the benefit of the doubt, as encapsulated by one woman's sentiment: 'I don't know if they safeguard mosques, but I'd like to think so'.⁶³ By echoing 'Trust talk'⁶⁴ and claiming that the organisation 'provides a welcome to everyone',⁶⁵ approximately half of visitors surveyed subscribed to a universalist discourse of the Trust that generally masked the issue of race and regarded racism not to be a problem pertaining to the Trust.

The National Trust is a multicultural organisation that represents the diversity of England

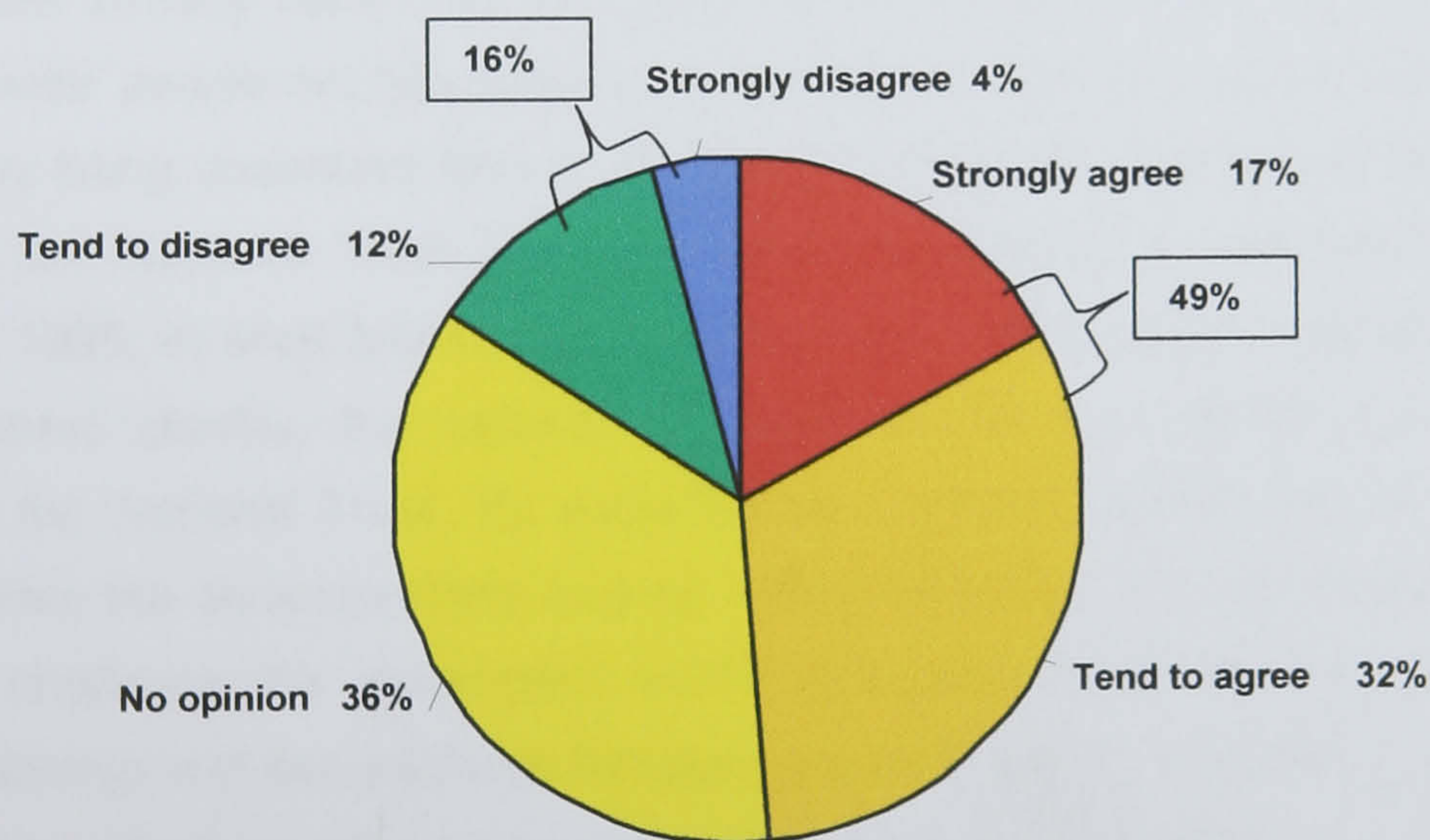


Figure 7.15: Multicultural Trust?

⁶⁰ Holidaymaker from Southampton, non-member, 25-34 (226)

⁶¹ Retired female ambulance service employee and Trust member (316)

⁶² Woman visiting the Lakes from Sunderland, non-members (257)

⁶³ Retired secretary on holiday to Lakes from Leicestershire, non-member, F (352)

⁶⁴ The name given here to refer to the Trust's public or marketing rhetoric that fills its Annual Report and the NT Magazine

⁶⁵ Local woman who uses Gibside for regular, almost daily exercise, Trust member (51)

A corollary of this normative, taken for granted status of the Trust was that many visitors, including members, were often uncertain about the National Trust's aims and activities. A number of visitors claimed that they '[D]on't know a lot about the National Trust', to have 'never thought about it'⁶⁶ and made comments such as 'It's not easy to find out about if you're not a member'.⁶⁷ The naturalised status of the *National* Trust would also seem to be mixed up with a sense of mystique and secrecy about what one visitor called the 'faceless'⁶⁸ organisation that often prompted feelings of alienation. The lack of public knowledge about the supposedly *National* Trust prompted one member⁶⁹ to curiously compare the organisation to the Klu Klux Klan, the British National Party (BNP) and MI5 for their secrecy and stealth. Such comparatives highlighted not only the uncertainties surrounding the Trust, evidenced by the marked percentage of visitors (36%) who claimed to have 'no opinion' about the culture of the Trust (see Figure 7.15), but also gestured towards the racialised characterisation of the organisation. While the survey unveiled the enduring normative power of whiteness among 'white' visitors', in the countryside and within the institution of the National Trust, it also exposed the coexistent tendency towards 'white reflexivity', to which the next section now turns.

7.5 White reflexivity: ambiguous, paradoxical discourses of whiteness

While we have already seen that whiteness continues to function as an invisible norm, equally, as 'white' people are becoming more sensitive to their own ethnic identity, whiteness is increasingly being decentred from a position of normativity. Just as the previous chapter argued that the National Trust has been characterised by a 'reflexive shift' since its centenary in 1995, in what follows, we shall see how 'white' people reflexively recognised their own ethnic identity, the cultural specificity of the countryside and the particular character of the National Trust. By exploring the complex positionings and perspectives embraced within the discourse here termed 'white reflexivity', the remainder of the chapter attempts to challenge the assumption which dominates much of the critical whiteness studies scholarship and geographical literature on ethnicity and exclusion, that whiteness is unmarked as an ethnic signifier, particularly in the English countryside.

⁶⁶ First time visitor to the Lakes from Sunderland, non-member (256)

⁶⁷ Local resident meeting his friend by the Lake, non-member, 18- 25 (273)

⁶⁸ Engineer from London on holiday to the Lakes, non-member, 25- 34, F(385)

⁶⁹ Recent visitor to Gibside from local area, 55- 64 (58)

7.5.1 '[A]t the end of the day, we do have an ethnic identity':⁷⁰ the growth of 'white' awareness

Although 'white' people have historically tended not to have to engage in the complex and troublesome process of self-categorisation to which non-whites have enduringly been subjected (Bonnett 1993; Martin, Krizek et al. 1999; Model 1999), when confronted with such a process of ethnic self-identification, many visitors did reflexively recognised their own whiteness, as signalled by the above quote. Rather than whiteness functioning solely as an unmarked discourse, visitors also expressed a willingness to question the taken for granted elements of identity, captured by a visitor to Gibside who admitted 'I haven't given this much thought really, but maybe it opens your mind, questions like this'.⁷¹ Another respondent, a Trust volunteer and active member of the Friends of Gibside, indicated the receptivity and readiness of some visitors to question the normatively racialised character of the countryside by posing the question: '[I]f you think about the countryside do you think about Asians and Black people?'

In fact, the survey showed that the majority of visitors to both sites described themselves as 'white' in some form or other, revealing that 'white' people are not oblivious to their own racialised identity. Despite the apparently disparate discourses of whiteness and ethnicity in England, 'white' was the single most common referent used by visitors to describe their ethnicity (33% of respondents, see Figure 7.3). The process of ethnic self-identification among visitors demonstrated that many 'white' people do acknowledge their whiteness, however bound up that sense of whiteness may be – and manifestly is for the interviewees – with conceptions of national identity (evidenced by the fact that 46% of respondents used various national descriptors to identify their ethnic identity, see Figure 7.3). By reflexively recognising whiteness and Englishness as ethnic categories like any other – a recognition that some scholars have suggested is crucial to the project of destabilising dominant, deracialised discourses of English national identity (Hall, C. 1992; Kundnani 2000) – 'white' visitors demonstrated a sense of what Judy Katz (1978) has termed 'white awareness'. Thus, by highlighting that 'white' people are indeed conscious of an ethnicity whose very racialised inflection affords them the power and privilege to decide when and when not to think about their ethnic identity, the survey challenges one of the core assumptions of whiteness studies – the idea that 'white people do not see themselves as white' (Katz 1978: 13).

⁷⁰ Regular visitor to Gibside, keen walker and recently-joined member of the Trust, 55-64 (13)

⁷¹ Woman collecting wedding certificate at Gibside, 35-44, non-member (169)

Those who did recognise themselves as white did so on the basis of the paradoxical perception that minority ethnic groups are increasingly absent or present in the countryside. While some visitors recognised their own whiteness in the face of a lack of ethnic diversity in the countryside, other 'white' visitors asserted their own whiteness due to the heightened perception that visible minorities are 'very evident'⁷² in the countryside. Either way, 'white' visitors' reflexive recognition of their own whiteness was fuelled by a sense of anxiety; be it an uneasiness about the cultural particularity and ethnic exclusiveness of the countryside, or more commonly, a desire to preserve the countryside as 'an Englishmen's pursuit',⁷³ to guard against perceived threats to English national identity. As the chapter will go on to argue, although the survey exposed white visitors' awareness of their own ethnicity, the cultural and ethnic particularity of the countryside, and the specific character of the National Trust, such a reflexivity embraced a diverse range of white positionings.

7.5.2 'There's lots of...cultures that it doesn't appeal to'⁷⁴: the culturally specific nature of the English countryside and the National Trust

Although the chapter has already demonstrated that half of visitors surveyed considered the countryside to have a universal, national appeal, the other half were sensitive to the cultural particularity of the English countryside. Respondents' perceptions of traditional countryside goers exemplify the way that, despite claims to the contrary, the majority do believe the countryside holds greater appeal to some people than others, as illustrated in Figure 7.17. According to a cluster of visitors, some people 'don't enjoy it',⁷⁵ some 'prefer to be in cities',⁷⁶ and 'some people are terrified of the countryside',⁷⁷ if not 'totally alienated by it'.⁷⁸ Thus, not all visitors assumed that everyone wants to visit the countryside. However, by seizing on cultural differences, claiming that '[D]ifferent cultures don't appreciate the countryside',⁷⁹ some visitors also deferred responsibility and assigned blame onto non-visitors rather than recognising that people may face real or perceived barriers to accessing the countryside. The fact that only a minority (19%, see Figure 7.16) believed the countryside to appeal to everyone, to a cross section of the population, indicates that the majority of visitors' did recognise the particular appeal of the countryside, according (in order) to age, visiting 'unit'

⁷² Country pursuits enthusiast from Northumberland, non-member, 45-54, M (360)

⁷³ Recently retired teacher and regular visitor to Gibside from the neighbouring village of Rowlands Gill, F (146)

⁷⁴ Local resident, non-member, 45-54, M (132)

⁷⁵ Retired ambulance service employee on holiday to the Lakes from West Yorkshire (317)

⁷⁶ Retired woman on holiday to the North East, non-member (136)

⁷⁷ National Trust volunteer and long-term member, over 75 (167)

⁷⁸ Trust member visiting while on holiday in the area, over 75 (172)

⁷⁹ 90 yr old woman from Scotland, returning to her childhood home at Gibside, long-term Trust member (91)

(families, couples), class, residence, mobility, ethnicity and gender. Although the chart below indicates that countryside visitors were perceived less in terms of ethnicity than age, class or residential status, the survey did reveal an increased sensitivity to the racialised nature of the English countryside.

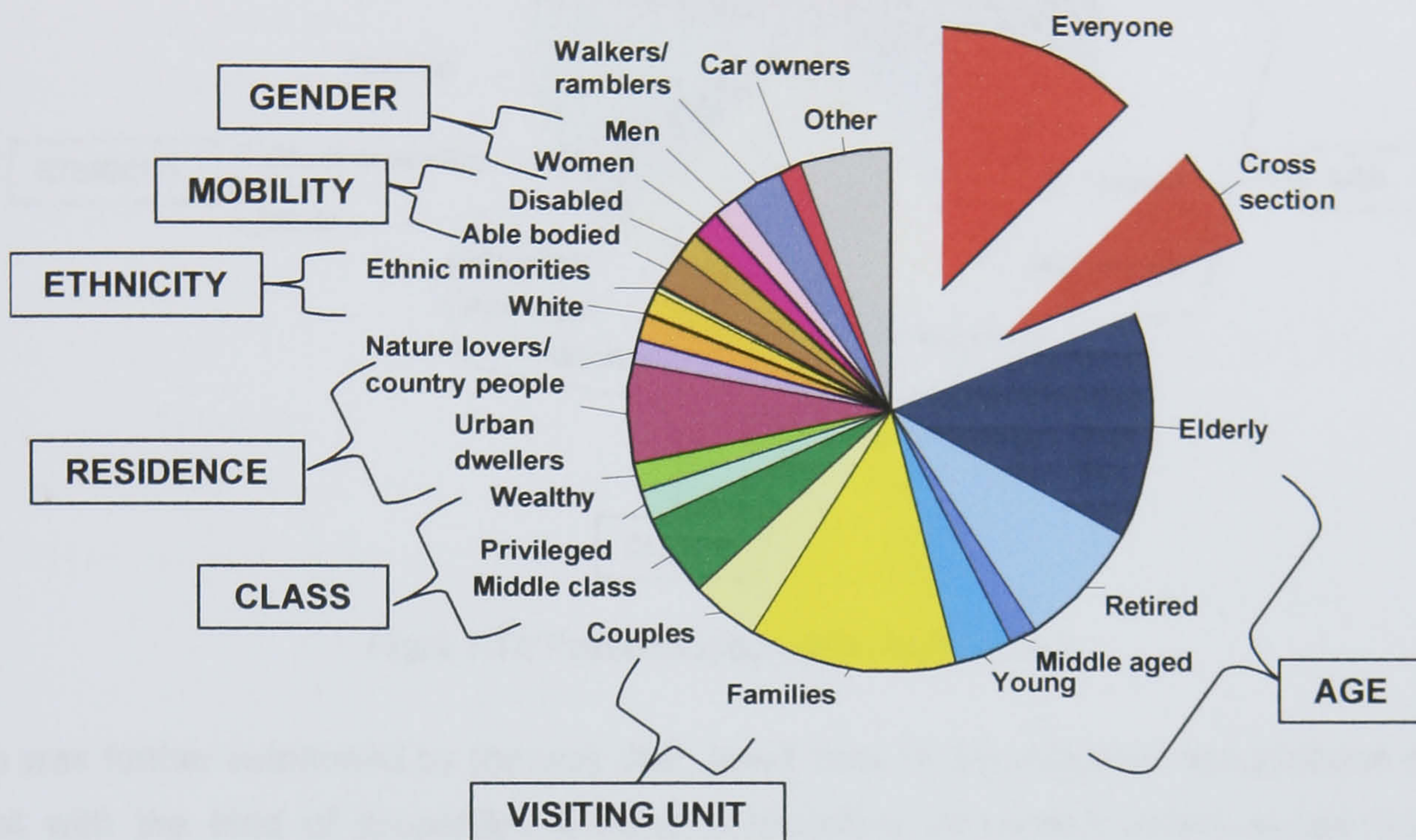


Figure 7.16: Visitors' perception of a traditional countryside visitor

Similarly, like the countryside it preserves, the National Trust was in the main considered to hold a particular image and appeal, one that is tightly bound up with a classed and raced national imaginary. Although the chapter has already illustrated the centrality of the Trust in the national geographical imagination of Englishness, many 'white' visitors recognised the class-specificity and ethnic particularity of the Trust, as encapsulated by one visitor's assertion that 'the National Trust is quite middle class and white, I think'.⁸⁰ A large proportion of visitors considered the National Trust to have a culturally specific image and appeal, even those who initially agreed with the statement that 'the National Trust is a multicultural organisation and represents the diversity of England' (49%, see Figure 7.15). When visitors were asked to whom they think the National Trust holds appeal, only 10% thought that the Trust appeals to everyone equally, supported by a further 4% who believed it appeals to a cross section of the population (see Figure 7.17). Thus, the survey revealed that the majority of visitors regarded the National Trust to have a class-based, age-specific, cultural and ethnically particular image and appeal.

⁸⁰ Monthly visitor to Gibside from County Durham with family membership, 35-44 (93)

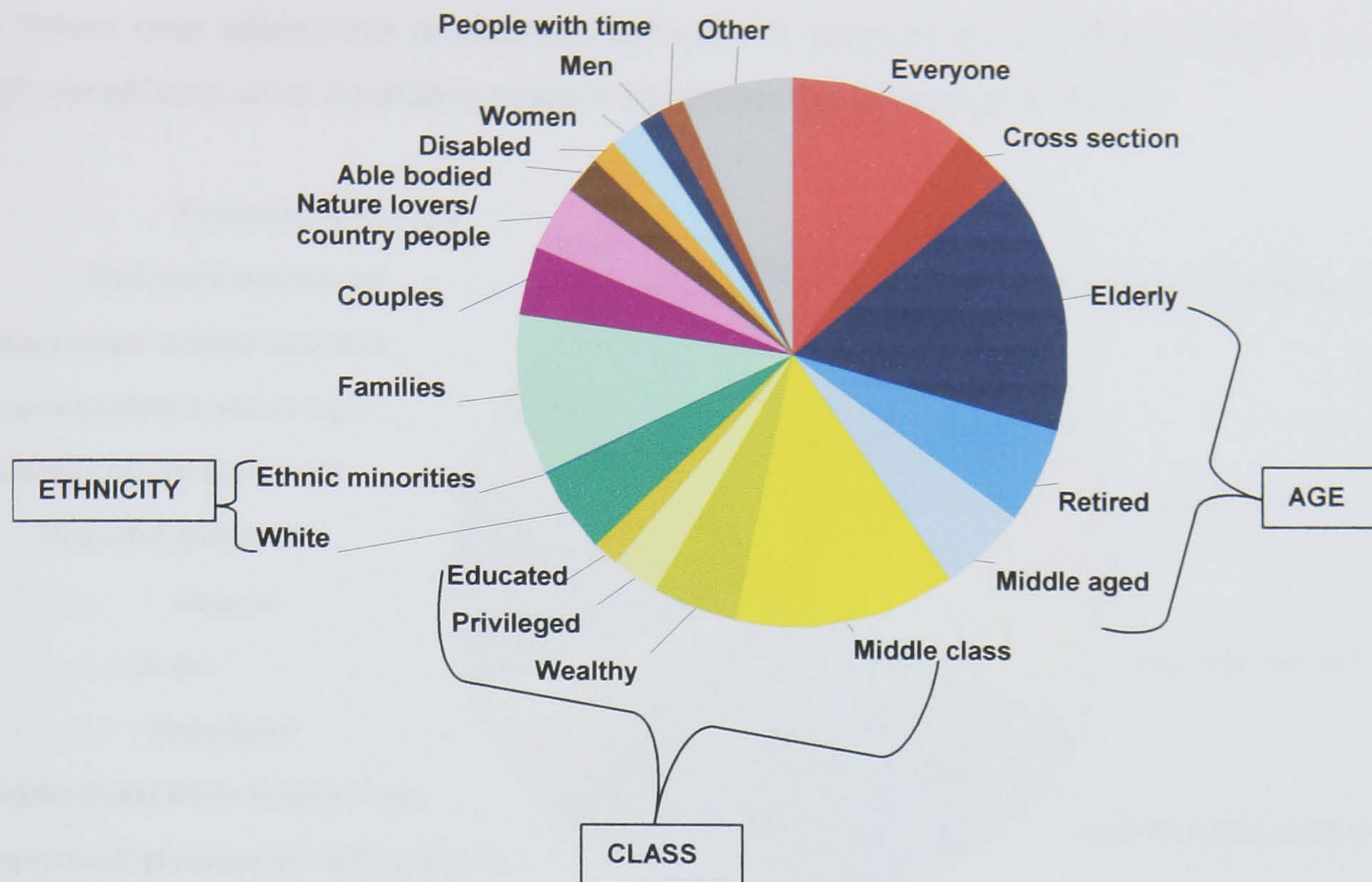


Figure 7.17: Perceived appeal of the National Trust

This was further evidenced by the way that, apart from all the assumed associations of the Trust with the kind of properties it owns – including (in ranked order) stately homes, countryside, gardens, buildings and coastline, and its generic focus on heritage and preservation – some visitors' prevalent images and impressions of the Trust were of its particular English, 'white middle class',⁸¹ 'middle aged...elitist'⁸² character (see Figure 7.18). Visitors' comments revealed that the elision of 'middle class' and 'white' seemed virtually irresistible. Numerous visitors invoked class-based images of the Trust, associating it with 'the green welly and four wheel drive brigade',⁸³ 'over 50's with tweed skirts',⁸⁴ 'nicely dressed middle class people',⁸⁵ 'ex generals'⁸⁶ and the 'upper crust',⁸⁷ to give but a few examples. In fact, the open recognition of the Trust's middle class composition arguably masks its white racialised character. However, some visitors, albeit a smaller number, also drew attention to the racialised composition of the Trust. As one long term member of the Trust observed: 'I've only seen white people in the National Trust, never seen non-white people in the National Trust'. Indeed, many visitors gave voice to the view that as the Trust

⁸¹ Young woman who works in the heritage sector on a visit to Gibside to finalise her wedding arrangements (94)

⁸² Environmental education and community worker accompanying a group with learning difficulties to Gibside (149)

⁸³ Ibid (94)

⁸⁴ Local member visiting Gibside on a Heritage Open Day, 35- 44 (130)

⁸⁵ Young woman on holiday to Keswick from Scotland, non-member (347)

⁸⁶ Local man on day trip walking at Gibside, member, 65- 74 (88)

⁸⁷ Retired man, regular holidaymaker in the Lakes and member of Lifelong Learning Rambling Club (278)

has 'taken over where the aristocracy left off',⁸⁸ it projects an 'English moneyed image',⁸⁹ which constitutes what countless visitors diagnosed as 'an image problem'.

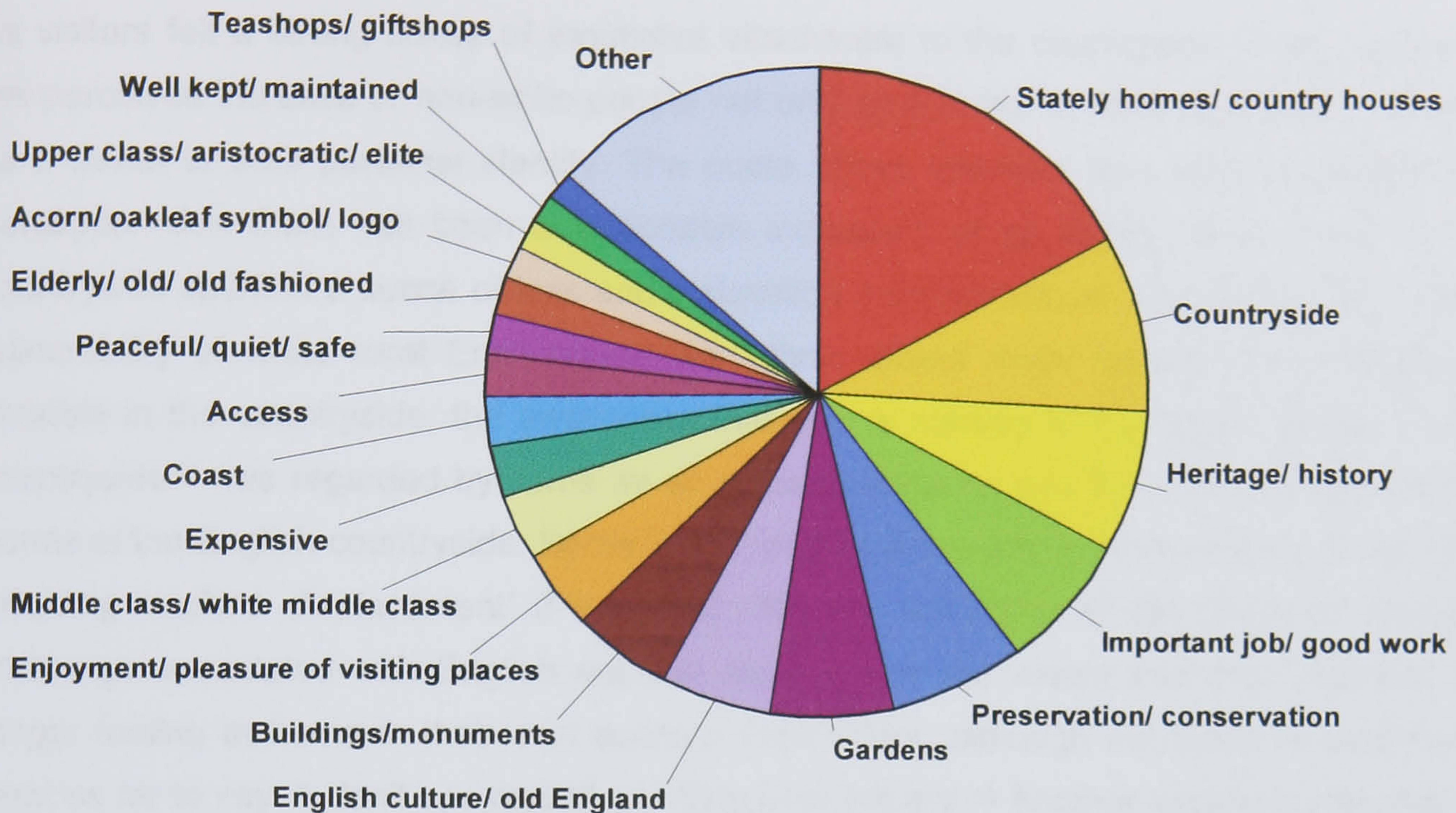


Figure 7.18: Images and impressions of the National Trust

While some considered the cultural and ethnic particularity of the countryside and the National Trust to be a 'white' problem, others construed the presence of 'non-white' people as the problem, as a threat white national identity. Thus, interviewees who reflexively recognised their own whiteness, the ethnic specificity of the countryside or the National Trust were broadly divided into two groups; those who considered the whiteness of the countryside to be a problem, a mark of inequality, and those who regarded the presence of 'others' to be the problem, an affront to the (white) English countryside. Opinions were generally split between those willing to question dominant narratives of white rural Englishness and those anxious to defend those very same narratives. In both cases, attitudes to the National Trust illustrated visitors multiple white positionings and perspectives. Thus, as we shall see, even 'white' visitors' reflexivity was differentially motivated and shot through by ambiguous, paradoxical perspectives.

⁸⁸ Member from Newcastle visiting Gibside as part of the Heritage Open Day, 35-44 (130)

⁸⁹ Translator, first time visitor to Derwentwater, 35-44, F (337)

7.5.3 'We're losing our identity when people from other races come in':⁹⁰ anxious white Englishness

As visitors felt a strong sense of emotional attachment to the countryside, many regarded the perceived increase of non-white people not only as a threat to the countryside, but also as a threat to their personal identity. The quote above indicates how visitors' heightened perception that there has been a 'noticeable increase'⁹¹ of so called 'other races' in the countryside sparked a sense of loss and dislocation from the nation that convey the hidden vulnerability of white rural Englishness. As 'ethnic others' have typically been rendered invisible in the countryside, the awareness that 'you're starting to find Asian people in the countryside'⁹² was regarded by some as an unusual intrusion into the conventional cultural norms of the English countryside. Some 'white' visitors articulated a strong sense of 'anxiety-arousing in-place displacement' (Pred 2000: 30) – a disruption of the taken for granted meanings associated with English national identity – to the extent that they reported no longer feeling at home in their own country. One visitor, although not alone in sentiment, went as far to say 'I don't see myself as fitting in anywhere'.⁹³ Another long-term member of the Trust captured the sense that 'Englishness is framed by... a sense of loss' (Byrne, 2002: 9) by remarking that '[A] lot of things that were English have gone. Tradition has gone. English tradition has been swept away',⁹⁴ supported by others who contended that 'we're losing so much of what is English'.⁹⁵ Thus, far from functioning as a singularly powerful discourse, contemporary white Englishness is, for some, experienced as dislocation and alienation from the nation.

This strong feeling of displacement, dislocation and disillusionment was articulated by an elderly man who said 'I feel as though we're being domineered and don't fit into society'.⁹⁶ Another man on a day trip to Derwentwater expounded the view that other nationalities are 'more English' than white English people who tend to evade rather than embrace Englishness, to feel ashamed rather than proud:

'In school, they don't teach English history...The Japanese and Americans are more English than we are...they appreciate it most...they bring a lot of money in and are very respectful of all things English...We're not proud to be English...The English are not encouraged to be English anymore.'

⁹⁰ A retired ambulance driver on a day trip to Derwentwater, Trust donor (350)

⁹¹ Volunteer chapel steward at Gibside for over 2 years, 65-74 (116)

⁹² Local resident, monthly visitor to Gibside and Trust member, 35-44, F(118)

⁹³ Part-time engineer and first time visitor to the Lake District, M (280)

⁹⁴ Long-term Trust member, occasional visitor to Gibside, M (151)

⁹⁵ Ibid (350) and his wife, non-member, 55-64 (349)

⁹⁶ A retired man, member of Lifelong Learning Rambling Club (278)

While continuing to function, then, as a dominant, hegemonic discourse of nation – one that draws much discursive strength from a narrative of ‘countryside’, whiteness is equally lived as an insecure and uneasy condition.

These vulnerabilities of lived whiteness – the belief that ‘The ethnic thing is coming in to too much these days’⁹⁷ – were often expressed as hostility to those seen as threatening an idealised, rural image of England. In the words of one visitor to Gibside and member of the National Trust for Scotland: ‘I strongly disagree with the influx...the new influx has got to stop...In 100 years there will be more ethnic people than English...But it’s only the illegals I’m very much against’. The fear of being in the minority, losing the uniquely English character of the countryside led another man to assert: ‘I don’t want foreign interference in the countryside...[We’ve] got to keep it British/ English. As long as they don’t alter it’.⁹⁸ The comments of a semi-retired Cornish farmer and his wife⁹⁹ further exemplified the paradoxically powerful and precarious discourse of white rural Englishness:

(Man) ‘Pakistanis and stuff don’t care...They’re coming into our little market town. In the last year things have changed. We would never see any coloureds at all-only the people from the Chinese restaurant- now we see all sorts. It’s coloured people, I don’t know where they come from. We don’t want them to come, especially Asylum seekers...They should stay in their own countries...Why do Indian women come in with their spots on their heads? If they want to do that kind of thing they should stay in their own countries, not come here’...

(Woman) ...‘When in Rome, do as the Romans do...Our way of life is going’...

(Man) ...‘We don’t want coloureds to come in. They shouldn’t have come in in the first place but we can’t do anything about that. We can’t do anything about anything. Can’t stop them coming in’.

The sense of Englishness lost and the growing feeling of exasperation that ‘white’ people are only one of a whole range of groups that make up England, has unleashed an assortment of English racisms. In the apparently ‘white spaces’ of English countryside, interviews with visitors provided evidence that racist attitudes and multiple racisms are flourishing, alongside some tentative anti-racist sentiments, as we shall go on to see in section 7.5.5. This sense of uprooted, uncertain white Englishness became particularly apparent in visitors’ attitudes to the National Trust, the institution that has been the key focus through which this thesis has sought to tease out the racialised character of the English countryside myth.

⁹⁷ Retired local man on day trip to Gibside (35)

⁹⁸ A middle-aged man visiting Gibside with his family, member of the National Trust for Scotland (90)

⁹⁹ Semi-retired farmer and his wife on holiday to the Lakes from Cornwall (344 Male, 343 Female)

7.5.4 'You get the impression that the National Trust want your money but they don't want you':¹⁰⁰ Losing Trust

While the visitors surveyed clearly considered the National Trust to be an important part of national and personal identity, some members and non-members articulated a sense of detachment and distance from the organisation. On one hand, as the quote above highlights, many visitors felt alienated from the elite, upper-middle class image of the Trust and renounce its exclusivity, yet on the other hand, a smaller cohort of visitors articulated a growing sense of exclusion from the Trust because of its attempts to widen its appeal and reach out to new audiences. In this sense, attitudes to the National Trust condense a much wider story implicit in this thesis of the contingencies and fragilities of racialised Englishness.

This survey revealed that certain 'white' people, even members of the Trust, believed the Trust to be remote and felt a sense of alienation from an organisation that has been iconically identified with the nation. A few visitors believed that the National Trust is more concerned about generating money than providing benefit to its members and the nation more broadly, as signalled by the quote in the subhead. Many visitors drew connection between the Trust's pricing policy and its middle class appeal, arguing that the Trust 'should be made more available as it's a bit expensive for a normal working family. They argue that high prices effectively say "working class keep out"¹⁰¹ and implicitly serve to police who can visit its pay-on-entry properties like Gibside. Even in spite of the sense of resistance and reluctance to questioning the Trust described earlier (see section 7.4.4), many visitors, including members, expressed their increased sense of alienation from an organisation that professes to be 'National', and yet remains remote from many sections of English society. One man¹⁰² encapsulated the alienation felt by many, explaining that as the 'elite group of people who are involved in it... still have a them and us attitude... I don't see myself as fitting in anywhere'.

Another, albeit smaller grouping of visitors, typically Trust members that form part of its traditional support base (approximately 10% of people surveyed), felt increasingly ostracised and excluded from the organisation for a different reason – due to its recent attempts to reach out to new audiences. These visitors, who valued the Trust not in spite of, but precisely because of its exclusive appeal, apparently felt threatened by the Trust's official

¹⁰⁰ Part-time engineer and first time visitor to Derwentwater (280)

¹⁰¹ Local man on day trip walking at Gibside, member, 65- 74 (88)

¹⁰² Ibid (280)

stance on 'broadening its appeal' (The National Trust, 2001a) and alienated from its recent efforts to 'strive to promote inclusivity rather than exclusivity' (The National Trust 1995d). In contrast to the majority of visitors who shared a desire for a more plural rural England and an inclusive countryside, some people expressed an anxious desire to 'keep it exclusive',¹⁰³ to maintain its specific cultural character. For example, one visitor to Gibside explained that its particular clientele is an important part of why he and his wife visit the site on a regular basis:

'While it doesn't exclude people, it keeps people out- like vandals, youngsters, you know? It's only people who want to come here who visit. You know what I mean? That's why we drive 18 miles to get here'.¹⁰⁴

As already suggested, such apparently authoritative assertions of the desire to 'keep the riff raff out'¹⁰⁵ often shield a sense of insecurity, of white Englishness under threat. Thus, we see that cultural and class racisms were sometimes mutually reinforcing. Although the survey unveiled these contradictory and complex senses of alienation and dislocation from the nation, not all visitors reacted defensively to the perceived increase of 'ethnic minority' people in the countryside. Although some visitors were anxious to preserve the white, national culture of the countryside in the face of the perceived increase of 'non-white' visitors, the majority of people surveyed were equally anxious to see the countryside opened up to different audiences in order to achieve a truly inclusive appeal.

7.5.5 'It's a matter of finding out multicultural links in history to show how people had a part in it':¹⁰⁶ reflexive reimaginings of the countryside

The survey unveiled a critical consistency among visitors, albeit a smaller proportion, who were acutely aware of the cultural and ethnic particularity of the countryside and emphasised that more needs to be done to widen the appeal of the countryside. Many who regarded the countryside to be culturally specific expressed regret that the countryside is not truly inclusive, claiming pithily 'it's a pity it isn't'.¹⁰⁷ Although, as Pred (2000: 83) has argued, and as we have already seen, 'the very thought...of any variety of racism in their own midst...proves...extremely difficult to accept for the majority', a number of 'white' visitors did indeed acknowledge the omnipresence of racism across countryside and city space, emphasising that race and racism 'matter everywhere'.¹⁰⁸ One visitor recognised the prevalence of different forms of racism in the countryside, acknowledging that aside from the

¹⁰³ Man, 35-44, who visited Gibside as part of its Heritage Open Day (128)

¹⁰⁴ Ex Naval engineer, Trust member and heritage enthusiast with a passion for historical re-enactments (163)

¹⁰⁵ Recent visitor to Gibside from local area, 55- 64 (58)

¹⁰⁶ Member of the Trust from Newcastle, 35-44, F(103)

¹⁰⁷ Retired man on holiday in the Lakes from Leicestershire, non-member (353)

¹⁰⁸ First time visitor to Gibside, retired teacher from Hertfordshire, Trust member (177)

common understanding of 'racism' there is also '[A]n English racism set up with the hunting business...Racism doesn't just come with different colours, it depends how you define racism'.¹⁰⁹ One woman stressed that racism pertains equally to the countryside based on her personal observation that '[W]hen I went out with my ['non-white'] friend, everyone in Wensleydale stared at him'.¹¹⁰ Another couple¹¹¹ drew upon an article they had read in the newspaper about a local Asian family being refused service in a restaurant in Windermere to illustrate the presence and prevalence of rural racism. Visitors gave many different explanations as to why race and racism are important in the countryside. While some stressed the enduring material inequalities of people of colour in urban and rural England, others placed emphasis on people's 'distrust and nervousness',¹¹² and 'suspicion of outsiders'.¹¹³ Some visitors claimed that race and ethnicity matter because it is 'important to individuals...to be respected in England'¹¹⁴ or that they matter because 'it's nice to see a mixture of people'.¹¹⁵ In fact, a handful of visitors went as far to suggest that racism is an even 'worse problem in the countryside than in cities...[as] there are few black and Asian people in the countryside'.¹¹⁶ Rather than seizing on the absence of 'ethnic minorities' to deny the relevance of race and presence of racism in the countryside, some visitors expressed the view that race and racism are important in the countryside precisely because of the lack of ethnic diversity, encapsulated by a woman who claimed '[R]acism exists because rural people don't come into contact with people from ethnic minorities'.¹¹⁷ As we shall see, such comments were part of a wider recognition that more needs to be done to ensure the countryside is multicultural in practice as well as in principle.

As the quote in the subtitle indicates, a cluster of critically-minded, reflexive visitors sensitive to the representation of heritage and countryside targeted the need to reinterpret and reimagine the countryside as a multicultural not a monocultural space. A solicitor, spending the day reading and relaxing at Gibside¹¹⁸ postulated that although:

'There's no reason why it [the countryside] shouldn't be [multi-cultural]...there is still work to be done to convince people that it's relevant to them. We need to find ways of picking it out...People who came to work had an impact, but it is not recorded'.

¹⁰⁹ Local woman, 55-64, Trust member (181)

¹¹⁰ Retired woman on a visit to the Lakes from County Durham, non-member (209)

¹¹¹ Middle-aged couple, non-members from Liverpool (F-215, M- 216)

¹¹² National Trust member and volunteer, over 75 (168)

¹¹³ Trust member from Newcastle visiting as part of the Heritage Open Day, F (127)

¹¹⁴ Member of the Trust from Newcastle, 35-44, F (103)

¹¹⁵ Trust member on visit to Gibside from Newcastle (179)

¹¹⁶ Ibid (103)

¹¹⁷ Local resident and Trust member, 65-84, F (135)

¹¹⁸ Ibid(103)

In this way, some visitors – to be sure a minority – emphasised the importance of reimagining the countryside and making the multicultural links more explicit as a way of working towards a truly inclusive countryside. The fact that even one visitor's belief that the countryside is multicultural was founded on images they had seen on television of 'ethnic minorities doing gardening, growing crops'¹¹⁹ suggests the potential value of projecting multicultural images of the countryside. Many visitors reflexively recognised this potential, reflected by the fact that the majority (52%) agreed or strongly agreed that 'The National Trust needs to represent English heritage in new ways', to keep up with the times¹²⁰ in order 'to appeal to a broader consistency of people'.¹²¹ As many visitors, both members and non-members, regarded the Trust to be a culturally particular 'white middle class'¹²² organisation, they stressed the '[N]eed to make people think its our National Trust rather than some elite in London',¹²³ to shed its 'polite, mainstream and middle of the road' image in order to be 'more relevant to ordinary people'¹²⁴ and encourage a broader range of people to visit its properties.

The survey indicated that even (if not particularly) among certain of the Trust's most ardent and committed supporters, there is a willingness to challenge and confront dominant 'white' racialised narratives of the English countryside. One member epitomised this view by calling into question the way that the Trust's publications give the impression that they have been 'written by over 50's with tweed skirts',¹²⁵ which perpetuate its age, gender and class specific image. A number of visitors advanced the argument that the National Trust should 'explore all aspects of life on the estate or anywhere'¹²⁶ in order to reinterpret the typically undifferentiated narrative of white, middle class enjoyment of and engagement with the countryside. For example, one visitor to the Lake District and a volunteer for the National Trust stressed the need for organisations like the Trust to:

'promote history for white and ethnic minorities as well.....It's important to ethnic minorities that this history is acknowledged...There's a tendency to dismiss it but it must be important, to create a stable multicultural society....Everyone should have access to their history. Unless we address it we are heading for problems'.¹²⁷

¹¹⁹ Retired farmer from Burnlee on a visit to Derwentwater, non-member (279)

¹²⁰ Annual visitor to the Lakes from Oxford, non-member, 45-54 (283)

¹²¹ Translator, first time visitor to Derwentwater, woman 35-44 (337)

¹²² Man on a cycling trip to the Lakes, non-member, 35-44 (305)

¹²³ Visitor on a day trip to the Lakes from Blackpool, non-member but Trust donor (269)

¹²⁴ 35-44 year old woman on a day trip to Derwentwater, non-member (268)

¹²⁵ Woman from Newcastle, age 35-44, visiting Gibside as part of its Heritage Open Day (130)

¹²⁶ Local visitor to Gibside, member and supporter of National Trust (87)

¹²⁷ First time visitor to Derwentwater, non-member, 55-64 (289)

By recognising that dominant narratives need to be told alongside and amongst other histories, some visitors appeared to acknowledge white Englishness as one of many ethnicities within a multicultural society. In fact, the quote in the subhead exemplifies the way that visitors, echoing the sentiment of the Parekh Report (2000), recognised the fundamental importance of reinterpreting hegemonic histories of the countryside in contributing to the creation of a stable multicultural society.

Numerous visitors highlighted the need for the Trust to unveil the numerous 'links thinking back to the empire', to unearth 'heritage...that is relevant to other cultures'¹²⁸ in order to relate their history to people across class and race boundaries. Particularly at Gibside many visitors were concerned that the Trust's largely aristocratic representation of the site cloaks its important mining heritage. A retired teacher and resident in the nearest village to Gibside argued that as its 'heritage was built on sweated labour and belongs to the people' the Trust 'need to bring attention to suffering of the miners upon which it's built' to provoke people to 'think how many miners died to build this for owners...[to] think of the exploited and exploiters'.¹²⁹ She stressed the need for the public to understand the exploitation and 'sweated labour' that Gibside was built upon, to appreciate the power dynamics and inequalities that were involved in order to challenge the Trust's largely uncritical history of the architectural and aristocratic elements of the site. Mirroring the annotations attached to Ingrid Pollard's powerful photographs (as shown in Figure 2.4), which confronted comfortable norms of the countryside, some visitor's comments drew attention to the 'hidden histories' of exploitation that materially fuelled the development of Gibside. For example, a life member and volunteer at Gibside stressed that the estate 'was developed by a man who exploited the local coal. It was built on the back of industrial heritage'. Another volunteer for the Trust at Nunnington Hall in North Yorkshire reflected on how 'Bowes made his money on what were almost slaves and now we are wandering around enjoying it...A lot [was] built on the slave trade'. Such comments exemplify that it is not only academics, heritage professionals and politicised minorities calling for British heritage to be unsettled 'from its smug position... unquestioningly representing the interests of the white English upper- and middle-class great and the good' (Littler 2005: 1), but also a critical constituency among the apparently homogeneous white middle class who are 'hungry for a more radical take on this nation's history' (Naidoo 2005: 36).

¹²⁸ Young woman who works in the heritage sector, Trust member (94)

¹²⁹ Recently retired teacher and Trust member from Rowlands Gill (146)

7.6 Conclusion

The survey revealed that the question of racialised whiteness in the contemporary English countryside is more complex than a story of ex-nomination and unfaltering domination. We have seen that far from being a unitary essence, universally possessed and expressed by 'white' visitors to the countryside, the discourse of whiteness embraces a complex constellation of attitudes and identifications, more accurately described by the plural term 'whitenesses'. While visitors were united in their strong sense of countryside belonging and deep emotional attachment to the countryside, such seemingly secure place-based white rural identities were fraught with insecurities about preserving the aesthetic purity and cultural particularity of the countryside and inextricably intertwined with anxieties about the loss of white national homespace. As we have seen, the sense of loss, displacement and vulnerability expressed by a cohort of visitors makes explicit the precarious as well as powerful positioning of white people in contemporary English society. Thus, the chapter has demonstrated that whiteness functions as a ruptured, almost schizophrenic discourse that is not as confident a position as is often assumed, but is also fragile and vulnerable. On the one hand it is experienced and lived as a feeling of authority, power, security and belonging, and on the other, it calls up a sense of anxiety, powerlessness, insecurity and alienation.

Although whiteness has been enduringly embedded within nationalist discourses of the English countryside, the survey also gave voice to a sense that whiteness has been 'unhinged from a position of privilege' (Dolby 2001: 5). It revealed whiteness to be a complex cultural condition, at once normatively powerful and 'prefigured inwardly' (Muller 2001:9) by feelings of anxiety, disillusionment and displacement. The process of ethnic self-identification revealed that although many 'white' people fail to see their own whiteness, the majority defined themselves as 'white' when questioned and were also sensitive to the cultural and ethnic particularity the countryside and the National Trust. Although the Trust, like the countryside it preserves, continues to function as an unquestioned, taken-for-granted part of English national culture, the survey also indicated a certain receptiveness among members and non-members alike to the class-specific and even white-racialised character of the organisation. The survey highlighted that a critical consistency of visitors were receptive to the idea of representing and reinterpreting the countryside to appeal to the nation in its widest sense. Thus, as the next chapter will conclude by arguing, the Trust has an important role (and responsibility) to represent and reinterpret the countryside beyond its image as a white, middle class and middle aged space.

Chapter 8

Concluding comments: Reflections on the white racialised English countryside

8.1 'An invitation to reflection'

'Like all histories, this is less a recipe for action than an invitation to reflection'

(Schama 1996: 18)

The central contention of this thesis has been that the English countryside has been variously constructed as a culturally specific and normatively white racialised space from its very imaginings in the mid to late nineteenth century through to today. Given the hostile reception to the Parekh Report's argument that 'to be English...is to be white...that Englishness...is racially coded' (The Runnymede Trust. Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain 2000: 38) – a claim which was broadly misinterpreted as rendering England an inherently racist nation (Fortier 2003) and was read as an attack on Britishness from both ends of the political spectrum¹ – this thesis, that the English *countryside* is racially coded and normatively white racialised, is clearly controversial. It is important to stress that far from branding the English countryside, whiteness, or the National Trust as intrinsically racist, this thesis has aimed to analyse the complex differentiated nature of white people and places in order to better understand the historical and contemporary processes through which notions of countryside, Englishness and whiteness became inextricably intertwined. It is the hope that such an understanding of how the English countryside has been constructed and sustained as a normatively white racialised space can help progressively theorise histories of exclusion as a basis to practically confront its exclusive legacy and realise the socially inclusive potential of the English countryside.

¹ See McGuigan 2005 and also Schwartz 2005 for analyses of the vitriolic political and press reception to the Parekh Report

It should by now be clear that rather than aiming to advance policy recommendations or solutions for how to work towards a culturally cohesive countryside, as recent academic (Ayamba and Rotherham 2002; Slee 2002; Uzzell, Kelay et al. 2005) and policy (Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions 1999b; Countryside Recreation Network 2002; Wong 2002a; Wong 2002b; OPENspace 2003) research has already done, this thesis invites reflection on how the English countryside has been constructed and reconstructed as a white-racialised space. By analysing the simultaneous conceptualisation of countryside, Englishness and whiteness this thesis has aimed to make explicit what many know intuitively: that the English countryside, far from being a culturally and ethnically neutral space, is to its very substrate, culturally and ethnically particular. It has not been the intention of this thesis to legitimise the erroneous assumption that people from ethnic minority communities do not access or enjoy the English countryside, but rather to develop a better understanding of how the countryside has been implicitly racialised.

8.2 Revisiting research aims and retracing the central arguments

In concluding, this thesis returns to the aims with which it began – that is, in summary to explore how the English countryside has been constructed as a white racialised space through the institutional case of the National Trust. This has involved the consideration of four main research aims. First, the thesis set out to analyse the historical connections between normatively racialised English national identity and countryside from the late nineteenth century through the discourse of preservationism and the institution of the National Trust. By drawing conceptual connection between discourses of Englishness, whiteness and countryside, *Chapter 2* began to make explicit some of the implicit historical processes through which the countryside became synonymous with white racialisation in England. This aim was further advanced in *Chapter 4* by making whiteness intelligible within the discourse of preservationism and the institution of the National Trust from the mid to late nineteenth century. In so doing, it attempted to specify the normatively racialised and class based character of the English countryside. The chapter argued that institutional whiteness has been variously constructed as a terrain of power that is multifaceted rather than monolithic, fluid rather than fixed, unstable rather than stable. Rather than functioning as a unitary site of white authority, from its founding fears about the decline of rural Englishness, the Trust has also been shot through by anxiety. Thus, even in the workings of such a powerful organisation as the National Trust, whiteness functions as a complex cultural construction that is at once fragile and forceful, privileged and precarious, authoritative and anxious.

Second, the thesis aimed to explore how the contrasting countryside spaces of Derwentwater in the Lake District and Gibside in Tyne and Wear have been variously and historically constructed as terrains of white racialisation. By historically specifying and geographically situating 'national', institutional whiteness in particular landscapes owned and managed by the Trust, *Chapter 5* further exemplified the culturally complex condition of whiteness, variably manifest in different nature spaces and at different times. While the Lake District and Gibside were both constructed as 'hyperwhite' spaces from their very discovery and design in the eighteenth century, by the end of the nineteenth century, both places became sources of anxiety – the Lakes because of the threat posed by railway development and Gibside because of its state of decay and dilapidation. While such class-based anxieties about the decline of Englishness fuelled the Trust's involvement in both places, the chapter illustrated that the Trust held different classed and nationalised discourses of whitenesses in tension at particular times in its history. By locating discourses of whiteness in the histories of nationally significant countryside sites, the chapter makes a contribution to the pursuit of historical geographical analyses of whiteness.

Third, the thesis went on to examine how the National Trust has reconstructed, represented and reimagined the countryside from its Centenary year in 1995 to today. As *Chapter 6* argued, over the past decade, the Trust has reflexively embraced criticisms to prioritise issues of access and socially inclusion. Just as the cases of Gibside and Derwentwater illuminated some of the historical processes through which the countryside became racialised as white, they equally exemplified the Trust's contemporary prioritisation of its social aims. Both sites illustrated how the Trust has, in its second century, begun to fully engage in representing and reinterpreting its properties with the aim of broadening its appeal and reaching out to people excluded from its work. Despite the Trust's emphasis on education, image, access and outreach, the chapter concluded that the organisation could go further to redress its exclusive character and constituency, and in particular, to encourage ethnic environmental participation.

Fourth and finally, the thesis aimed to investigate the attitudes and values of contemporary 'white' countryside visitors to issues of countryside, national and ethnic identity in order to analyse the cultural complexity of white racialisation in rural England. As we saw in *Chapter 7*, the survey of 400 'white' visitors to Derwentwater and Gibside exposed whiteness to be a complex cultural condition that is lived through senses of both authority and anxiety; power and powerlessness, security and insecurity, belonging and alienation. While whiteness continues to function as a normative and unmarked discourse among 'white' countryside visitors, within the English countryside and the institution of the National Trust, the survey

also revealed that many 'white' visitors reflexively recognised their own whiteness as well as the cultural and ethnic particularity of the countryside and the National Trust. Although the survey uncovered the very real presence of rural racism, the English countryside cannot simply be construed as a 'white unpleasant land' (Cohen 1999) riddled with rural racism. Indeed many visitors recognised the importance of reinterpreting hegemonic histories of the countryside in contributing to the creation of a stable multicultural society. By empirically exploring white racialised identities of contemporary visitors to Northern England, the thesis makes an original contribution to academic debates on the complex cultural condition of whiteness and on race in the English countryside.

8.3 Academic additions: the complex nature of whiteness in the English countryside

This thesis contributes a fresh perspective to understanding the racialisation of the English countryside by making connections between discourses of whiteness, Englishness and countryside that have so far remained critically under-developed in academic scholarship. In an attempt to rebalance the overwhelming focus on racially marked people and urban spaces, this thesis has made explicit the chain of association between rurality, ethnicity, ethnic purity and whiteness in the English countryside where whiteness is positioned to represent 'normal', 'essential' England. It has argued that whiteness pertains to and permeates 'seemingly nonracial issues as the environment' (McLaren 1998: 72) and that racial identity plays a crucial role, albeit less apparent, in the geographies of rural England.

While the thesis has analysed ways that whiteness continues to function as normatively powerful discourse in the English countryside, it has also argued that whiteness has never been a unitary trope of domination but rather has been constituted by both competing and interlocking discourses of authority and anxiety. In its analysis of the jointly authoritative and anxious discourse of whiteness, this thesis contributes a more complex and nuanced understanding of white racialisation than currently available in recent scholarship that 'has yet to explore these intersecting dimensions of whiteness' (Hardiman 2003: 131). It has begun to move beyond what some writers have identified as the 'impasse of reducing whiteness exclusively to forms of exploitation and domination' (Giroux 1997: 383) that has failed to capture its complexity. By prizing open the bounds of hegemonic ethnicity, this thesis has exposed whiteness as a historically and geographically contingent, internally incoherent and culturally complex condition. Despite the inherent problems of researching and studying whiteness outlined in Chapter 2 (see section 2. 5) and the enduring concerns among some critics of its usefulness as a category (Kaufmann 2006), whiteness has, in this

study (as in others), certainly proved to be a useful 'heuristic tool' to explore 'context specific processes and performances of particular, and often very subtle, forms of racialisation' (Shaw 2006: 856).

As the thesis started out by arguing, the National Trust, with its over hundred year history, has provided an institutional bridge between both historical and contemporary prongs of whiteness scholarship. Rather than simply arguing that during the period of heady British imperialism, whiteness was a secure identity and that in postcolonial times the normative hold of whiteness became anxious, the thesis has aimed to demonstrate that the status of whiteness as the invisible, unmarked norm has been far from secure. This ambivalently authoritative and anxious nature of whiteness was reflected as much through visitors' voices as through institutional narratives. By bringing into one thesis a focus on institutional and individual inflections of white racialisation, this research not only contributes to our understanding of the white racialised nature of preservationism, the National Trust and the English countryside, but also of the complex attitudes and identifications of 'white' visitors to the countryside.

As an institutional discourse and a lived identity, we have seen that whiteness is far from an undifferentiated trope of domination, a unitary site of white privilege, but rather is differentially inflected and internally contradictory. While whiteness continues to function as an elusive, invisible and unacknowledged norm in the countryside, within countryside organisations and among 'white' countryside visitors, the thesis exposed a certain sensitivity and reflexivity to the register of whiteness. In so doing, it opens up the possibilities of positively reworking the category and conceptualisation of whiteness beyond negative associations with white power and racism, of refiguring whiteness in an antiracist way (Rodriguez 1998: 33). As we have seen, focusing on the discursive and institutional formation of whiteness not only provides a tool for theorising the intersecting discourses of landscape, race and national identity in England, but also contributes a fresh approach and a deeper historical understanding to policy debates concerning social in/exclusion in the English countryside.

8.4 Policy problematics: confronting and challenging whiteness in the English countryside

In the context of the growing, if reluctant recognition among policy makers as well as academics, that the dominant ideology of the countryside remains implicitly 'white', this thesis argues that it is only by making explicit how the English countryside has been

historically constructed as a normatively white racialised and class-based space that the challenges of overcoming its exclusive legacy can be confronted and that the culturally cohesive potential of the contemporary countryside can be sustainably realised. While there has been a proliferation of policy commissioned and oriented research on the perceptions and use of the countryside among under-represented groups over the last few years, not least a series of reports stemming from the Countryside Agency's *'Diversity Review'* (OPENspace 2003; The Countryside Agency 2003; Uzzell, Kelay et al. 2005), such research has done little to destabilise the myth of homogeneity in the so called 'white majority'. By analysing the largely unstated assumption that the countryside is a white-dominated space, the thesis has aimed to confront and challenge the core of the homogenous same, to contribute an analysis of the multi-white countryside within multi-ethnic Britain.

While a small yet significant body of policy oriented research from the late eighties has provoked a recognition of the under-representation of 'ethnic minority' communities in countryside recreation and has furthered our understanding of barriers to access, in the context of Trevor Phillips' controversial charge that 'mutual incomprehension' is the root of a system of 'passive apartheid' in the countryside (John 2004), it is important not only to understand the (perceived or actual) barriers to ethnic environmental participation, but equally to understand the taken-for-granted processes through which the countryside has been equated with normatively white racialised English national identity. According to Dyer, 'we won't get there until we see whiteness, see its power, its particularity and limitedness' (1997: 3). Rather than simply branding 'white' countryside organisations or visitors as implicitly racist, or more subtly implying that they are the perpetrators and protagonists of a system of 'passive apartheid', this thesis has aimed to demonstrate the cultural complexity of an apparently unitary white culture of the countryside. By arguing that there is not and never has been a homogenous, fixed, settled or singular white majority, the thesis helps further the understanding that all identities are in a process of transition, which is important to building and sustaining a truly multicultural society. Far from criticising the Trust, the countryside or countryside visitors for virtue of being 'white', or descending into black/white assault, analysing whiteness as a multiple, mutable discourse reveals the fractures and fragilities within whiteness, suggesting the need not only to reach out to black and minority groups but also to other less privileged 'whites' including white working class, inner city or less physically able people.

Although this research, like any other, has its limitations, it is hoped that by highlighting the complexity and contingency of whiteness and challenging the myth of 'white' homogeneity in the English countryside, that this thesis may contribute to the anti-racist project of redefining

Englishness as outward looking, dynamic and inclusive. As the Parekh Report emphasised, such attempts to reimagine dominant discourses of the nation are central to achieving a just and inclusive society (The Runnymede Trust. Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain 2000). While this chapter and the thesis more generally has argued that working towards a socially inclusive contemporary countryside demands an open and honest recognition of its racialised history, as noted at the opening of this chapter, the fact that the Parekh Report was crucified for so much as suggesting that Englishness is racially coded, is a stark signal of the problematics involved in adopting such an approach in reality. Thus, although this thesis may harbour unrealistic expectations about the readiness of countryside organisations like the National Trust to directly confront the white racialised nature of the English countryside, analysing the multi-white English countryside surely has a crucial part to play in furthering the anti-racist project of reimagining the future of 'multi-ethnic, multi-faith, multicultural, multi-community Britain' (The Runnymede Trust. Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain 2000: 2).

8.5 Policy reflections and directions for future research

So far this chapter has outlined how this thesis contributes both to critical whiteness scholarship by empirically analysing the culturally complex nature of whiteness in the English countryside and to policy debates concerning the social in/exclusiveness of the countryside by confronting and challenging the whiteness of nature in England. It concludes by reflecting on how organisations like the National Trust can play a crucial role in reimagining the countryside and by pointing to some possible directions for future academic research.

8.5.1 Reflections on the National Trust

At a time when the Trust is emerging out of a process of internal review, from a turbulent time of turning itself inside out, it is fitting to provide some reflections on the organisation from the outside in. Standing as it does at a reflexive and critical moment in its history, the Trust (like the environmental movement more generally) is well poised to help build a socially inclusive society. While the Trust holds the potential and power to re-narrate multicultural rather than monocultural narratives of national heritage and identity, by continuing to aim and claim to be 'for everyone', the organisation has sustained a universalised rhetoric that 'masks race, ethnicity and class dimensions' (De Luca 1999: 227) of the historically interesting and naturally beautiful places it preserves. As such, it has inadvertently whitewashed race from the idealised, rural portrait of the nation that it represents. Amin and Thrift's (2002) argument about urban planning holds much relevance

to the context of rural preservation in England; in order to realise the rhetoric of social inclusion and combat rural racism, the assumption that the countryside, the countless number of countryside organisations in general and the National Trust in particular are 'for everyone', for the benefit of the nation, usually meaning for the normatively white national culture, must be clearly rejected. The aspiration of promoting a socially inclusive countryside demands a different rhetoric that recognises and responds to the needs of particular groups and communities rather than deploying a universal 'one size fits all' policy which, despite good intention, serves to perpetuate the normative power of whiteness. This thesis contends that if the National Trust is to fully address the problem of social inclusion, it should do so based on the recognition that its governance, membership and visitor base is predominantly white, middle class, male, ageing and able-bodied.

Even in its attempts to project a positive, inclusive ethos, the Trust has failed to challenge the normative power of whiteness and embedded power relations inscribed in the cultural fabric of the English countryside. Although the National Trust has adopted a tolerant attitude, in line with liberal tradition, the discourse of tolerance assumes there is something negative to be tolerated by people who consider themselves dominant and have the power to be tolerant (Hage 1998: Chapter 3). Thus, the discourse of tolerance reproduces power relations and falls short of challenging normatively racialised, nationalist practices of exclusion. Moving beyond tolerance, the Trust has adopted an ethos of 'welcome' as part of its commitment to improving communications with existing and potential visitors, reflected by its plan to include a direct message of welcome on its signs (as we saw in Chapter 6, Figure 6.2). However, such an 'ethics of welcoming' (Ahmed 2000: 152) also reinscribes rather than redresses the power relationships imbued within the countryside. While the intended effect of welcoming people, particularly under-represented groups to its properties, is to project an inclusive ethos, according to Sarah Ahmed (2000: 4), the very act of welcoming marginalized or excluded groups, those recognised as strangers, produces the stranger in the first place. By assuming the power to welcome 'others' to its land, the Trust not only asserts its power of landownership, but also assumes that others should assimilate into the dominant culture of the countryside. Given that such an ethos of tolerance or welcome fail to challenge the normatively racialised assumptions that underscore the fabric of the countryside, the Trust needs to make a broader and more radical commitment to changing the culture of the countryside. As Naidoo (2005) has recently argued, it is only by making a profound ideological shift in our understanding of national history that heritage can be mobilised as a useful tool against the exclusive xenophobia traditionally associated with the concept of Britishness. Similarly, this thesis contends that the countryside can only become truly inclusive by radically rethinking and reimagining the English countryside.

Although the Trust has reflexively recognized such a need to reinterpret its properties and reevaluate meanings of national heritage, the challenge is how to translate diversity policies into practice given that institutions like the Trust and their archives continue to make assumptions about what is considered 'important' (Littler 2005: 13) and the Trust itself remains somewhat of an enigma. While this thesis has made an attempt to tap previously unused archival materials and documents (discussed in Chapter 3), the Trust's archives remain generally inaccessible to the public. Consequently, as the survey of 'white' countryside visitors revealed, there is still a lack of understanding of the Trust, among members and non-members alike. Given that the Trust's recent organisational overhaul (the Blakenham Governance Review) has been motivated by the concern to improve internal and external communications, to remain relevant to its members and the public in the new millennium, unlocking its archives holds limitless possibilities and should surely constitute a pressing agenda for the Trust. By unlocking its rich archive of information, the Trust has a huge potential to reinterpret and breathe fresh life into its places of historic interest and natural beauty that comprise national heritage.

While the Trust is anxious to respond to recent high-profile criticisms by figures like Trevor Phillips that the countryside is implicitly racialised and exclusive, it is also sensitive to the controversy sparked by such claims and remains nervous not to alienate its core constituency in the process of reaching out to marginalized minority communities. Thus, while the Trust has always been anxious in its desire to be all things to all people, as argued in Chapter 6, it is a particularly turbulent, tense time for the organisation seeking to tread a delicate line between sustaining the support of its existing members and appealing to new audiences, or more generally in Roshi Naidoo's words, 'between acknowledging the excluded...and the political systems that exclude them, and maintaining the sanctity of the liberal world view' (2005: 39). As noted in Chapter 1, the controversy created last year over the Lake District National Park Authority's (LDNPA) plans to axe its series of free guided walks on the grounds that they appealed mainly to white, middle age, middle class people, revealed the anxious and deeply politicized position of environmental organisations in their quest to become more socially inclusive without alienating existing beneficiaries. On the one hand the LDNPA faced governmental pressure to encourage visits from ethnic minorities, youngsters, inner-city dwellers and the disabled, and on the other hand, it was met by fierce opposition among the public and the popular press, which descended into accusations of political correctness and provoked a racist backlash with some demanding that ethnic minority groups be kept out of the Lake District altogether (Crowley 2005; Henderson 2005).

Thus, although this thesis has focused on the particular institutional formation of the National Trust, such controversies demonstrate that debates about the cultural and ethnic constituency of the English countryside do not relate exclusively to the National Trust. Indeed, from the very beginning, the thesis framed the discussion within wider policy concerns about social in/exclusion, diversity and ethnic environmental participation. The fact that organisations like English Nature are beginning to develop policies on race equality also indicate the growing recognition and concern among policy makers, not only about the ethnic composition of their visitors, but also about the ethnic diversity of their workforce and of the countryside more generally. Moreover, the way in which the plan to amalgamate English Nature, the Rural Development Service and the Countryside Agency into one organisation, 'Natural England' by 2007 (English Nature 2005) was fuelled, in no small part by the desire to break down barriers to access and enjoyment of the countryside among under-represented groups, is also revealing of the readiness among countryside organisations more generally to work towards a socially inclusive English countryside. Therefore, while these policy reflections and suggestions relate specifically to the National Trust, it is hoped that they hold more general relevance to countryside organisations and service providers united by their aims and attempts to work towards a culturally cohesive English countryside.

8.5.2 Future research avenues

Although this research has analysed the historical and contemporary interconnections between landscape, race and national identity in England through the discourse of whiteness, the thesis has opened up other potential avenues for future research, three of which are suggested below by way of conclusion. First, while this thesis has critically explored the enduring association between countryside and whiteness in England, as yet, little has been written on the relationship between landscape and race in the Scottish context. Although the 'OPENspace' research centre for inclusive access to outdoor environments,² located in Edinburgh, has been involved with a number of research projects on social in/exclusion in natural environments in Scotland, there has been a lack of critical research on the relationship between landscape, national identity and race in Scotland. Apart from Heather Winlow's (2001) article on the construction of Scottish racial identity in the early twentieth century and a few recently published articles that have begun to analyse Scottishness as an ethnic and racialised category (McIntosh, Sim et al. 2004; Kiely, Bechhofer et al. 2005), the Scottish countryside has tended to escape analysis as a racialised space. Philomena de Lima's research on rural racism in Scotland (1999; 2001a; 2001b; 2004), which has drawn

² See the OPENspace website for further details: www.openspace.eca.ac.uk

popular and press attention to the racialisation of the Scottish countryside (Meiklem 2004), and Sian Jones' (2005) recent work on local and national identities in Scotland, have offered tantalising connections between white culture and Scottish nature that merit further critical investigation.

As an extension of this thesis, it would be particularly interesting to investigate how the sibling but separate institution of the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) has been inflected by discourses of race and class. As the NTS has remained under-researched (Bremner's 2001 history of the First 70 Years of the organisation is a notable exception) and lacks even the hefty history of self-authorship typical of the English National Trust, it warrants critical academic attention. Analysis of the NTS would shed light on how landscape, race and national identity play out in a pre and post-devolution Scotland and provide an interesting comparative to this analysis of the enduring connections between discourses of countryside and whiteness in England. As Littler has recently signalled, '[t]hinking about the legacies of race in British heritage and how they have been mutually shaped by ideas about ethnicity means that we can start to think...about the complexities of Scotland's role as both coloniser and colonised, and the role of the Celtic diaspora in imperial heritage' (2005: 6-7).

More broadly, this research secondly points to the potential for future work to analyse how discourses of nature and preservation have been transported and translated into colonial countries in order to better understand how whiteness has functioned as 'the institutionalisation of European colonialism' (Rasmussen, Klinenberg et al. 2001: 13). Developing out from work that has analysed how nature has been produced through the discourse of colonialism (for example Ritvo 1992; Osborne 1994; Anderson 1995; Grove 1995; Philip 1998; Hall 2003a), the National Trust provides an unexploited mechanism to further explore how Eurocentric notions of preservation and heritage have been transplanted to ex-colonial countries (McDermott-Hughes 2006) and to critically analyse the privileged status of whiteness instituted by colonialism. Although the English National Trust has provided a model for the establishment of a series of other National Trusts worldwide, linked by shared aims, objectives and reciprocal membership privileges, apart from literally only a few online articles,³ the phenomenon has escaped attention, critical or otherwise. However, the geographical distribution of other National Trusts in former British colonies and overseas territories from Australia to St Helena (founded in 1945 and 2002 respectively) is indicative

³ A rare and brief article on the existence of 'International Trusts' can be found at: <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/environment/html/features/fspapers/fsislands01.htm>. Wikipedia, the free online encyclopaedia, has also acknowledged that many other countries have organisations based on the English National Trust. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Trust (last modified 07/02/2006).

of how normatively white racialised discourses of preservationism and heritage have been transposed into (post)colonial contexts. The fact that the vast majority (16 out of 20 or so)⁴ of satellite 'International Trusts' (Leonard 2004) are situated in commonwealth countries or British overseas territories (see Table 8.1) is suggestive of a process of cultural colonialism that merits further critical investigation.

Third, although this thesis has briefly touched on issues of embodiment and performativity by making reference to cultural practices of whiteness, there is huge scope for future research to analyse how 'the body' is critical to the construction, enactment and performance of whiteness in the English countryside. As work on the embodiment and performance of ethnicity has tended to focus on urban areas and on non-white 'strangers' (Ahmed 2000), analyses of 'rural embodiment' (Little and Leyshon 2003) and 'performing whiteness' (Schueller 1999; Tehranian 2000; Lunde 2004) in rural areas can make a critical contribution to understandings of the relationship between rurality, normative codes of countryside conduct and the performance of white ethnicity in the English countryside. Although a number of scholars, many of whom geographers, have begun to analyse embodied countryside practices such as walking or adventure sports as constitutive of race and ethnicity (Matless 1998; Macnaughten and Urry 1999; Edensor 2000; Macnaughten and Urry 2000; Franklin 2002; Braun 2003), to date, studies have still to demonstrate the importance of analysing bodily performance in understanding the relationship between countryside and whiteness. While writing on rural gendered and sexual identities has begun to explore the construction and performance of masculinities, femininities and sexuality in rural areas (Bell and Valentine 1995; Little 1997; Campbell and Bell 2000; Phillips, Watt et al. 2000; Saugeres 2002; Little 2003), there is an as yet largely untapped potential for geographers to analyse the unmarked, normatively racialised 'body politic' (Gatens 1991) of the English countryside in order to develop a deeper and more nuanced understanding of complex and fluid racialised rural whitenesses.

⁴ It is difficult to discern exactly how many 'International Trusts' exist, as the very fact of their existence has received little attention. A trawl of the Internet revealed at least twenty Trusts that have been set up in other countries and share similar aims to the English National Trust. The few Trusts worldwide that are not located in the commonwealth or British overseas territories include America's 'The National Trust for Historic Preservation' (see www.nationaltrust.org), The Republic of Ireland's 'An Taisce' (see www.antaisce.org), 'The National Trust of Guernsey' (see www.nationaltrust-gsy.org.gg) and Italy's National Trust 'The Fondo per l'Ambiente Italiano'.

INTERNATIONAL TRUST	DATE	ABBREVIATED AIM AND SOURCE OF FURTHER INFORMATION
COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES		
National Trust of Australia and Australian Council of National Trusts (ACNT)	1945, 1965	Promote and conserve Australia's indigenous, natural and historic heritage www.nationaltrust.org.au
Bahamas National Trust	1959	Conservation of the natural and historic resources of the Bahamas: www.thebahamasnationaltrust.org
The Barbados National Trust	1961	To preserve and protect the national and artistic heritage of Barbados and to increase public awareness of Barbados' historic and architectural treasures: http://trust.funbarbados.com
The National Trust of Fiji	1970	Preserve historic and natural resources, conservation of flora and fauna, provision of public access (No website)
The National Trust of Guyana	1972	Preservation, conservation and public display of all aspects of the cultural heritage of Guyana www.nationaltrust.gov.gy
Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH)	1984	To protect and conserve India's vast natural and cultural heritage: www.intach.org
The Queen Elizabeth II National Trust (New Zealand)	1977	To encourage and promote, for the benefit of New Zealand, the provision, protection, preservation and enhancement of open spaces: www.nationaltrust.org.nz
The St. Lucia National Trust	1975	To preserve buildings, objects of historic and architectural interest and areas of natural beauty www.slunatrust.org
Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC)	1972	To conserve the natural and cultural heritage of Swaziland: www.sntc.org.sz
National Trust of the Turks and Caicos Islands	1992	To safeguard the natural, historical and cultural heritage of the Turks and Caicos Islands for present and future generations: www.nationaltrust.tc
UK OVERSEAS TERRITORIES	(Members of the UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum, supported by the English National Trust)	
The Anguilla National Trust	1993	To preserve and promote natural, archaeological, historical and cultural resources www.ant.ai
The Bermuda National Trust	1970	To preserve buildings, lands, artefacts and places of beauty or historic interest and to promote their appreciation www.bnt.bm
National Trust for the Cayman Islands	1987	To preserve natural environments and places of historic significance in the Cayman Islands for present and future generations: www.nationaltrust.org.ky
The National Trust for Jersey	1936	To preserve and safeguard sites of historic, aesthetic and national interest in Jersey www.nationaltrustjersey.org.je
Montserrat National Trust	1969	The conservation, preservation and enhancement of the islands natural, historical and cultural resources and the promotion of public environmental awareness www.montserratnationaltrust.com
St. Helena National Trust	2002	To acquire and hold in perpetuity land of natural beauty or buildings and objects of historic or cultural interest: www.sainthelena.gov.sh/lifestyle/associations

Table 8.1: International Trusts
Source: A variety of web pages, as shown

Like most research, this thesis raised more questions than it has purported to address. How is whiteness performed and embodied in everyday engagements with nature in England? Are codes of countryside conduct and performance institutionally inscribed within National Trust's in other countries? If so, how are institutionally embedded norms of use variously inflected through race and ethnicity in different national contexts, from Scotland to St Lucia? How do attitudes to the countryside compare between and within 'white' and 'non-white' people, between visitors and non-visitors? Such questions point some ways forward for future cultural and historical geographical research that seeks to understand intersecting meanings of race, nation and nature at different times and in various places.

Appendix 1

Archive and documentary sources

Name of archive	Archive code	Scale	Access	Catalogue/ index
Wansdyke	WANS	National	Not publicly accessible. On special arrangement only	NT database of box numbers and names
Cirencester Estates Department (NT)	CIREN, or WANS (Ciren) if accessed at Cirencester	National	Documents relating to past few years held in situ, Wansdyke files recalled through internal database	Recent documents uncatalogued. Internal database for archived files.
'Scots Gap' NT North East Regional Office	NTNE	Regional	Internal/ staff, or by arrangement	Internal inventory, part-catalogued
'The Hollens' NT North West Regional Office	NTNW	Regional	Internal/ staff, or by arrangement	Uncatalogued
Borrowdale Office (NT)	BORROW	Local	Internal/ staff, or by arrangement	Catalogued
Gibside Estate (NT)	GIB	Local	Internal	Uncatalogued
Carlisle Records Office	CRO	Regional	Readers by appointment	Catalogued
Kendal Records Office	KRO	Regional	Readers by appointment	Catalogued
Durham County Council Records Office	DRO	Regional	Public by appointment	Catalogued
Public Records Office	PRO	National	Public	Catalogued
Royal Geographical Society	RGS	National	Members	Part-catalogued
Kendal Local History Library	KenLHL	Local	Public	Uncatalogued
Carlisle Public Library	CPL	Local/ regional	Public	Uncatalogued
Keswick Local History Library	KLHL	Local	Public	Uncatalogued
Gateshead Local History Library	GLHL	Local	Public	Part-catalogued
Newcastle Local History Library	NLHL	Local	Public	Part-catalogued
Darlington Library Centre for Local Studies	DCLS	Local	Public	Catalogued

Appendix 2

Documentary and archival material

The archive codes listed in Appendix 1 are used to source the archival and documentary material. In addition, '(ind)' is used to refer to documents that were sourced from individuals via interviews or conversations, '(pers)' is used to mark documents, particularly interpretative material, that was personally sourced and the abbreviation '(mem)' is used in the case that material was gained through being a member of the Trust.

Legislation and constitutional reviews

Oliver, L. (1993). The Oliver Report on the Constitution, The National Trust: WANS: Box 34/38: 308216

The Hornby Working Party (1984). The Report of the Hornby Working Party, The National Trust: WANS: Box 34/38

The National Trust (1907 to 1971). The National Trust Acts. 36 Queen Anne's Gate, SW1, The National Trust: CIREN (ind)

The National Trust (1907a). National Trust Act 1907, The National Trust: 1-12: CIREN (ind)

The National Trust (1965). The National Trust Byelaws. London, The National Trust: CIREN (ind)

The National Trust (1968). The Benson Report on the National Trust. Report by the Council Advisory Committee on the Trust's Constitution, Organisation and Responsibilities. The National Trust, WANS: Box 31/40

The National Trust (1971). National Trust Act 1971, The National Trust: 33-55: CIREN (ind)

Trustees of the Earl of Strathmore (1974). Conveyance of Gibside Chapel, Cottage and Avenue. From J.M. Haldane Esq. and others to the National Trust, 9th May 1974, NTNE: Chapel, Cottage and Avenue – Conveyance: F8.

The National Trust (1983). The National Trust – Its members and the public. The Arkell Report, The National Trust: CIREN (ind)

Annual Reports

The National Trust (1895). Report of the Provisional Council, Year ending April 30th 1895, The National Trust: NTNW

The National Trust (1896). Report of the Council, March 1896-July 1896: First Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1897). Report of the Council, July 1896-1897: Second Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1899). Report of the Council 1898-1899: Fourth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1901). Report of the Council for the Year 1900-1901: Sixth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1903). Report of the Council 1902-1903: Eighth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1904). Report of the Council 1903-1904: Ninth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1906). Report of the Year 1905-1906: Eleventh Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1907b). Report of the Year 1906-1907: Twelfth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1907c). Report of the Council to the 21st of August 1907, when the Trust was reconstituted. The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1908). Report of the Council 1908: Fourteenth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1910). Report of the Council 1909-1910: Fifteenth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1911). Report of the Council 1910-1911: Sixteenth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1912). Record of the National Trust 1906-1912, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1913). Report of the Council 1912- 1913: Eighteenth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1914). Report of the Council 1913-1914: Nineteenth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1920). Report of the Council 1919-1920: Twenty-fifth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1921). Report of the Council 1920-1921: Twenty-sixth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1923). Report of the Council 1922-1923: Twenty-eighth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

The National Trust (1924). Report of the Council 1923-1924: Twenty-ninth Annual Report, The National Trust: NTNW.

- The National Trust (1925). Report of the Council 1924-1925: Thirtieth Annual Report. Record of the National Trust 1924-1929, The National Trust: NTNW.
- The National Trust (1927). Report of the Council 1926-1927: Thirty-second Annual Report. Record of the National Trust 1924-1929, The National Trust: NTNW.
- The National Trust (1929). Report of the Council 1928-1929: Thirty-fourth Annual Report. Record of the National Trust 1924-1929, The National Trust: NTNW.
- The National Trust (1974). Annual Report 1974, The National Trust: WANS: Box H508: 9911285.
- The National Trust (1976). Annual Report 1976, The National Trust: WANS: Box B:a027: 9911286
- The National Trust (1998a). Annual Report and Accounts, 1997/ 1998, The National Trust: WANS: Box 32:30: 9800057
- .The National Trust (2001a). Annual Report and Accounts, 2000/ 2001, The National Trust: WANS: Box 38:25: 9915563
- The National Trust (2002a). Annual Report and Accounts, 2001/ 2002, The National Trust: WANS: Box 38:25: 9915564
- The National Trust (2003a). Annual Report to Members 2002/ 2003, The National Trust (pers)
- The National Trust (2004a). Annual Report and Accounts 2003/ 2004, The National Trust (pers)

National strategy and other reports

- Proby, W. (2004). Chairman's Foreword. Looking to the future 2004-2007. The National Trust. London, The National Trust: 2-3 (pers)
- Reynolds, F. (2002). The Director-General's Review of the Year. Annual Report and Accounts, 2001/ 2002. The National Trust, The National Trust: WANS: Box 38:25: 9915564
- Reynolds, F. (2004b). Director- General's Introduction. Looking to the future 2004-2007. The National Trust. London, The National Trust: 4- 5 (pers)
- Sale, N. and J. Burgon (2002). Guidelines for the display of National Trust byelaws, The National Trust: NTNW (ind).
- The National Trust (1941). The National Trust and the Preservation of Historic Country Houses. London, Geo Barber and Son Ltd: NTNW.
- The National Trust (1985). Gifts of Time: Volunteers and the National Trust. WANS, Box K130.

- The National Trust (1993a). The Oliver Report on the Constitution, The National Trust: WANS: Box 34/ 38: 308216
- The National Trust (1993b). Notes of Consultation. Access Review Working Party. WANS, BOX: 55E31/ 061.
- The National Trust (1995a). Linking People and Place: a consultation report. Cirencester, The National Trust: CIREN (ind)
- The National Trust (1995b). Open countryside: Report of the Access Review Working Party, The National Trust: Part A and Part B: CIREN (ind)
- The National Trust (1996). Directory of Community Initiatives. Cirencester, The National Trust: CIREN (ind)
- The National Trust (2001b). The National Strategic Plan: Summary. March 2001- February 2004, The National Trust (pers)
- The National Trust (2001c). Visitor Marketing: Review of Advertising and Promotion, Prepared for the Development Director on behalf of the Director of Marketing and Communications: BORROW (ind).
- The National Trust (2002b). Trust in the Future: outcomes of the consultation process on structures, and an update in progress. Organisational Review Report, The National Trust: BORROW, Ad/ OR-2.
- The National Trust (2002c). Directory of Community Initiatives. Cirencester, The National Trust: CIREN (ind).
- The National Trust (2004d). Looking to the future 2004-2007. London, The National Trust (pers).
- The National Trust Council (1974). Annex 1 to the Council Agenda, 1974, The National Trust: WANS: Box H508: 9911285

Regional reports, strategy and management plans

- Acland, C. H. D. (1973). "25 Years on...A Review." North West Regional Report 1971-1973 1971- 1973 (The National Trust). WANS: Box K130
- Howard, S. (1973). "Foreword." North West Regional Report 1971-1973 1971- 1973: WANS: Box K310
- Lawler, C., J. Barlow, et al. (2001). North West Lakes Education Plan, The National Trust: NTNW (ind)
- Lister, J. and K. Alexander (1986). National Trust Biological Survey: Gibside Chapel, Tyne and Wear. The National Trust, WANS (Ciren): Gibside/ A: Box 55F2 0/234.

- Maurice, O. (c. 1996). Introduction. Lake District Countryside Information Strategy – a consultation document. The National Trust North West Region. The National Trust, NTNW: 1/ NT/P+P-15.
- Northumbria Region of the National Trust (1998). Gibside Conservation Plan 1998: NTNE
- Northumbria Region of the National Trust (2000). Gibside Conservation Plan 2000: GIB
- Platt, A. (1999). Education in the North West Region of the National Trust: A Strategy for Future Development. Paper by the Regional Education Officer: NTNW (ind)
- Sale, N. (c. 2001). A Sort of National Property: A Strategic Approach to Communicating in the Countryside of the National Trust's North West Region with the audiences of the 21st century. The National Trust, BORROW 1/ NTS-1.
- The National Trust (1952). Lake District Report for 1951 and 1952, The National Trust: NTNW.
- The National Trust (1954). Lake District Report 1953-1954, The National Trust: NTNW.
- The National Trust (1958). Lake District Report 1957-1958, The National Trust: NTNW.
- The National Trust (1962). Lake District Annual Report 1959-1962. London, The National Trust: NTNW
- The National Trust (1966). Gibside Chapel, County Durham. London, Country Life Limited for the National Trust: NTNE.
- The National Trust (1970). Lake District Report 1968-1970. London, The National Trust: WANS: Box K130: 0200455
- The National Trust (1978a). Gibside Chapel. Plaistow, Curwen Press: NTNE.
- The National Trust (1978b). The National Trust in the North West. WANS: Box: B:a 039.
- The National Trust (1980a). A Strategy Plan for the National Trust in the Lake District. London, The National Trust: WANS: Box 55D14/261
- The National Trust (1980b). The National Trust in the Lake District: A colour guide to National Trust properties in the Lake District and Cumbria, Dalesman Books: KRO
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Appendix 3

Purpose and nature of key informant interviews

	Interviewee	Role	Purpose/ function	Nature of interview
National	John Harvey*	Head of Nature Conservation	- Learn more about the Trust's work from an insider perspective - Inform about the research aims	Structured
	Jo Burgeon*	Head of Access and Recreation	- Find out more about the Trust's policies on countryside, access and recreation - Target relevant documents	Structured
NW Region	Nigel Sale*	North Region Countryside Interpretation Officer (Retired)	- Learn more about the Trust's approaches to countryside preservation and interpretation in the past, present and future - Target documents	Structured
	Alison Platt	Learning and Interpretation Officer	- Find out more about the Trust's education and interpretation strategies in the North West - Target documents on NW education policy	Structured and semi-structured
	Jane Watson	Customer Management	- Find out about marketing strategies and visitor management in the North West	Semi-structured
Borrowdale	Shirley Muir	Property Manager	- Negotiate access to undertake visitor survey at Derwentwater - Find out about local archives and information	Semi-structured
	John Amos*	Roving Recruiter and Warden	- Find out about visitor patterns and work of Roving Recruiters	Unstructured, Informal
	Steve Lloyd	Roving Recruiter and Warden	- Find out about visitor patterns and work of Roving Recruiters	Unstructured, Informal
NE Region	Liz Fisher*	Area Manager, Tyne and Wear and County Durham	- Learn more about the origins and evolution of the Newcastle Inner City Project (NICP) - Gauge how research may feed into the work of the Trust	Semi-structured
	Gerald New	Property Manager, NICP	- Learn more about the future aims and plans of the Newcastle Inner City Project	Semi-structured
	Ken Gardener*	Former warden of Gibside, now working for NT in NE Region	- Get a sense of Gibside's recent past - Learn about the origins and evolution of the Newcastle Inner City Project	Unstructured
Gibside	Tony Walton	Property Manager	- Negotiate access to carrying out visitor survey at Gibside - Learn about the work going on at Gibside	Semi-structured
	Tony Dawson*	Warden	- Learn about history and features of the site as well as contemporary use	Unstructured Transect and tour of Gibside
	Sandra Ellis	Education and Community Officer	- Find out more about education work and further plans to increase community involvement	Semi-structured
	Lydia Price	Visitor Services Manager	- Negotiate access to undertake survey - Learn about visitor trends	Unstructured

The asterisks mark longer-serving employees of the National Trust

Appendix 4

Visitor survey

Date:/...../.....	Location:	LD / Gib	Individual / Couple
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A YOUR VISIT: To begin with, please give details of your visit today	
1	Roughly how many times have you visited this particular site in the past 12 months? 1. Only today 2. 2-11 times 3. Monthly 4. Weekly 5. Daily
2	What are the main reasons you have come here today? [circle up to 3 answers] 1. Enjoyable day out 2. Relax / peace +quiet 3. Walk/ walk the dog 4. Rambling/ hill climbing 5. Fresh air 6. Education / learning 7. Exercise / health 8. Special event: 9. Particular activity: 10. Other:
3	How did you originally come to know about this place? 1. Visited as child 2. Live/d in area. 3. NT member 4. School /education 5. Word of mouth 6. Always known 7. Publicity (TV, leaflet) 8. Other
4	Where have you travelled from today? City/ town/village: County:
5	Are you 1. On a day trip from home 2. Visiting while on holiday/ staying in the area 3. Other?
6	How many people, including you, are in your group today? 1. 1 2. 2 3. 3-5 4. 6-9 5. 10+
7	Do you think this site is an important part of the English countryside? 1. Very important 2. Quite important 3. Not very important 4. Unimportant
8	How important do you think this place is to English national identity? 1. Very important 2. Quite important 3. Not very important 4. Unimportant
9	Could you say why?
10	What words would you use to describe this place to someone else?

B COUNTRYSIDE AND ACCESS	
1	What does the term 'countryside' mean to you? 1. Open spaces 2. Peace/ quiet 3. Fresh air 4. Few cars/ traffic 5. Few buildings 6. Beauty 7. Few people 8. Trees/ birds 9. Rural 10. Other:
2	How important is it for you to visit the countryside? 1. Very important [go to 2.1] 2. Quite important [go to 2.1] 3. Not very important 4. Unimportant
2.1	Where do you think your interest in the countryside comes from? 1. Visited as child 2. Live/d in countryside 3. Family 4. Friends 5. Job 6. School 7. Change from city 8. Gardening 9. Other:
3	Roughly how often do you visit the countryside per year? 1. 1- 11 times a year 2. Monthly 3. Weekly 4. Daily
4	What features or qualities of the countryside do you most value? 1. Natural beauty/ landscape 2. Historic interest/ heritage 3. Peace + quiet 4. Space for leisure activities 5. Nature/ wildlife 6. Other:
5	What are the main activities that you enjoy in the countryside? 1. Long walks/ hiking 2. Short walks/ strolling 3. Active outdoor pursuits e.g cycling 4. Sit + enjoy 5. Visit stately homes 6. Picnic 7. Other
6	In your experience, who do you think traditionally visits the countryside? [Circle options that apply] 1. Everyone 2. Men 3. Women 4. Working class 5. Middle class 6. Young 7. Elderly 8. Poor 9. Wealthy 10. Privileged 11. Disadvantaged 12. White 13. Ethnic minorities 14. Able bodied 15. Disabled 16. Couples 17. Retired 18. Families 19: Other:

C COUNTRYSIDE, IDENTITY AND THE NATIONAL TRUST: Your opinions matter

	<i>[Please state how much you agree or disagree with the following statements]</i>	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	No opinion	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Comments
1	The countryside matters to me and is an important part of my identity	1	2	3	4	5	
2	The English countryside improves my everyday quality of life	1	2	3	4	5	
3	I feel safe, welcome and at home in the countryside	1	2	3	4	5	
4	I consider myself to be a country person	1	2	3	4	5	
5	I consider myself to be fairly knowledgeable about the countryside	1	2	3	4	5	
6	The countryside is a space for recreation and leisure	1	2	3	4	5	
7	The countryside is idyllic	1	2	3	4	5	
8	The countryside is an important part of English national heritage and identity	1	2	3	4	5	
9	The northern countryside is different from the southern countryside in England	1	2	3	4	5	
10	I prefer to visit open countryside than country houses or landscaped gardens	1	2	3	4	5	
11	The countryside appeals to all cultures, to everyone equally	1	2	3	4	5	
12	The English countryside is multicultural	1	2	3	4	5	
13	I often think about the issue of ethnic identity in the countryside	1	2	3	4	5	
14	I rarely think about my ethnic identity	1	2	3	4	5	
15	Race and ethnic identity matter in the countryside	1	2	3	4	5	
16	Racism is a problem in the English countryside	1	2	3	4	5	
17	The National Trust is relevant to me	1	2	3	4	5	
18	The National Trust is an important part of English national identity	1	2	3	4	5	
19	The National Trust is a multicultural organisation that represents the diversity of England	1	2	3	4	5	
20	The National Trust should encourage a broader range of people to visit their properties	1	2	3	4	5	
21	The National Trust needs to represent English heritage in new ways	1	2	3	4	5	

D YOUR VIEWS ABOUT THE NATIONAL TRUST

1	What images or impressions come to mind when you think about the National Trust?						
2	Who do you think the National Trust tends to appeal to? <i>[Circle as many or few options as you wish]</i>						
	1. Everyone	2. Men	3. Women	4. Working class	5. Middle class		
	6. Young	7. Elderly	8. Poor	9. Wealthy	10. Privileged		
	11. Disadvantaged	12. White	13. Ethnic minorities	14. Able bodied	15. Disabled		
	16. Couples	17. Retired	18. Families	19. Other:			
3	Are you a member of the National Trust?			1. Yes <i>[go to 3.2]</i>		2. No <i>[3.1]</i>	
3.1	What has prevented you from joining the National Trust?						
	1. No need	2. Not interested	3. Don't know enough about it	4. Too expensive	5. Support other organisations	6. Wouldn't use enough	7. Other:
3.2	How long have you been a member of the National Trust?						
	1. 0-2 years		2. 3-5 years		3. 6-9 years		4. 10-19 years
							5. 20+ years

E ABOUT YOU: Finally, a few questions to check the survey covers a fair cross-section of society							
All your details will be kept strictly confidential							
1	Gender			1. Female	2. Male		
2	What is your age group?						
	1. < 18	2. 18- 24	3. 25- 34	4. 35- 44	5. 45- 54	6. 55- 64	7. 65- 74
3	Do you live in the city, the suburbs or the country ?						
	1. Big city	2. Suburbs	3. Small city or town	4. Country village	5. Farm, or house in the country		
4	Would you prefer to live anywhere else?						
	1. No	2. Big city	3. Suburbs	4. Small city/ town	5. Country village	6. Farm/ in the country	
5	Where did you live for the majority of your childhood ?						
	1. Big city	2. Suburbs	3. Small city/ town	4. Country village	5. Farm, or house in the country	6. Mixture	7. Other:
6	What is your nationality?						
7	What is your ethnicity?						
8	What is your religion?						
	1. None	2. Christian	3. Muslim	4. Hindu	5. Buddhist	6. Jewish	7. Sikh
9	Do you consider yourself to be			1. Able-bodied	2. Disabled, please specify:		
10	What educational qualifications do you have?						
	1. None	2. School/ college qualifications	3. Degree level or higher		4. Other:		
11	What is your working status?						
	1. Employed full time	2. Employed part time	3. Self employed	4. Full time home duties	5. Retired	6. Unemployed	7. Full time education
12	What is the occupation (or former occupation if retired) of the chief income earner of your household?						
	1. Higher managerial, administrative or professional	2. Immediate managerial, administrative or professional	3. Supervisory or clerical and junior administrative or professional	4. Skilled manual workers/ technical	5. Semi and unskilled manual workers	6. State pensioners, etc., with no other income earner	

F FURTHER COMMENTS: All your comments are welcomed

1	Are there any other comments you would like to make?
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Thank you very much taking part in this survey

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