

The Cinematic and Historic Weight of *Stone of Destiny*

Stone of Destiny undoubtedly has earned a place within Scottish film history as a controversial film, not only for its subject matter, but for its reception at home and abroad. Those non-Scots who see the film on DVD might question just why this seemingly innocent entertainment gained so much notoriety in 2008 for its politics and role as Scotland's cultural representative to the cinema-going world. Several sociocultural issues—from the Scottish political environment in 2008 to the director's and lead actors' nationalities to the needs of so many Scottish businesses, including the film industry as well as local companies—combined to create a perfect storm of controversy surrounding what, on the surface, seems to be a pleasant, good-but-not-great film.

At its official premiere at the Edinburgh International Film Festival (EIFF) in June 2008, *Stone of Destiny* was billed both as a nationalist film and “an uplifting account of the theft in the 1950s of the Scottish coronation stone from Westminster Abbey” (Cornwell, “Move Proves”). It is certainly a different kind of “political film” than many audiences are used to seeing and, indeed, Canadian writer/director Charles Martin Smith denied that the film's initial *raison d'être* was to become a political statement. *Stone of Destiny* thus bridges both popular film and politics, currently popular cinema and history. Throughout 2008, the film involved more Scots in their country's popular culture by making *Stone of Destiny* a hot topic in the

local media (as the actual Stone had been in the 1950s), but it also became a touchstone for international popular culture because of its (and often its actors' or writer/director's) presence at film festivals around the world.

In an interview before the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), where the film was selected for the prestigious closing night gala, Smith (also an actor in Hollywood films) emphasized that “[w]hat I didn’t realize when we first started this was the politics of it. I sort of thought of it as a movie about young people overcoming big obstacles, sticking together and pulling something off . . . Not only that, I always was making the film for an international audience” (Bradley). Timing is everything, however, and *Stone of Destiny* came on the scene at a time when Scottish nationalism was heating up again. Smith noted that “There was a lot of objection to the politics of the movie, which I’m sorry about. I didn’t intend it to be a political statement. But it is. . . There’s a lot about Scottish politics in it. A lot about Scottish culture that to them was overly obvious. I felt I had to do that for audiences that didn’t know Scotland” (Bradley).

To understand the significance of the film’s title, one must know at least a brief history of the Stone of Scone, also called the Stone of Destiny, and its sociopolitical significance to Scots. For a thousand years, the coronation of every Scottish, English, or British monarch took place on this Stone. Scottish ruler John Balliol’s coronation was the last (in 1292) before the Stone was taken in 1296 by Edward I. To help crush Scottish spirit and bring the northern nation under England’s dominion, Edward II took the Stone to London, where it long resided in Westminster Abbey. Most recently the Stone was integral to Queen Elizabeth II’s coronation.

In 1950, a group of university students “repatriated” (to Scots, or “stole,” according to the English) the Stone away to Scotland. Nevertheless, the recovered Stone once more was sent back to England. In 1996 it was returned to Edinburgh for the foreseeable future, although it is still the property of the British government. The Stone of Destiny remains a symbol of Scottish nationalism and to many Scots is the nation’s greatest cultural icon (“Stone of Destiny,” *Historic U.K.*).

At the time of the film’s release in 2008, the Scottish National Party (SNP) was experiencing a resurgence of popularity, and Scotland seemed to be gradually moving toward independence. Although the faltering global economy and the results of the 2010 U.K. general elections have helped diminish the most recent nationalist movement, in spring and summer 2008

Scotland's independence was perceived as a real possibility.

In 2007, the SNP doubled its number of local council seats and became the dominant party in local politics. In the 2007 Scottish national election, the SNP ended 50 years of Labour Party rule by winning 47 of 129 seats in the Scottish Parliament. The SNP, however, was unsuccessful in forming a coalition government, and the gains made in 2007 have since been superseded by the party's results in the U.K. general elections in 2010. Despite winning approximately 20 percent of the popular vote in 2010, the SNP gained only 10 percent of the number of Scottish seats within the British Parliament ("SNP Begin"). Although Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron's ancestry is Scottish, he was born a Londoner, and his politics are very different from the promoted aims of the SNP.

In 2008, the increased interest in Scottish nationalism split the *Stone of Destiny* audience into oppositional groups: Scots or non-Scots (whether English or a largely apolitical international audience) and SNP supporters or detractors. In addition, this high-profile Scottish film attracted the attention of multiple other groups, many who had a vested interest in the film's success: Scottish Screen, the film board partially funding the film; Scottish cast members trying to promote local talent; and the tourism industry and local businesses hoping both to attract more filmmakers to the region and to pique international travelers' interest in Scotland as a prime holiday spot. With so many varied interests monitoring the film's reception and box office, *Stone of Destiny* early on became weighed down by a plethora of expectations and different definitions of its success.

In contrast to the swirl of controversy surrounding the film, its premise is straightforward: University student Ian Hamilton, disgruntled by Scotland's continuing slide into British political obscurity, plans to drive to London, remove the Stone of Destiny from Westminster Abbey on Christmas Eve 1950, and repatriate the Stone to Scotland. In this endeavor he is aided by three equally fervent accomplices: Kay Matheson, Gavin Vernon, and Alan Stuart. Their daring, if inexpertly planned, deed gains national notoriety and helps unify Scots by revitalizing national pride. Although unwilling to participate in the event itself, Bill Craig assisted in the planning and, later, in moving the Stone where authorities could find it when the time was deemed right. The film shows the five "conspirators" being hauled away by police, although none was sentenced.

At a pivotal time when many Scots believed independence loomed nearer, the release of this film (October 10, 2008 in Scotland; December 12 in the rest of the U.K.; February 20, 2009 in Canada) increased public interest in the Stone's history. Scots once more began remembering not only what happened in 1950 but in 1999, with devolution and the Scottish parliament. In 2007, the rising power of the Scottish National Party (SNP) increased the urgency of its plan for an independence referendum. Ian Hamilton, the man behind the Stone's repatriation in 1950, believes he may yet see Scottish independence in his lifetime. In 2008, surrounding the film's highly publicized local and international festival premieres (and in 2009, around the DVD release and further reviews and commentary), Hamilton's memoir gained additional attention as the book on which the film was based.

Instead of being an incendiary or a revolutionary film about a symbol of independence and nationhood, *Stone of Destiny* is a gentle reminder of what can happen when people, particularly the young, decide to take a stand to protect their freedom. Nevertheless, the film gathered quite a bit of attention (especially before its EIFF reviews) about its potential use as a "nationalist" film. Advance publicity in the U.K. included articles claiming that

nationalists may try to hijack new film *Stone of Destiny* as a rallying cry for Scottish independence . . . but the producer claims it's bigger than that . . . Everybody will come out of this film very proud to be Scottish. But you don't have to be a Scottish nationalist to enjoy this movie. It's David v Goliath - the little guy overcoming the big guy. The movie doesn't knock England. It is completely feel-good. It'll make you laugh. It'll make you cry. (Fulton, "New Film")

Even in December 2008, when the film gained wider release throughout the U.K., the mixed reviews emphasized Scottish politics. The *Daily Record* listed this brief review within its holiday movie guide: "Given a festive release to take advantage of stirrings of patriotism common in many Scots around New Year—and the fact the plot is set around historical events which took place at Christmas—this is one of the best Scottish films to be made in recent years" ("At the Movies"). Predictably, concerning reviews for this film, other newspapers took a different approach, calling it "a rather cuddlier tale of disputed nationalism" and "a daredevil, real-life story of a dedicated band of nationalists who broke into Westminster Abbey in the early hours of Christmas morning and lugged out the all-important lump of

granite,” a tale unfortunately deemed “turgid” and “careless” in this retelling (Ide). Such seems the fate of *Stone of Destiny*, a film that cannot escape its nationalist origins, especially in the U.K.; every review, whether pro or con, made a comment about Scottish politics or nationalism.

Unlike truly political films made around the same time, such as the dramatic and highly politicized *The Kite Runner* (2007), a film about friendship that put the lives of its child actors at risk in Afghanistan; any Michael Moore film critical of the U.S. or Bush administration, including 2007’s *Sicko*; or Oliver Stone’s meant-to-be-heart-wrenching *World Trade Center* (2006) or clearly political *W* (2008), *Stone of Destiny* takes a different tack. Even the much earlier *Braveheart*, revealed during the week *Stone of Destiny* premiered at the EIFF to be Scots’ all-time favorite Scottish film (Smith), made a political statement about a series of historic events; its bloody battles and graphic martyrdom, however, place it in a very different entertainment context than the kinder, gentler *Stone of Destiny*.

In addition to the politically-themed film reviews, critics often attacked the film’s structure, including plot points, tone, and dialogue. One Edinburgh International Film Festival reviewer caustically summarized the critical reception:

American actor-turned-director Charles Martin Smith’s feeble caper about the Scottish nationalist students who stole the coronation stone back from Westminster Abbey was by far the worst film of the festival: a thoroughly embarrassing and badly out-of-date slice of tartan tweeness, which served only to demonstrate that the otherwise noble impulse to showcase national product shouldn’t come at the expense of all quality control. (Harkness)

Reviews like this contradicted the public’s perception of the film; *Stone of Destiny* received a “much preferred” rating by audiences polled after its two EIFF screenings. After the first 10 days of the festival and based on 18 of 21 films for which audiences could vote for their favorite, *Stone of Destiny* was ranked seventh (Pendreigh, “Audience on Edge of Hate”). After all votes had been tallied at the end of the festival, *Stone of Destiny* was ranked 8 out of 21 films, and 48 percent of the audience attending either screening awarded it 4 stars, or “unmissable” (McKinlay).

True to the producers’ description of a “feel-good film,” *Stone of Destiny* as an entertainment does not seem like the type of film to generate so much political commentary or potentially to be remembered as more

than a pleasant cinematic diversion. It has a relaxed pace and linear plot, which give it an old-fashioned feel appropriate for its 1950 setting. The director looks back nostalgically to a simpler era when Westminster Abbey was guarded by a single night watchman, when snogging in the front seat, even if only as a way to fool the police about the students' true actions at the cathedral, was a breach of conspirator Kay Matheson's moral code. Even the political act of taking and then returning the Stone to Scotland seems more of a uni prank during the Christmas holiday than the jumpstart of nationalist sentiment. Although the film automatically attracts political commentary, its aim is clearly to entertain, even if it also ends up making a statement.

As a film, *Stone of Destiny* struggled under the weight of so many divergent groups' expectations and, more than other recent Scottish films, carried the responsibility of illuminating the world about Scotland's history and future. Its varied reception, exemplified by premieres at the Edinburgh International Film Festival and the Toronto International Film Festival, raises several questions for those who study film: How effective is *Stone of Destiny* as a film—as entertainment—as well as an opportunity to make a political statement? Is Smith's approach as writer or director the correct one to make the story of the Stone understood and remembered not only in Scotland but internationally? How will it hold up in world cinema or when compared with other recent Scottish films? Does it matter if a film is not a blockbuster as long as it has political value? Ultimately, will *Stone of Destiny* be important not as a film but as yet another footnote to history that instigated greater events—or is it even fair to put so much weight on what, after all, is a “feel-good film”? Film critics and the audiences who viewed *Stone of Destiny* at EIFF or TIFF probably would disagree about answers to these questions.

Significance of the Director-Writer's Nationality

Writer/Director Charles Martin Smith is perhaps better known to audiences for his roles in such U.S. blockbusters as *American Graffiti* (1973) and *The Untouchables* (1987), although more recently he won acclaim for directing films as diverse as *Air Bud* (1997) and *The Snow Walker* (2003), which was nominated for direction and screenwriting at the 2004 Canadian

Leo and Genie Awards. Smith collaborated with producer Rob Merilees of Vancouver's Infinity Features on both *The Snow Walker* and *Stone of Destiny*.

For more than a quarter century, Smith has called Canada home, and he clearly was awarded native son status in reviews of *Stone of Destiny*. Although many critics considered Smith's writing and direction of this film as less than successful, film festival and general audiences seemed to enjoy Smith's work, and DVD buyers' reviews were most often positive. (By August 2010, for example, 9 Amazon.com reviewers gave the DVD 4 [3 reviewers] or 5 [6 reviewers] stars; 1 of 2 Amazon.ca reviewers gave it 5 stars [the other, 3 stars]; the majority of Amazon.co.uk reviewers [7 of 8] gave the DVD 4 or 5 stars [the other, 1 star].) No matter how much or little critics like *Stone of Destiny*, however, Smith's Canadian connection often comes up in the press, especially in professional reviews published in Scotland and Canada.

In Scotland, critics wondered why a Canadian (even one who brought plenty of funding with him) was the one to bring this story to the screen; in Canada, his interest in an international story was lauded. In either case, Smith's "non-Scottishness" led Scottish critics to fault him for playing up national stereotypes. Despite Smith's love of the story, his positive comments about Scottish crew, cast members, and the country in general, and his eagerness to make the film, he just could not compensate for the fact that he is a non-Scot. "You can tell he's a fan of Scotland, but no matter how much he loves our country or the story, the film still feels like a nostalgia trip from a tourist's perspective" came from the *Daily Record* shortly before the film gained wide release in Scotland. "Thanks to tartan, our accents, the scenery, and Mel Gibson, we Scots are susceptible to cliché Hollywood interpretation. . . . If I was to apply the same principle to American culture, I'd surely be right in thinking that everyone from the deep south plays the banjo, wears dungarees and calls their first-born son Elmer" ("Stone of Destiny," *Daily Record*). To U.S. citizens, this comment about the South might seem horribly out of touch, whether from a social or a cinematic perspective of what it means to be Southern. To Scots, the director's romantic depiction of rolling green hills (even in December), plenty of tartan, and 1950s' family life and morality is far removed from the modern urban reality of Glasgow or Edinburgh (although some Scottish critics and actors like the fact that this film presents Scotland as something more family friendly

than does *Trainspotting* [1996] or *Red Road* [2006]). The point remains that an “outsider” like a Canadian director may not be able to capture the nuances of Scottish culture, even in a film depicting events in 1950 that already will seem “ancient history” to many audiences.

Stereotypes aside, Smith clearly became enamored with the story and, during the course of researching and writing the screenplay, became “one of the world’s leading experts on the Stone.” During interviews, he easily explained the significance of the Stone of Scone and the many theories about its authenticity. He also cinematically told a story that, perhaps surprising to non-Scots, not everyone in Scotland knows. Smith explained that he “found that most Scottish people, virtually all the Scots [he] talked to over a certain age, know the story. With the younger generation, it can be a bit hit and miss” (“Movie Q&A”). Thus, as a scriptwriter, he needed to appeal both to those familiar with the basic plot and those, at home or internationally, who were new to the story. The undertaking, for many reasons, would become much more controversial than Smith ever could have anticipated, no matter how carefully he researched the subject.

Quibbles over Casting

As one critic succinctly noted, “*Stone of Destiny* is a feature film from Canada, the first country to address the subject of modern Scottish nationalism.” After admitting that “a few Scots loiter on the sidelines,” the inevitable question was raised: “But shouldn’t a film about Scottish nationalism star a Scotsman?” (Harrison). Of course, the critic later admitted, many films involving Scotland or Scotsmen (e.g., *Braveheart* [1995], *Rob Roy* [1995], *Highlander* [1986]) starred actors not from Scotland, but this question about casting plagued *Stone of Destiny* in the U.K. or Commonwealth press. Even a more recent review in the *New Zealand Herald* noted the film’s casting is “slightly ironic [in] that the two main roles in this feel-good celebration of Scottish nationalism are English and American” (Calder).

The U.K. critics’ comments centered on two aspects of casting: the actor’s nationality (and ability to pull off a Scottish accent) and age. Lead (English) actor Charlie Cox (Ian Hamilton) caught most of the flak for his “painfully bad Scottish accent,” but even Glaswegian Robert Carlyle was faulted for “inexplicably doing an accent that rivals Cox’s in the grating

stakes” (Gallagher). Although non-Scots might not notice the presence or lack of a specific regional Scottish accent, U.K. reviewers certainly did. American Kate Mara (Kay Matheson) largely escaped accent assessment but was frequently referred to by nationality, and, when evaluating her performance, critics questioned why an American actor was cast in a Scottish role. (This is not a fair criticism, although it is a common argument for casting “real” [insert nationality, race, or sexual orientation] in a particular role. Critics that week did not admonish Scottish James McAvoy for playing a Chicagoan in *Wanted*.) Nevertheless, because the film may come to represent Scottish history not only during the film’s theatrical release but in cinematic history, some critics and filmgoers questioned the long-term credibility of these casting choices.

Billy Boyd and Stephen McCole bore the brunt of another criticism—age. Although Boyd (Bill Craig) could not be faulted for his accent, he was deemed just this side of too old to play a university student, even one just finishing his second degree. The same problem was noted of casting McCole as student muscle man Gavin Vernon; the actor received the uncharitable comment that he had to “dye his hair from grey to ginger” (“Festival Cuts”) to play the role. Boyd handsomely fits author Hamilton’s description of his friend Bill Craig: “He had charm and ability . . . Indeed in the fun and frolic of a rectorial election he led me into much temptation . . . , and together we got into all sorts of trouble, which was not real trouble because he had the useful facility of knowing how not to be caught . . . [H]e was small in stature, but he had a commanding presence” (Hamilton, *Stone of Destiny* 14). Although the actors failed to look like students in their early 20s, their performances were nonetheless effective, and they fit Hamilton’s description of the real people behind the story.

Perhaps the best cast surprise was Ciaron Kelly as Alan Stuart. His age and longish hair make him look more typically like a student, but in one scene he easily surpasses any shy-guy stereotype. He convinces a hulking bulk of a drifter to give the students back the Stone they had thought well hidden in a field. Kelly’s easy grace not only in identifying with a man so physically his opposite but poetically explaining the Stone’s importance helps the audience understand just why the Stone—and its return to Scotland—is significant. Kelly well represents the next generation of Scottish actors but does not yet have global name recognition.

Whether an English, American, and Scottish cast guided by a Canadian/American director can adequately portray a now-romanticized event in a film suitable not only for local but international audiences, not only in 2008 but for all time, seemed a highly debatable point in most reviews. Even if Smith intended that his film primarily be an enjoyable caper, Scottish audiences' expectations for this film forced it to meet a higher standard than escapist entertainment.

Promotion of National Virtues

As noted by its selection for several international film festivals, *Stone of Destiny* represents some positive qualities associated with Scots. Although the film shows them as being subsumed under English culture as part of the U.K., they struggle but ultimately succeed in maintaining a distinctive national identity, which the 1950 event helped them achieve. Despite the comedic aspects of the "caper," the film also illustrates the students' commitment to a cause, inventiveness under duress, and solidarity with each other. These young people clearly love their country enough to do something for it, and their repatriation of the Stone is completed without bloodshed or violence. Their story, as told in this film, promotes the value that one individual, or a small group of individuals, can work together to overcome what others see as overwhelming obstacles and to stand up for their beliefs. Audiences outside Scotland may be more likely to see the "forest" of these virtues rather than the "trees" of casting issues or the director's nationality that some Scots feel detract from their national image.

In his blog published the week before the film debuted at the EIFF and his book was republished, Ian Hamilton summarized the positive nature of the characters portrayed in the film:

In this film there are no car chases, no explosions, no swear words, no sex, there are no special effects, no guns, no one even gets a sock on the jaw. It is about people being kind to one another in adversity and winning through for a high ideal. No wonder these hardened film moguls at Cannes stood and cheered and signed it up. They had seen the thing that the modern cinema has lost. They had seen the decency of young people trying to do something brave. I am terribly glad I was one of those

young people all those years ago. (Hamilton, “Stone of Destiny”)

Hamilton’s perception of the story equals that of the many audience members with whom I shared the Scottish and Canadian premieres (and who voted in the EIFF polls) and illustrates the division between the general audiences’ enjoyment of the film and its political or cinematic critiques.

The Film and Politics at Home

The Scottish National Party seemed to have no qualms about the critical reception, either before or after the film’s official premiere at EIFF. They homed in on the film’s topic: the theft or return (depending on one’s point of view) of the Scottish coronation stone. Taking this symbol of nationalism was a patriotic act for the four students in 1950. Taking the film as a political touchstone was the SNP’s act to encourage public sentiment for independence.

Culture Minister Linda Fabiani proposed—and led the discussion several times—to have *Stone of Destiny* shown in the Holyrood debating chamber. Scottish Parliament vetoed her petition because the film has “political overtones” and its message is considered as more than political history. *The Scotsman* quoted a confidential report to the bipartisan Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body summarizing the reasoning behind the veto: “Even though the film is being considered as a comedy, we are advised it will have political overtones which the agreed criteria for events exclude it from being screened in the debating chamber” (Swanson). The SNP’s next option was to screen the film at Holyrood during August’s Festival of Politics, but the screening would not be allowed to take place in an arena of formal political debate. During the festival, however, no notice of the film appeared in the schedule, and the SNP must have decided against this option for a screening.

Months later, in early October 2008, the press surrounding the Scottish general release of *Stone of Destiny* generated equally emotional commentary, much of it political. Cancer-stricken Sir Neil MacCormack, whose father John was one of the founders of the SNP (portrayed in the film by Robert Carlyle), watched the film in a private screening at home. He and his wife saw the film with the director and Ian Hamilton and his wife. In

anticipation of the event, MacCormack told *Scotland on Sunday* that he planned to watch the film “in context. I won’t be saying: ‘Oh, here’s a film about my dad and there’s the Stone in it as well.’ More the other way round – here’s the film of this remarkable event . . . I am interested in the whole story. I was quite tied up in it as a child at the time” (Pendreigh, “Premiere”). MacCormack’s childhood recollections of gathering around the radio to hear the news and the resultant cheering sound much like the director’s scenes of the aftermath, and such a poignant news article on the weekend of the film’s general release in Scotland was sure not only to generate interest in the film but remind readers of the SNP’s history.

Other articles promoting the film in Scotland described it as much more than a heist caper or comedy. A few days before the MacCormack story was published, another article described the film this way:

Frustrated by political apathy and Scotland’s diminishing sense of nationhood, Hamilton sought to reawaken Scottish national pride and spur his generation into action. For hundreds of years, the English had jealously guarded the Scottish coronation stone, the Stone of Destiny – an ancient block of sandstone symbolically used in coronation ceremonies which Edward I took from Perth in the 13th century. Hamilton led a group of university friends to London to make a dramatic gesture to reinstate Scotland’s place on the political map. (“Stone of Destiny Set to Cause a Stir”)

The film—and media coverage of it—prompted emotional responses in local newspapers shared online around the world. One Edinburgh resident protested the use of “thieves” to describe the students who took the Stone: “Bearing in mind the stone was taken by King Edward I in 1296 from Scone Abbey, maybe ‘reclaimed’ or ‘repatriated’ is a more appropriate description” (Orr). Editorials such as this one indicate that the film, and critics’ reviews, are being carefully read and considered, at least in Scotland. Future Movies’ website report from the EIFF noted that “It’s doubtful that the event had quite the national impact that this flag-waving (and at points unbearably cheesy) comedy drama portrays, but it still seems a story worthy of big screen treatment” (Gallagher). On the day after the film’s EIFF premiere, the *Sunday Post* headline (albeit on page 5) announced “Story of the Stone Destined to be a Big-Screen Blockbuster” and added that even rain “couldn’t dampen Scottish ardour at the world premiere of

the eagerly awaited film” (Bowron 5). Whatever the reviewer’s or filmgoer’s personal response to *Stone of Destiny*, it generated plenty of commentary.

Politics naturally came up when the actors were interviewed prior to the EIFF premiere in June, as well as the film’s opening across Scotland in October. Robert Carlyle (John MacCormick) wanted the audience to be as moved by the story as he was, but he stopped short of making a stand for or against independence. He, like fellow Glaswegian Billy Boyd, prefers to live and often work in Scotland, although his career takes him anywhere in the world, which may make him want to avoid making overt political statements (“This Slice of History”). (At the conclusion of the 2008 EIFF, Carlyle was recruited as a patron of the festival, thus becoming “a key factor in maintaining the event’s profile and network of contacts, drawing new films, stars, and film-makers to the city” [Cornwall, “From Sir Sean”].)

Boyd frequently talked with the press as part of the film’s publicity, but he, too, mostly kept safely away from expressing his own opinions for or against independence. Instead, he explained the students’ motivation for taking the Stone as a desperate act by people being ignored. He believes in the importance of telling local stories, not just making big Hollywood films, and the story of the Stone is indeed an important “local” story. When asked in general about his political ideals, however, he focused on global issues like climate change (Mottram 27). A few days before the film went into wide release in Scotland, Boyd elaborated that the story should fire up national pride but noted that Hamilton, who was on set every day, would think the Stone itself was not the issue. Rather, it “was doing something that mattered. He just wanted Scotland’s voice to be heard. He just felt he had to do something. At the time he felt taking the Stone was the biggest thing he could do” (Reid).

In one interview, however, Boyd opened up a bit more about his political ideas but still did not commit either for or against Scottish independence:

I love Scotland, and I choose to live in Glasgow. I want it to be the best city and country we can make it. If you are talking about independence to achieve that, I feel there are a lot more questions to be asked. Small countries running their own affairs is normally a good idea, especially if it’s joined by something bigger such as the European Union. But we really have to think why we want it and what we want to get from it. With budgets for The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and the Science

Centre being cut, what kind of country do we want? We want great music, great art but more importantly, we want great housing and health. (Fulton, "Exclusive")

Shortly before the film's October release in Scotland, Charlie Cox (Ian Hamilton) admitted that "he knew nothing of the story beforehand, [but] having learned it, . . . feels it contributed to the movement for Scottish independence. 'Although it didn't have a direct impact into the Scottish government, it was certainly a huge catalyst towards all of that.'" Like Smith, Cox did not think he was making a political film, adding that "'a lot of this is by chance; filming it now is interesting because the nationalist party are in power'" ("Stone of Destiny Set").

Promotion of *Stone of Destiny* gave the actors a chance to espouse their political concerns, whether narrowed to Scotland or broadened to the entire world, but they did not make a case for or against nationalism as the focus of their remarks. Instead, they pinned their hopes on *Stone of Destiny* attracting attention because of its history and the quality of the human story behind it, rather than the film gaining notoriety because of current political controversy.

In the 2008 reissue of Ian Hamilton's memoir about taking the Stone (now retitled *Stone of Destiny* to coincide with the film's title and, presumably, to attract the attention of a new generation of readers and filmgoers), he emphasizes that the event occurred long ago and seems to him to have taken place in another lifetime. Nearly 60 years after Hamilton's daring act, watching scenes being filmed in the Abbey is more memorable to him than the real event. The film's recent publicity and "glittering premiere" brought then-82-year-old Hamilton back into the public spotlight and made him something of a local hero in Argyllshire (Walker). The memory may fade, but the ramifications of that fateful night remain. During festival week in Edinburgh, Hamilton frequently found himself at the center of attention for being what he claims is a "footnote" in Scottish history, but he is still glad to be remembered for that daring act, even if he is happier to be better known for his long legal career.

Especially at home, *Stone of Destiny* never was judged only on the basis of its entertainment value. Simply the way the film was heralded by the government and given media attention before the EIFF marks *Stone of Destiny* as more than mere entertainment, no matter how well it ultimately succeeded or failed as such in the marketplace. In the press surrounding

the EIFF's red carpet premiere on June 21, the actors frequently expressed how proud they were of this film because of its story, and the director—at both screenings—prefaced the presentation by explaining how long it had taken to bring the story to screen and how pleased he was to debut the film in Edinburgh, where the Stone now resides. He expressed his gratitude to Ian Hamilton, who received applause as he stood before the audience and later shook hands with the actors; Hamilton, Smith praised, had become a friend as well as a collaborator on the film. Alan Stuart, another one of the four nationalists who appropriated the Stone, also received a warm welcome to the premiere.

Between June 21 and 23, when the film received a second screening, the government feted Hamilton, the cast, and director at a gala dinner, and Hamilton once again viewed the Stone, now “on loan” in Edinburgh Castle—an act he once vowed would not happen until Scotland received its independence. In the new edition of his book, which publisher Birlinn released during festival week, Hamilton explains that the nation is close enough now to independence that he felt all right about seeing the Stone again. It did not hurt that First Minister of Scotland Alex Salmond wrote an introduction to Hamilton's book or publicly commented in many articles about the Stone's questionable authenticity, further keeping the film in the public eye.

Commercial Benefits of a Successful Film: Tourism, Local Business, and Future Filmmaking

Although the film's possible political significance and use to incite independence were focal points in U.K. reviews, many businesspeople in Scotland also hoped that, politics aside, the film would generate more revenue for tourism, local business, and the film industry.

The curator of Arbroath Abbey, where pivotal scenes were filmed, hoped that audiences would want to visit such historic destinations, and a Glasgow film critic praised the film for making Glasgow look so lovely on film: “It has been a long time since the city looked this good on screen and Glasgow University and the surrounding areas are made to look truly stunning” (Greenwood). Such comments, plus old-fashioned images of Scotland's green hills (even shown during a driving sequence supposedly taking place in late December) and the credits overlaid with the unofficial national an-

them, “Flower of Scotland,” should attract filmgoers who like to travel. As well, the film industry hoped that such romantic depictions of the country would help attract other filmmakers.

Even local businesses benefitted from the film, not only during production but even a few years later. During late summer 2010, the Kirkcaldy’s classic vehicle show highly promoted two vintage cars that once belonged to English royalty (the Queen and Queen Mother). The vehicles also were touted as being featured in the “Hollywood film *Stone of Destiny*.” Local newspapers (which, of course, reach an international audience via the Internet) emphasized the film connection equally with the significance of the vehicles’ former owners (Shannon). In the two years since the film’s release, however, *Stone of Destiny* had become classified, by this newspaper at least, as a “Hollywood film,” not a Scottish one, perhaps more of a commentary on its high-profile media and film festival attention rather than its filming location. Corporate association with a Hollywood film, however, might be deliberate to indicate this company’s prestigious business of providing classic cars to future filmmakers as well as locals.

Part of the film’s funding came from public money through Scottish Screen, the film board deciding how many and which films would receive funding in 2008. In light of several films’, including *Stone of Destiny*’s, disappointing box office receipts, politicians criticized Scottish Screen’s funding decisions. This criticism of Scottish Screen continued even in 2010, when a new funding agency, Creative Scotland, took over. According to *The Scotsman*, “many in the film industry blame Scottish Screen for making bad funding decisions and repeatedly pouring public money into projects that have failed to materialise. Of £26.2 million handed out to local production companies since 2001 only £2.2m has been recouped from completed projects, such as *Stone of Destiny*” (“Art of the Matter”). Again, because of its high profile but less-than-stellar box office, the film remains a convenient target for critics of Scotland’s film industry, which had perhaps unreasonably high hopes for this film and others.

In April 2008, however, *Stone of Destiny* seemed a likely candidate to generate international interest and cash flow. The film quietly debuted at Cannes. Hoping to attract the interest of distributors, the producers showed the film on “Scotland day,” away from the main festival venue, and Rob Merilees from Infinity Films participated in a panel discussion about Scot-

tish films (“Scotland Day”). This gentle initial push into the international market nonetheless helped the film build momentum toward inclusion in several other international film festivals.

Several nations hoped to benefit from an international release. At Cannes, *Stone of Destiny* generated a fair amount of publicity and some good reviews, but Arclight Films, handling international sales, did not secure an international distributor. The film already had been scheduled for U.K.-Canadian release, as befitting the joint production efforts of Canadian Infinity Films and Scottish Screen. Canada’s Alliance Films handled distribution in Canada (Strauss). Scottish Screen found the film beneficial to showcase Scottish talent and locations, by which they hoped to attract more filmmakers to Scotland. Promotion of *Stone of Destiny* emphasized its entertaining story, but critics saved any political commentary until the film’s premiere in Edinburgh, most likely not wanting to scare off any distributors at Cannes who might want to invest in the production.

Success of Film Internationally

Stone of Destiny became a staple at international film festivals during the latter half of 2008. Around the world the film became better known as a “feel-good film,” more along the lines of Smith’s initial intentions. In addition to its brief exposure at the Cannes Film Festival and official debut at the EIFF, the film also appeared, in Canada alone, at the Toronto International Film Festival; Cinefest in Sudbury, ON; the Vancouver International Film Festival; and the Whistler, BC, Film Festival. In mid-October the film was shown during the Hamptons International Film Festival in New York, and before the end of the year, *Stone of Destiny* was shown at festivals as geographically distant from Scotland as Turkey, Argentina, and Dubai.

By late 2008, the film still had not secured distributorship outside the U.K. and Canada, although it had been released throughout the U.K. by the end of the year and was released in Canada in February 2009. Instead of a global theatrical distribution, the film went to DVD in the U.K. in March 2009, followed by release in formats suitable for North America. DVD reviews in Canada promoted the film as family entertainment, and sales were respectable but not exceptional.

Outside Canada and Scotland, *Stone of Destiny* became a true representative of Scotland and took its place to represent global cultural diversity; as such, it became more of a national product than a political statement or simple entertainment. The film was chosen to become part of Dubai's Cultural Bridge programming for its festival. In a press release highlighting the film festival, the programmer of the Cultural Bridge segment explained that "Our goal is to create a lasting impact, and to prove without doubt that one solitary person can move mountains. Seven of the films selected this year are based on true events, and the stories they tell will reach out to viewers by speaking of mutual humanity, compassion, and hope in the face of adversity" ("Everyday Heroes"). *Stone of Destiny's* theme of an individual, Hamilton, aided by his friends standing up to English authority in order to promote Scottish patriotism fit the bill; the film represented Scotland among a wide range of similarly categorized selections from Italy, South Africa, New Zealand, and Venezuela, among others.

In Argentina, at the San Luis Cine Film Festival early in November, *Stone of Destiny* competed against 17 films from Mexico, Japan, Spain, Argentina, Germany, Brazil, and Jordan for a \$50,000 prize to be divided between the winning film's director and producer. The international competition was steep, with the Jordanian film *Captain Abu Raed* already a winner of the Sundance Film Festival's World Cinema Audience Award (Newberry). The criterion for this festival was strictly the quality of the film, not its political or social commentary or even its ability to represent its culture.

In film festivals around the world, *Stone of Destiny* failed to win awards as an outstanding production, but it won the hearts of audiences for its uplifting "can-do" spirit. Without any political baggage, the film—judged only on its entertainment value—received average reviews from critics but above-average kudos from audiences.

Comparison with Other Scottish Films

In international release beyond film festivals, *Stone of Destiny* largely had to rely on the story, not actor name recognition or nationalism, to get audiences into the theatre or, later, to buy the DVD. As one young Canadian seated in front of me commented shortly before the TIFF screening,

Stone of Destiny does not have easily recognized actors, at least to North American audiences. Robert Carlyle, best known outside the U.K. for *The Full Monty* (1997) (prior to his more recent *Stargate Universe* television role), probably has the greatest name recognition, although U.S. audiences might remember Kate Mara's brief role in the controversial *Brokeback Mountain* (2005). Charlie Cox, Stephen McCole, and Ciaron Kelly are not household names (although Cox's roles in *Casanova* [2005] and *Stardust* [2007] gave him more international exposure). Scottish favorite (and tourism spokesman) Billy Boyd primarily is known for his role in *Lord of the Rings* (2001-2003), but at the Edinburgh premiere, his fans kept him far busier than any of his co-stars signing autographs. A contingent of U.S. and Canadian fans also attended the TIFF gala simply because Boyd had a role in the film. Nevertheless, the fan base for any one actor was not enough to boost sales significantly across the U.K. or Canada.

Industry-staple *Variety* doubted that the film would have international appeal, claiming "this unabashedly sentimental and outright anti-English pic is stodgy as a cheap haggis with nationalistic sentimentality. That will endear it to auds north of Hadrian's Wall, but ravage the pic's theatrical prospects in England. Offshore, 'Stone' may stir the hearts of kilt-carrying expats and descendants in ancillary" (Felperin).

Of course, *Stone of Destiny* also immediately faced comparison with *Braveheart*, an Academy Award-winning movie starring and produced by Mel Gibson, a megawatt Hollywood star with a huge budget and easier access to international film distribution. *Braveheart* won the hearts of not only Scots but international filmgoers, because of, not in spite of, its political message. Although it was released back in 1995, its presence is still felt in the Edinburgh tourist districts. During festival week 2008, a blue-faced Gibson-as-William-Wallace impersonator entertained the crowd just outside the entrance to Edinburgh Castle, not far from a statue of the real Wallace. Tourists from around the world, as well as Scots, embrace Gibson's version of Wallace as a symbol of Scottish identity.

Stone of Destiny will never be in that league. It cannot truly be compared with *Braveheart* in more than an apples-and-oranges way because of its budget (\$13 million U.S.), name recognition of cast, and genre. It is more of a small independent feature than an epic studio production, and, as such, it faced different challenges in finding distributors, appealing to a wide audience, and becoming recognized in its own right as an important Scottish

film.

Instead of fitting more easily with the political epic *Braveheart*, *Stone of Destiny* followed in the cinematic footsteps of recent “feel-good” small films shedding light on smaller events or segments of Scottish culture. In fact, one review commented that “If you liked *The Flying Scotsman*, you’ll like this” (Edwards).

Many of these films include the familiar faces of Scottish actors who may be recognized around the world for roles in larger films. A glance at the cast lists of such EIFF entries from recent years as *The Flying Scotsman* (2006) or *On a Clear Day* (2005), as well as *Stone of Destiny*, reveals repeated names like Billy Boyd (*Lord of the Rings*, *Master and Commander* [2003]), Robert Carlyle (*Trainspotting*, *The Full Monty*), Brian Cox (*Troy* [2004], *The Bourne Supremacy* [2004], *The Water Horse* [2007]), and Peter Mullan (*Trainspotting*, *The Magdalene Sisters* [2002], *Young Adam* [2003]). Although these actors also play roles in non-U.K. films as well as more typical “dark” Scottish fare, they increasingly are called upon to lend their talents to this newer generation of “uplifting” films, most set in modern times. These lighter films also namedrop problems like job redundancy, depression, and a general Scottish sense of feeling left out or slighted, but the characters overcome these and other challenges to find success, as well as love and happiness, by the end of the film.

The move away from darker themes to promote Scotland as a happier place to live (or visit) is welcomed by many who work in the industry as well as see film as a main way for potential tourists to get their first impressions of the country. During my stay in Glasgow in June 2008, several people were curious about my reasons for studying Scottish film because so many offerings are downright depressing. Even films claiming to be lighter fare, such as Dungeons and Dragons-themed *Gamerz* (2005) or American goodfellas-getting-to-know-Scotland *American Cousins* (2003), include scenes of bullying, fighting, drug use, and gunplay. *Stone of Destiny*’s Stephen McCole succinctly summed up the need for less gritty depictions of Scotland on film: “[*Stone of Destiny* is] a really important film, and I hope people get behind it. We need another big film in Scotland that’s not about junkies” (English).

The move toward less gritty realism is not always embraced as a positive. One reviewer described *Stone of Destiny* as one of many “government-funded identikit features,” including *On a Clear Day* and *The*

Flying Scotsman. “Despite the success of full-blooded Hollywood visions of Scottish history in *Braveheart* and *Rob Roy*, historical, political or socially relevant subjects have not been tackled” (Harrison). Whether Scottish stories should be feel-good entertainment or gritty glimpses of reality, or if both can help Scotland establish its cinematic identity, is only one part of the problem; funding is another. With such mixed consensus about *Stone of Destiny*’s success or failure, the film may become best known as a catalyst for influencing the way the government, filmmakers, and critics direct the Scottish film industry.

The Film’s Mark on Scottish (Film) History

Expecting *Stone of Destiny* to be a future “classic,” a political statement, and lighter entertainment may be too heavy a burden for this film—or any Scottish film—to carry. The film succeeds in showing how the past 50+ years’ gradual move toward independence began with an unexpected event that captured public imagination and made many Scots resolve to remain Scottish, not be subsumed as British. *Stone of Destiny* makes audiences long for simpler days when a landmark like Westminster Abbey was guarded by a person instead of electronics, when idealistic young men (and woman) united behind a cause and did not feel compelled to resort to violence, when such a notorious act ended without a lengthy media trial or perpetrators’ confessions on late-night talk shows.

Smith does offer a slightly revisionist history, but movie audiences may not immediately turn to Hamilton’s newly updated and reissued book to learn the real reasons why the Stone was not immediately returned or ransomed or how it ultimately was handed over to authorities. A film based on real people and events, especially such a bloodless coup long romanticized as the cornerstone of an independence movement, suffers because much of the (Scottish, at least) audience already knows at least something of the characters and plot. There are no surprises for them in this film, but it documents and keeps alive an important moment in history. That reason, more than the good but not great storytelling, makes *Stone of Destiny* a significant Scottish film. What would make it great international cinema

would be its ability to surpass history, a la *Braveheart*, in order to make the events portrayed in the film memorable and relevant to audiences around the world. Even with a much smaller budget and less epic subject, however, *Stone of Destiny* should continue to win fans internationally as an interesting film showcasing a little-known (at least outside of Scotland) event that could someday end up changing the course of nationalist history.

Stone of Destiny reminds instead of revolutionizes audiences. It lets them identify with lovable idealists rather than be troubled by incendiary martyrs. It also reminds audiences that one person—or four, or five—can often make a difference. *Stone of Destiny* gently, often humorously, makes that point in a way audiences of all ages can enjoy. As an EIFF- and TIFF-hyped film, it is adequate. As a Scottish film trying both to capture history while promoting nationalism and following the trend to lighten up, it struggles to do everything well but still ends up being a pleasant little film.

The problem with making a Scottish movie for the ages while still attracting large audiences is that it is in competition for attention with bigger, faster, visually cutting-edge films like *Wanted*, a movie that premiered during the week of the EIFF. In trying to position itself in such a global market while trying to be successful as so many different “types” of film, *Stone of Destiny*’s reach exceeded its grasp. Nevertheless, it is a useful transitional film that indicates where Scottish film would like to go, and it provides a measure of what is right about Scottish films as well as what needs to be improved if EIFF entries are truly going to make their financial and cinematic mark outside of Edinburgh.

Lynnette Porter

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Works Cited

- “Art of the Matter.” *The Scotsman* 14 Feb. 2010. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- “At the Movies.” *Daily Record* 13 Dec. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk>>.
- Bowron, Stephen. “Story of the Stone Destined to be a Big-Screen Blockbuster.” *Sunday Post* 22 June 2008: 5. Print.
- Bradley, Lara. “Scottish Tale Loved by Critics, Not Scots.” *The Sudbury Star* 11 Sept. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1195018>>.
- Calder, Peter. “Stone of Destiny.” *The New Zealand Herald* 23 July 2009. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- Cornwell, Tim. “From Sir Sean with Love . . . One New Movie Star Patron for Film Festival.” *The Scotsman* 30 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- _____. “Move Proves a Blockbuster Success for Film Festival.” *The Scotsman* 28 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- Edwards, David. “Review: Stone of Destiny.” *The Mirror* 10 Oct. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.mirror.co>>.
- English, Paul. “High Times Duo Stephen and Paul McCole Find Fame in Unlikely Places.” *Daily Record* 29 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk>>.
- “Everyday Heroes: Cinema That Builds Bridges.” *Dubai City Guide* 15 Nov. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <http://www.dubaicityguide.com/geninfo/news_dtls.asp?newsid=21391>.
- Felperin, Leslie. “Stone of Destiny.” Review. *Variety* 30 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. “Festival Cuts.” *Scotland on Sunday* 22 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://scotlandonsunday.scotsman.com>>.
- “Festival Highlights.” *Variety* 13 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- Fulton, Rick. “Exclusive: I’m Happier Making Music than Being a Hollywood Star, Says Billy Boyd.” *Daily Record* 4 July 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk>>.
- _____. “New Film ‘Stone of Destiny’ Will ‘Make You Proud to Be Scottish.’” *Daily Record* 18 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk>>.
- Gallagher, Paul. “Edinburgh International Film Festival—Monday.” *Future Movies* 23 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.futuremovies.co.uk/news.asp?ID=200>>.
- Greenwood, Paul. “Movies with Paul Greenwood: Accent on the Playful.” *Evening Times* 9 Oct. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.eveningtimes.co.uk>>.
- Hamilton, Ian. *Stone of Destiny*. Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2008. Print.

- _____. "Stone of Destiny." Ian Hamilton QC 15 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.ianhamiltonqc.com/wordpress/?p=380>>.
- Harkness, Alistair. "A Reel Mixed Bag." *The Scotsman* 30 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- Harrison, Eddie. "The Stone of Destiny." *The List* 2 Oct. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- Ide, Wendy. "Stone of Destiny." *Times Online* 11 Dec. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- "The Limits of Empire." Letter to the Editor. *The Herald* 30 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <http://www.theherald.co.uk/features/letters/display.var.2369805.0.The_limits_of_empire.php>.
- McKinlay, Sadie. Edinburgh International Film Festival. Personal email. 3 July 2008. Web.
- Mottram, James. "A Reluctant Star Whose Destiny Lies Close to Home . . . For Now." *The Herald* 19 June 2008: 17. Print.
- "Movie Q&A: Charles Martin Smith." *Daily Record* 10 Oct. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk>>.
- Newbery, Charles. "'Stone' Rolls in San Luis Cine Fest." *Variety* 29 Oct. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- Orr, Alex. "Thieves? I Don't Think So." *The Scotsman* 25 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- Pendreigh, Brian. "Audience of Edge of Hate for 'Boring' Film." *The Scotsman* 30 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- _____. "Premiere Brings Stone of Destiny Home to Dying Son of 'King John.'" *Scotland on Sunday* 5 Oct. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://scotlandonsunday.scotsman.com>>.
- "The Real Stone of Destiny is Roman Property." Letter to the Editor. *The Herald* 28 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.theherald.co.uk>>.
- Reid, Georgina. "Billy Boyd on Destiny Mystery." *The Scottish Sun* 7 Oct. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/scotsol/homepage/news/article1770609.ece>>.
- "Scotland Day Set for Cannes Film Festival." *AllmediaScotland* 15 May 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- Scottish National Party. SNP.org. N.d. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- Shannon, Kate. "Classic Car Show in Kirkcaldy High Street Has Regal Touch." *Fife Today* 29 July 2010. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/Classic-car-show-in-Kirkcaldy.6446547.jp>>.
- Smith, Claire. "Braveheart Wins Battle to be Top Scots Movie of All Time." *The Scotsman* 24 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- "SNP Begin Coalition Discussions." *BBC News* 5 May 2007. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- "Stone of Destiny." *Daily Record* 10 Oct. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk>>.

- “The Stone of Destiny.” *Historic U.K.com*. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- Stone of Destiny*. Charles Martin Smith, dir. Infinity Features Entertainment and The Mob Film Company, 2008. Film.
- “Stone of Destiny Set to Cause a Stir.” *Aberdeen Press and Journal* 4 Oct. 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/Article.aspx/868351?UserKey=>>>.
- Strauss, Marise. “Smith Wraps Stone of Destiny.” *Playback* 3 Sept. 2007. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.playbackonline.ca/articles/magazine/20070903/destiny>>>.
- Swanson, Ian. “Bid to Show Stone of Destiny Film in Holyrood Thrown Out.” *The Scotsman* 29 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009.
- “This Slice of History Has Sense of Destiny.” *Sunday Express* 22 June 2008: 56-57. Print.
- Walker, Tim. “Feuding Author Leaves No Stone Unturned.” *Telegraph* 24 June 2008. Web. 21 Aug. 2009. <[>](http://www.telegraph.co.uk).