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MEANINGS, MYTHS AND MEMORIES:  
LITERARY TOURISM AS CULTURAL DISCOURSE  
IN BEATRIX POTTER'S LAKE DISTRICT

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## SUMMARY

Tourism is about the production and consumption, and the transformation and appropriation of cultural meanings. These meanings are imposed on landscapes to facilitate economic development but their interpretation by visitors is also important. A case study of Beatrix Potter tourism in the English Lake District is used to explore the links between literary tourism and a range of personal, social and cultural values. The thesis develops a cultural studies approach for tourism and literary analyses. It then combines qualitative and quantitative research methods to evaluate how visitors made sense of their encounters with the literary place. From the resulting field study material three key themes emerged: childhood and adulthood; city, country and preservation; and marketing literary heritage in an increasingly global context. These themes both reflect and contribute to contemporary debates in cultural geography. They also help to clarify aspects of the relationship between tourism, popular culture and society.

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## *Chapter One*

### *Introduction*

'It is said that the effect of eating too much lettuce is 'soporific'. I have never felt sleepy after eating lettuces; but then I am not a rabbit. They certainly had a very soporific effect upon the Flopsy Bunnies' (Potter 1989, p.199).

'The taken-for-granted landscapes of our daily lives are full of meaning. Much of the most interesting geography lies in decoding them....Because geography is everywhere, reproduced daily by each one of us, the recovery of meaning in our ordinary landscapes tells us much about ourselves' (Cosgrove 1989a, pp.133-134).

There are no immediate, or evident connections between these two passages. Beatrix Potter was a late Victorian children's author and illustrator, celebrated for the 'Peter Rabbit' stories, but who died a virtual recluse in a small Lake District village in 1943. By contrast, Denis Cosgrove is charting research trends in contemporary cultural geography; trends seemingly far removed from the world of children's fiction. Looking at this excerpt from Cosgrove's paper more closely, though, I want to draw attention to two inter-related, and important themes. First, that geography is everywhere, and secondly, that geography is about meaning. This meaning is not only recoverable in landscapes, as Cosgrove implies, but is embedded in all forms of social and cultural expression. As such, and in a round-about way, Cosgrove's interpretation brings us back to Beatrix Potter.



The language that Potter used highlighted in the phrase 'soporific lettuces', is widely cited. Indeed, who else but Potter would use such a word in books for very small children? Not only the 'soporific lettuces', though, but many of her other characters, illustrations and images have gained wide cultural currency. Allusions to Potter permeate a range of media, spanning political cartoons, feminist fiction, and the sometimes torrid prose of popular romantic novelists (Figure 1). Thus, in becoming part of taken-for-granted culture, Potter today carries a variety of fundamentally adult meanings; meanings which reveal much about the preoccupations and interests of contemporary society.

Cosgrove's agenda for cultural geography emphasizes the importance of decoding the meanings of landscapes and places. In geography, this focus on cultures and landscapes is not new. What has changed, however, is how different forms of cultural expression are to be interpreted. Carl Sauer (1889-1975), and his influential Berkeley School of Geography were among the first to devote serious attention to questions of 'culture' and 'landscape'. Sauer's 1925 paper, 'The Morphology of Landscape' is particularly significant, for there he theorized culture as a superorganic conceptual *a priori*. As he argued: 'the cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a culture group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape is the result' (Sauer 1925; 1969 collection, p.343).

As cultural issues have become increasingly important in social,

**Figure 1**  
**Examples of Beatrix Potter's Cultural Currency**

As cited in Taylor 1988, p.215.

## Figure 1

'There was certainly nothing abhorrent about Penscombe that afternoon: the wind that shook her turret bedroom last night had dropped, while the little Beatrix Potter cottages, covered in velvety purple clematis, were white in the afternoon light.'

'Lady Gosling, decided Cameron, looked more like a hedgehog than a goose, a Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle, with small twinkling intelligent eyes, a long thin nose, a pointed chin and rather wild grey hair, held down on either side by tortoise-shell slides. She wore no make-up and, despite the warmth of the evening, was smothered in several shawls over her olive-green wool dress. The cosy exterior, however, was deceptive and hid a rapier mind.'

Cooper 1988, pp.93; 338.

'Mother Rabbit cautioned her babies not to wander into Mr McGregor's garden. Remember the end of your father, she says, Mr McGregor put him in a pie. At this point my mother began to laugh. I asked, why are you laughing? Because, she replied, they made Papa Rabbit into a pie. What is a pie? I asked. (I did not know English then). My mother struggled to find an Indian equivalent. At last she said, meat curry, my Rani. Mr McGregor made Papa Rabbit into meat curry and ate him up. And so Mama Rabbit doesn't want her babies to wander into his garden. She began laughing again. Meat curry? Papa Rabbit cut up into little pieces? Brown bits of Papa Rabbit floating in thick gravy, gone forever? Leaving them behind, never to return? I caught hold of my mother's saree with one hand and began pounding her thighs with the other. Tears coursed down my cheeks as I screamed....'

Appanchana 1991, pp.57-58.

economic and political analyses, it is not surprising that Sauer's view of culture has been criticized. Duncan (1980), for example, challenged the superorganic perspective, suggesting that cultures and cultural landscapes are active human constructs, reflecting the economic, political and social contexts within which they are created. Cosgrove and Jackson (1987) also commented on Sauer's interpretation, noting that although the Berkeley geographers studied cultural landscapes, their research considered the 'visible aspects of material culture as produced by unitary cultural groups' rather than the inner workings of culture (p.96).

As manifested through the discourse of literary tourism in Beatrix Potter's Lake District, this thesis is explicitly concerned with assessing some of the practical expressions of these inner workings of culture. While tourist development is typically studied as an economic enterprise, tourism also serves an inherently social function, evoking a range of both individual, and collective meanings, myths and memories. This realm of the tourist experience can therefore help to highlight a much broader pattern of social and cultural attitudes.

### Literary Tourism and Children's Fiction

In Britain today, heritage tourism is a lucrative and rapidly growing industry. An important part of what Hewison (1987) calls the 'heritage industry' is literary tourism; travel to places associated with books or authors. In microcosm, the development of literary sites, and their

interpretation for and by visitors, provides an illustration of larger processes of cultural production and consumption.

Literary tourism spans a number of inter-related research areas. The recent resurgence of interest in travel literature, for example, although not the focus of the present study, highlights one aspect of this phenomenon (Frater 1986). In describing places, travel writers, whether deliberately or unconsciously, serve as cultural brokers, appropriating a landscape and its people, and re-interpreting them for new audiences.

Links between geography, and travel writers are now being forged (see for example Burgess and Jenkins 1989; Wheeler 1986; Ogden 1987; Domosh 1991), but when considering travel books, it is important to recognize that much regional fiction serves a similar function. Drabble (1987) and Daiches and Flower (1979), have written at length about Britain's literary landscapes, indirectly promoting this heritage for tourists. Such associations between authors and regions have a long history. As Ousby (1991) notes, Shakespeare's Stratford has been celebrated since the eighteenth century, often by travel writers (pp.33-57).

Today, England's literary heritage remains widely promoted for tourism. Some of the key sites are also those associated with so-called 'great' authors; not only Shakespeare's Stratford but also Hardy's Dorset, the Bronte sisters' Yorkshire, and Wordsworth's Lake District. For overseas visitors, the British Tourist Authority even publishes a map of 'Literary Britain' (BTA 1983), but many of these literary sites have also been

celebrated in various kinds of travel books. McCracken (1984), for example, has written a guide to Wordsworth's poems and their places; Hawkins (1983) focuses on Hardy's Wessex; Hill (1987) looks at Shakespeare's country; and Ravendale (1989) traces the path of Chaucer's pilgrims.

While a new focus in human geography on 'culture' and 'context' is changing the kinds of questions asked about landscapes, places and societies, tourism has rarely been part of such debates. In considering tourism as a form of cultural discourse, this study appraises tourism in a different light. Correspondingly, it is also concerned with children's fiction which has again, been neglected. As Hunt (1991) comments: 'to the academic, children's literature is a non-subject. Its very subject-matter seems to disqualify it from serious adult consideration; after all, it is simple, ephemeral, popular, and designed for an immature audience' (p.6). It is not only literary critics, though, who have failed to devote serious critical attention to children's books. In geography too, much has been written about literature but few people have considered the important role of children's fiction in influencing adult environmental attitudes, values and perceptions.

Loyd (1974), for example, considered the changing city landscape in children's books, and the way that these changes reveal both the landscape images of adults, and 'how much the political and social climate of the country influences our landscape imagery' (p.19). Similarly, Brooker-Gross (1981) assessed how landscape description in the Nancy Drew mystery stories conveyed the social values of American middle class society. As she

claimed, 'the use of landscape [in these books] constitutes a sort of tutelage in moral geography' (p.63). While romantic and pastoral imagery symbolized morality, dirt and decay suggested crime.

As much as they may be shaped by adult reading, landscape attitudes do not suddenly emerge in adulthood. Thus, these papers are important because they highlight how notions of childhood and landscape are imbued with all kinds of socially constructed meanings and values. Lowenthal (1989) draws attention to links between the past, childhood and countryside, and notes that nostalgia for all three is often conveyed in children's fiction.

Raymond Williams (1973) makes a related point:

'...often an idea of the country is an idea of childhood: not only the local memories, or the ideally shared communal memory, but the feel of childhood: of delighted absorption in our own world, from which, eventually, in the course of growing up, we are distanced and separated....'(p.357).

Children's books offer one way of recapturing childhood experience. So too do certain forms of tourism. In using Beatrix Potter tourism in the Lake District as an illustrative case study, this thesis charts some of the links between tourism, culture and society: links mediated by shared ideas about childhood and adulthood, country and city, and local and global heritage.

Beatrix Potter is one of the most place-specific of English children's writers, and the settings for many of her stories and illustrations have been preserved to the present day. Born in London in 1866, Potter became attached to the north of England through a series of family holidays. With the success of her first book, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* in 1902, she

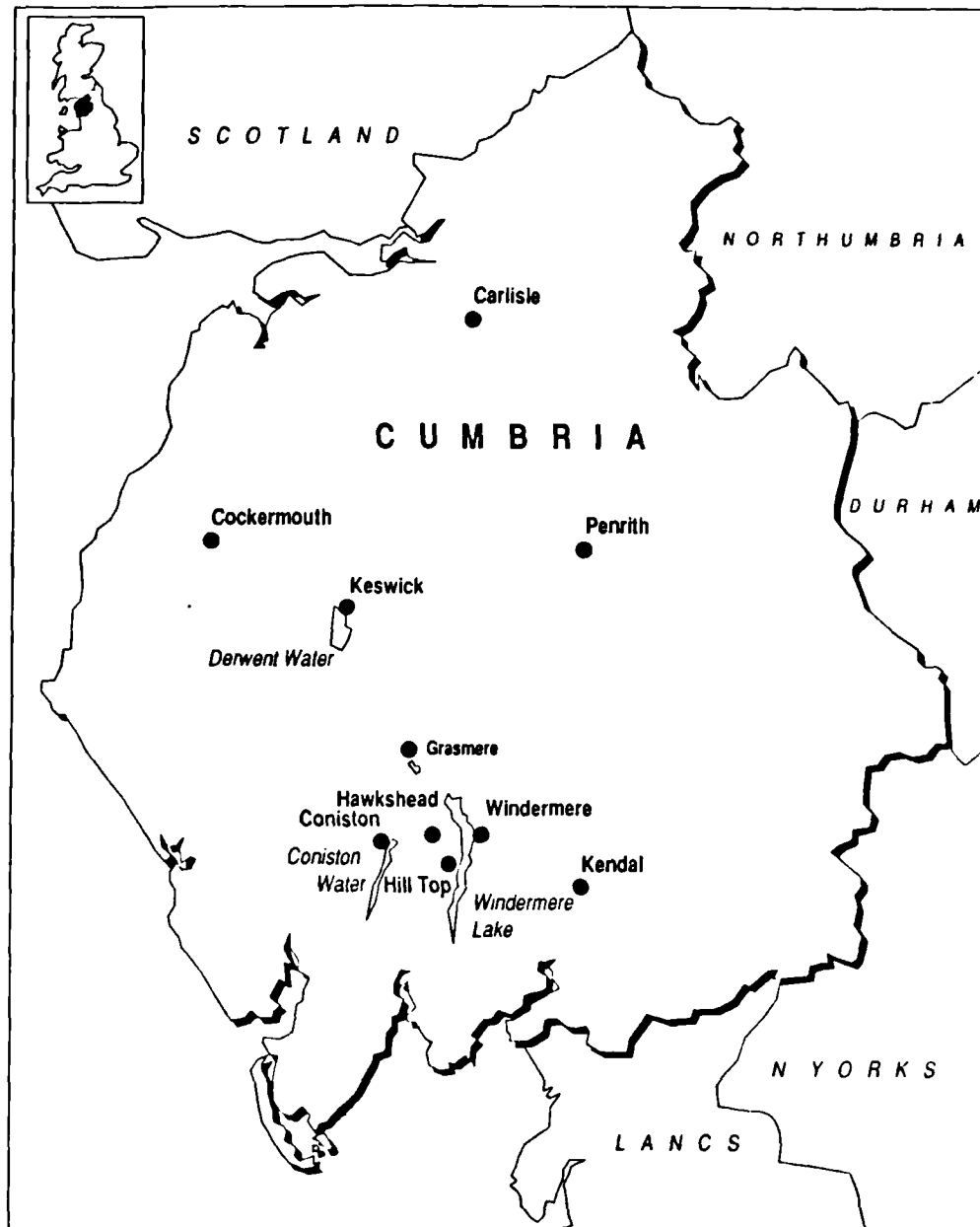
subsequently used some of her royalties to buy a farm in the Lake District village of Near Sawrey (Figure 2). She later incorporated both Hill Top Farm, and other cottages and gardens nearby, into her work; graphic evidence of art imitating life. When Potter died in 1943, she left most of her by then substantial property holdings in the Lake District to the National Trust, a non-profit conservation organization founded at the end of the nineteenth century. Hill Top is still in the care of the National Trust today and, preserved exactly as Potter left it, it is open to the public as a museum (Figure 3).

While the museum suggested an appropriate setting in which to conduct research with visitors, I also had some personal reasons for choosing this particular case study. My earliest memory of the Beatrix Potter books is of having them read to me, and it was Potter's illustrations that shaped my first, and indeed lasting impressions of the English countryside. How many others share this experience? And collectively, how has this undoubtedly powerful image of place shaped tourist motivations, and the nature of the contemporary tourist experience?

These questions provided a partial starting point for the research but the notion of textual analysis was important too. Literary tourism involves different kinds of textual relations. Specifically, it necessitates an understanding of the relationship between readers and texts, texts and landscapes, and readers and places. There are thus various ways that a study of literary tourism could be approached but all of them bring into question



Figure 2  
Lake District Location Map



Drawing Office, Dept. of Geography, University College London

Figure 3  
Hill Top Farm Today



Photograph by the author

certain aspects of the production and consumption of meaning.

In considering the discourse of Beatrix Potter tourism in the Lake District, and at Hill Top Farm in particular, this thesis addresses certain dimensions of this relationship between the encoding and decoding of meaning. In so doing, it highlights the important, although neglected role of audience research in tourism, and pays particular attention to the links between tourists' experiences, and wider social and cultural structures. Although production or development of the tourist site is important, the primary emphasis in the thesis is on its consumption, or interpretation by visitors. Ultimately, Beatrix Potter tourism is a vehicle through which to forge a practical appreciation of processes of cultural expression and representation; processes which have until recently, only been conceptualized theoretically.

### Overview and Synopsis

Cultural meanings are transformed and communicated in different contexts. While literary tourism illustrates this transformation process, it also necessitates that a wide literature be considered. The focus of Chapter 2, then, is a critical review of three research traditions which have influenced how both literature and tourism have been interpreted in geography. Quantification has had perhaps the greatest impact on tourism studies, but there are also important links to be drawn between humanistic research, especially on landscape tastes and authenticity, and attempts to theorize the

nature of the tourist experience. Concurrently, however, the humanistic reaction to positivism has had an enormous influence on geographers' engagement with creative literature and the chapter also reviews selected work in this area. Finally, contemporary cultural studies research suggests new and challenging directions for tourism scholarship. I focus on Johnson's (1986) 'circuits of culture' model because it offers a way of conceptualizing these cultural transformations theoretically (see also Burgess 1990). Work in other disciplines, though, also helps to define a more practical and empirically-based, cultural studies agenda for literary tourism.

Chapter 3 adopts a much different tone, telling the story of Beatrix Potter's life and literary career. The first part of the chapter traces her biography, the origins of her books, and her links with the Lake District, not only as an author, but also as a sheep-farmer and countryside conservationist. A brief summary of appreciative approaches to children's literature follows, and the chapter then reviews Beatrix Potter scholarship as embedded in these traditions. Building on this work, I go on to highlight some important connections between Potter's books and a pastoral tradition. Potter's books are also part of popular culture, however, and the chapter concludes by considering some of the ways that they have recently been changed into other forms.

While the second chapter addresses processes of cultural production and consumption theoretically, Chapter 4 focuses on methodological questions in tourism research. Various work using qualitative methods, in human

geography and elsewhere, provides conceptual justification for the research strategies I employed in my empirical field study in the summer of 1990. These strategies included a social survey, incorporating closed and open-ended interview questions, and small group discussions. The chapter then summarizes some of the results of the social survey, highlighting the socio-economic profile of the sample visitor population.

This visitor profile raised questions, however, especially about visitors' motivations, which were further explored through the open-ended interview questions and small discussion groups. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 uses this more qualitative material to assess how an interest in Potter also reflects other culturally constructed attitudes and values.

As Chapter 5 shows, for example, the author, and by implication the tourist visit to Hill Top, were being used to give meaning to ideas about the nature of childhood and adulthood. In defining this relationship, a variety of adult values were ascribed to children. Further, there was a particular morality associated with Potter which was conveyed in the family, through inter-generational sharing, and at school. And ultimately, the pervasiveness of these moral values points to a dialectic between elite and popular culture, reflecting different kinds of meanings which are contested between different social groups.

This argument is further developed in Chapter 6 which considers some of the links between Potter and an ideology of countryside and country life. In solidifying myths of the 'happy childhood', Hill Top's rural setting and

its close connections with Potter's illustrations were the basis for an important discourse about the country childhood, incorporated within a broader rural idyll. The idyll was frequently contrasted with the city. Not surprisingly, in constructing ideas about countryside, both visitors and members of the small groups were distanced from the everyday realities of rural life. Chapter 6 then explores some of the connections between this image of the rural past and contemporary debates about heritage preservation. It concludes by looking at how people related countryside conservation to their own lives, using Potter as a medium for reflecting on local, as well as global heritage issues.

The relationship between the local and the global sustains much of what the whole Beatrix Potter phenomenon, tourism included, is about. While the thesis is primarily concerned with processes of cultural consumption - how visitors and group members were interpreting Potter and evaluating the nature of the tourist experience - the focus shifts, in Chapter 7, to a more explicit consideration of cultural production. Looking first at how the books and related merchandise were produced during Potter's lifetime, I then consider the role played after her death by the National Trust and her publisher Frederick Warne. This is followed by a brief discussion of recent developments: notably how Potter is being used in advertising to promote unrelated products. These different phases of production illustrate one of the main tenets of the chapter. Namely, that as the meanings associated with Potter are taken from one context and transformed to suit

another, new meanings are created.

Transformations of meaning between texts, readers, places, and commodities, are central to the whole study. In summarizing these arguments, Chapter 8 seeks to synthesize the multi-faceted relationship between production and consumption, and to draw attention to tourism's important role in contemporary cultural expression. The chapter also raises questions about the potential for developing qualitative methods in social and cultural geography, as well as tourism studies. Finally, it emphasizes the important, although largely overlooked role of tourism and children's fiction, in mediating a valued cultural heritage.

The contemporary cultural discourse of Beatrix Potter tourism may be interpreted through three inter-related social constructs: meanings, myths and memories. While writing, reading and tourism are different kinds of experiences, they are linked through the medium of cultural construction and representation. This process involves the creation of meaning, shaped by the fusion of individual and collective memories and mythologies. Cultural geography is about de-coding meanings and understanding how these meanings are communicated and interpreted. In advocating a move to bring tourism studies into cultural geography, while also suggesting new ways of approaching geography and literature, this thesis contributes to, and builds upon, trends in contemporary cultural criticism. These trends are the focus of the next chapter.

*Chapter Two*  
*What Does Tourism Mean?:*  
*A Survey of Research Trends*

'You're not just taking a holiday, you're opening the door to more variety, more freedom, more individuality - more, in fact, of everything that turns a good holiday into a great one' (English Tourist Board 1991, p.4).

Tourism is about holidays, and at some stage everyone has been a tourist. For this reason, it may seem trite to ask what tourism means. As Urry (1990), for example, comments, 'on the face of it there could not be a more trivial subject [than tourism]' (p.2). Consider, however, the extract cited above which incorporates several different understandings of tourism. For the English Tourist Board, tourism is an economic activity and this kind of advertising encourages people to 'buy' certain holiday products. At the same time, however, tourism serves a personal and social function. Why take a 'good' holiday when you could experience a 'great' one?

All tourist experiences involve meaning but these meanings have been studied in different ways. This chapter considers some of the links between tourism and different research traditions in human geography. I will first comment briefly on the economic heritage. A preoccupation with spatial modelling had a major influence on how tourism has been, and continues to be interpreted. At the same time, this preoccupation has been responsible for a persistent neglect of social and cultural questions in tourism research.



Secondly, I will assess some aspects of the humanistic tradition by considering work on landscape tastes, landscape and literature, sense of place, and 'authenticity'. This material is important because in emphasizing individual feelings and values, it offered new ways of conceptualizing many different kinds of environmental experiences, tourism included.

Finally, I will focus on the contemporary cultural agenda, looking at its origins, its critique of earlier research traditions, and two conceptual models (Jakobson 1960; Johnson 1986) to synthesize different arguments about processes of cultural production and consumption. There are some interesting connections to be made between the 'new' cultural geography and fresh approaches to literary and tourism studies. The last section of the chapter considers some of this research and highlights how a cultural studies perspective offers new analytical opportunities between geography and tourism.

### The Economics of Tourism

Interest in tourism spans the social sciences: today there are as many terms invoked to describe this kind of research as there are examples of tourist activity. Holloway (1983), for example, describes tourism as 'the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work, and activities during their stay at these destinations' (p.2). This definition is useful because it captures some aspects of tourism research that I want to consider here: specifically, the economics

of tourist development, growth and change.

Some of the pioneering work on tourism was done by economists and in geography, tourism research has always been associated with an economic tradition. In the 1950's, tourism studies by geographers assessed the economic implications of different recreational activities such as summer cottage communities, for example (Wolfe 1951). The quantitative revolution, however, had a particularly important influence on tourism research. Although the same sorts of questions continued to be asked, the quantitative revolution changed and developed the economic agenda. In the first instance, more sophisticated forms of statistical analysis extended research possibilities. At the same time, however, quantification also involved behaviouralism and large scale social surveys.

In human geography, quantitative and then behavioural approaches have dominated tourism studies longer than in almost any other field. In charting trends in tourism research, Pearce (1979) for example, argued that geographers should consider spatial patterns of tourism supply and conduct statistical analyses of tourism's areal economic impact. This view continues to have wide popular currency. Mitchell and Murphy (1991) summarize geographic approaches to tourism as 'synthesiz[ing] a myriad of causal factors into concepts or models of behaviour that assist in an understanding of a complex worldwide activity' (p.65).

In this research, certain trends or themes recur. As an economic activity, for example, tourism has long been seen as a form of land-use and

various studies have calculated tourism's economic benefits to a landowner or host community (see Hills and Lundgren 1977 on the Caribbean; Pearce 1981 for a general survey). There is also a large literature on market areas and vacation hinterlands. Wolfe (1975) looked at a particular region and measured its potential demand for summer cottages by the year 2000. Bell (1977) studied an existing spatial distribution of these vacation homes. Helleiner (1981) assessed the residential hinterland for recreational boat traffic on an Ontario canal. From this perspective, tourist movements and visitor flows have also been widely studied. Gravity models, for example, have been used extensively to explain motivations and travel patterns. Bell (1977) used a gravity model in his study of second homes, as did Mednick (1975) who evaluated travel patterns of American visitors to a particular Canadian province.

The results of this research were often used in tourism management and planning, including modelling resort cycles of evolution and the vacation preferences of different tourist types (Plog 1972; Butler 1980; Hovinen 1981; Lundgren 1983). This literature charted the various phases of development that resort areas would experience and the kinds of people to which they would appeal at different stages in a cycle of discovery, development, saturation, and decline. Practically, different holiday destinations could be situated at different points on the spectrum, allowing tourism planners to choose the most effective management strategies.

This literature embraces two different analytical perspectives. While

much of it was concerned with measuring the economic effects of tourist activity on a particular geographic area, it also had a behavioural orientation particularly in the 1970's. This behavioural paradigm had much to do with trends across the social sciences more generally, demonstrated in a new concern for explaining and predicting people's perceptions, attitudes and preferences (see Walmsley and Lewis 1985). As expressed in tourism research, this shift was noted by Butler (1978):

'The emphasis in research has been shifting noticeably from an almost total economic orientation found in those studies conducted in the 1960's and earlier, to a more critical examination of the costs or negative effects of recreation and tourism, particularly from environmental, social and cultural standpoints' (p.187).

Butler researched the impact of increased tourism on traditional lifestyles in a community on the Isle of Skye, analyzing results of a questionnaire survey to assess how local residents perceived visitors' impact. The questionnaire survey is one of the hallmarks of this kind of research and such strategies remain well respected in social science. Widely used in market research and public opinion polls, these surveys allow large numbers of people to be sampled and their views tabulated. In Butler's study, though, the survey was used to measure perceptions and this merits particular attention.

Butler's work is important because he was beginning to ask questions about tourism not directly concerned with economic development. These questions were about the psychology of tourist motivations, behaviour and preferences, and how tourism's impact could be perceived and assessed (see

also Walmsley and Lewis 1985, pp.118-123). Butler was therefore exploiting the analytical potential of the questionnaire survey in different ways.

The questions Butler asked about how tourism might be affecting traditional ways of life also reflect the influence of an earlier interpretive tradition in geography, which began to be re-discovered in the middle of the 1970's (Wright 1947; Lowenthal 1961). This tradition is considered later in the chapter but it is useful here to trace briefly this broader picture of patterns in tourism research. This picture is the basis upon which other research trends are compared and contrasted.

From the 1950's until the present, tourism has been defined as a kind of economic activity premised on an interaction between supply and demand. Thus, as an economic activity, tourism needs to be managed and developed according to certain principles. This perspective was well summarized by Burkart and Medlik (1975); more recently by Lundberg (1980), Murphy (1980), Pearce (1981) and Holloway (1983). Smith (1988) also makes this point, proposing that 'tourism - as an industry - is the aggregate of all retail businesses that produce commodities for the traveller, regardless of his [sic] motivations or other personal characteristics' (pp.89-90).

It is precisely, however, an interest in these motivations and personal characteristics that has fuelled a second area of tourism research; one concerned with the psychological dimensions of tourist behaviour and perceptions. Hunt (1975), for example, assessed the importance of a regional image in influencing visitor motivations while Mayo and Jarvis (1981)

considered the psychology of leisure travel. Pearce (1982) studied the social psychology of tourist behaviour. Moscardo and Pearce (1986) applied some of these ideas to an analysis of visitor centres and environmental interpretation.

Finally, it must be emphasized, that tourism has always been a multi-disciplinary research activity. As Mieczkowski (1978) and Mitchell and Murphy (1991) note, geographers have tended to focus on tourism management, economic development and spatial modelling of visitor behaviour. Thus, in geography particularly, there has been scant consideration of social and cultural questions, such as how visitors' attitudes and values reflect a social context. Some of these questions have been asked in anthropology in terms of the host-guest relationship (see for example Smith 1978; Graburn 1983), and in sociology (MacCannell 1976). In geography, a social and cultural agenda for tourism studies must consider some of these issues. In this sense, though, there are also some important links to be drawn with the humanistic tradition.

### Humanism and Individual Experiences

The preceding summary of trends in tourism research has been brief: in this thesis I am primarily concerned with the links between tourism, culture and society, so these trends are a basis against which to compare and contrast other traditions, humanism in particular.

## Landscape Tastes

In studying tourism, various authors have considered the historical evolution of recreational places and activities. Examples include the creation of the English seaside resort (Bennett 1986; Cosgrove and Jackson 1972); development of the package tour through Thomas Cook holidays (Swinglehurst 1982); and research considering development of British tourism and promotion of particular attractions (Vaughan 1974; Moir 1964; Ousby 1990). The research shares an interest in understanding why certain places are preferred to others. While there are some links between work on historical landscape preferences and the behavioural tradition in which historical causative factors are substituted for psychological motivations, I do not want to consider such questions here. Given the aims of this thesis, cultural issues are more important.

In their influential paper on English landscape tastes, Lowenthal and Prince (1965) traced the historical derivation of certain attitudes and values towards the English landscape. In particular, they demonstrated the importance of literary and artistic imagery in popularizing particular landscapes and indirectly, encouraging tourist travel. As they argued: 'the English seldom merely see a landscape. They see it as delineated in famous books and paintings' (Lowenthal and Prince, 1965 p.215). In bringing cultural questions to the fore, this sort of work prefigured the growth of iconographic approaches over twenty years later. As Penning-Roswell (1986), for example, observed: 'Our view of Suffolk landscapes is now inseparable

from Constable's paintings, which have helped to highlight the landscape's appeal' (p.118).

These excerpts reflect a much larger body of work in which the interpretation of landscape meanings and values emerged as a major focus for a post - positivist human geography. This work often draws inspiration from Lowenthal's important (1961) paper on experiential geography. Appleton (1975), for example, explores the basis of landscape symbolism in individual environmental experiences and perceptions. Many papers in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes* (Meinig 1979), address landscape tastes. In *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, Jackson (1984) sees the American setting and landscape design as an expression of the relationship between individuals, their history and society. Finally, *Landscape Meanings and Values*, edited by Penning-Roswell and Lowenthal (1986) is concerned with landscape aesthetics and interpretation; temporally, regionally and by reason of different social and cultural practises.

In the latter, Appleton's paper is particularly important for he articulates one of the key premises of a humanistic agenda. Concerned with 'The Role of the Arts in Landscape Research', he argues that such sources may lead to 'new insights which the rational, logical language of science cannot evoke' (Appleton 1986, p.28). Ley and Samuels make this point too, defining the humanistic approach as one emphasizing 'man's [sic] place in the reconciliation of the science and the art of geography' (Ley and Samuels 1978, p.10).



The work on landscape tastes is important because it represents a move away from scientific 'rationality' towards new sources and more interpretive forms of analysis. One of these sources was literature and, following Lowenthal and Prince (1965), some research has explicitly focused on the relationship between literature and environmental preferences. One way that this relationship has been evaluated is through studies of the Romantic Movement in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century art and literature. Rees (1975; 1978) looks at the cult of mountain scenery and imagery in landscape paintings; Zaring (1977) traces the influence of various writers and artists in shaping romantic images of Wales; Howard (1985) studies landscape taste and landscape painting; Newby (1981) and Squire (1988c; 1990) are concerned with Wordsworth's role in tourist development of the English Lake District.

These links between the popularity of literary images, landscape values, and tourism remain under-researched. Pocock (1981; 1982) notes how certain English authors have used places in their work and how these places have become the focus of tourist interest. Curtis (1981; 1985) develops a similar argument for two American writers, John Steinbeck and Mark Twain. Butler (1985) also drew on literary sources in assessing the history of Scottish tourism to argue that literary imagery was influential in shaping landscape tastes. As he claimed: 'the great popularity of [Sir Walter] Scott's works, many of which romanticized the scenery and inhabitants of the Highlands, resulted in changing peoples' perceptions of the area...and were prime factors

in the decision of many people to visit [it]' (p.376). Returning to this theme in a review essay, he speculated:

'Today people like mountains with lakes and trees. At one time they didn't. What will they like in 2100? Will we find the answers in Arthur Hailey, or in John Le Carre, or perhaps more likely in Andy Warhol, Steven Spielberg and George Lucas?' (Butler 1986, p.130).

One of the problems with this kind of work is that it advances cause and effect reasoning. This research is important though, because Butler in particular is one of the few to make explicit reference to literary tourism and imply that it might not only be the classic literary texts which are significant in shaping popular landscape values. I have also made this point in my previous work on *Anne of Green Gables* in tourist promotion in Prince Edward Island (Squire 1988a; 1988b; in press). This points to other questions about the role of popular culture and the media which have also been neglected (see Burgess and Gold 1985a).

Although literary tourism may not be particularly well developed, the study of literature comprised a major focus in the development of humanistic geography. Not only was literature cited as a source for the popularization of landscape tastes, literary texts were also studied for their geographic descriptions of places and landscapes, and as a medium capturing individual environmental experiences.

### Humanistic Geography and Literature

Although the geographical study of literature gained ground in the 1970's and 1980's through humanistic research, its potential value had

already been noted elsewhere. Wright (1924) made one of the first definitive statements in this area:

'Some men of letters are endowed with a highly developed geographical instinct. As writers, they have trained themselves to visualize even more clearly than the professional geographer those regional aspects of the earth's surface most significant to the general run of humanity' (p.659).

His comments were largely overlooked but Wright continued to reiterate this theme; in a presidential address to the Association of American Geographers (1947) and in an appraisal of the history of geographic ideas (1966, pp.21-22). Recognition was to come much later as Wright's work was celebrated in *Geographies of the Mind*, edited by Lowenthal and Bowden (1976). This collection is significant because it is one of the first geographical texts to emphasize literature as source material. Ultimately, the links between geography and literature were defined throughout the 1970's and 1980's as part of a broader humanistic agenda.

The first part of this agenda was expressed in research drawing geographic details from novels, assessing how authors depicted particular areas in their work, and establishing parallels between these settings and the author's biography. Some of the earliest studies relating fictional descriptions to actual settings were Baker's (1931) paper on Defoe's geography, and Darby's (1948) meticulous study of Hardy's Wessex. More recently, however, Salter and Lloyd (1977) and Salter (1978), claimed that literary landscapes could be read by landscape signatures, 'the distinctive image[s] created by an individual or group in the act of modifying the landscape'

(1977, p.7). Aiken (1977; 1979; 1981) adopted this approach to study the literary geography of Faulkner's 'Yoknapatawpha County' novels, as did Jay (1975) in a study of Francis Brett Young's 'Black Country' novels and Spolton's (1970) assessment of Lawrence's East Midlands. Other examples, assessing both real and fictional landscapes would include Goodey (1970), Porteous (1975), Shin (1976), Lloyd (1976), Lamme (1977) and Withers (1984).

This approach has been subject to much criticism. Thrift (1978) likened it to 'stamp collecting, the stamps being replaced by quotations from novels' (p.348), while Silk (1984) argued that it reduced literary sources to 'quarries to be mined for information of geographic interest on environmental settings and background' (p.152). This critique is linked with the contemporary cultural approach, discussed below. What I want to focus on now, however, is the second part of this humanistic agenda which regarded creative literature as an expressive medium highlighting individuals' experiences with landscapes and places.

The grounds for this approach were explained by Lanegran and Toth (1976): 'Because imaginative literature has always dealt with interpretations of events and places, the humanist accessible to the geographer is likely to be a gifted writer' (p.6). And, as Salter and Lloyd (1977) elaborated:

'The strength of landscape in literature lies in its subtle human qualities, its potential for revealing the hidden dimensions of human meaning, and not in its objectivity. The geographer invokes this sense through the medium of intimate personal involvement, leading to an appreciation of the human qualities of the cultural landscape that might best be termed *humanistic*' (p.2).

Tuan (1974; 1976; 1978) described 'literature as a force, creating new patterns of cognition' (1976 p.272), and proposed that it offered geographers insights into 'possible modes of human experience and relationship[s]' (1978 p.205). Seamon (1976) pointed to 'a phenomenological investigation of literature [as] provid[ing] one way of illuminating more precisely our environmental situation, and so better help[ing] us to attune our modes of knowing the geographical world with our modes of experiencing it' (p.289).

These authors share a common perspective. Each makes some reference to literature's role in revealing otherwise hidden aspects of human experience. There is also a sense that geographers are better qualified than others to comment on an author's unique insights into landscapes. Humanistic geographers are explicitly concerned with the relationship between writers, texts and landscapes, rather than with how ordinary readers make sense of literary texts. Simpson-Housley and Paul (1984), for instance, and Simpson-Housley (1988) use Lawrence's novels to assess how the writer's 'personal categories of perception select, colour and interpret [his landscape descriptions]' (p.64). With Malcolm Lowry's fiction, Porteous (1986; 1987) adopted a similar approach, coining the word 'inscape' to interpret the 'correspondences between landscape and human personality' (1986, pp.123-124) in Lowry's work. He concluded that Lowry used similar landscape features in describing different settings 'in a symbolic way, [they] indicate human experience and feeling, and...synthesized as landscapes, they become identified with Lowry's mind' (*Ibid.*, p.124).

One of the problems with this kind of work is that 'experiential' and 'humanistic' are often used so loosely as to become little more than pop psychoanalysis; Porteous' identification of Lowry's mind and landscape, for instance. The focus on the experiential, however, is important, because it proposed a new emphasis on emotions, feelings and values which were linked indirectly with psycho-analytic models of attachments and behaviours. As Pocock (1986) explained: 'the geographer's engagement in literature is, and has been, for various ends but *humanist* geographers so engage in an attempt to understand the nature of human experience as lived out in a meaningful world' (p.56).

Other examples of this approach could be cited (Hart and Pirie 1984; Hart 1986; Porteous 1985; Herbert 1991). However, the dominant theme in humanistic geography and literature is that of 'place'. As Pocock (1981a; 1981b) wrote, the gifted novelist is capable of 'articulating our own inarticulations, offering among other attributes, an insight into place' (1981a p.345). Place is thus about symbolism, and landscapes become places through the kinds of values people associate with them. In regional literature, for example, novelists are involved in place creation and this was the theme of a major statement on humanistic geography and literature (Pocock (1981b). The essays in this volume use 'place' as an 'organizing concept for what is termed our immersion in, or interpenetration with, the world' (Pocock 1981b, p.17). Lloyd (1981), for instance, uses literary sources to trace aspects of social life in late nineteenth century Boston, and Andrews

(1981) takes a similar approach to assess place imagery in nineteenth century St. Petersburg.

It would be fair to say, taking Pocock (1981b) as an example, that the grounds for textual interpretation are rarely specified by individual authors. Neither is there much consideration of the social, cultural and political contexts within which texts are produced and consumed. Further, there is an implicit assumption that symbolic places are somehow uniquely associated with the work of great authors; there are no references either to children's fiction or other 'popular' literature. But despite these caveats, this genre of humanistic research was significant because it drew attention to individual experiences with places, in ways that had been previously overlooked. Further, in its concern with interpreting 'sense of place', there are some important links to be drawn between this humanistic geography and parallel themes in tourism studies (on a related theme, see Duncan 1978).

### Sense of Place and Authenticity

The ways that individuals interact with, and experience places are integral to both literature and tourism. As discussed above, though, tourism research by geographers has tended to overlook the social and cultural meanings of tourist places. Other disciplines such as sociology have considered some of these questions; an important link between this work, geography and tourism studies is through research on sense of place and authenticity.

In considering a new agenda for tourism research, Relph's influential work on *Place and Placelessness* (1976) is important. Not only does Relph summarize some of the main precepts of humanistic geography but he uses tourism to illustrate elements of his humanistic argument. Relph offers various interpretations of 'place' but central to his thesis is the 'sense or spirit of place':

'Obviously the spirit of a place involves topography and appearance, economic functions and social activities, and particular significance deriving from past events and present situations - but it differs from the simple summation of these. Spirit of place can persist in spite of profound changes in the basic components of identity....The spirit of place that is retained through changes is subtle and nebulous, and not easily analyzed in formal and conceptual terms. Yet at the same time it is naively obvious in our experience of places for it constitutes the very individuality and uniqueness of places' (1983 reprint, pp.48-49).

The major themes in Relph's book are how place identities are created and how individuals experience a sense of place. Correspondingly, Relph also looks at how meanings of places can be destroyed. This results in placelessness as new places are constructed in soulless ways.

The sense of place is linked with tourism through the contrasting notions of 'authenticity' and 'inauthenticity'. For Relph, authentic places reflect 'attempts to create places that reflect a clear and complete conception of man [sic] as well as a sensitivity to the significance of place in everyday life' (1983 reprint, p.71). Alternatively, 'an inauthentic attitude to place is essentially no sense of place' (*Ibid.*, p.82). In Relph's view, most contemporary landscapes are inauthentic because individuals are alienated from places; 'value is measured almost entirely in terms of the superficial



qualities of cost, colour and shape' (*Ibid.*, p.83).

Across this spectrum of inauthenticity - the suburbs and shopping precincts that shape contemporary existence - Relph points to tourism as one of the best examples of inauthentic place - making. As he contends:

'An inauthentic attitude to place is nowhere more clearly expressed than in tourism, for in tourism individual and authentic judgement about places is nearly always subsumed to expert or socially accepted opinion, or the act and means of tourism become more important than the places visited' (Relph, 1983 reprint, p.83).

In other words, the tourist experience is created for visitors by tourism operators but, for most people anyway, 'the purpose of travel is less to experience unique and different places than to collect those places (especially on film)' (*Ibid.*, p.85).

Burgess and Gold (1985b pp.17-18) challenge Relph's assumptions about how the mass media destroys authentic experiences and a similar argument can be made about his interpretations of tourism. In particular, this interpretation rests upon certain understandings of elite and mass culture which can be traced to F.R. Leavis amongst others (see Swingewood 1977). In the context of different representations of Beatrix Potter's work, some of these themes are developed in Chapter 5. What I want to emphasize here, though, is the notion of authenticity.

There is no reference in Relph's bibliography to MacCannell's work, especially his influential book *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (1976; new edition 1989). Yet, there are links to be drawn between Relph's arguments about authenticity and MacCannell's sociological study

of the nature of tourist experiences, and representations of tourist culture. Within tourism research, MacCannell's work is innovative because he wanted 'to understand the role of the tourist in modern society', contending that 'tourist attractions are an unplanned typology of structure that provides direct access to the modern consciousness or *world view*' (1976, pp.2-10).

Drawing on Goffman's (1969) work on 'front' and 'back' regions in the presentation of the self in daily life, MacCannell developed the notion of staged authenticity in tourism (1973;1976). MacCannell maintained that at tourist sites the 'front region' was the meeting place between hosts and guests, while the 'back region' was the private or personal sphere of hosts. He argued that 'sightseers are motivated by a desire to see life as it is really lived' and want to infiltrate the back regions, or everyday life experiences of members of host communities (1976, p.94).

In seeking such authentic experiences, however, tourists are likely to be duped by staged authenticity where 'what is taken to be entry into a back region is really entry into a front region that has been totally set up in advance for touristic visitation' (1976, p.101). In this way, tourist sites are a continuum extending from the front to the back, incorporating a variety of staged settings designed to accommodate but, at the same time guard against, intrusions by outsiders. This is directly connected with some of the literature on sense of place and how the meanings of places are created. In terms of heritage particularly, it suggests that people are duped into meanings already created for them by different agencies.

Both Relph's and MacCannell's work highlights some of the difficulties associated with defining authentic and inauthentic experiences. As Relph says: 'in terms of the experience and creation of places, authenticity rarely appears in...a pure form - instead it is discontinuous and occurs with different levels of intensity' (1983 reprint, p.78). When incorporated into understandings of tourism, MacCannell concluded that 'tourists make brave sorties out from their hotels, hoping, perhaps, for an authentic experience, but their paths can be traced in advance over small increments of what is for them increasingly *apparent* authenticity proffered by tourist settings' (1976, p.106).

It is somewhat surprising that although various studies have applied MacCannell's approach (Buck 1977; 1978; Schmidt 1979), none have as yet used it within a context of literary tourism. Two different approaches to authenticity in tourism are illustrated in papers by Buck (1977; 1978) and Moscardo and Pearce (1986). Buck studied tourism pressure on the Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. As visitors seek glimpses of the authentic Amish way of life, the Amish retreat further into the isolation of their culture group. At the same time, Buck shows how entrepreneurs have mounted 'staged' Amish settings - schoolhouses and farms, for instance - which many visitors accept as representative of genuine Amish culture. By contrast, Moscardo and Pearce used multi-variate statistics to analyze the 'relationships between perceived authenticity and satisfaction' amongst visitors to Australian historic theme parks (1986, p.475). They conclude that

a search for authenticity did indeed motivate people to visit these parks and was an important part of the whole experience.

These papers raise questions about how authenticity is to be defined, and by whom. Following MacCannell's style of research, it seems that tourism automatically destroys authenticity because it brings previously isolated groups into contact with outside and, by implication, harmful influences. Buck's work on the Amish substantiates this position. Looking at this argument in a different way, however, I would again question if authenticity is not in fact something of a myth, premised upon certain elitist assumptions about high and mass culture. Although Relph critiques modern landscapes and staged attractions from an elitist perspective (Burgess and Gold 1985b, pp.17-18), there is no suggestion in the Moscardo and Pearce paper that ordinary visitors valued the 'authentic' experience any less because it had been created for them in a theme park. "Authenticity" therefore raises some important questions about how the meanings of heritage places are created, interpreted and communicated. These meanings may reflect a shared set of landscape preferences, or they may result from individual experiences and feelings; both axioms of humanistic research. They may also be inseparable from a 'sense of place', fostered not only by individual experience but a variety of other sources, too.

In challenging the social scientific concepts of rational human behaviour, humanism asked certain questions about the role of the individual within human geography. The humanistic agenda also introduced previously

neglected areas of human life, like literature, into geographical research. What humanism rarely considered, however, were the links between culture and society, and the contexts within which different forms of cultural production and consumption, such as literature and tourism, operate. In addressing these issues, the contemporary cultural agenda suggests new research opportunities and an important way forward.

### Contemporary Cultural Geography

In an early paper on geography and literature, Tuan (1978) suggested that fiction was 'an artefact highlighting the environmental perceptions and values of a culture' (p.205). In tourism too, various impact studies have assessed the social and cultural effects of tourist development (see for example Barkham 1973 on recreational carrying capacity; Cheng 1980 and Lundgren 1983 on resort developments in Canada). As a powerful mediator of cultural experience, literary tourism bridges these research areas. In doing so, an interpretation of literary tourism necessitates an understanding of the workings of culture and cultural processes which have not really addressed in any of the preceding work I have examined. In considering the agenda of contemporary cultural geography, this section looks first at the origins of cultural studies research and its influence on recent debates in cultural geography.

## Cultural Studies

Cultural geography is about how individuals and groups interact with landscapes and places, and the different ways that this interaction may be expressed. As Sauer (1925) commented, 'the works of man express themselves in the cultural landscape' (Leighley 1969, p.333). The new cultural geography, though, focuses explicitly on the role of culture in social life and the ways in which meanings are produced, communicated, and interpreted.

In engaging with social and cultural theory, human geographers have drawn on the work of several eminent post-war cultural critics and key texts, especially Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1957), and Raymond Williams *Culture and Society* (1958), and *The Long Revolution* (1961). At the University of Birmingham, the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies provided an institutional setting within which to develop this interdisciplinary tradition (Hall 1980, pp.15-47).

In light of my particular inquiry, the following discussion of cultural studies research must necessarily be highly selective. To begin, I focus on two inter-related interpretations of culture. First, culture as concerned with meanings and ideas; second, culture as an expression of social practises and communication (Hall 1986, p.35). As Williams (1958), for instance, writes: 'the history of the idea of culture is a record of our reactions, in thought and feeling, to the changed conditions of our common life' (p.295). A vocal defender of working class culture, Hoggart (1957) echoes this view by

showing how that particular way of life was intimately connected with the structures and practises of everyday existence.

In turn, these associations between ideas of culture and forms of cultural expression, raise important questions about culture and ideology. Jackson (1989) describes this relationship as the 'link between the world of ideas and beliefs and the world of material interests' (p.47). While some forms of Marxism would situate a materialist interpretation of culture as a function or reflection of the economic base, Williams took a less deterministic approach. In considering historical experience, he recognized 'multiple forces of determination, structured in particular historical situations' (Williams 1977, p.88 as summarized by Jackson 1989, pp.35-36).

Expressed in different ways, this critical conception of culture is central to the contemporary cultural agenda. 'It conceptualizes culture as interwoven with all social practices...the activity through which men and women make history' (Hall 1986 p.39). It is a view of culture which incorporates many different forms of cultural expression: not only elite or official perspectives but popular or vernacular cultures too.

In cultural geography, this perspective has shaped many recent critiques of earlier traditions. Blaut (1980), for example, defined a radical critique of 'traditional' cultural geography as the 'criticism one would level at the theories and concepts of elitist western cultural geography if one were poor, or if one were not Western or both' (p.26). He also rejected humanistic perspectives, contending that their emphasis on the individual was not only

a-historical, but also overlooked the comprehensive cultural frameworks within which individuals operate. Jackson (1980) made a similar point, urging geographers to study the inner workings of culture and 'not just those aspects...directly observable in the landscape' (p.113).

More recently, Cosgrove and Jackson (1987) have summarized some of the new directions in cultural geography. They emphasize the centrality of culture by adopting a broad definition of cultural geography; one embracing the contemporary and the historical, the social and the spatial, the urban and the rural (Cosgrove and Jackson 1987 p.95). Gregory and Ley (1988) also stressed the importance of culture, situating the analytical focus of cultural geography in three inter-related areas: the theoretical strategies by which culture is located within the wider framework of social life, the methodologies invoked to study cultural formations, and the representational systems through which cultures may be described (p.115).

As the review papers published in *Progress in Human Geography* over the last ten years show, there have been some significant developments and changes in cultural geography (Ley 1981; 1983; 1985, Rowntree 1986; 1987; 1988 and Cosgrove 1989b; 1990). These can be incorporated into Gregory and Ley's (1988) framework of theory, methodology and representational systems. While Ley and Rowntree chart the growing theoretical awareness in cultural geography and its impact on a broad field of human geography, Cosgrove emphasizes its heightened political edge. Specifically, he looks at how recent research has focused on power relations, as represented in ideas



about race, class and gender.

In this research, the notion of cultural politics or struggles over meaning is a key concept. Ley (1987) and Mills (1988; 1991), for example, consider landscapes of gentrification in Vancouver to assess how wider social trends are mirrored in the built environment. As Ley has written:

'...we might identify the landscape as a text, as a cultural form upon which interrogation reveals a human drama of ideas and ideologies, interest groups and power blocs nested within particular social and economic contexts' (Ley 1987, p.41).

Duncan and Duncan (1988), make specific reference to the landscape as text metaphor, arguing that if social relations and political ideologies are inscribed or 'naturalized' in landscapes, such patterns must be 'denaturalized' or questioned if dominant values are to be challenged. Related themes were addressed by Jager (1986) who studied class and gentrification in Melbourne, while Jacobs (1991) explored contested meanings of heritage and redevelopment in the city of London.

The concern with landscape symbolism has also been expressed in work focused on another representational system, the idea of landscape as 'a way of seeing' (Cosgrove 1984, p.1; 1986a). Cosgrove links the development of the landscape idea with social change and specifically, the transition from feudalism to capitalism:

'...it is in the origins of landscape as a way of seeing the world that we discover its links to broader historical structures and processes and are able to locate landscape study within a progressive debate about society and culture' (1984, p.15).

Similarly, Daniels (1981) considers how landscape preferences and designs

are inseparable from material production. In evaluating Humphry Repton's designs for the home of a wealthy nineteenth century industrialist, Daniels illustrates how they were 'instruments for interpreting the world beyond the park perimeter' (1981, p.395), reflecting wider social tensions and processes.

Some of the work on landscape texts and imagery borrows from the iconographic tradition in art history. Cosgrove (1986) argues that iconography facilitates three kinds of landscape interpretation: morphological, symbolic and iconologic (p.16). This perspective was also the focus for *The Iconography of Landscape* (Cosgrove and Daniels 1988). Spanning a range of themes including nationhood in Canadian art (Osborne 1988b), the anti-picturesque in Wordsworth and Clare (Lucas 1988), eighteenth century art and English agrarian change (Prince 1988), this collection is explicitly concerned with the material conditions in which landscape images are produced, while interpreting the social and cultural meanings of that imagery.

Criticism of earlier approaches in cultural geography has also been influenced by structuration theory (see for example Pred 1984). As Jackson (1986) points out, an understanding of the structural dimensions of social change must be translated into an understanding of their particular local impact. Further, the socially derived links between landscape and place should also be explored: if 'place is to be understood as the level at which social processes are experienced landscapes become places through the meanings that they have for different human subjects' (Jackson 1986 pp.119-120).

These conceptions of culture suggest new approaches and new research opportunities for cultural geography. Although the individual remains important, there is now a much greater emphasis on cultural representation and the relationships between culture and society. As Jackson (1989) writes:

'cultural geography must be contemporary as well as historical; theoretically informed yet grounded in empirical work; sympathetic to other conceptions of human geography rather than focused exclusively on landscape; and concerned with a range of cultures and with the cultural politics that this implies' (p.8).

Within this 'range of cultures', there is great potential for tourism research. Tourist landscapes become places through the meanings ascribed to them by both visitors and promotion agencies. As a form of social activity, tourism is embedded in the material context within which it is produced and consumed. Meanwhile, the links between literature and tourism add another dimension to the process. Literary texts are cultural products too, with different meanings and representational systems. In tourism studies, as well as geography and literature, such issues remain relatively unexplored.

The 'new' cultural geography is premised on closer links with social and cultural theory. Part of this agenda involves consideration of the processes of cultural transformation: the production and consumption of meanings through time. In mapping out the place of literary tourism within cultural studies perspectives, some of these arguments must now be considered.

## Jakobson, Johnson and Theories of Cultural Transformation

Much of Raymond Williams' work was concerned with language and the way that changes in linguistic use reflect wider changes in social life (1958; see also *Keywords* 1976). In this sense, he was especially concerned with cultural communication. As he argued: 'communication is not only transmission; it is also reception and response' (Williams 1958, p.313). Thus, the production and consumption of meaning in discourses cannot be considered as separate communicative systems. Active creation of meanings is carried out by different groups, in particular material circumstances, over time.

In considering these processes, an analogy from literary theory offers a useful starting point: Jakobson's (1960) model of linguistic communication. My work is concerned with the relationship between texts and readers, producers and consumers. In geography, humanistic approaches to literature have usually focused on authors. Jakobson's model offers another way of looking at literature because he considers both writers and readers, and his work therefore bridges a gap between the 'textual' and the 'contextual' (Figure 4).

As set out in Jakobson's argument, the addresser produces a text which is received by an addressee or reader. The message is transmitted through a contact or medium (like a book) which uses a familiar code such as language. The code is the set of rules which structure the message (Selden 1985, pp.3-4). In the relationship between the addresser and the addressee

Figure 4  
Jakobson's Model



In Selden 1985, p.3

context, and therefore time, is singularly important. Literary meaning is not fixed. Meanings are transformed from the point of literary production to their reception by different readers, in different social settings, at different times (see Lodge 1977).

Jakobson's model accounts for the social and temporal contexts within which literary meaning is transformed but it is still premised on a framework of an individual producer (the author) and an individual reader. In terms of literary tourism, a more useful analytical perspective is Johnson's theory of the circuits of culture (1986). Johnson greatly extends Jakobson's model by generalising the processes of cultural production and consumption away from the 'individual' to the 'collective'.

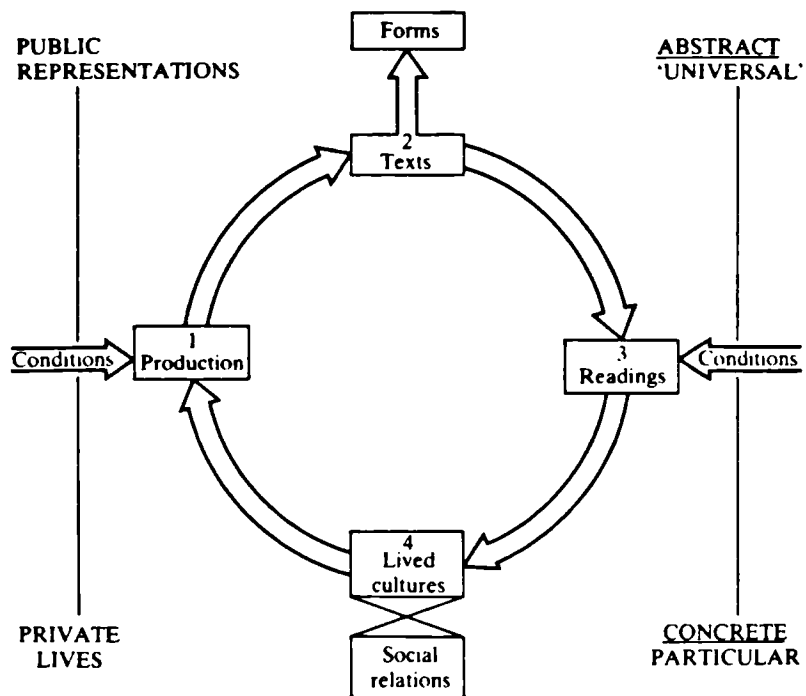
Jakobson is concerned with literary criticism, whereas Johnson concentrates on summarizing trends in cultural studies research by tying together different theoretical traditions and identifying new research directions. Literature is therefore only one part of a much larger social, cultural and political agenda. As Johnson writes: 'we must not limit ourselves to particular kinds of text, or specialized practice or institutional site. *All* social practices can be looked at from a cultural point of view' (1986, pp.282-283).

Contemporary forms of cultural communication are not usually the product of a single creative subject and so in emphasizing the 'collective', Johnson's argument has some important implications. Burgess, for example (1990) used the circuits of culture model in a study of environmental

meanings in the mass media. As she argued: 'Media communications may be theorized as a circuit of cultural forms through which meanings are encoded by specialist groups of producers and decoded in many different ways by the groups who constitute the audiences for those products' (Burgess 1990 pp.139-140). Tourism also involves different groups of producers and audiences. Similarly, it is premised on different meanings, encoded and decoded by producers and consumers over time, and in different social contexts. Johnson's circuits of culture model is shown in Figure 5, and in summarizing the main points of the argument, I use literary tourism to illustrate how the model might work.

Johnson argues that at different phases in the circuits of culture, meaning is transformed, a process expressed through changes of form (see also Burgess 1990, pp.145-146). In the first instance, an author produces a text. Textual production is subject to certain conditions such as the dictates of the publishing business for example, but the production process involves transformation. Linguistically and visually, the text becomes part of a symbolic system. Subsequently, the text is read by different readers or audiences who will make sense of it in different ways. As Burgess (1990) suggests, different textual readings reflect, for example, differences in gender, class and ethnicity (p.146). Textual meanings are then incorporated into lived cultures or everyday life, ultimately contributing to new moments of production. An author's popularity, for instance, may foster interest in certain regions or landscapes. When a tourist industry results, new textual forms

Figure 5  
Johnson's Circuits of Culture Model



Johnson 1986, p.284.



such as advertising are created which are then the subject of new readings.

Johnson also makes an important distinction between public representations and private lives. As he maintains: 'Cultural production is often, but not always, a process of rendering public, a public-action. Cultural consumption is always a process of rendering private again' (Johnson 1986 p.286). In terms of literary tourism, this process might work in several ways. Once published, a novel becomes public property but when its meanings are incorporated by individuals into their own lives, it also fulfils a singularly private function. Similarly, when an author's home is opened to visitors the private becomes an object of public scrutiny. As visitors make sense of their encounters with a literary site, individual and private meanings are likely to interact with public forms and images.

As summarized in the circuits of culture model, cultural studies research is often premised upon different kinds of textual interpretation. Yet, as Johnson emphasizes, 'the individual text is only a *means* to cultural study, a kind of raw material for a part of the practice' (1986, p.297). He therefore distinguishes between the cultural studies and the structuralist and post-structuralist analyses of texts and language. While the latter regards 'the production of meaning as a relatively independent process', the former is concerned with 'whole ways of life or cultures' (Johnson 1986, pp.289-290). These ways of life should not only be studied theoretically; Johnson contends there is a need for much more ethnographic work.

Literary tourism therefore suggests one way of studying the processes

of cultural production and consumption empirically. Corner (1986) notes that a key theme in cultural studies research is 'how social meanings are made' (p.61). Some of these meanings are made through tourism, a form of subjective experience with important links to special moments in people's lives. As such, there are some significant connections between cultural studies approaches, the new cultural geography and possible new directions in tourism research.

### New Perspectives: Literary Geography and Tourism Research

The contemporary cultural agenda has influenced research questions in many different areas of human geography. Some of these new directions are summarized by papers in an edited collection by Gregory and Walford (1989). It is a little disappointing to find that none of the contributors mention tourism and, with the exception of Cosgrove's paper on landscape symbolism (1989a), there is scant reference to literature. Clearly, the editors had a broad mandate but the neglect of tourism highlights the extent to which geographical research on recreation has first, not been influenced by cultural geography and second, remains isolated from work in other disciplines. Similar comments could be made about Kobayashi and Mackenzie's (1989) edited collection which brings together humanistic and historical materialist perspectives. Here, I want to outline some of the possible new directions for tourism research but, in light of my special interest in literary tourism, I focus first on recent work in geography and

literature.

### Literary Geography and Cultural Studies

In the foregoing review of some of the work on geography and literature, I outlined how the creative powers of individual authors have been the primary focus of attention. Following Williams (1973), a cultural critique of this work would highlight several areas of neglect: context, the material conditions of textual production, and the meanings that different readers make from texts. This argument is well expressed in papers by Thrift (1978), Daniels (1985) and Osborne (1988a).

In an influential paper, Thrift (1978) argued that the 'geographic component of a novel can be analyzed but...only in terms of what it contributes to the novel as a whole, to the author's perception of what is real' (p.348). Correspondingly, Thrift asked the rhetorical question about what geography could contribute to the study of literature that literary criticism could not. Daniels (1985) provided a partial answer, highlighting some of the problems inherent in this kind of humanistic research:

'...authors appear not to work, as they do and very humanly, with the possibilities and restraints of artistic form and language, or, in a larger context, with those of the society in which they work. They become instead vehicles for transcendent truths....there is little or no recognition of the literary conventions that...novelists employ, for example their methods of narration or description' (p.149).

Osborne (1988a) supports the argument, stressing that geographers must move beyond consideration of literary texts as sources to see them instead as 'constitutive of social relations and complex symbolic systems' (p.268).

There are a few examples of work taking an explicitly materialist approach in linking literature to wider social and cultural processes (Thrift 1983; Silk 1984; and Silk and Silk 1985). Thrift produced a cultural materialist reading of descriptions of the 'Front' in First World War fiction and the role of place in Fowles' novel, *Daniel Martin*. He emphasized that culture is 'a whole material social process' and that literary depictions of places cannot be divorced from the material context within which they were produced. As such, literary representations of places always carry political meanings.

The papers by Silk (1984), and Silk and Silk (1985) were also concerned with the material context in which literature was produced but took a somewhat different approach. In grounding a geographical appraisal of literature in critical literary theory and reviewing how different traditions conceptualize the relationship between literature, culture and society, Silk (1984) was explicitly concerned with text and context. As he maintained: 'the text clearly cannot be simply regarded as an object which forms the centre of attention, but more in terms of a force in a field of ever shifting pressures, limits, and influences' (Silk 1984, p.169).

In a subsequent paper, Silk and Silk (1985) explored the relationship between racism, nationalism and southern regional myths as expressed in popular American fiction after the Civil War. While this paper has been criticized for its crude marxist reading of the way the material context of southern life found ideological expression in fiction (Cosgrove 1986b), the

Silks' use of popular fiction is worth noting. Work on geography and literature has rarely considered anything other than the 'classic' texts (other notable exceptions include Lowenthal 1982 on landscapes of science fiction, and Tuan 1985 who looked at the world of Sherlock Holmes). By emphasizing cultural plurality and different forms of representation, contemporary cultural geography highlights the need to consider 'popular' literature and mass media.

In considering such sources, however, there is also the important question of different readings and patterns of consumption. As Silk (1984) writes: 'it is difficult to argue what a particular text should be taken to mean, unless something is known about who currently reads it and how it is to be read' (p.172). This issue draws Johnson's circuits of culture framework together with some recent work on popular values for the countryside (Harrison, Limb and Burgess 1986a; 1986b; Burgess, Limb and Harrison 1988a; 1988b; Burgess, Goldsmith and Harrison 1990), and the meanings of heritage landscapes and sacred places (Jacobs 1991; Kong 1991). This kind of approach also forms an important part of my own work on literary tourism.

### Tourism, Heritage and the New Cultural Geography

In geography, possible links between tourism research and contemporary cultural geography have not yet been developed. Thus, a range of research opportunities exist and literary tourism offers one interesting way

of trying to unpack the relationship between leisure activities and wider social structures. In considering some of the recent work in tourism studies by social scientists, however, some important theoretical connections can be made with cultural studies perspectives.

The cultural significance of tourism is premised on an understanding of the functions and meanings of holidays in everyday life. While the links between humanistic approaches and tourism have already been documented with reference to the literature on authenticity and sense of place, 'authenticity' has preoccupied tourism researchers in other disciplines. This research embraces different perspectives, and to illustrate this point I want to consider three papers, two by a sociologist (Cohen 1988a; 1989), and one by a psychologist (Uzzell 1984).

Cohen (1988a) discussed some of the problems associated with the meanings of authenticity and how such a quality is marketed. He pointed to the ambiguities that plague an academic understanding of authenticity and concluded that 'commoditization does not necessarily destroy the meaning of cultural products' (p.383). In a subsequent paper, he developed this argument empirically by studying advertisements for Hill Tribe trekking in Thailand (Cohen 1989). Cohen used discourse analysis to assess how meanings of authenticity were being conveyed in these advertisements. Further, he also linked these meanings with the material and symbolic contexts within which they were produced. Cohen's work represents an important step because he is explicitly concerned with discourse and how

meanings are conveyed in texts. A number of studies have considered tourist advertising but the emphasis has usually been on rather mechanistic content analysis rather than discourse analysis (see, for example, Dilley 1986).

Another approach to tourist advertising is expressed in a paper by Uzzell (1984). Working within a structuralist framework, he used a sample of annual brochures from six U.K. holiday companies to analyse the meanings package firms use to sell their products to consumers. Paying particular attention to photographs in these brochures, Uzzell emphasized that 'meaning lies within the cultural system in which the advertisement is situated' (1984 p.82). Hence, the imagery works because it appeals to, and is mediated by the meanings of the dominant culture; traditional associations, for example, between pleasure and attractive young people (often women) in brief clothing in a tropical setting.

The papers by Cohen and Uzzell illustrate how the contemporary cultural agenda has suggested new possibilities for textual interpretation. Specifically, the textual has been linked with the contextual through a cultural materialist perspective. This approach is also highlighted in a paper by Bennett (1986) which draws on guidebooks and publicity brochures to trace the discourse of modernity at different moments in Blackpool's history. Also expressed in local architecture, this discourse of modernity has been shaped by competing forces including the tastes of the different classes to whom the resort has appealed. The meanings of Blackpool have changed in conjunction with the social, political and cultural context (see also Shields

1990).

The links between modern tourism, culture and society have been explored in a particularly stimulating way by John Urry (1988). He situates the phenomenon of seaside holidays within a context of what he calls 'post-(mass) tourism'. As he argued: 'if we are moving towards a postmodern culture then that will have its parallel developments in the organization of holiday making' (p.35). Linking the decline of British seaside resorts to broader cultural changes, including the dwindling role of the traditional industrial working class and the concurrent rise of a service oriented workforce, Urry contends that post-modern, post-industrial society demands flexible tourism and greater consumer choice. Typically unprepared to meet demands for a variety of on-site recreational activities, the popularity of the traditional seaside resort has declined.

Urry's reference to the post-modern and flexible tourism resonates with Harvey's (1987; 1989) concept of flexible accumulation. Urry links desires for more specialized tourism with these wider intellectual and aesthetic trends as a material expression of postmodernism. There is, however, no easy or straightforward definition of postmodernism and I do not propose to enter that debate here. Suffice to say that Jackson (1989, pp.175-176) points to some of the dilemmas of interpreting postmodern culture, suggesting that 'one of the few areas of consensus within the whole...debate concerns the inadequacy of a unitary concept of culture' (p.177). This argument is, of course, central to the contemporary cultural agenda and, in a different guise,



is developed further in Urry's recent book *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (1990).

In *The Tourist Gaze*, Urry suggests some exciting ways of theorising tourism and his definition of 'the tourist gaze' merits special consideration:

'There is no single tourist gaze as such. It varies by society, by social group and by historical period...What makes a particular tourist gaze depends upon what it is contrasted with; what the forms of non-tourist experience happen to be. The gaze therefore presupposes a system of social activities and signs which locate the particular tourist practises, not in terms of some intrinsic characteristics, but through the contrasts implied with non-tourist social practises....'(1990, pp.1-2).

Urry therefore explores how objects of the tourist gaze have changed both historically and between different social groups, continuing to develop connections between holiday-making and postmodernity, and a dialectic of tourist and non-tourist social practises. This book represents a major contribution to tourism research, not least theoretically as Urry is able to link tourism with other social practises and meanings in new ways, through, for example, the concept of the 'spectacle'.

The 'spectacle' is one concept which directly connects postmodernism with tourism: 'because of the importance of the visual, of the gaze, tourism has always been concerned with spectacle....'(Urry 1990, p.86). MacCannell (1989) makes this point too, but what I want to emphasize here is Urry's consideration of one particular aspect of the tourist gaze: the heritage industry.

Heritage has become part of the spectacle of contemporary tourism, as heritage sites are constructed in response to changing social, cultural and

political contexts. In Britain, for example, progressive de-industrialization has led to a surge of interest in industrial heritage sites like Wigan Pier and Ironbridge Gorge Museum (see Hewison 1987, pp.15-32). Formerly parts of a working landscape of production, these sites have today been transformed into objects of pleasure.

Amongst those now writing about heritage, there has been a growing emphasis on the material context within which attitudes about heritage and preservation are shaped. A strong interest in the heritage of subordinated groups such as the working class has developed (Bommes and Wright 1982; Wright 1985; Hewison 1987). There are thus links to be drawn between the spectacle of Urry's tourist gaze, MacCannell's back regions and the ways that visitors experience 'heritage' settings such as literary sites. In this kind of tourism, history becomes spectacle and when presented to the public, visitors are able to go 'behind the scenes' to experience a seemingly authentic past (see also Lumley 1988). Yet, there is an important political dimension to heritage too, and its politics are as much concerned with the kinds of places and artifacts preserved, as with the ways in which heritage policy is implemented and contested (Wright 1985; Hewison 1987).

Given these theoretical developments, what is now needed is work to see whether or not these propositions can be supported by empirical field research. As Jackson (1989) writes, 'it could be said that theoretical debate in contemporary cultural studies has tended to outstrip empirical research' (p.179). Urry's (1990) book is a case in point. The tourist gaze remains

largely theoretical and there is little sense of the different ways in which ordinary visitors read the changing texts of modern tourism. As Burgess writes 'few geographers seem willing, as yet, to undertake empirical research with the consumers of post-modern meanings' (1990, p.140).

With few exceptions, the analyst remains in the position of power, telling readers what tourism means and how these meanings are constructed, communicated and interpreted. In taking issue with this approach, my work on literary tourism is based on empirical research exploring what have up to now been largely theoretical ideas. From a cultural studies perspective, literary tourism offers one way of assessing the integrated relationship between cultural production and consumption. But, in focusing directly on the consumers of a particular heritage experience, the meanings of that experience assume a more immediate and contemporary relevance.

### Summary

This chapter has synthesized a wide range of research to illustrate how cultural studies perspectives offer new ways of exploring the inter-relationships between geography, tourism and literature.

While an economic tradition has had a powerful influence on how geographers define tourism, humanistic approaches have shaped most of their interpretations of literature. Within such humanistic approaches, some connections between literature and tourism can be drawn from landscape preferences. Other links are derived through work on 'sense of place' and

authenticity. While humanism emphasized the individual, the social contexts within which individuals operate are important too, and therein lies the origins of the contemporary cultural critique.

Recent debates in cultural geography have drawn inspiration from work in cultural studies and Raymond Williams in particular. Concerned with defining culture and the material context of cultural production and consumption, these various critiques and commentaries have brought new research questions into human geography. Two models suggested by Jakobson and Johnson help to conceptualize some of these arguments theoretically. The last part of the chapter charts ways forward, considering how aspects of the contemporary cultural agenda have been applied in both geography and literature, and tourism. Finally, drawing theoretical connections between the 'new' cultural geography and the 'new' tourism, highlights opportunities for empirical field research with 'ordinary' visitors including literary pilgrims. How these meanings are communicated and interpreted provides a focus for the following chapters. First, though, it is important to consider a different issue: the story of Beatrix Potter's life, her publishing career, and some of the ways that literary meanings have been represented.

*Chapter Three*  
*Beatrix Potter:*  
*Biography, Criticism, and Transformations*

‘[Beatrix Potter’s] observations of plant and animal life are exact and scientific, but they are more than that, and her stories open a window into an imaginative world which does not fade with childhood’ (Drabble, 1987, p.256).

Since Beatrix Potter’s books were first published at the turn of the century, her imaginative world has been embraced by successive generations of an admiring public. The great power that her work seems to hold for so many people, however, cannot be easily or definitively explained. Certainly, this power is expressed through tourism, but an understanding of the meanings of the tourist experience must also be premised on knowledge of Potter’s biography and publishing career, during her lifetime, as well as after her death.

In this chapter, I want to focus on the story of Beatrix Potter. Considering first her early life and the history of her writings, her important connection with the Lake District is highlighted: how she transferred this setting into her illustrations and later worked for its preservation through the National Trust. The second part of the story and this chapter is about writing on children’s literature, emphasizing how Potter scholarship is embedded in several different appreciative traditions. Building on this work, some important links between Potter’s stories and a pastoral tradition are then developed. Finally, the chapter looks at some of the different representations of Potter’s

work today. In Britain, she is closely associated with a middle class, elite cultural movement. What has been largely overlooked is how children's books, Potter included, may be changed into different forms, with a much wider popular appeal. The chapter concludes by considering two examples of this process: the Ladybird editions of Potter's books, and a recent exhibition associated with her books which opened in Bowness-on-Windermere in July 1991.

### Illustrator, Author and Countryside Conservationist

#### Early Life and Influences

Beatrix Potter was born in London on the 28th July, 1866. Her parents lived in South Kensington and most of her childhood, adolescence and early adulthood were spent there, largely in the third floor nursery of their large home. Beatrix was the only daughter of Helen and Rupert Potter; her younger brother, Bertram, was born in 1872. Her father was a barrister but never needed to practise law as both he and his wife already possessed substantial family fortunes. This money came from the Lancashire textile mills. The Potter's were thus part of a wealthy, upper-middle class whose parents and grandparents had realized substantial profits from the early industrial revolution but who, by virtue of at least a generation, were separated from any contact with industry.

The Potter's led a life of leisure, spending winters in London, and prolonged summer holidays in various large country homes in Scotland and the north of England. As described by one biographer, Rupert and Helen Potter 'had fallen...under the most enervating and stultifying influence of their century - the sterile spell of moneyed and middle-class gentility' (Lane 1946, pp.11-12). In this environment, Beatrix Potter's early life has typically been portrayed as abnormally secluded. She lived 'in a house which made no concessions to childhood' (Lane 1946, pp.11-12).

This picture has wide popular currency but it is only a partial view. As Taylor (1988) points out:

'Much has been written about the strictness of her childhood, but the Potters were no more overbearing than any other middle-class parents of the time. Children were seen and not heard; they were looked after almost exclusively by their nannies and governesses and were brought downstairs to see their parents only on special occasions or to say goodnight' (pp.17-19).

From a modern perspective, the young Beatrix may have lacked parental attention but she was not deprived in other ways. Not only did she have access to the many new children's books then being published, but from an early age her interest in drawing was actively encouraged by her father. Rupert Potter was a keen amateur photographer, art collector and patron, mixing with some of the leading artistic figures of the day. He regularly attended exhibitions at the Royal Academy and was a close friend of the celebrated Victorian painter, Sir John Everett Millais. Rupert Potter often contributed photographs for Millais' use.

Most of Beatrix Potter's early drawings were inspired by the pets that she and her brother kept in their nursery, and by the flora and fauna that they encountered on their holidays. Although largely self-taught, Beatrix became a competent botanist and, with the precision of a natural historian, she also became well-schooled in plant and animal physiology. As Taylor (1987a) explains: Beatrix and her brother 'closely observed the behaviour of their pets, recording their measurements, noting their characteristics, even boiling them when they died so they could study their skeletons' (p.14).

Beatrix Potter had very little formal artistic training. In her teens, she had lessons from two different instructors. The first, a Miss Cameron, Beatrix felt was the most helpful, teaching her 'freehand, model, geometry, perspective and a little water-colour painting' (as cited in Taylor 1988, p.32). The latter, only ever identified as 'Mrs A', was supposed to instruct her in oils and figure drawing but these lessons were short-lived.

For the most part, then, Beatrix relied on her own instincts, sharpened by advice from Millais when she visited his studio with her father. She also developed a critical eye by meticulous observation of the paintings she encountered on her tours through various London galleries. These visits are recorded in a journal that she kept from the age of fifteen until she was over thirty (Linder 1966; Cavaliero 1986). Although it contains little of a personal nature, this journal was written in a code which was not deciphered until 1958.



In 1885, when Beatrix was almost nineteen, her last governess, Annie Carter, left to marry Edwin Moore and her formal education ended. Thereafter, she was free to devote most of her time to drawing. Several years later, she wanted to raise money to buy a printing machine and, encouraged by an uncle, submitted some watercolours of her pet rabbit, Benjamin Bouncer, to the London publishers, Hildesheimer & Faulkner. Impressed with her work, the firm bought six designs for £6 and asked to see more. These designs were issued as Christmas and New Year's cards in 1890, and also accompanied a booklet of verse, *A Happy Pair* published in the same year. This acceptance marked the start of Potter's professional career.

### Country Holidays

Although Beatrix lived in London until she was forty-seven, she found most of her artistic inspiration in the English countryside. It is therefore important to consider the origins of this influence.

Like many other Victorians, Beatrix Potter's parents were able to enjoy the benefits of industrialization while recoiling from its adverse effects. In the process, they sought refuge in a countryside romantically perceived as a rural idyll. As did his father before him, Rupert Potter first took his family to Scotland for their long summer holiday. Between 1869 and 1881, he leased Dalguise, a stately home near Dunkeld in Perthshire. As Taylor (1988) writes: 'Dalguise was the perfect place for small London children, and the Scottish

countryside influenced Beatrix and Bertram for the rest of their lives....It was at Dalguise that Beatrix discovered with amazement and delight the wild life about her' (pp.28-29; see also Taylor 1989a).

The drawings that Beatrix Potter did on these holidays are included in some of her early sketchbooks (now held in the Victoria and Albert Museum), and they highlight how she began to draw some of the things she saw in the natural world (Whalley 1987, pp. 38-39; Whalley 1989, pp.22;25). However, it is with the Lake District that Beatrix Potter is indelibly associated and in retrospect, the summer holiday of 1882 was particularly important.

When the owners of Dunkeld raised the rent dramatically, Rupert Potter decided to take his family elsewhere; because of its many similarities to Scotland, he chose the English Lake District. Beatrix was then sixteen, and this first Lake District holiday was spent at Wray Castle, on the western side of Windermere Lake. It was here that Beatrix met Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley, the vicar of Wray, and an ardent advocate of Lake District preservation. Rawnsley formed the Lake District Defence Society and was later involved in the founding of the National Trust in 1895. In sharing these concerns with Beatrix, he had a significant influence on the development of her own conservationist concerns (Taylor 1988, p.39).

In choosing to holiday in the Lakes, the Potter's were following an already well-established elite cultural tradition, popularized by Wordsworth, Ruskin and others (as selected examples see Nicholson 1955; Moir 1964;

Newby 1981; Squire 1988c; 1990; Vaughan 1974). To cater to this new interest, a number of large summer residences had been built and in the next ten years the Potter's rented a number of these, including Lingholm on Derwentwater (see Murdoch 1990; The Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum 1984). In 1892, however, the family returned to Scotland, and spent the next several years exploring the Scottish border country. Concurrently, Beatrix was making several independent visits: to cousins near Gloucester in 1894, and to an uncle who lived at Gwynnynog, near Denbigh in Wales in 1895. In 1897, however, the Potter's went back to the Lakes, staying again at Lingholm, and then at the nearby Fawe Park. Resuming her friendship with Rawnsley, Beatrix Potter found him to be a welcome advisor as she began to contemplate publishing a children's book.

All these visits and holidays were important because they provided Beatrix Potter with the backgrounds for her illustrated stories. Yet, she did not originally set out to produce children's books. During the second series of Scottish holidays, she had become interested in fossils and fungi, collecting, drawing and cataloguing specimens at every opportunity (Noble 1986). In London, she did research at the Natural History Museum and Kew Gardens, experimenting with ways of growing fungi spores. Although later validated, her work was given a cool reception by the male scientific community of the day. In 1897, a paper she prepared for the Linnean Society of London, was read by someone else as women were not welcome at Society meetings.

Although she was again encouraged by her uncle, the bastion of male opposition which greeted her attempts to be taken seriously as a mycologist eventually led her to channel her efforts in other directions (Hobbs 1987, p.94). From childhood, she had drawn pictures of animals wearing clothes, and it was these sorts of designs that had brought her early financial success from Hildesheimer and Faulkner. Although never entirely relinquishing her interest in fungi, she turned her attention to animal illustration and, in particular, a series of picture letters she had sent to the children of her former governess, Annie Moore.

#### Beatrix Potter's 'Tales'

Beatrix Potter had always been interested in rabbits and other small animals, and when she went on holiday, she usually travelled with a small menagerie. Yet, as Whalley and Hobbs (1987) point out:

'Beatrix Potter's earliest fantasy drawings appeared in her childhood sketchbooks, but there is quite a gap between the childish pictures of rabbits wearing clothes and skating, and her more mature work. As she continued with more serious studies she grew out of this type of drawing....[and] only very occasionally was there something more imaginative' (p.49).

Whalley and Hobbs trace her resurgence of interest in these sorts of paintings to the 1890s and they cite a very practical reason. Beatrix needed money in order to gain some measure of independence from her increasingly domineering elderly parents.

For its time, Beatrix Potter's situation was not especially uncommon. As

the only daughter, she was being reluctantly drawn into the domestic sphere, with the assumption that she would soon also assume the responsibility of caring for her parents as they grew older. What was unusual, though, was the dramatic success of her chosen emotional outlet. Her brother Bertram had escaped any family obligations permanently when he moved to the Scottish borders and there, without his parents' knowledge or consent married a farmer's daughter. Bertram remained a mediocre and almost unknown landscape painter while his sister, quite unexpectedly, achieved international fame.

Beatrix Potter's work for Hildesheimer and Faulkner was followed by similar commissions from other companies. In conjunction with this kind of work, however, Beatrix also kept up a correspondence with various children, illustrating her story letters with animal sketches. The most famous of these was the 'Peter Rabbit' letter Potter sent to Noel Moore, the eldest son of Annie Moore in September 1893. In 1900, Beatrix asked Noel if she could borrow the letter because she wanted to try and write a book about the rabbit.

After a number of revisions, and consultations with Canon Rawnsley, Beatrix attempted to find a publisher. Taylor (1987b, p.98) estimates that the 'Peter Rabbit' story was rejected at least six times. Only the London publishers Frederick Warne showed any interest, and even they declined the manuscript because she was unwilling to change its small sized format. With no other alternative, Beatrix arranged to publish the book herself and this privately

printed edition appeared in December 1901. It was so successful that she had to have it reprinted by February 1902. Meanwhile, both she and Rawnsley had continued to negotiate with Warne's who eventually agreed to publish the 'Peter Rabbit' story in a condensed form, with colour illustrations.

Frederick Warne published *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* in October 1902, and this marked the start of an association between Warne's and the Beatrix Potter image that continues to the present. Although her second book, *The Tailor of Gloucester*, was also first printed privately, her other books were all published through Warne's.

Beatrix Potter's links with the Warne family were both professional and personal. Her early books owe much to the advice and encouragement of the youngest Warne brother, Norman. Through their correspondence about the books, and her visits to Warne's London office, Norman and Beatrix fell in love and became engaged in 1905. With his sudden death only a few months later, Potter turned to her work for solace.

Between 1902 and 1913, Potter produced nineteen books, making this by far her most creative period (Appendix 1). Many of these books were again derived from picture letters and all of them drew some inspiration from the English countryside. Various backgrounds in the Peter Rabbit story, for example, came from Scotland, as well as her uncle's home in Wales. *The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin* is set firmly in the Lake District on Derwentwater, as is *Benjamin Bunny*, the sequel to *Peter Rabbit*. *The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle*,

about the hedgehog who is a washerwoman, is set in the nearby Newlands Valley, near Cat Bells.

It is easy, even today, to see connections between Beatrix Potter's drawings and some of the places upon which they were based (Figures 6 and 7). Owl Island on Derwentwater, from *Squirrel Nutkin*, can still be identified, as can 'Littletown', the model for Lucie's home in the story of *Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle* (on this point see also Bartlett and Whalley 1988). It is with the southern Lake District, though, that Potter's work is most closely associated and, in particular, the village of Near Sawrey.

In 1903, Beatrix Potter invested some of her royalties by purchasing a field in Near Sawrey and two years later she bought a farm property. Over the course of their Lake District holidays, the Potter's had also rented Lakefield (now called Eeswyke) just outside Near Sawrey village. Their coachman stayed at Hill Top Farm and this was the property that Beatrix acquired (Battrick 1987a, p.177).

Beatrix Potter never lived permanently at Hill Top. When she bought it she arranged for a tenant farmer to be retained. Her visits there were brief, made only when she managed to escape briefly from parental demands. Yet, possibly because she never lived there continuously, Hill Top was an emotional refuge and an important creative stimulus. As Battrick (1987a) suggests: 'However short the visits, it was at Hill Top that Beatrix found her real world....She copied the way of life she gave her animals from what she saw

Figure 6  
Owl Island



*The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin* by Beatrix Potter. London: Frederick Warne. Copyright (c) Frederick Warne & Co., 1903, 1987, p.15. Illustration reproduced by permission of Frederick Warne & Co. Photograph by the author.



Figure 7  
'Littletown'



*The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle* by Beatrix Potter. London: Frederick Warne. Copyright (c) Frederick Warne & Co., 1905, 1987, p.8. Illustration reproduced by permission of Frederick Warne & Co. Photograph by the author.

around her....The books and the life and landscape of the Lake District merged together' (p.178).

Between purchasing Hill Top in 1905 and the end of 1913, eight of Potter's stories were set in the vicinity of Sawrey. *The Tale of the Pie and the Patty-Pan* (1905), for example, celebrates the village's lanes, cottages and gardens while *The Tale of Ginger and Pickles* (1909) is about the Sawrey shop. A trio of books, *The Tale of Tom Kitten* (1907), *The Tale of Jemima Puddleduck*, and *The Tale of Samuel Whiskers* (both in 1908), capture different aspects of the house and garden at Hill Top. And finally, the stories about *Jeremy Fisher* (1906), *Mr. Tod* (1912), and *Pigling Bland* (1913), were drawn from various places nearby; Moss Eccles Tarn and Esthwaite Water, for instance were used as backgrounds for *Jeremy Fisher's* home.

Battrick (1987a) notes that 'Beatrix was part of a trend towards realism - what she called copying what she saw' (p.178). Her watercolours therefore evoke this part of the English countryside in exquisite detail. At least superficially, Near Sawrey and Hill Top especially, still look much as they do in her drawings. Today, these links with the books are an important part of visitors' experiences. Why this countryside seems to resemble her illustrations so closely necessitates consideration of one other aspect of Beatrix Potter's biography: namely, her work as an ardent Lake District conservationist.

Beatrix Potter and the National Trust

As the royalties from her books increased, Potter used this money to buy more Lake District property. These transactions were handled by a local solicitor, William Heelis, whom she eventually married in October 1913. Marriage made a fundamental change in Potter's life. First, it enabled her to live permanently in the Lake District. She and her husband settled at Castle Cottage, Sawrey, another one of the properties that she had acquired. Second, it allowed her to devote more time to her growing interest in farming. Indeed, her literary career soon became secondary to a new role as Lake District sheep farmer and conservationist.

Through her friendship with Canon Rawnsley, Potter became sympathetic to the aims of the National Trust (see also Hanson-Smith 1986). This organization was formed in 1895 'for the preservation of places of historic interest or natural beauty in England, Wales and Northern Ireland' (National Trust Handbook 1991, p.5). Initially, Potter bought property in and around Sawrey to increase Hill Top's holdings but, influenced by Rawnsley, she soon began to buy other properties to save them from destruction, or conversion to a non-traditional use. Correspondingly, she made regular financial contributions to the Trust's Lake District appeals. After her marriage, she acquired even more property, especially following the First World War when many large estates were being broken up. As Mrs Heelis, 'she bought where and when she could, always with an eye to preventing jerry-built bungalows swamping the villages and traditional cottages being demolished' (Battrick 1987b, p.32).

One of her more important purchases was Troutbeck Park Farm in 1924. Near Windermere, this farm covered 2,000 acres. Potter was already interested in Herdwick sheep and, in conjunction with hiring a new shepherd, the acquisition of Troutbeck allowed her to specialize as a Herdwick breeder. Eventually, she became President of the Herdwick Sheepbreeders Association - the first woman to fill the role.

As Potter continued to buy more farms, her flocks of Herdwicks increased accordingly. In 1929, another important acquisition was the 4,000 acre Monk Coniston estate. With this purchase Potter became directly involved with the National Trust, for she offered half of the estate to the Trust at cost with the understanding that the remainder would eventually be willed to them (Battrick 1987b; 1987c; 1987d; Denyer 1991b). She also put her practical farming knowledge to good use, serving as the Trust's land agent at Monk Coniston from 1930 until 1936, and remaining in an advisory capacity until her death in December 1943.

Although the many farms, cottages and other buildings that Beatrix Potter gave to the National Trust have recently been compiled (Denyer 1989; 1991a; 1991b), the extent of her contribution can never be precisely documented. Much of her financial support was made anonymously and she only used her influence as 'Beatrix Potter' when she thought that it might significantly help the Trust's work. In 1927, for example, the Trust launched an urgent appeal to save a strip of Windermere's shore from development.

Since she had become enormously popular in America, she turned this popularity to advantage, selling fifty signed copies of drawings of 'Peter Rabbit' and donating the money to the appeal (Battrick 1987c, p.194).

In later years, Beatrix Potter's primary motive for writing and illustrating was Lake District conservation. Indeed, it was the proceeds from sales of her last two major books, *The Fairy Caravan*, published in America in 1929, and *The Tale of Little Pig Robinson* (1930), which enabled her to buy Monk Coniston. Farming had become so absorbing that her storybook world was less important and as 'Mrs Heelis' she consciously distanced herself from 'Beatrix Potter'. As Lane, her first biographer discovered she shunned any kind of publicity about her work, and refused to allow anything to be written about it. 'My books have always sold without advertisement' she replied to Lane's early query, 'and I do not propose to go in for that sort of thing now' (as cited in Lane 1978, p.203).

This reticence notwithstanding, Beatrix Potter left several important legacies. First, there are her 'little books', most of which remain in print around the world. With hindsight, a new era in children's writing began with Potter, for her books were among the first designed to fit children's hands. Her second major legacy, however, is the English Lake District. When she died in 1943 all of her property went to the National Trust. This donation of over 4,000 acres was called the Heelis Bequest, and was at that time, the largest endowment the organization had ever received.

Beatrix Potter's work for Lake District conservation was far-reaching.

As Battrick (1987d) explains:

'Canon Rawnsley, whose work for the National Trust had helped to persuade Beatrix Potter to leave her lands in its care, had seen only beautiful countryside as being under threat; farms and cottages were incidental. Beatrix had understood that Lake District countryside could only survive if the traditional way of life survived with it, farms and farming in particular' (p.204).

This traditional way of life, represented in Potter's drawings, is also today preserved by the National Trust and is part of what many visitors, literary pilgrims included come to the area to see. What happened after Potter's death, and the meanings that her work seems to hold for so many people today, are thus an equally important part of the story. This story begins with Potter's role in children's literature.

### Appreciating Children's Literature

#### Writing About Children's Literature and Beatrix Potter

Writing for children has rarely been considered worthy of serious critical attention and Beatrix Potter's books have been no exception. Work on children's literature is usually carried out in library schools and English departments. Correspondingly, there has been little consideration of children's fiction as popular culture, nor its links with other traditions.

Writing about children's literature embraces several strands. Some research, for instance, has focused on the history of writing for children,

considering the development of this distinct literary tradition in different genres and historical periods (selected examples include Darton, 1958; Meigs *et al* 1966; Ellis 1969; Cadogan and Craig 1976; Egoff 1981; Summerfield 1984). Summerfield offers a useful summary of this field: 'In Western culture, childhood is said to be a relatively recent invention; and literature for children, therefore, even more recent. It's hardly surprising, then, that in...the history of children's literature we are still at the stage of inventing the wheel' (1984, p.xi).

This historical approach is complemented by various biographies of individual writers. A recent list might include Bull's work on Streatfeild (1984), Thwaite's book about Milne (1990), and Briggs' assessment of Nesbit (1991). There is also some work on book collecting (Alderson 1989; Stockham 1991) and choosing children's books (Landsberg 1989). Others have studied the psychology of children's fiction and children's reading patterns (Tucker 1981), or have studied a writer's personality in light of the stories that he or she produced (Carpenter 1985). Perhaps most importantly, however, there is also beginning to emerge a body of critical theory about children's literature (Rose 1984; Paul 1987; Hunt 1990; 1991). As Hunt (1991) explains: 'Critical theory meets children's books at many...points. It has been concerned, for example, with politics and power, reader response, and deconstruction, structures, and myths' (pp.10-11).

This summary of approaches is, of necessity, brief and highly selective,

for it is not my purpose to dwell on this particular field. I refer to this literature simply because the majority of Beatrix Potter scholarship is embedded in these traditions. Although her work is usually described in terms of the 'nursery classics', other dimensions are now beginning to be explored.

Given Potter's feelings about publicity, almost all the work about her has appeared since her death. A notable exception, though, is a 1933 essay by Graham Greene, suggesting that her more macabre characters, Mr. Tod for instance, were the result of 'an emotional ordeal which changed the character of her genius' (Greene 1981, p.177). In one of her rare replies to critics, Potter 'denied that there had been any emotional disturbance at the time she was writing *Mr. Tod*: she was suffering...from the after-effects of flu' and she dismissed 'the Freudian school of criticism' (Greene 1981, p.180)

More appreciative work was also written, most of it focused on her biography and the history of her writings. One of the earliest of these essays was published in the American *Horn Book* magazine and celebrated the 'magical wonder' of the Beatrix Potter books (Miller 1941, p.228). In England, Lane's first biography, *The Tale of Beatrix Potter* appeared in 1946, the same year that Hill Top was opened to visitors. Lane's book was later revised (1968) and was then followed by another biography, this time uniquely concerned with Potter's early life and literary career (1978). More recently, Taylor's meticulous research has shed more light on the Beatrix Potter story (1987a; 1987b; 1987c; 1988; 1989a; 1989b).



Some work has focused specifically on the history of her writings and publishing career (see for example Linder 1971; Taylor 1987c). Finally deciphered in 1958, her journals have also been published (Linder 1966; Cavaliero 1986) and several letter collections compiled (Morse 1982; Taylor 1989b; 1991). The Beatrix Potter material in the Victoria and Albert Museum has been catalogued (Hobbs and Whalley 1985), several projects have been devoted to aspects of her art (Linder 1955; revised edition 1972; Hobbs 1989), and even her revision process (Golden 1991). In recent years, several guide type books have also been produced, celebrating Potter's links with the Lake District (Borish 1984; Battrick 1987b; Bartlett and Whalley 1988; Davies and Pemberton-Piggott 1988), Gloucestershire (Clarke 1988), and Scotland (Rolland 1981).

Many of these perspectives come together in the Beatrix Potter Society, founded in 1980 by a group of people professionally involved in the curatorship of Beatrix Potter material. This Society actively promotes Potter scholarship and has published a series of Studies, drawn from bi-annual conference proceedings (Pritchard and Riddle 1986; Riddle 1987;1989; Bassom, Knox and Whalley 1991). This work is important because it focuses attention on aspects of Potter beyond the 'Tales'.

In writing about children's literature, though, critical approaches are less well developed than biographical and historical projects. Work on Potter is no exception. Some of this research has taken a psychological perspective.

Carpenter (1985), for example, refers to Potter in his discussions of aspects of the children's writer as "a repressed personality". By contrast, Tucker (1981;1989) approaches the texts, and 'Peter Rabbit' in particular, to study the psychology of childhood and children's reading. MacDonald (1986) focuses on thematic questions, such as how narrative functions and plot is developed, while Carpenter (1989) and Lurie (1990) explore the subversive elements in her work. Meanwhile, Sale (1975) and Whalley and Hobbs (1987) are concerned with the links between Potter's work and other literary traditions, especially fairytales and fantasies.

These links with other traditions and critical approaches suggest an important way forward, not only for Potter scholarship but for a wide range of work about children's literature generally. Indirectly, these links highlight how children's literature can function as a form of popular cultural expression. Taking *Peter Pan* as an example, Rose (1979; 1984; 1990) is one of the few critics to make this point. In the work on Potter, though, there is enormous potential to build upon some of the themes that have already been considered, to focus more directly on why her work appears to resonate so strongly with people today. I would argue that one of the reasons Potter is so significant a figure in contemporary cultural life is that her work embraces a pastoral tradition, expressed through an idealization of country life and, ultimately, childhood.

## Beatrix Potter and the Pastoral

Beatrix Potter's work is linked with a pastoral tradition that comes out of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Romantic movement. Although the Romantics introduced the child into English literature, the explosion of writing for children between 1860 and 1930 was also the result of other influences (see Carpenter 1985, p.11).

The nineteenth century was the age of high imperialism and empire building, driven by an Industrial Revolution that was blighting the countryside, and leading to misery and oppression for the working classes. In children's literature, this climate of rapid social change and uncertainty was expressed in two ways: the adventure or school story, written to encourage nationalistic heroism, and fantasy or escapist arcadian literature to which Potter's stories belong (Carpenter 1985; Cadogan and Craig 1976). The resultant "cult of childhood", was not, however, simply a response to political circumstance. In the Victorian period, a new audience for children's books had emerged: the children of the monied middle classes.

The 'pastoral' carries a variety of meanings and it is not my purpose here to focus on the history and complexity of its usage, nor indeed how 'nature' generally has been defined (on this point see Marinelli 1971; Loughrey 1984; Williams 1982). What I want to emphasize is the extent to which the pastoral is an essential part of Beatrix Potter's stories. In her work the pastoral motif represents ordinary country landscapes, clouded by nostalgia for a

particular way of life and linked to attitudes about countryside and the country childhood.

Potter's books are not conventional pastoral idylls for she 'used the arcadian setting as an ironic contrast and background to the blackly comic themes of her stories' (Carpenter 1985, p.11). Further, her illustrations also reflect other influences: Aesop's animal fables and an anthropomorphic tradition; the work of Randolph Caldecott, an earlier Victorian illustrator whom Potter admired and whose work her father collected; a number of Victorian animal painters, especially Landseer; as well as the Pre-Raphaelites (Whalley 1987; Whalley and Hobbs 1987; Lambourne 1989; Feaver 1977; Maas 1978; Staley 1973). As I will show later in Chapters 5 and 6, however, Potter's work has become uniquely associated with a pervasive pastoral image, and it is thus important to look at how this myth is conveyed.

Maas' (1978) comparison between Potter and Landseer is interesting because as Pringle (1988) points out, Landseer was himself closely involved in the representation of a Victorian myth of the Scottish Highlands. Pringle argues that many of Landseer's paintings convey a 'myth in which the contingent and historical are lost in an image of tranquil natural order' (p.145). A similar perspective can also be applied to Potter's illustrations.

All of Potter's stories share particular pastoral motifs that help to perpetuate a specific kind of rural mythology. One of the most pervasive images in her books is that of the garden. Peter Rabbit trespasses in Mr.

McGregor's garden, and this setting re-appears in *both The Tale of Benjamin Bunny* and the *Flopsy Bunnies*. Gardens are also celebrated in the early Sawrey stories, as well as in a much later Sawrey book, *The Tale of Johnny Townmouse* (1918). Potter privileges a number of elements in these books, including the mixture of vegetables and flowers typifying the traditional English cottage garden (Russell 1987), stone walls and gates, and smaller birds and animals - sparrows, robins and mice.

One of the best examples of this imagery comes from the story about Johnny Townmouse and his friend Timmy Willie, a country mouse 'who went to town by mistake in a hamper' (Potter 1989, p.319). Johnny asks Timmy Willie about life in the country, and Timmy Willie replies:

'...when the sun comes out again, you should see my garden and the flowers - roses and pinks and pansies - no noise except the birds and bees, and the lambs in the meadows' (Potter 1989, p.325).

This passage includes many pastoral allusions. The profusion of flowers, the peace and tranquillity, and the lambs in the meadows all reinforce a particular way of seeing countryside. Leo Marx (1967) also singles out the garden motif as one way of exploring ideas about the pastoral. 'The garden stands for the original unity...the beauty...of creation', and such landscapes have been associated with a variety of positive meanings (Marx 1967, p.85). Although danger may lurk just outside or even within, the garden still represents a compelling utopia. This notion of barriers is important, for as noted, Potter's gardens usually include a wall or gate and these elements serve an important

symbolic function. Peter Rabbit, for instance, squeezes under the gate of Mr. McGregor's garden. In the sequel, Benjamin and Peter perch on a garden wall, as do the three kittens in *Tom Kitten* (Figure 8).

In writing about gardens and rural life, Potter was also juxtaposing country and city in an important way. As interpreted by contemporary visitors, these themes, and their links with Williams (1973), are the focus of Chapter 6. At present, though, it is interesting to consider how this relationship functions in one of Potter's books, as urban and rural experiences are defined in relation to each other. In her own life, Potter turned her back on London and consciously chose to live in the country. She reiterates this decision in *Johnny Townmouse* saying: 'One place suits one person, another place suits another person. For my part I prefer to live in the country, like Timmy Willie' (Potter 1989, p.330).

All of her stories celebrate rural virtues, and correspondingly, contribute to a still powerful myth of English country life. The cosy cottage interiors in the *Pie and the Patty-Pan*, *Tom Kitten*, and *Samuel Whiskers*, highlight how in lovingly transferring Hill Top and its furnishings into her work, Potter also captured a way of life; one that never existed as she portrayed it but which evokes an idealized golden age (Figure 9).

Although I do not want to delve into semiology, this concept of myth is important because it reflects a second level of signification (see Barthes 1972). Put simply, myth derives its substance from a pre-existing system of

Figure 8  
Pastoral Gardens

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Figure 8





meanings. As such, Potter's work speaks to a much wider sphere of rural images and mythologies. In this context, Treble (1981) draws an interesting link between the Victorian and modern era:

'One of the most powerful images of the Victorian countryside for the modern viewer, and for the Victorians themselves, was provided by scenes of cottage life, featuring rustic simplicity....This prettily sentimental view of country life was almost as mythical to its contemporaries as it is to the twentieth century and seems to have owed its popularity as much to its unattainability as to the evident charm of the paintings it produced' (p.169).

This charm is part of Potter's powerful appeal, for her landscapes show few of the more unpleasant realities of rural life.

One way of highlighting this pastoral image, then, is to look more closely at her illustrations with an eye to what she has omitted. Barrell (1980) takes this approach in a study of landscape paintings, uncovering the darker life of the English rural poor which lies behind the seemingly innocuous and picturesque depictions of rural scenes. Potter's illustrations can be read in a similar way. *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck*, for instance, is partially set in the farmyard at Hill Top but none of the more untidy aspects of farm life intrude upon the storybook setting. Similarly, there is no hint from the pretty village scene in *The Tale of the Pie and the Patty-Pan* that in nearby Hawkshead, a county sanitary inspector was then preparing a report about disease and over-crowding in the cottage homes (Denyer 1989; Figure 10).

In Potter's stories, it is always summer and the sun is usually shining. When she was doing most of these drawings, though, farming was still a hobby



and she was coming to the Lake District on holiday. Despite their obvious charm, there is thus a certain indulgence about her illustrations. Farming was not her livelihood and Hill Top was an emotional refuge from family concerns. As such, she was not really obliged to confront any darker realities and it was easy for the pastoral image to be sustained. After her marriage, when she became a full-time farmer, her perspective changed. As she wrote to one of the Warne family: 'Somehow when one is up to the eyes in work with real animals it makes one despise paper-book animals' (cited in Taylor 1988, p.144).

Marsh (1982) documents how the Victorian pastoral impulse was expressed in a variety of 'back to the land' movements. Although Potter did not join any kind of formal organization, her escape to the Lake District can certainly be considered in light of these wider social trends. For contemporary readers of Potter's books, literary tourism serves a similar, although transitory function. Most people today have no immediate contact with rural life. Part of the appeal of the pastoral and, indirectly, of Potter's work is more than likely to reflect this orientation.

While the pastoral has become a powerful cultural symbol, 'often directing the way we look at our environment' (Peebles 1989, p.1), it similarly has much to do with childhood. Like ideas about countryside, notions of childhood owe much to Romantic influences. Indeed, the two are linked because Wordsworth and his successors saw childhood as unequivocally rural. With the exception of Lucie in *Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle*, Potter did not include

children in her stories. Still, her books were written for children and, as discussed in Chapter 5, they have become indelibly associated with a particular version of childhood experience; one that is set in the rural past.

This construction of child-life is primarily a function of adult nostalgia, premised on a relationship between memory and an idealized childhood golden age. As Lowenthal (1985) notes:

'Life back then seems brighter not because things were better but because we lived more vividly when young; even the adult world of yesteryear reflects the perspective of childhood. Now unable to experience so intensely, we mourn a lost immediacy that makes the past unmatchable....Childhood thus recalled excludes the family quarrels, the outings dominated by waiting in queues for grubby loaves; nostalgia is memory with the pain removed' (p.8).

Potter has been incorporated into this nostalgia and the pastoral imagery in her books fused with this elusive childhood golden age. It is probably false to say that Potter intentionally set out to create this pastoral childhood idyll. The appropriation of her books in this way is one of the reasons that they are now held to be so significant. The nostalgia for a pastoral childhood has also become part of a middle class, elite cultural movement. The final part of the chapter brings Potter's story to the present by considering two rather different representations of her work, illustrating its wider popular appeal.

### Beatrix Potter Transformed

Like *Winnie the Pooh* and *Paddington Bear*, the Beatrix Potter characters are no longer mere literary types. In conjunction with writing and

illustrating the books, Potter herself, from a very early stage, was actively involved in developing a range of associated merchandise - china, painting books, toys, games and so on. Since 1943, this product line has continued to expand, licensed through Frederick Warne who hold Potter's copyright until 1993, fifty years after her death. This kind of marketing is discussed in Chapter 7. What I want to consider here are some of the other ways the books have been changed and represented; in particular, through the Ladybird editions and, by way of conclusion, a new Beatrix Potter Exhibition in Bowness-on-Windermere.

#### Ladybird Books

Beatrix Potter is part of middle class mythology, integral to what English cultural identity is about. Hunt (1991) describes the books as 'a national institution' (p.26) and as Drabble (1987) writes: 'Generations of children all over the world, some of whom have never seen an English field or tree, have formed intense and acute impressions of the English countryside through [Potter's] work' (p.256).

The mythology surrounding Potter is precisely why the recent Ladybird editions of her books have stimulated such debate. Like Potter, Ladybird Books are also something of a British institution. Over the past thirty years, they have established a reputation for publishing children's 'classics' in a simplified, easy to read format. In 1987, two Potter books, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, and *The*

*Tale of Squirrel Nutkin*, joined the list of Ladybird titles. Published in association with Frederick Warne, these editions were then followed by *The Tale of Jemima Puddleduck* in 1989.

In the United States, where *Peter Rabbit* has never been protected by copyright legislation, pirated editions of the story have a long history (Goodacre 1984). The older piracies are today avidly sought by collectors while new ones continue to be produced (Frohnsdorff 1984). Some of these retain Potter's text but not her illustrations, while others use the Peter Rabbit name but make no reference to Potter and have entirely different storylines and pictures (Figure 11). In rare instances, some of these books are sold in Britain. The main difference between these books, and the Ladybird editions, though, is that while the former are piracies, the latter have been sanctioned by Frederick Warne.

Chapter 5 considers these Ladybird editions in the context of culturally defined notions of childhood. Or, as Hunt (1991) puts it, as an example 'of the ways in which the book culture makes decisions about childhood, and in many ways creates or destroys it' (p.60). It is interesting here, though, to begin by considering how the Ladybirds have transformed Potter's texts and illustrations (see also Hamilton 1987).

In each of the three Ladybird books, Potter's drawings have either been replaced by photographs or re-drawn by other illustrators. Correspondingly, her animal characters take the form of fabric models. Compare, for example, the

Figure 11  
Beatrix Potter Piracies





picture of Peter Rabbit's sisters, Flopsy, Mopsy and Cottontail picking blackberries in Potter's original story, with the same scene in the Ladybird version (Figure 12). Although the Ladybird bunnies are wearing red cloaks, this detail is relatively minor. Far more important, is the transformation of Potter's watercolour into an entirely different medium. The delicate wash of colour in Potter's original is lost as the rabbits have been 'brought to life' as part of a staged studio set.

Another interesting example comes from *Jemima Puddleduck*, where the original version contains an illustration of the Tower Bank Arms, Sawrey's public house. In the Ladybird edition, part of the drawing has been replicated by another illustrator (although from a different angle), and the collie-dog Kep is depicted in model form, walking into the illustration (Figure 13).

Other changes have been made to the texts. The Ladybird strategy is one of simplifying language so that the story will be understandable to younger or less literate readers. In *Peter Rabbit*, for instance, Peter's escape from Mr. McGregor's garden and his return home have been substantially altered. The Ladybird version has a much more dominant educational tone, both in terms of the words used, and the way the reasoning is developed. Compare the following excerpts, beginning with Potter's original:

'His mother was busy cooking; she wondered what he had done with his clothes. It was the second little jacket and pair of shoes that Peter had lost in a fortnight.

I am sorry to say that Peter was not very well during the evening. His mother put him to bed, and made some camomile tea; and she gave a dose of it to Peter! One tablespoonful to be taken at bed-time' (Potter





1989, p.20).

Then, as modified in the Ladybird edition:

'Mrs Rabbit was busy cooking. She noticed that Peter's jacket and shoes were missing, and she wasn't at all pleased. It was the second pair of shoes that Peter had lost in a fortnight, and the blue jacket was nearly new.

Then Mrs Rabbit took a closer look at Peter. "Dear me!" she said to herself. "His whiskers are drooping! He doesn't look very well!"

So Mrs Rabbit decided to give Peter something to make him feel better. She got out her camomile tea and waited for the water to boil. Peter Rabbit groaned when he saw the tea. He knew that it tasted horrible.

Peter was put straight to bed and Mrs Rabbit gave him some tea. "One tablespoonful to be taken at bedtime," she said as she tucked him up.' (Hately 1987, unpaginated).

By itself, this second extract is simply part of a story. Yet, in part because the Ladybird editions have changed the substance of what Beatrix Potter has traditionally been about - crisp, concise prose and delicate watercolours - they have met with vehement disapproval. As a young woman wrote to the letters column of *The Times* newspaper soon after the first Ladybird Beatrix Potter book appeared:

'I am affronted, as Tabitha Twitchit would say, by the news of a simplified version of *Peter Rabbit*....For 85 years, children have read and enjoyed all Beatrix Potter's books, and when they were too young to read they simply looked at the author's beautiful line drawings. It is "passing extraordinary" (*The Tailor of Gloucester*) that these pictures should be replaced by overweight and garish puppets....As the sparrows said to Peter Rabbit, "I implore you to exert yourself" and try to prevent this "frightful thing" (*The Tale of Mr Jeremy Fisher*)' (Fox 1987).

Although there is no indication that these editions have made Potter's original stories any less popular, the way that they have been revised for a 'mass' audience challenges an elite cultural movement. As Howard (1987) also writing

in *The Times* commented:

'The age of dilettantism is gone. That of PR, economists, market research, and value for money has succeeded....That must be why *Peter Rabbit* no longer goes lippity-lippity as he used to in elitist old nurseries....Ladybird Books have updated Beatrix Potter to appeal to a wider non-book buying public....'

In this sense it is also interesting to compare the Ladybird editions with another representation of the books - the Frederick Ashton/E.M.I. film, *Tales of Beatrix Potter* made in 1971 (Godden 1971; Pritchard 1986). In this ballet, costumed dancers brought the characters to life, as the stories were conveyed through music and mime. Much as the Ladybirds have done, this film changed the original books into another form and circulated them to new audiences. Unlike the Ladybirds, though, the film featuring dancers from the Royal Ballet was widely approved. This approval says much about different, usually class-based notions of elite and thus acceptable forms of cultural expression, and those which are popular, and hence unacceptable to the elite.

### The World of Beatrix Potter

These distinctions between 'elite' and 'popular' culture are fluid and since her death, the Beatrix Potter phenomenon has been expressed in both sorts of discourses. Some of these are the focus of subsequent chapters. One, however, is very recent and as such is not discussed elsewhere in the thesis. In conclusion, I want to consider the 'World of Beatrix Potter Exhibition' which opened in Bowness-on-Windermere on the anniversary of Potter's 125th

birthday, 28th July, 1991.

This exhibition is financed by a private family consortium but it also has the approval and involvement of Frederick Warne. The various dioramas take the visitor on a journey through Beatrix Potter's world, in three dimensions. Each book has been incorporated into a stage set telling part of the story. The texts are in English, French, German and Japanese (Figure 14).

Looking at the figures closely, some parallels between this exhibition and photographs in the Ladybird Potter books, are evident. As an example, consider the exhibition *Jemima Puddleduck*, with the same scene in the Ladybird version (Figures 14 and 15). Although the medium is different, the characters have been animated in a similar way.

As this exhibition has only just opened, it is too early to assess public reactions and interest. Still, it has the potential to be an important part of the Beatrix Potter story. This story is about cultural transformations and how, over time, the books have been changed into different forms. Given the similarities, for instance, between the exhibition dioramas and the Ladybird characters, it will be interesting to see if the former sparks any kind of protest from Potter purists. Perhaps the lack of protest, to date, reflects a question of context. While it is seen by some to be inappropriate to produce new versions of the books, it is acceptable to use the same sorts of characters in a ballet or exhibition because the vehicle is fundamentally different.

Finally, the name of the exhibition, 'The World of Beatrix Potter' is

Figure 14  
The World of Beatrix Potter Exhibition



Photographs by the author.





interesting. Warne's use this description too, in advertising their Potter-inspired merchandise. The phrase also nicely summarizes what this chapter has been about. In the most literal sense, Potter's world is a product of the late Victorian and Edwardian period. Many of the illustrations for her books were first done in the 1890's and, by 1913 her career as an author and illustrator was virtually over. Thereafter, her work as 'Beatrix Potter' had come to serve a different function, supporting her commitment to farming and, through the National Trust, Lake District conservation.

Since 1943, Potter's popularity has continued to grow and the world of her books has been introduced to new audiences around the world. Potter scholarship is now embedded in studies of children's literature but the links between her books and a pastoral myth, as well as nostalgia for a childhood golden age have been overlooked. The way that Potter wove these different strands together provides a partial explanation of why her work remains so significant for people today, and has been integrated into an elite cultural movement. Correspondingly, though, her work is also part of a tradition of children's literature as popular culture and the Ladybird editions of her books reflect this background.

The Beatrix Potter Exhibition highlights another strand in this phenomenon: one concerned with tourism and tourist development. Tourism is one of the ways that the Potter heritage has been marketed and thereby changed. Yet, tourism offers a way of understanding the meanings associated

with Potter today, while also illustrating different expressions of elite and popular culture. As expressed through Potter tourism, this interaction between readers, texts and places not only reinforces a complex system of cultural attitudes and values. It also transforms them. In studying these processes of meaning creation, questions of methodology become singularly important and it is to these I now turn.

*Chapter Four*  
*The Field Research Programme:*  
*Methods and Preliminary Analysis*

'With their emphases on meaning, it is trite to say that qualitative and interpretative approaches differ from those of natural science and 'scientific' geography. This implies that the criteria of validation are also somewhat different. Interpretative geography does not stand outside its subject-matter: it is part of the investigation and of the discourse itself' (Eyles 1988, p.11).

The links between literature and tourism, expressed through tourist travel to places like Hill Top, are part of a larger system of cultural construction and representation. Understanding this system, however, necessitates integration of a variety of interpretive methods that have not traditionally been employed in tourism research. The circuits of culture model (Johnson 1986) offers one way of conceptualizing how cultural meanings are produced, represented and transformed. Concurrently, though, this schema raises some important methodological issues. How to put theory into practise through an empirical case study?

This chapter has three inter-related aims. First, trends in tourism studies and qualitative methods in human geography are considered, for rarely has the divergence between qualitative and quantitative approaches been more pronounced than in tourism research. In light of this material, the potential for the use of qualitative methods in tourism is discussed. The second part of the chapter highlights how these methodological issues are connected with

the research strategies I developed in the Hill Top study; a combination of conventional survey research with more flexible interview and workshop strategies. Finally, the last part of the chapter is concerned with preliminary analysis of the questionnaire survey results. This data informs much of the discussion in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. It also provides a comprehensive profile of the sample visitor population.

Case studies can highlight wider patterns of social relations and cultural experiences. If such studies are to be successful, however, the triangulation, or combination of different methodologies is essential. As this chapter seeks to illustrate, the qualitative-quantitative dialectic in tourism research is artificial. A more profitable course is to explore how these different strategies may support and enhance each other.

### Tourism Studies and Qualitative Methods in Geography

#### Trends in Tourism

In both North America, and to a lesser extent the U.K., tourism studies have been characterized by a preoccupation with quantitative approaches, and an attendant neglect of more interpretative work. With the exception of some historical studies (see for example Towner 1991; Bennett 1986), and attempts at theorizing aspects of tourist experiences (Thurot and Thurot 1983; Uzzell 1984; Urry 1988), tourism researchers have seemed reluctant to venture beyond quantitative analysis. This emphasis on statistics is, however, only

part of a larger methodological issue aptly summarized by Dann, Nash and Pearce in a 1988 review paper:

'...there has been an unfortunate tendency to gloss over questions of theory and method, and a concomitant failure to acknowledge their inter-relationships. As a result, 'research' often falls into one of...three categories: theoretical discourse without empirical foundation; descriptive essays which assemble a collection of impressionistic and anecdotal material; and data analyses devoid of theoretical content' (p.4).

Much has recently been written on approaches to tourism research, but Dann, Nash and Pearce's paper is noteworthy on two counts. First, they suggest a variety of possibilities for future work including greater use of qualitative material; archival documents, diaries, photographs, postcards and other souvenirs. Secondly, the authors support flexible research techniques:

'...there has apparently been no study which has utilized conversation sampling. Yet, in spite of the alleged accompanying high 'dross rate', such a technique could prove most worthwhile in assessing tourist satisfaction on a whole array of items....freely uttered words spoken outside the formal setting of an interview might very well have greater validity than the responses to a structured questionnaire with all its...in-built biases' (Dann, Nash and Pearce 1988, p.25).

As Dann *et al.* point out, the semi-structured or open-ended interview has never, to their knowledge, been used in tourism research. Although this seems to be an amazing oversight, it nevertheless highlights the great potential for qualitative analysis in this area.

It is not my purpose here to review how quantitative methods have been used in tourism research. Such perspectives have been well documented elsewhere, most recently by Mitchell and Murphy (1991) who have written:

'Like most disciplines examining tourism behaviour, geographers have approached the task by asking questions familiar to their own discipline, and have developed a series of individual models and

fragmentary 'laws'....Geography is a dynamic field, forever expanding its lines of inquiry and technical prowess to answer spatial questions. This same character is evident in its approach to tourism research, especially in its attempts to synthesize a wide variety of causative factors into meaningful models of tourism behaviour, including their temporal development' (pp.65; 67).

The tone of this paper situates it more readily in the late 1960's than in 1991. Yet, while the excerpt I have cited illustrates the narrow definition of tourism research that some geographers still entertain, it hardly seems profitable to debate such issues now. Far more useful is to consider how qualitative methods have been used in human geography more generally, and to relate such approaches to some recent work on tourism.

#### Case Studies and Qualitative Methods

In human geography, questions of methodology have become increasingly important and many of these discussions are concerned with qualitative techniques. Qualitative methods are linked with a resurgence of interest in social and cultural theory, and closer relations with cognate disciplines, notably interpretive sociology and anthropology. In this sense, the papers in an edited collection by Eyles and Smith (1988) are important, for they illustrate both the range of qualitative techniques - including ethnographies, depth interviewing, participant observation, and textual analyses - currently being used in geographic research, and their links with other disciplines.

Qualitative methods are used to draw 'order' or patterns from social

interactions and practises. Most of the essays in the Eyles and Smith (1988) collection are based on case studies. Smith (1988), Jackson (1988) and Keith (1988), for instance, look at different aspects of race, ethnicity and neighbourhood change, while Burgess and Wood (1988) assess advertising texts and small firm decision making in London's Docklands. The emphasis on the case study is important because it is one of the hallmarks of qualitative research, while also the focus of some criticism. Those engaged in quantitative analysis, for example, may dispute the wider relevance of case study research.

Mitchell (1983) addresses this issue in an important paper, 'Case and Situation Analysis'. As he argues, 'the essential point about the basis of making inferences from case material...[is] that the extrapolation is in fact based on the validity of the analysis rather than the representativeness of the events' (p.190). In other words, data derived from the case study is used to substantiate or refute certain theoretical principles. Mitchell outlines various kinds of case studies and, in so doing challenges 'the common assumption that the only valid basis of inference is that which has been developed in relation to statistical analysis' (p.197). Case study research rests on logical inference which is extrapolated to a wider population through 'the process by which the analyst draws conclusions about the essential linkage between two or more characteristics in terms of some systematic explanatory schema - some set of theoretical propositions' (p.200).

In conjunction with highlighting how a range of qualitative case studies



have been used, many of the papers in the Eyles and Smith (1988) volume also demonstrate links with other disciplines. Jackson (1988) draws inspiration from the Chicago School of Sociology for his interpretations of neighbourhood change, while others have adopted ethnographic techniques to engage in different kinds of community research (see for example Donovan 1988; Smith 1988).

Similarly, some of the many guides to practising qualitative research have been brought into geography from these other disciplines too. In particular, writers in qualitative sociology have had a significant influence on interpretive methodology in human geography. Plummer (1983), for example, evaluates 'documents of life', the individual and collective records of human experiences, which are rich source material for qualitative research. Burgess (1982; 1984) considers field research more generally, outlining some of the techniques and problems of carrying out qualitative work, while Whyte (1984) emphasizes the necessity for a triangulated approach, combining different methodologies to better appreciate the dynamics of a single case setting. By contrast, Strauss (1987) is explicitly concerned with data analysis. Based in Grounded Theory, Strauss suggests ways of coding and interpreting qualitative material - interview transcripts, for instance - that are just as rigorous as conventional quantitative approaches.

Although Strauss' guidelines for qualitative analysis were particularly useful in interpreting data in the present study (discussed in Appendix 4), the more immediate importance of this and other work lies in their links with

broader questions of methodology in human geography. Certainly, qualitative techniques have been used to great advantage in medical geography, textual analysis, and community ethnographies, for example. Where the potential for qualitative analysis has been barely touched upon, however, is in tourism research.

### Interpreting Tourism

Few studies have considered the social meanings of tourist places. Pocock (1987), for example, studied literary tourism at the Bronte Parsonage Museum in Haworth but his research was based on a pre-coded questionnaire survey, which visitors had to complete themselves. As such, the study did not explore the meanings of the literary place as interpreted by tourists. These 'meanings' had already been formalized by the researcher in the study design.

Some researchers have, however, used more qualitative techniques. Albers and James (1988), for example, used interpretive methods to assess the relationship between photos in tourist postcards and representations of ethnicity, while Uzzell (1984) took a similar approach in assessing tourist advertising and the psychology of tourism marketing. In neither case, though, was there any contact between the researchers and actual tourists. One exception is a paper by Hartmann (1988) where different field methods, including interviews and participant observation were used to study the travel patterns of young North Americans in Europe. Although recognizing the

usefulness of the questionnaire interview as an efficient means of data collection, Hartmann is also one of the few to question the emphasis on standardized techniques. As he argues: 'questionnaires often leave a wide gap between the verbal expression and the leisure lived or travel experienced' (Hartmann 1988 pp.89-90).

Participant observation gives Hartmann's study an important ethnographic dimension, but the paper also raises one of the central problems of applying qualitative methods to a tourist setting. Much of Hartmann's research was covert, offering a way of observing the tourist experience without disturbing the dynamics of sightseeing and urban recreation that he was anxious to study. One of the difficulties in investigating tourism is that the tourist population is transient. There is limited opportunity to develop anything but the most superficial relationship with those participating in the study.

Allied with this problem, however, are several other issues Hartmann does not raise. Equally important is the fact that in many places, the tourist season is restricted to several months in the summer, limiting the time available for carrying out qualitative research. At smaller and more crowded sites, the researcher may be seen as an impediment to visitor flows by administrators, and as a nuisance by tourists. In the latter case, visitors may be loathe to give up holiday time to researchers, for unlike the standard questionnaire interview, qualitative studies are usually more time consuming, demanding greater effort and involvement from respondents.

These issues present particular methodological problems not usually encountered by most social scientists using qualitative techniques. In other research settings, it is usually easier to develop a relationship of mutual trust and accommodation with participants. Morley's (1980;1991) work on patterns of television viewing in family culture, and Hobson's (1980) paper on housewives and mass media are good illustrations. In these instances, the researchers were accepted as part of a community network. They were able to work with groups or individual respondents under more relaxed conditions, than would be the case in most tourist settings.

This kind of research is concerned with the ways that different audiences make sense of, and create meanings from various media texts. As such, it necessitates that researchers engage with respondents beyond the confines of a closed or pre-coded questionnaire interview. As Burgess (1990) asks: 'Is it possible to conduct research with audiences which is sensitive to the contexts in which they live and which is able to tease out the complex ways in which media texts are consumed?' (p.140). In answering this question affirmatively, she proposes a qualitative research agenda which allows audiences or 'consumers' to describe what particular products or cultural forms may mean to them, as opposed to having such meanings mediated by the researcher.

Amongst geographers in particular, and tourism researchers in general, there has been scant recognition of the potential for this kind of audience research in a tourist setting. 'Visitors' continue to be referred to in the

abstract and as Urry (1990) maintains: 'there is no sense of the complexity by which different visitors can gaze upon the same set of objects and read them in quite a different way' (p.111). Cohen (1988b) makes a related point.

'Qualitative methodology has recently attracted growing attention. However, sociologists of tourism have given it but scarce, if any explicit consideration, although in this field, the most significant and lasting contributions also have been made by researchers who employed an often loose qualitative methodology' (pp.28-29).

Indeed, in recent years, only rarely has qualitative analysis been translated into empirical case studies with visitor experiences, rather than theorizing, the primary focus of attention.

Pearce (1990), for instance, has studied farm tourism in New Zealand, using interview based analysis of the host-guest relationship to relate it to this kind of tourism elsewhere. Yet, he focuses on the farm families and tourist operators who facilitate this kind of tourism experience - the producers rather than the consumers. Although this research is important because most of the data is derived from conversational interviews not typically used in tourism studies, neither Pearce nor others have explored the possibility of systematic research with the general public.

Where such a strategy has been used is in a project by Harrison, Limb and Burgess (1986; 1987), Burgess, Limb and Harrison (1988a; 1988b) and Burgess, Goldsmith and Harrison (1990). In working with people to explore popular values for open spaces in the city, they recruited groups of residents from several London boroughs, meeting with them over a number of weeks. From analysis of this material, they argued that 'explaining how people

formed an attachment to countryside...involved complex interpretations of their structures of feeling in which aspects of culture, society and experience were intimately bound together' (1990, p.160). Furthermore, and highlighting one of the benefits of this kind of qualitative methodology, the authors continued: 'Responses to psychometric and projective techniques used in questionnaire surveys and single group interviews can of themselves only ever be a pale shadow of this holistic experience' (*ibid.*, p.161).

Although in most tourist settings it is not possible to meet with the same group of people over a sustained period of time, this research still suggests an important way forward. Tourism is value-laden, and engaging with visitors is necessary if the links between tourism, culture and society are to be explored. Until recently, though, qualitative analysis has been synonymous with participant observation. Since this strategy has usually been covert, few researchers have actually engaged in any kind of relationship with visitors. Within tourism research, however, there are various opportunities to carry out semi-structured and in-depth interviews, as well as small group discussions. The design of the Hill Top study affords consideration of some of these alternatives.

### The Research Design and Hill Top Study

The Hill Top study was set up to explore how visitors were interpreting the meanings of a literary place. The research design involved a combination of methodologies. These included a social survey with open-

ended interview questions and small discussion groups. This part of the chapter considers the research design more closely, focusing on how the study was devised, tested through a pilot project, how the small groups were organized and how the main part of the project was carried out.

For a study of literary tourism and the role played by children's books in the negotiation of culturally constructed attitudes and values, the Beatrix Potter phenomenon offers an ideal case study. Not only is Potter one of the most place-specific of English children's writers but she was also an ardent conservationist, leaving her farm and many other properties to the National Trust. In the Lake District village of Near Sawrey, Hill Top Farm was opened by the Trust as a Beatrix Potter museum in 1946 and since then has been at the centre of a thriving tourist industry. Many of the settings for the stories, captured in the watercolours, are still identifiable today which enables visitors to match image with reality in explicit and, presumably, meaningful ways. As such, this case study offers a way in to understanding the role of Beatrix Potter and literary tourism within a sphere of broader social patterns and processes.

To familiarize myself with the study area, I undertook a preliminary reconnaissance in August 1989 (Appendix 2). This preliminary phase led me to conclude that the eventual project should be solely based at Hill Top Farm. Securing permission from the National Trust to proceed with the study, while concurrently devising alternate strategies if this permission was not forthcoming, was one of the most difficult aspects of the research

process.

In approaching the National Trust, I was supported by the Beatrix Potter Society. This organization was founded in 1980 by a group of people professionally involved in Beatrix Potter scholarship which currently has a membership of over 700 people worldwide. I met a National Trust representative at a Society meeting who expressed interest in my project, requested a formal research proposal, and was willing to liaise with the administrator at Hill Top on my behalf. Subsequently, the Society President endorsed my project by writing a letter of reference recommending that research access be approved.

#### Triangulated Methods and the Pilot Study: April 1990

Carrying out the study at Hill Top involved negotiation and compromise. Not only was the National Trust to have full access to the results of the study but at their request, two questions about the Trust-run Beatrix Potter Gallery in Hawkshead were to be included in any visitor survey. Furthermore, any potentially controversial issues were dropped from the study. Initially, for example, I had hoped to conclude a questionnaire with a re-contact question, asking visitors if they would be willing to re-convene elsewhere to participate in small group discussions about Potter and her work. Although there were constraints in implementing this strategy with a transient holiday population, and the costs of obtaining a local meeting place, the Trust did not allow me even to ask the question. My research



could only be conducted at Hill Top with a survey schedule which had the explicit approval of the National Trust administration and, during the field work phase on site, with their close supervision.

Once these constraints were agreed, I formulated the research programme that used a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques and was oriented around a social survey. The central aim of the study was to elicit the different meanings within which different kinds of visitors were experiencing the site. This necessitated the integration of various methodologies. As Eyles (1988) explains:

'Interacting and talking to people may take many forms, ranging from formal survey instruments with their multiple-choice checklists and closed questions to participant observation....In [formal interviewing] it is...assumed that the researcher knows already that which the interview is designed to uncover....' (pp.6-7).

At the opposite extreme is the informal interview, where 'the questions asked, their sequence and wording are not worked out beforehand....the interviewer tries to tailor the wording of the questions to each particular individual and to ask the questions in an order appropriate for the interviewee' (Eyles 1988, p.7).

While the formal interview has traditionally been used in tourism research, it is of little use in drawing out the underlying meanings of visitors' experiences. Practically, however, the informal interview is just as problematic. Given the time constraints at a tourist site, it is not feasible either to change the format of the interview or to substantially alter its wording for individual visitors. As such, the Hill Top study was set up as

a compromise between these two alternatives. In conjunction with some participant observation, I used a social survey with a number of open-ended questions. The open-ended questions were designed to allow respondents to describe in their own words, their feelings and impressions. But visitors were under no compulsion to talk at length if constrained by time or other factors.

I tested this strategy through a pilot study at Hill Top during Easter week in April 1990, when 77 visitors responded to a semi-structured interview. The sample was selected as randomly as possible with every fifth or tenth adult being approached. When the weather was fine, I was able to stand in the garden at the front of the house and people were interviewed after they had toured the interior. If the weather was wet, I stood in the scullery at the foot of the main stairs and approached visitors as they were coming down from the second floor. The interview included standard questions about residency, age, sex, socio-economic status, and travel patterns. It also, however, had a more subjective dimension, asking respondents to think about what Potter and her work, as well as the visit to Hill Top meant to them.

Other information about the site and how visitors were approached is provided in Appendix 3, but it is important to consider the contribution of the pilot study because it shaped the outcome of the rest of the project. These early results demonstrated that most visitors were interested in the research and eager to share their feelings about Potter's books. Indeed, what was entirely unexpected was the wealth of qualitative material generated by

the interviews. More open-ended questions than anticipated were thus included in the revised questionnaire. Furthermore, this preliminary phase also highlighted an unexpectedly large number of Japanese visitors, many of whom had little knowledge of English. A Japanese language version of the interview was obviously essential. Finally, the pilot study helped to resolve my dilemma about whether to interview children or not. I found children were primarily interested in finding the characters, and that the visit to Hill Top was usually only one of many holiday activities. For adults, however, the experience was much more meaningful and, since I wanted to explore this range of meanings, no children were interviewed in the main study.

This general social survey was an important part of the research design but as McCracken (1988) argues: 'learning the qualitative [research] tradition will require the absorption of new assumptions and 'ways of seeing'. It will require new strategies of conceptualizing research problems and data' (p.18). While the pilot study highlighted the potential for semi-structured interviews as part of a social survey, and the ways that qualitative and quantitative approaches can profitably be used together, the kinds of questions it raised also necessitated other techniques, notably the small discussion group.

### Organizing the Group Discussions

These discussions could not be held with visitors at Hill Top, so a viable alternative proved to be members of the Beatrix Potter Society, meeting in July 1990 for a conference at Lancaster University. With the

Society's consent, I prepared a circular to be included in the conference registration package, outlining the aims of my research and requesting that participants sign-up for one of the sessions be held on each evening of the conference. Participants were recruited for four out of the five workshop slots (13th-16th July, 1990) and of the sixty-eight delegates in residence at Lancaster, twenty-five ultimately came to one of the groups.

The process of setting up and carrying out these group sessions is discussed in more detail in Appendix 4, where members of the groups are also profiled. What I want to emphasize here, however, are the reasons why the single group interview was used in preference to the depth group strategies employed by Burgess *et al.* (1988) cited above. In the time available, I was only able to meet with each of my groups once. Again, this issue relates to some of the particular constraints associated with applying qualitative methods to tourism. Correspondingly, however, single group interviews have been widely used in market research, and the justifications for the technique there may be appropriate in other settings where time and research facilities are limited.

Although depth group interviews offer what Burgess *et al.* (1990) have termed 'a holistic' understanding of social and cultural experiences, where such strategies are not possible, small discussion groups are perhaps the best alternative. As Hedges (1985) suggests:

'People are to be understood partly through their relationships and interactions with others, as well as through their own internal workings as individuals. Interviewing people individually can minimise the impact of this because it encourages the participant to look in on himself [sic] rather than out at his relations with others. Groups

provide an essentially social context. It is of course an artificial hothouse society created for the purposes of the research, but it still obliges participants to take account of other people's views in framing their own responses' (p.72).

It was precisely this 'social context' which could not be realized in the semi-structured interviews at Hill Top, and that is why the small group discussions were so important. In other words, the main advantage of this technique 'is the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group' (Morgan, 1988, p.12).

#### The Study Schedule Summarized

In the small discussions with members of the Beatrix Potter Society, the interaction both within and between groups, was a useful corollary to the material generated by the Hill Top study. This main field study began in the middle of June 1990, and as Hill Top was open between Saturday and Wednesday from 11 A.M. until 5 P.M., the research was conducted accordingly. I completed approximately twenty interviews each day and, by the middle of August, I had approached 626 people. National Trust staff had pointed to the different kinds of people who visited the site over the course of the summer - American and other overseas visitors in June and July, more day trippers in August - and my sample attempted to be sensitive to these fluctuations. As such, 180 interviews (29%) were completed in June, 301 (48%) in July, and 144 (23%) in August.

A copy of the questionnaire used in this part of the study is included

in Appendix 5, as is information about some of the practical dimensions of the field research. In the present context, however, I want to consider the interview schedule more closely, for its design reflects the way I used quantitative and qualitative approaches complementarily, to exploit the analytical potential of each.

The survey statistics raise many questions especially about motivations, which were later explored through the open-ended interview questions and discussion group transcripts. Based on the pilot study, visitors were asked a series of questions about their place of residence, travel patterns, party characteristics, and prior knowledge of Potter and Hill Top. These questions were followed by a number of open-ended queries about interest in Potter, impressions of Hill Top, and knowledge of the books from childhood. These were explicitly designed to elicit meanings. Finally, the interview was concluded with short answer questions about souvenir purchases, visits to other Beatrix Potter and Lake District literary sites, and demographic and socio-economic information.

Situating the semi-structured part of the interview in the middle was intentional, for at this point most visitors were already involved in the project but were not tired of answering questions, nor anxious that the study was requiring too much of their holiday time. What must be emphasized, though, is that 'qualitative and quantitative approaches are never substitutes for one another....they observe different...aspects of the same reality' (McCracken 1988, p.18). In allowing visitors to describe in their own words

why the visit to Hill Top was important, many of the analytic categories emerged from the research rather than being pre-determined. Such was the case in the small group discussions. In conjunction with participant observation, the combination of a semi-structured interview and a social survey offered new ways of assessing the tourist experience and, ultimately, linking the results of this case study theoretically to wider social patterns. Understanding this relationship, however, is first derived from some basic knowledge of the visitors.

### Profiling the Visitors

Hill Top is one of the National Trust's most popular properties and during the 1990 season (from Easter until the end of October) 74,000 visitors were recorded at the site. Although my sample of 626 only covered a small percentage of the total visitor numbers, it was collected during one of the busiest periods in the season (between June and August), and when the majority of overseas visitors might have been expected.

One of the aims of the study was to sample a sufficient number of visitors to construct a general profile of where visitors were coming from (place of permanent residence), the sex ratio, and patterns of age and socio-economic status. In asking visitors where they were from, United Kingdom respondents were subsequently requested to specify their county of residence while those temporarily resident in the U.K. were asked about both the county in which they were temporarily living, as well as information about

their home country.

## Residence

As shown in Figure 16, over half of the visitors (61% or 380 people) came from within the United Kingdom. A further 4% were temporarily resident in the U.K. and amongst this group of 25 people, 2% were from North America, 2% were Japanese, and 0.3% were from either Australia or New Zealand. The regional breakdown of all the United Kingdom respondents, whether temporarily resident in the country or not, is presented in Figure 17. The highest proportion of visitors within this group (30% or 122) came from the South-East. If, however, two of the northern regions are combined (Yorkshire/Humberside and the Northwest), the percentage of visitors coming from that area is around 25% (103). Interestingly, however, the figures suggest that Hill Top is more of a long-distance holiday destination than it is part of a day outing. Only 9 visitors, or 2% of the total came from within Cumbria, while a further 20 people (5%) were from neighbouring Lancashire. Similar results were recorded for North and West Yorkshire, again arguably within the radius of a large, potential day-trip market.

Overall, 20% (129) of visitors were from North America (for analytical convenience, the totals from the United States and Canada were combined), and 7% (41) of the respondents were Japanese. A further 5% (29) were from Australia/New Zealand, 3% (18) were European, and a very small number



Figure 16

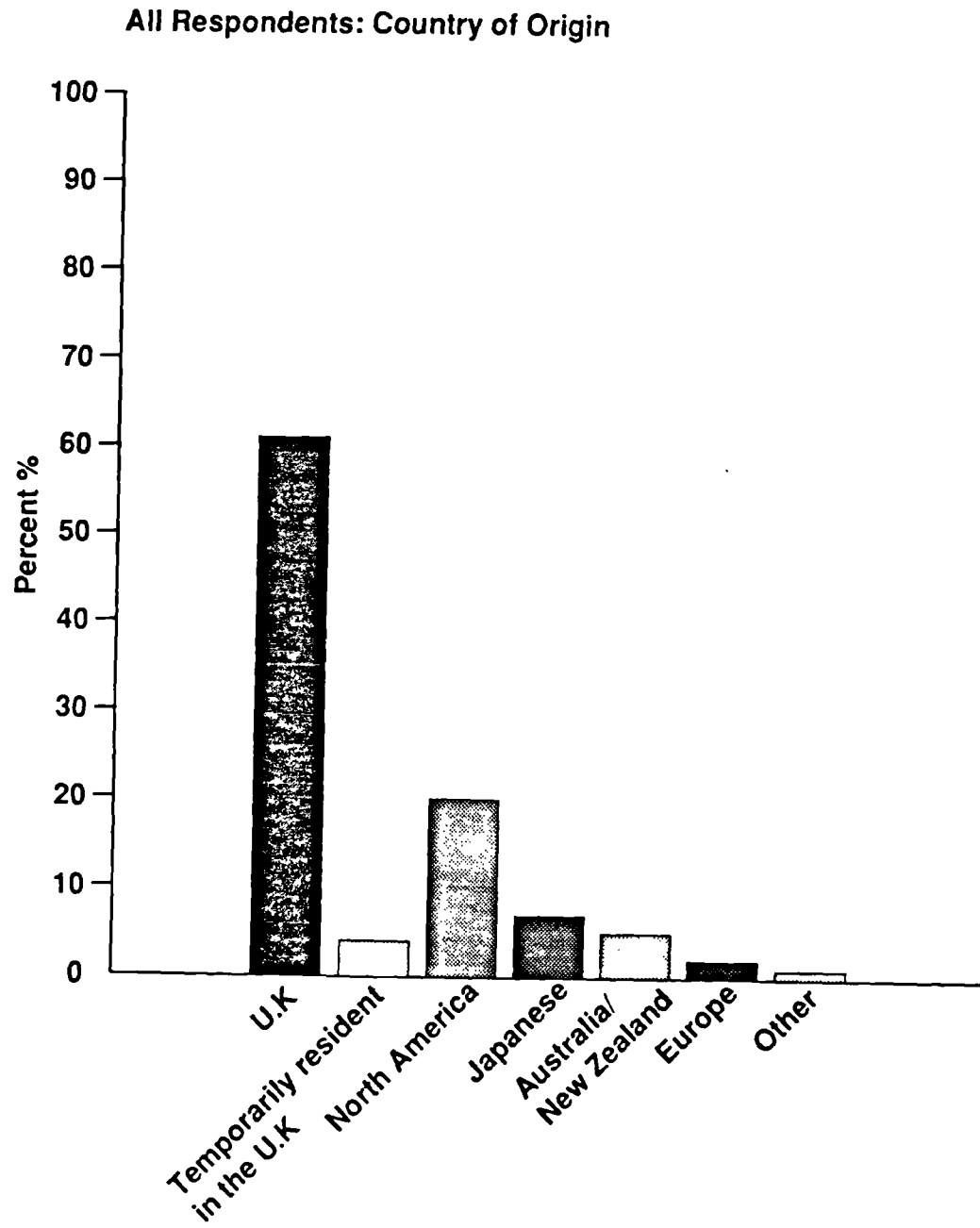
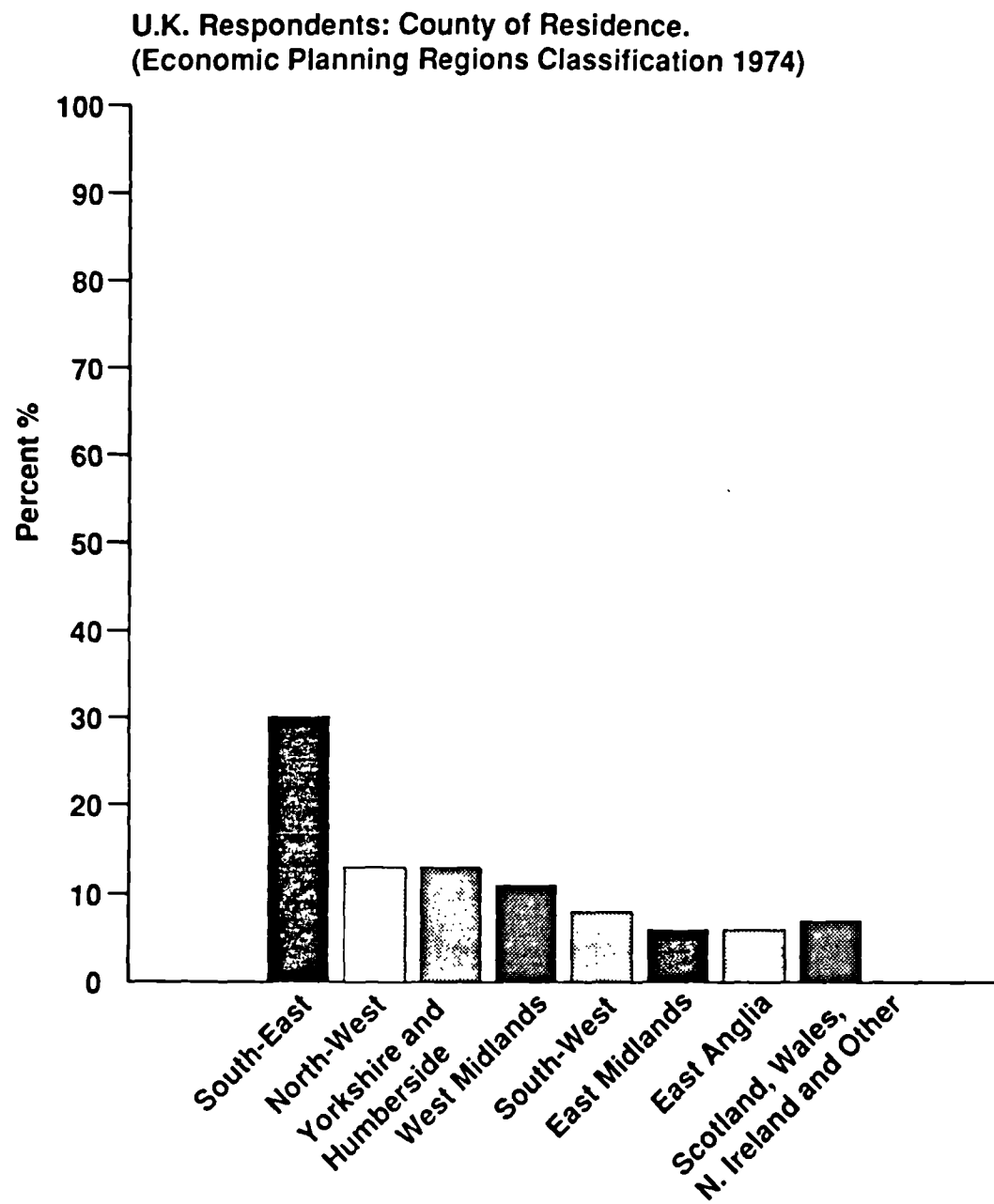


Figure 17



came from other countries. In this record of visitor origins, I believe, however, that the percentage of Japanese respondents is artificially low. Several constraints governed the number of Japanese interviews that could be carried out. First, the respondents had to complete the Japanese language questionnaire themselves, and I was only able to have limited communication with them because I do not speak Japanese. Not surprisingly, this process took longer, and there were more possibilities for misunderstandings between the respondents and myself.

Most importantly, though, the majority of Japanese visitors came in large tour groups who adhered to a rigid timetable. With usually only fifteen minutes to spend at the site (as compared to other visitors who would typically spend at least half an hour), members of these tour groups could not be included in the sample survey. From watching their activities, I observed that these visitors would spend approximately five minutes in the house, walking in single file through the main entrance hall, up the staircase to the second floor, through the rooms there, and back down the stairs exiting the house for a photo session in the garden. They would then make their way to the National Trust shop which really seemed the main point of their visit. This pattern was later confirmed by National Trust staff in the house. Correspondingly, though, the structured atmosphere of the tour group did not encourage individual members to break away from it and pursue their own activities.

## Demographics

To build a demographic and socio-economic profile, visitors were also asked several questions about sex, age and occupation. Beatrix Potter's strong, gender-based appeal was born out in the sex ratio of the visitors (Figure 18). Interestingly, and although no precise record was kept of the refusal rate, most of those who declined to be interviewed were men who claimed that their wives or girlfriends would be 'better' respondents. A number of men who did agree to be interviewed emphasized that they were only visiting Hill Top because it was important to their wife, girlfriend or other female companion. This factor may partially explain the skewed sex ratio; 72% (452) of those interviewed were female. The 28% (174) of respondents who were male were then asked if they were visiting with a female - spouse, friend or other relative. Here, 97% (169) of the males were accompanied by one or more females. Only 3% (5) were travelling by themselves or were in a uniquely male party.

Although less skewed than the sex ratio, the age profile, shown in Figure 19 nonetheless demonstrates that the majority of visitors were 25-44 - part of the post-war, baby boom generation. Because the interview was directed towards adults, only one respondent was under the age of fifteen, but 10% (65) were aged 16-24, 28% (173) were in the 25-34 age bracket, and another 28% (177) were 35-44. Expressed differently, 55% of those sampled fell into one of the latter two middle-age group categories. Another 18% (112) were 45-54, while lesser numbers were 55-64 (12%/76), and just

Figure 18

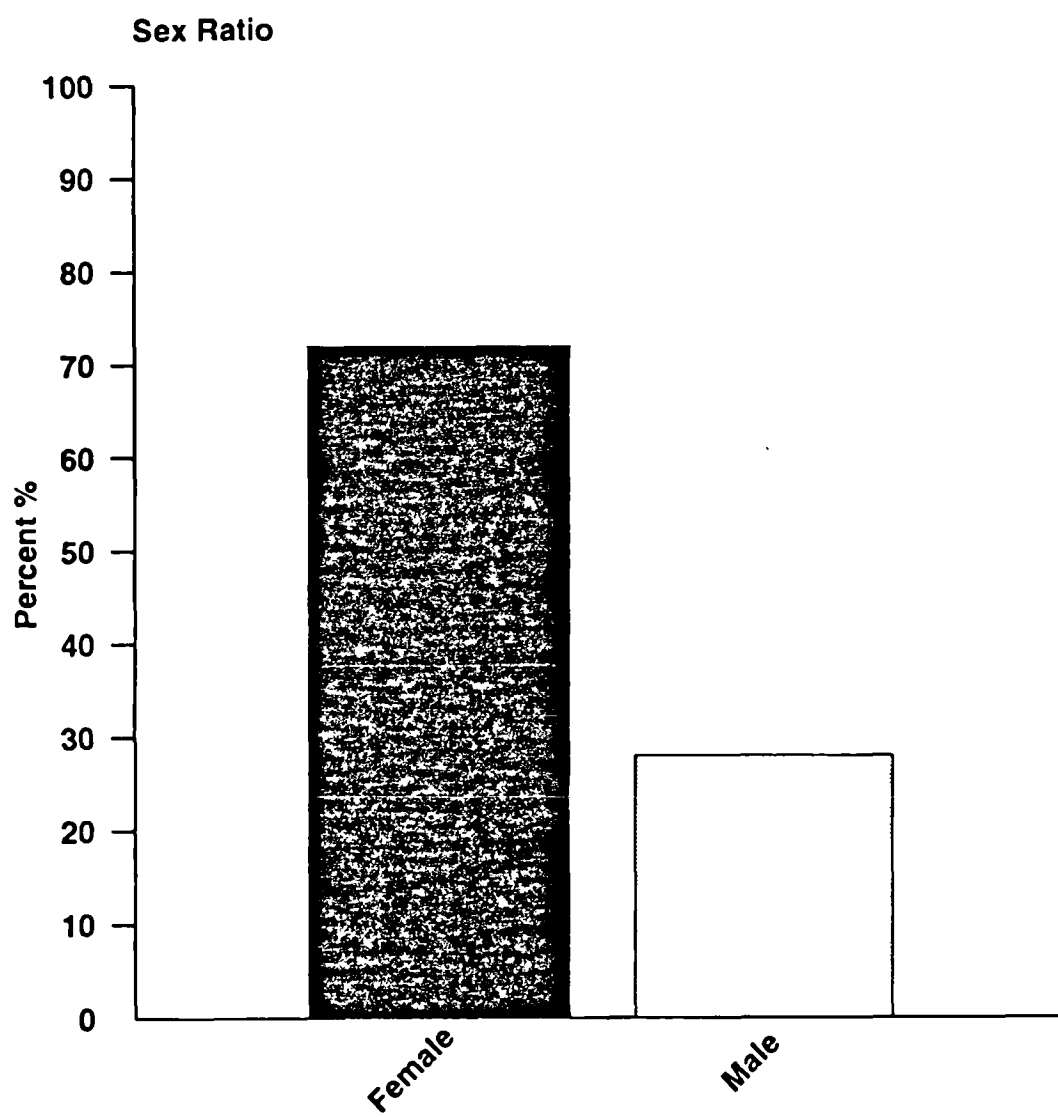
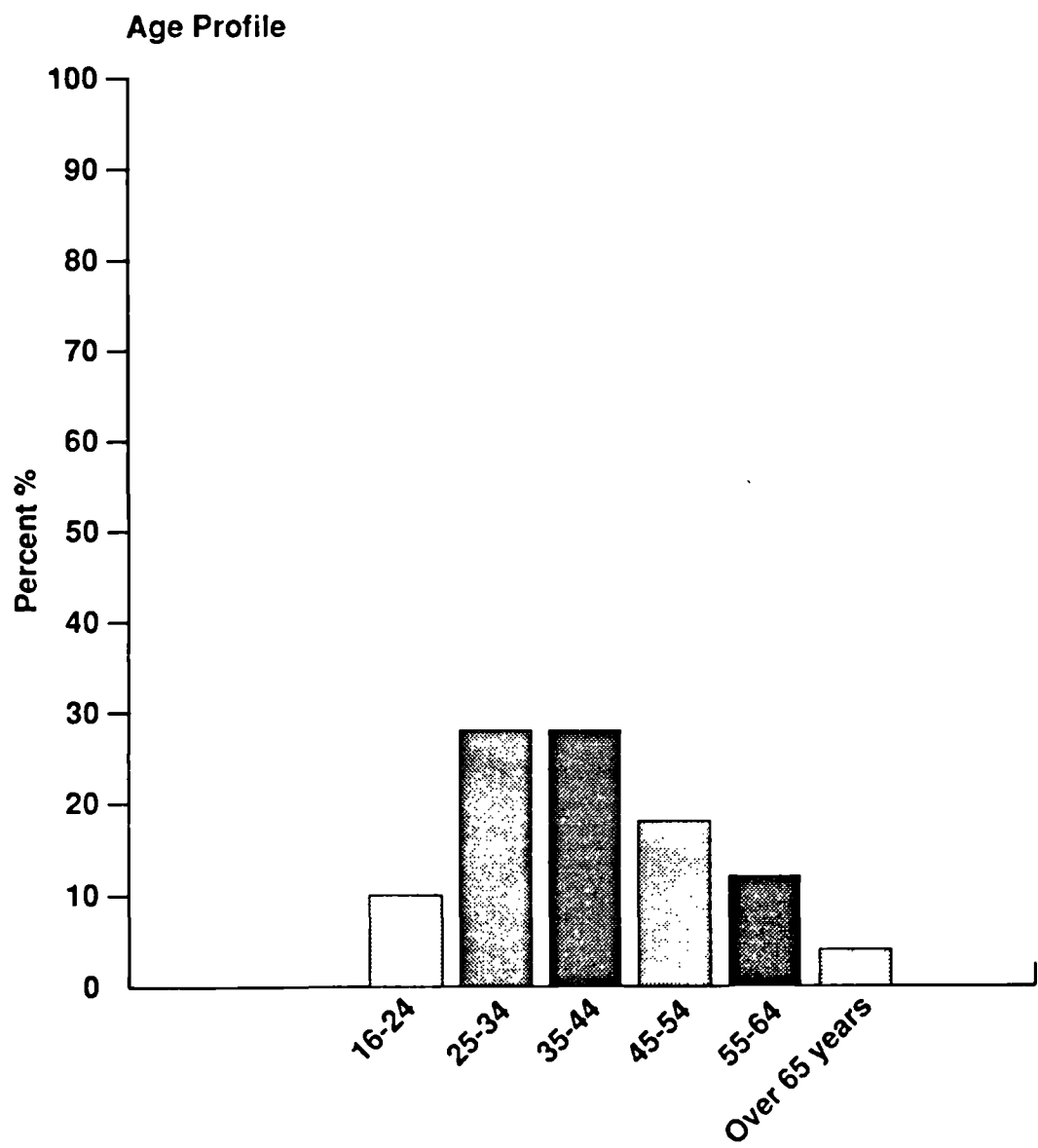


Figure 19



4% (22) were over the age of sixty-five.

Another way of looking at this data is to cross-tabulate it with sex (Table 1). As shown in the table, 57% (254) of the female visitors were again in one of these two middle-age group categories, 25-44. The majority of men were also in this middle group and proportionally speaking, the sex-age ratio in each category was remarkably consistent.

An indication of socio-economic status was provided by asking respondents what kind of job they had and, if necessary, whether or not they had managerial responsibilities. Women who were unwaged homemakers, or whose jobs were supplementary to the main family income, were asked to describe their husband or partner's occupation. As Figure 20 shows, interest in Potter is primarily a middle to upper-middle class phenomenon. The majority of respondents were engaged in professional (18%/116) and intermediate and managerial (27%/170) occupations. A further 18% (107 people) were involved in clerical and supervisory occupations while only 4% (24) described their jobs as unskilled labourers or manual workers. An additional 4% (26) were students, 8% (48) were retired, and a very small number were unemployed.

Two other categories, however, merit particular explanation. A number of Japanese respondents described their occupation as 'office worker'. Based upon the U.K. census classification, these responses should be included with the clerical and supervisory socio-economic category. In Japan, however, 'office worker' is a general descriptive term, referring to anyone from the

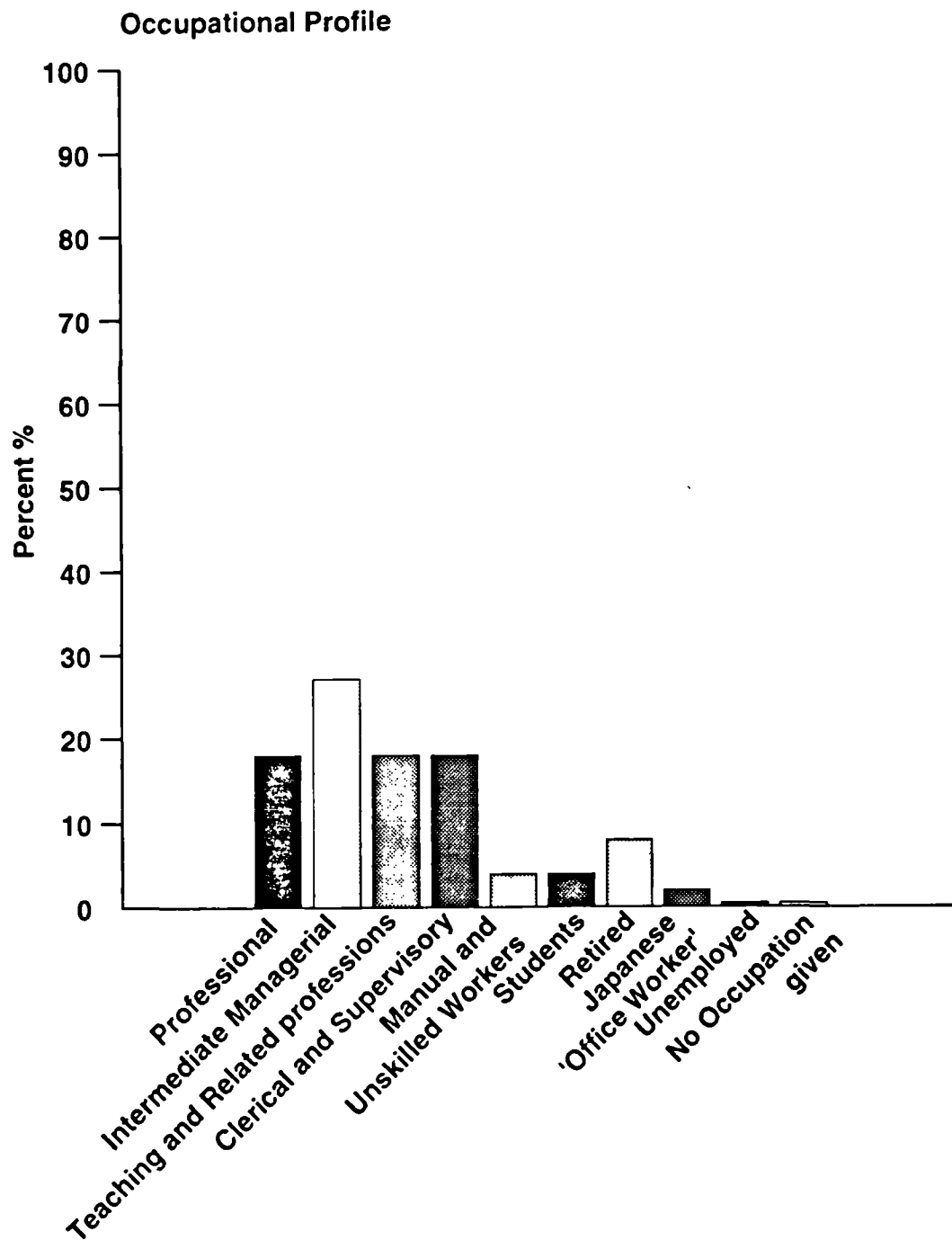
Table 1

Sex and Age

Age	Men (174 total)	Women (452 total)
Under 15	0	0
16-24	18 (10%)	47 (10%)
25-34	48 (28%)	125 (28%)
35-44	48 (28%)	129 (29%)
45-54	29 (17%)	83 (18%)
55-64	23 (13%)	53 (12%)
Over 65	7 (4%)	15 (3%)



Figure 20

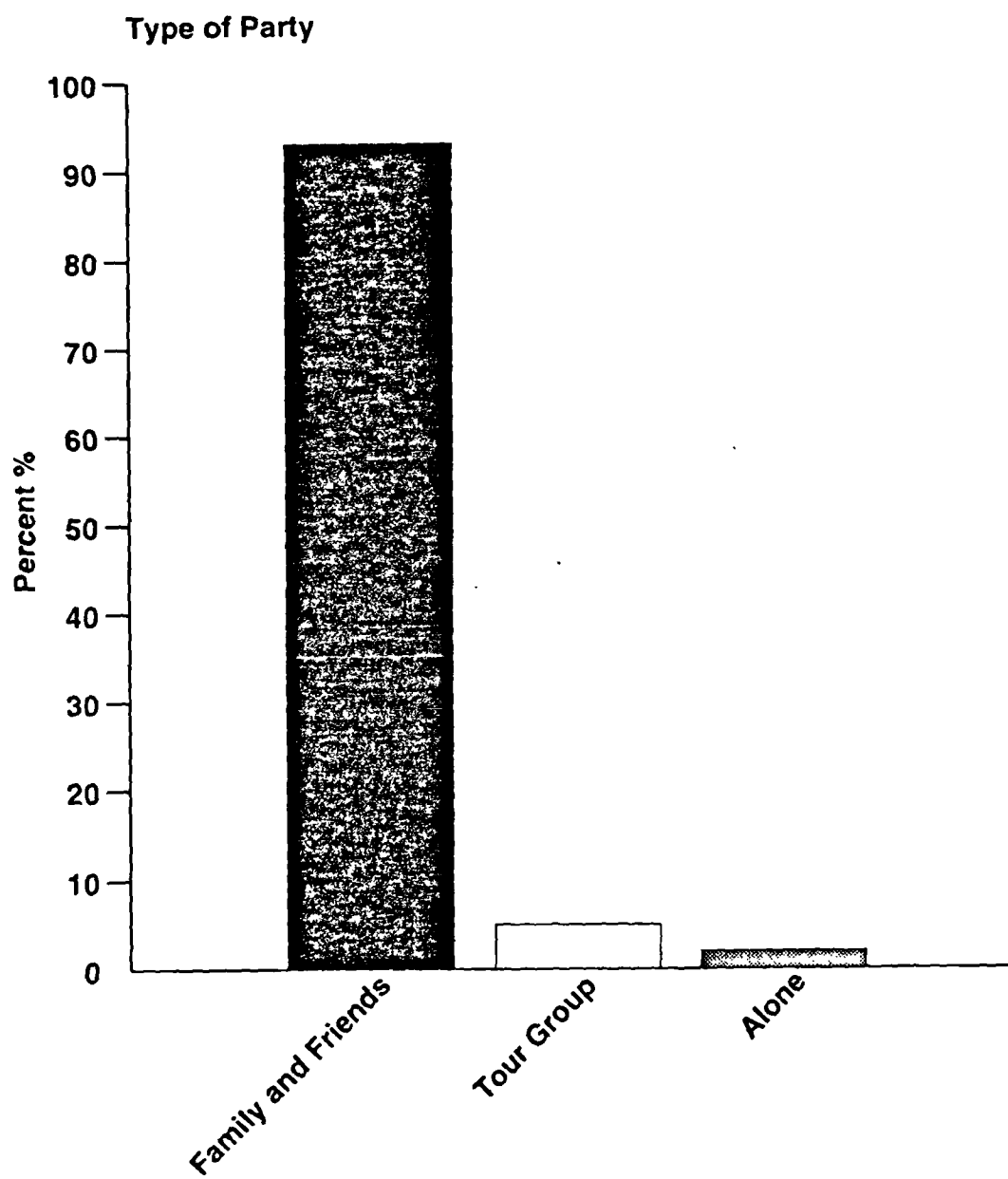


president of a corporation to members of the secretarial staff. Hence, as illustrated in the table, these responses were calculated separately. I also separated teaching and related professions (including librarians) from the general professional and intermediate managerial groups. A surprising 18% (114) of both the U.K. and overseas respondents described their job in these terms, and since the educational applications of Potter's work were noted in both the questionnaire interviews and workshop sessions, it seemed important to differentiate between this and other professions. It must be emphasized, however, that if the teaching category is added to the responses in the professional and managerial classifications, 63% (400) of those sampled were middle to upper-middle class.

#### Family Parties

Other details about respondents were collected through questions concerning type of party, party size, whether there were any children in the group, and if the children were under twelve years of age. Hill Top was clearly part of a holiday visit, typically made with family or friends, for 93% (585) of the respondents visited the site in this type of party (Figure 21). The remaining 5% (26) came with some kind of tour group, while 2% (15) were travelling alone. I would again comment, however, that the tour group sample is artificially low, and that as a result, my sample is probably biased towards the family visit. It was not only the Japanese visitors who travelled in large groups for there were also many North American package

Figure 21



holidays/college study tours visiting Hill Top. For similar reasons of inadequate time, I was unable to interview many of these visitors. Yet, although there is this bias toward family visitors, it must be stressed that these people probably had stronger motivations to visit the site than members of most tour groups whose itineraries had been chosen for them by tour operators.

Not surprisingly, the data on party size also reflects the large number of family visitors with 83% (522) of those surveyed indicating that they were travelling in a group of between one and four people (Figure 22). The importance of the traditional family unit in this kind of holiday-making relates back to gender; 97% of the men for instance travelling in parties with one or more women, and others emphasizing that the only reason they were visiting Hill Top was because it was important to a female member in their party.

Although Potter is typically associated with childhood, a much higher proportion of visitors than anticipated did not have any children with them (Figure 23). While 35% (220) of those interviewed were travelling with children, surprisingly 65% were not. Amongst those travelling with children 72% (159) had young families with all the children under twelve years of age (Figure 24). Only 19% (43) were visiting with children over twelve years while a small number (8% or 18) had children both over and under twelve years.

Cross tabulating this data with location, as shown in Table 2 highlights

Figure 22

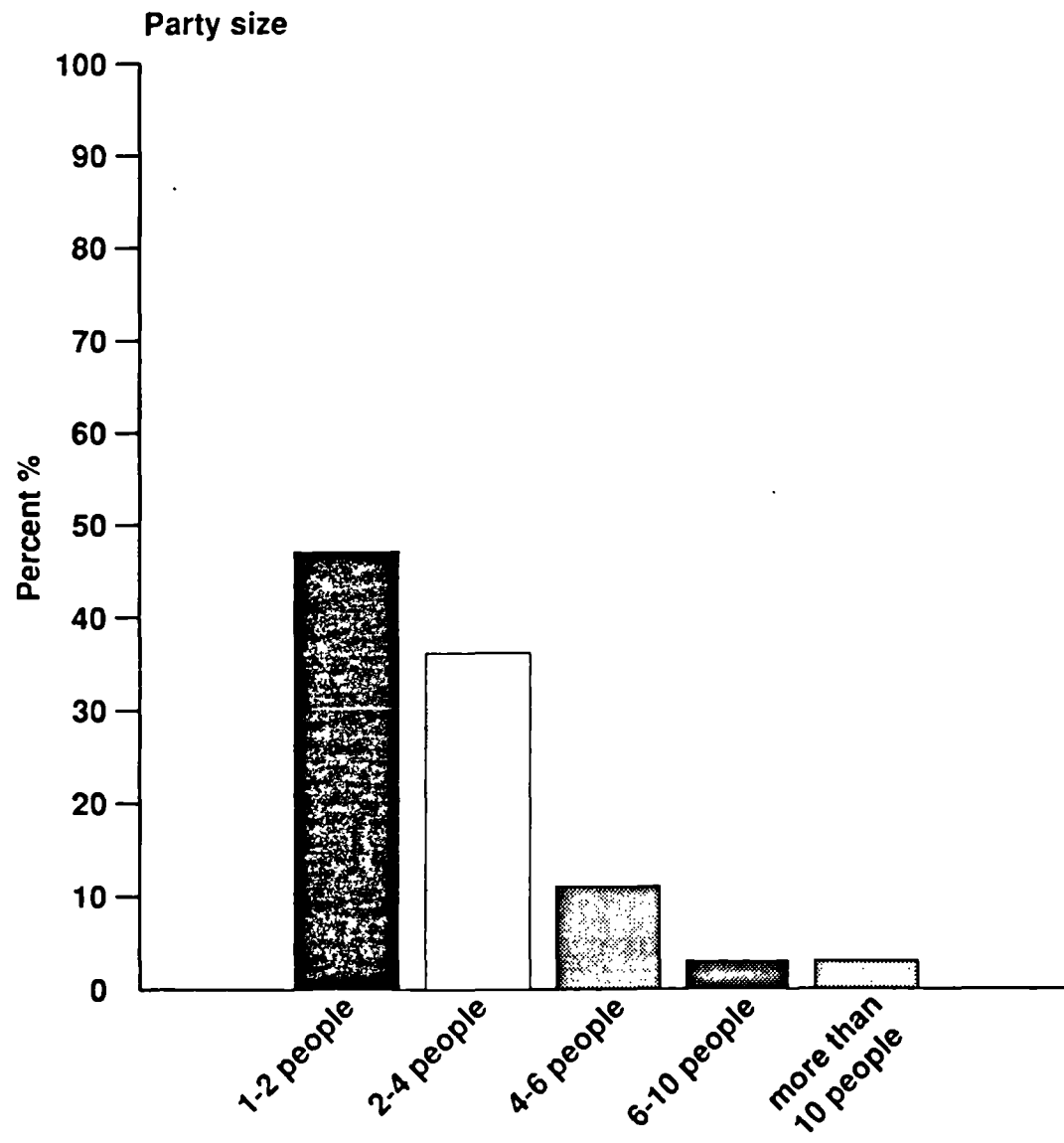


Figure 23

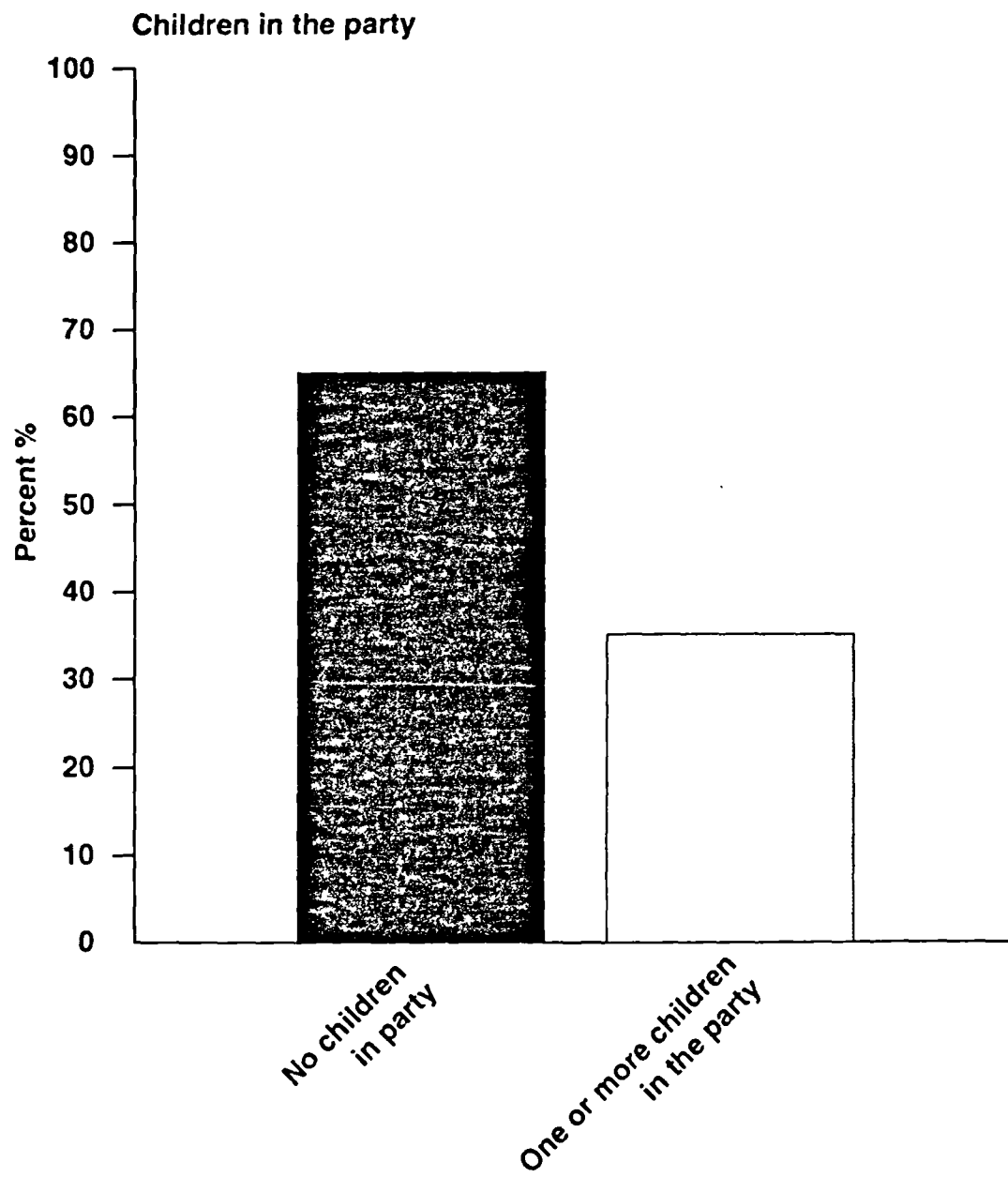


Figure 24

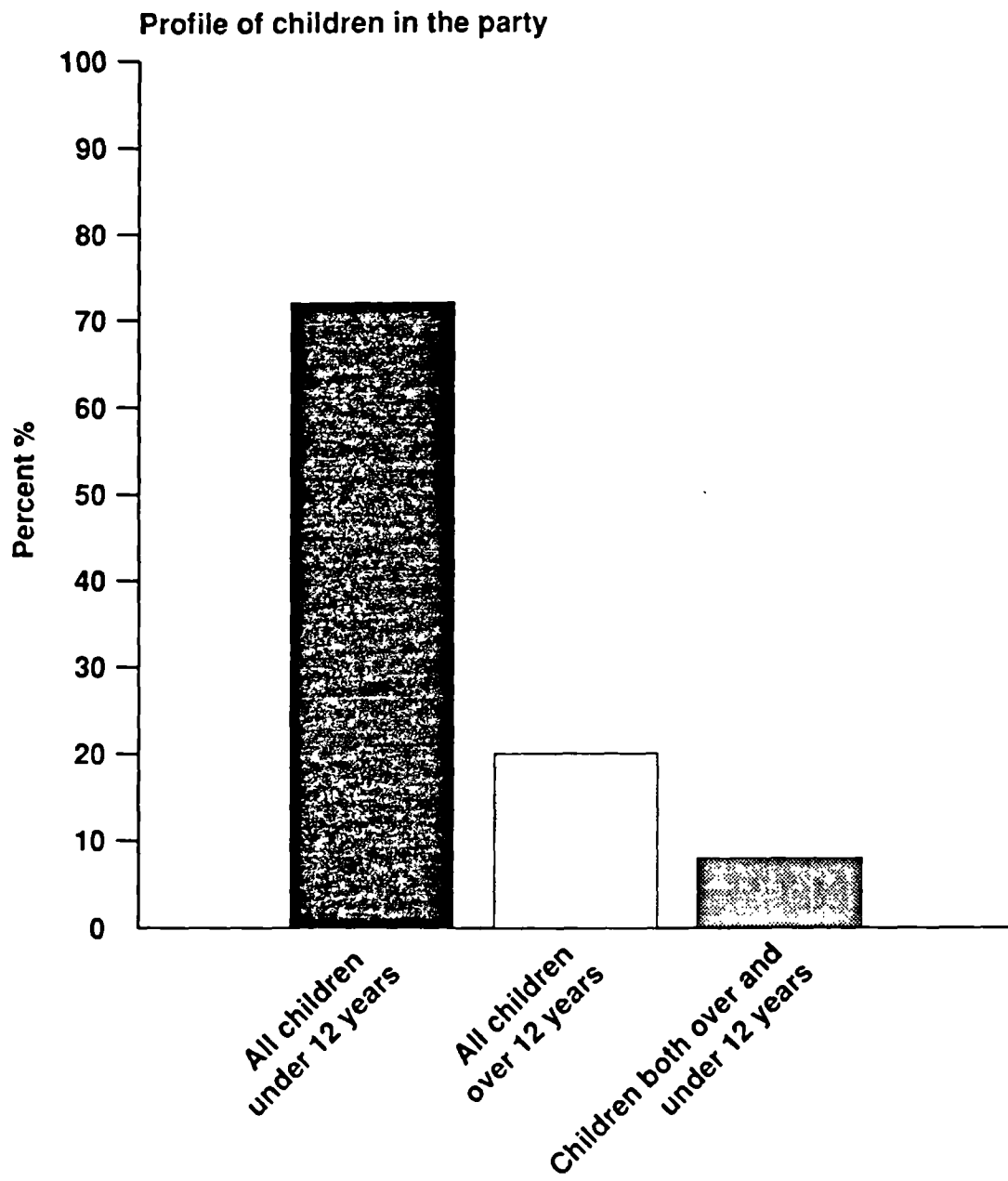


Table 2

## Residence and Children in Party

	Children	No Children	All (% of this)
Residence			
U.K.	163 (43%)	217 (57%)	380
U.K. temp.	12 (48%)	13 (52%)	25
North America	28 (22%)	101 (78%)	129
Japan	5 (12%)	36 (88%)	41
Australia/ New Zealand	5 (17%)	24 (83%)	29
Europe	7 (39%)	11 (61%)	18
Other	0	4 (100%)	4



some of the regional variations in this profile. Proportionally, both U.K. and European respondents were more likely to be travelling with children than were others in the sample. While 43% (175) of U.K. respondents (temporary residents included) had children in their party, only 22% (28) of North Americans, and 17% (5) of those from Australia/New Zealand were with children. Even fewer Japanese visitors (12% or five people) mentioned that they had children with them. In part, it is undoubtedly distance and the increased costs associated with taking children on long-haul holidays, that explains why overseas visitors were less likely to be travelling with children than U.K. or European respondents. Overall, however, these results raise questions about whether Beatrix Potter's appeal is truly for children, or is in fact fundamentally an adult concern.

The presence or absence of children in these holiday parties is important because Hill Top is not really designed for younger visitors. Although staff members make a conscious effort to interest children in the house, pointing to Samuel Whiskers' hole in the floor boards, and Jemima Puddleduck's egg in the rhubarb patch, there is little for children to do. On several occasions, parents complained that even the height of the display cabinets excluded young children who were too small to be able to see the items inside. And as I watched the visitors, it was clear that adults, and middle-aged women in particular, were more concerned with connecting the characters and the settings in the books with the house and garden than were children. At best, children were keen to find the characters, but more

typically they wanted to visit the shop, finding little else to interest them at Potter's home.

### Organizational Membership

Completing this profile of visitor characteristics was information about their interest in heritage and conservation issues as expressed through organizational membership, either in the U.K., or for overseas visitors, in their home country (Figure 25). Typically, respondents had to be prompted with examples of such organizations, but 54% (336) did belong to at least one of the groups as profiled in Figure 26. A surprisingly high percentage (46% or 290 visitors) did not belong to any organizations, suggesting that Potter's appeal was not uniquely associated with heritage and conservation concerns, at least as demonstrated by organizational affiliation. It is important to note, however, that 67% (219) of those respondents who did belong to organizations mentioned membership in the National Trust, including 2% who were involved in its American branch, the Royal Oak Foundation. As Hill Top is a National Trust property, its members are admitted free of charge, and in terms of visitor motivations, this may be significant. Yet, 'heritage', was clearly meaningful, for a further 22% of respondents claimed that they belonged to similar groups in their home countries, while others mentioned membership in the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, English Heritage and so on.

To further explore this relationship between membership in a heritage

Figure 25

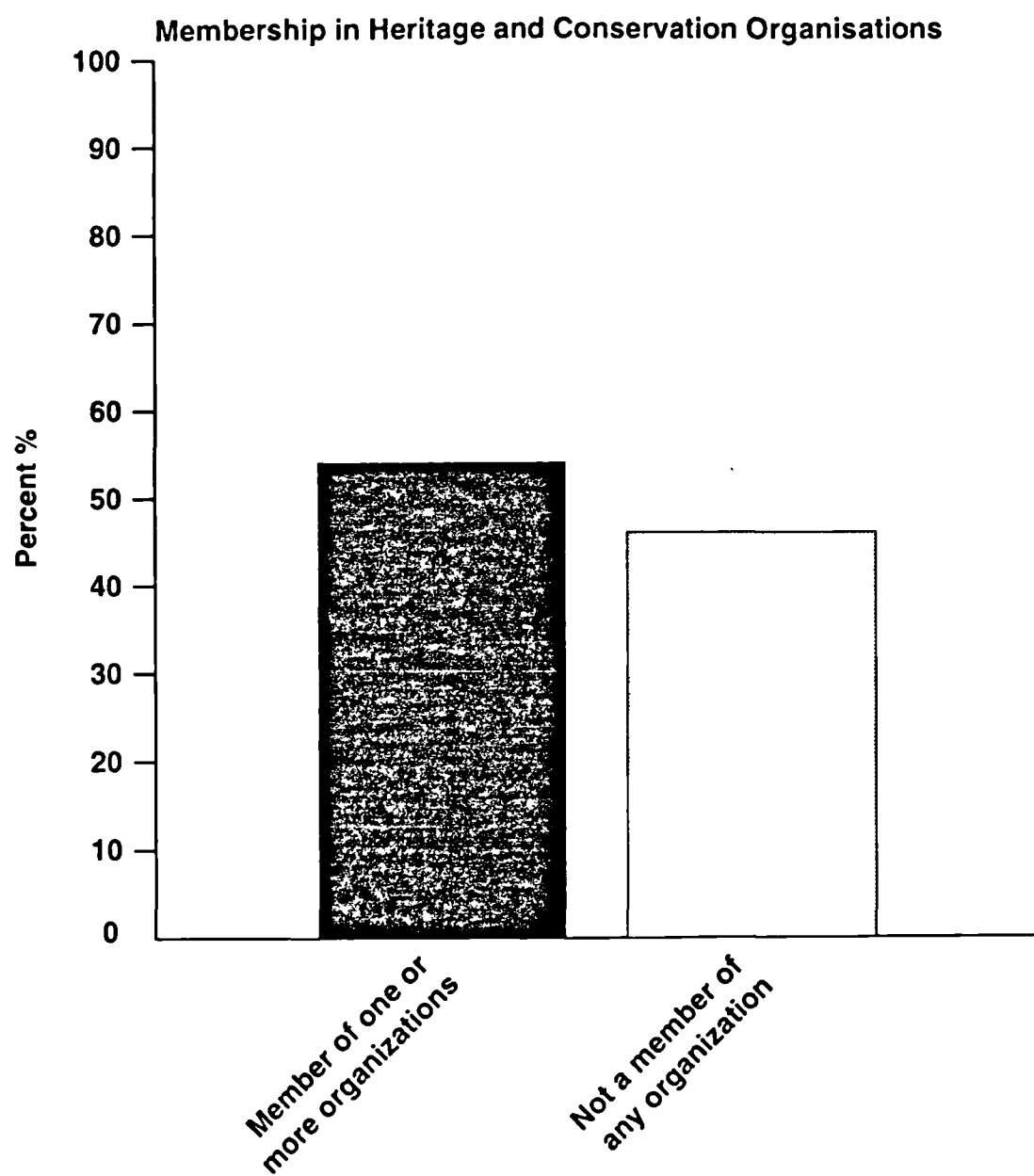
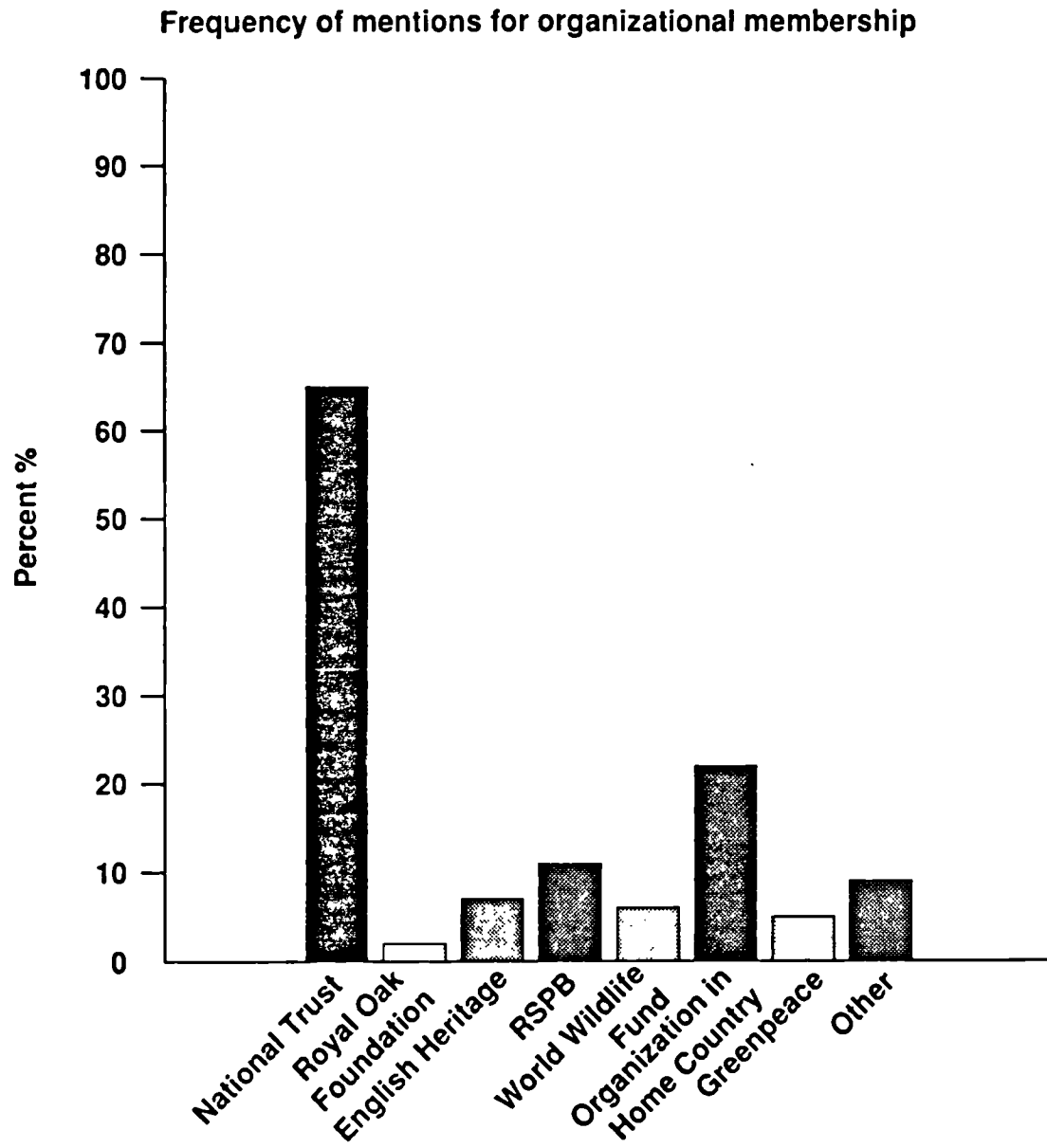


Figure 26



organization and visitation, it is useful to cross-tabulate the membership data with residency (Table 3). Here, the most striking variation in the international profile concerns the Japanese where none of the visitors sampled belonged to any such organization. Although it may be surmised that comparable groups do not exist in Japan, the results of the open-ended interview questions discussed in Chapter 6, highlight the strong interest that many Japanese have in nature, and specifically, the English countryside. This interest has been concretely expressed by several large donations recently made by Japanese corporations to the National Trust's Lake District appeal (National Trust Annual Report 1990). What these results might suggest is that especially in these times of financial difficulty, the Trust could profitably look toward establishing a Japanese branch, similar to the American-based, Royal Oak foundation.

It is also interesting, however, to compare the U.K. and European rates of organizational membership with other overseas visitors, North Americans in particular. Proportionally speaking, 62% (234) of U.K. respondents but only 39% (7) amongst the much smaller European group belonged to heritage or conservation agencies. In contrast, a higher proportion of North Americans surveyed (51% or 66) and correspondingly 48% or 14 from Australia/New Zealand mentioned such organizational affiliations. While this result might suggest the relative importance of heritage/conservation organizations to people in these countries versus Europe particularly, no definitive statements can be made without reference to a larger sample

Table 3  
Organisational Membership and Residence

	Member	Non-member	All (% of this)
Residence			
U.K.	234 (62%)	146 (38%)	380
U.K. temp.	13 (52%)	12 (48%)	25
North America	66 (51%)	63 (49%)	129
Japan	0	41 (100%)	41
Australia/ New Zealand	14 (48%)	15 (52%)	29
Europe	7 (39%)	11 (61%)	18
Other	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4

population.

### Travel Patterns

Having set out some of the basic characteristics of the visitors attracted to Hill Top, it is also important to consider the kinds of travel patterns that they were engaging in, as well as some of the motivations for first-time and repeat visits. As Hill Top is relatively inaccessible by public transport, it is not surprising that 85% (533) of those interviewed reached the site by either private or hired car (Figure 27). Others travelled with a tour company (4% or 27), on foot (9% or 54), or various combinations of bus, bicycle, and local taxi services (2% or 12).

In this respect, it is useful to compare mode of travel with place of residence for some interesting variations were recorded between visitor groups (Table 4). In particular, it was the Japanese visitors who were less reliant upon car hire, seeking out other alternatives, especially walking. Indeed 49% (20) of the total Japanese visitors arrived at Hill Top on foot, usually walking from the Windermere area to the car ferry terminal, taking the ferry across Windermere Lake, and then walking the two mile, uphill journey to Near Sawrey. Others walked from Hawkshead, or in rare cases, all the way around the Lake from the Ambleside area.

By contrast, the North Americans were tied to automobile transport with 76% (98) of visitors in this national group travelling to the site by car. An additional 16% in this group were part of a tour, the highest proportion

Figure 27

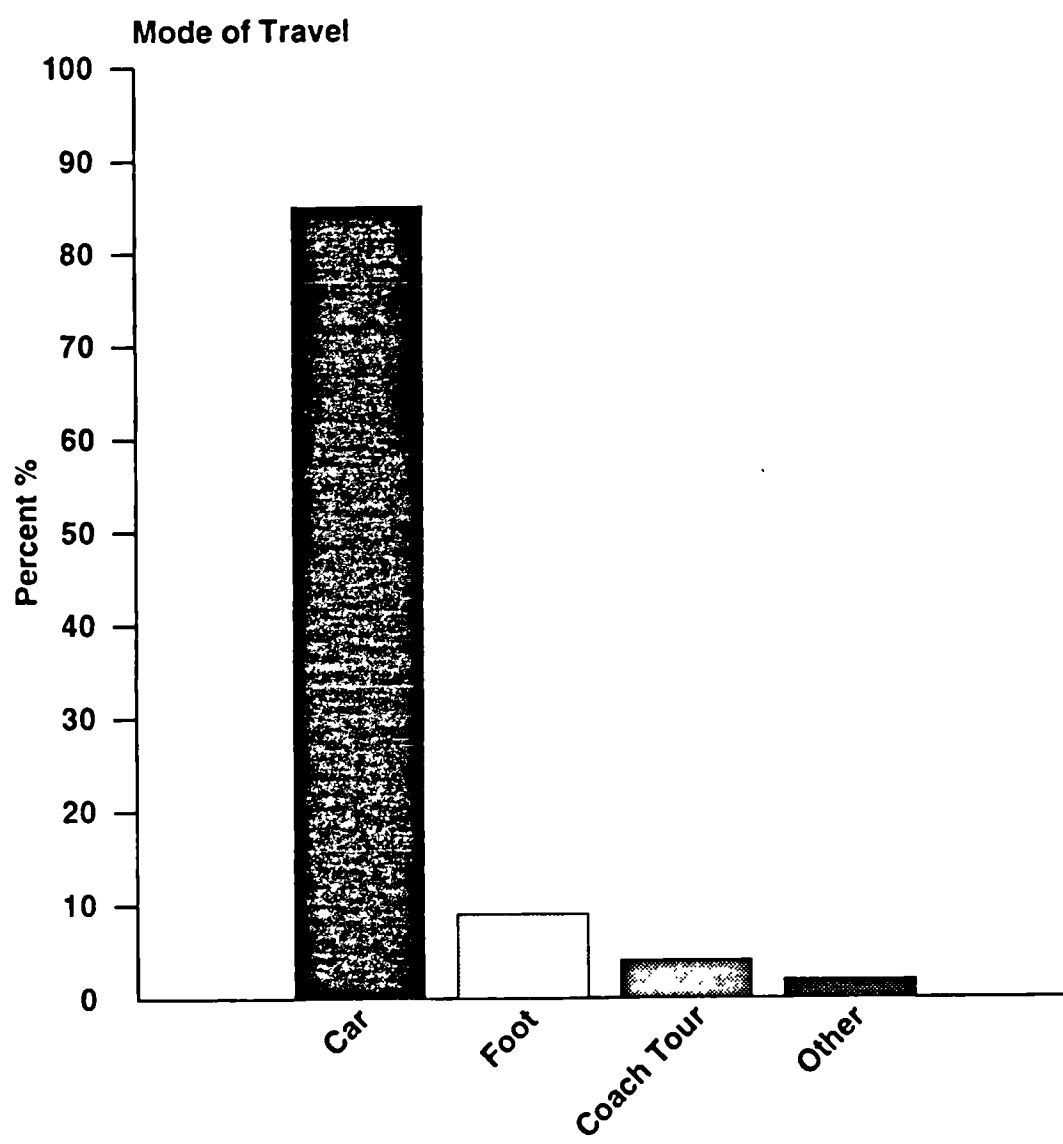




Table 4

## Residence and Mode of Travel

Residence	Car	Tour	Foot	O t h e r includes Bus, Bike)
U.K. (380)	361 (95%)	2 (1%)	13 (3%)	4 (1%)
U.K. temp. (25)	18 (72%)	1 (4%)	6 (24%)	0
North America (129)	98 (76%)	21 (16%)	9 (7%)	1 (1%)
Japan (41)	14 (34%)	0	20 (49%)	7 (14%)
Australia/ New Zealand (29)	27 (93%)	2 (7%)	0	0
Europe (18)	11 (61%)	1 (6%)	6 (33%)	0
Other (4)	4 (100%)	0	0	0

overall to cite this mode of travel. The majority of U.K. residents too, as well as visitors from Australia/New Zealand and Europe were similarly dependent upon car transport. What these figures indicate, then, is a major difference between Japanese and other visitors. Regardless of the difficulties that they might encounter because of Hill Top's inaccessibility by public transport, Japanese visitors were so determined to visit Potter's home they chose modes of transport that were clearly unacceptable to others.

Linked with issues of access to Hill Top, a similarly important aspect of the tourist profile was uncovering the broader travel patterns that visitors were engaging in. Several questions were asked about frequency of visitation and I was surprised to find that 82% (513) of those surveyed were making their first visit to Hill Top. Only 18% (113) of the sample were making a repeat visit, while a staggering 70% (358) of the first time visitors claimed that they would like to visit the site again.

Comparing at this group of first-time visitors with place of residence, it must be noted that a large proportion of U.K. permanent residents (74% or 283 people) were paying their first visit to Hill Top. Correspondingly, however, the highest number of repeat visitors were also from within the U.K. When compared with the low levels of repeat visitation amongst overseas visitors (only 6% or 8 visitors from North America, for example, were making a second visit), this result suggests that distance and/or the wealth of other heritage attractions within the U.K. may discourage multiple visits amongst foreign visitors.

These issues were in fact raised by some of the 30% (155) of first-time visitors who said that they would not return. Amongst this group, 75% (117) had no dissatisfaction with the site. The reason for their non-return was simply that they had now seen Hill Top and in the future would prefer to visit other places. A further 10% (15) cited distance, while smaller numbers mentioned other factors.

### Motivations

It is important to consider more closely the large group of first-time visitors who claimed that they would like to come back to Hill Top again. Most of these visitors cited a combination of reasons and, expressed in their own words, this material offered one indication of the deeper feelings that this kind of tourist experience could evoke. More practically, it showed that some people wanted to talk at greater length about Potter and Hill Top. Thirty percent (155) of these visitors said that they would be drawn back to Potter's home because of its country setting. Respondents used words like 'idyllic' and 'quintessentially English' to describe their feelings about Hill Top, thereby hinting at the broader cultural values within which these feelings lay embedded. Concurrently, 22% (113) of the sample group mentioned a specific interest in Potter and/or the storybook characters, 15% (78) wanted to bring other family members or to come back when their children were older. Some mentions of the possibility of a second visit were linked with subsequent holiday trips to the area, and preparatory work to

learn more about the author.

Disaggregating the reasons first-time visitors would return to Hill Top and setting the results against country of permanent residence highlights some of the variations between U.K. and overseas respondents (Table 5). It was more important to U.K. visitors, for instance, to pay another visit to Hill Top within the context of bringing friends, relatives or children (25%) or whilst on another holiday in the area (13%) than it was for members of any other group. Conversely, the North Americans and the Japanese cited their interest in Potter as a reason for returning to Hill Top more frequently (39% and 52% respectively) than did U.K. respondents (21%). Concurrently, however, the data also highlight the singularly important role of countryside for members of each of these groups. Although expressed in different ways, the appeal of the country setting transcended ethnic, linguistic and cultural barriers.

Even allowing for a 'halo effect' engendered by the euphoria of a first visit where more visitors would say they wanted to return to Hill Top than would actually be the case, the number of visitors who could conceivably return underscores the growing problem facing the National Trust. Because of fears of increased structural damage to the cottage, and limits to carrying capacity if visitor numbers continue to rise, the Trust is loathe to publicize the site. As such, this potential level of repeat visitation is cause for some concern, especially in terms of future policy formulation.

Some indication of patterns and motivations for repeat visitation,

Table 5

## Residence and Reasons First-Time Visitors Would Return

	To bring others	Holiday in area	Interest	Setting	Other
Residence					
U.K. (179)	46 (25%)	23 (13%)	37 (21%)	57 (32%)	16 (9%)
U.K. temp. (20)	2 (10%)	1 (5%)	4 (20%)	12 (60%)	1 (5%)
North America (87)	11 (13%)	4 (5%)	34 (39%)	29 (29%)	9 (10%)
Japan (33)	0	1 (3%)	17 (52%)	13 (39%)	2 (6%)
Australia/ New Zealand (13)	4 (31%)	1 (7%)	4 (31%)	4 (31%)	0
Europe (14)	4 (29%)	2 (13%)	4 (29%)	4 (29%)	0
Other (3)	1 (33%)	1 (33%)	1 (33%)	0	0

emerges from data asking these visitors the year of their last visit to Hill Top and the reasons for that visit. As noted, the highest percentage of repeat visitors were from within the U.K. What is interesting, though, is that overall, 33% (37) of these non first-time visitors had made their most recent visit within the preceding two year period, between 1988 and 1989. A further 4% (5) were paying another visit to Hill Top within the same year. If the figures for the period 1985-1990 are combined, over half of these visitors (53% or 60) had visited Hill Top at least once during those five years.

These results seem to suggest that Hill Top's popularity has increased dramatically over the past several years, possibly with parallel increase in Potter's popularity. Despite the National Trust's efforts to reduce visitation by not advertising, the site is becoming a major Lake District tourist attraction. Hill Top is drawing in new visitors, while at the same time catering to an existing clientele.

In this sense, it is useful to set visitation patterns against gender. Despite the highly skewed sex ratio, with many more women than men being interviewed, the gender difference between first-time and repeat visitors was less significant than I had anticipated. Amongst the males interviewed, 84% (147) were making their first-visit as compared with 80% (366) for first-time female visitors. Correspondingly, 15% (27) of males, and 19% (86) of females were making a repeat visit. What these results suggest is that although Potter is clearly more popular with women than men, women are not returning to the site in solely female parties, and that proportionally

speaking, gender is of minimal importance in influencing repeat visitation.

Finally, it is also important to consider why repeat visitors, the majority of them from the U.K., made their last visit. For 43% (49) this visit was part of a holiday in the area, and 27% (31) were brought by friends and relatives, or were themselves acting as a tour guide. Only 19% (22) made specific reference to their interest in Potter. Unlike the first-time visitors reviewing the reasons why they wanted to return to Hill Top, it is striking that none of these repeat visitors made explicit mention of countryside. This possible difference between U.K. and overseas visitors, the former conceptualizing the visit in terms of a regional holiday with the latter seemingly more preoccupied with the idyllic country setting is more fully explored through the workshop groups and open-ended interview questions. It is worth highlighting the issue now, however, because it provides yet another illustration of the fundamental role of the visitor profile in informing and asking questions about other material.

### Visits to Other Literary Places

Although the distinction between first-time and repeat visitors, and the motivations behind these visits is important, it is also useful to set such activities within a context of the broader travel patterns visitors were engaging in. Only 27% (172) of those sampled had visited any other literary attractions in the Lake District, meaning that for 72% (453) Hill Top was the first literary site in the area they had visited. These results are even

more interesting when visits to other Lake District literary places are cross-tabulated against place of residence.

As shown in Table 6, this procedure highlights some interesting similarities between U.K., Japanese, and visitors from Australia/New Zealand. Within each group, over 70% of the visitors had not visited any other literary sites apart from Hill Top. In contrast, the North American visitors seemed more anxious to explore the area's literary heritage with 40% (52) saying that they had visited other literary places. Although these results effectively demonstrate the Japanese preoccupation with Potter to the virtual exclusion of any other attractions, what is perhaps most surprising about these results is the large proportion of U.K. visitors who had not ventured beyond Hill Top on this holiday. Some of these people were undoubtedly seasoned Lake District tourists who had visited other properties on previous holidays, but it must be assumed that for the majority of U.K. visitors Hill Top was the only Lake District literary site that they were interested in visiting.

This preoccupation with Potter's home also emerged in replies to the open-ended questions and through casual conversations I had with visitors. For many, Hill Top was a singularly important part of their holiday, and they had made a conscious decision to visit it on the first or second day out. Such remarks were entirely unexpected and it was only when the study was nearly three-quarters complete that I realized there was a pattern emerging. Unfortunately at that stage, it was too late to begin recording when during



Table 6

## Residence and Visits to Other Lake District Literary Places

	Visits to Other Sites	Visit to Hill Top Only	All (% of this)
Residence			
U.K.	87 (23%)	293 (77%)	380
U.K. temp.	9 (36%)	16 (64%)	25
North America	52 (40%)	77 (60%)	129
Japan	8 (20%)	33 (80%)	41
Australia/ New Zealand	8 (28%)	21 (72%)	29
Europe	7 (39%)	11 (61%)	18
Other	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	4

the holiday respondents had decided to visit the site. It does, however, seem particularly important that such a high proportion of visitors, (72%) overall should choose to visit Hill Top first. Some respondents did say that if time permitted they hoped to visit one of the Wordsworth properties or Ruskin's home but Potter was repeatedly given preference to these literary heroes. The nature of this appeal was clarified in the workshops, as well as through some of the open-ended dialogue and this material will be considered in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. At this preliminary stage, though, the closed questionnaire results raise some interesting questions about the origins of visitor preferences and motivations.

Amongst those visitors who had visited other literary sites, the main Wordsworth property, Dove Cottage, had the highest frequency of visits, mentioned by 73% (126) of those in the sample. The English and Cumbria Tourist Boards have claimed that 'more than fifty percent of visitors to Dove Cottage are American' ('Wordsworth Goes West' 1987, p.25), and the documentation in Table 6, where proportionally speaking, North Americans demonstrated the most interest in visiting other literary places, supports this assertion. In my sample, the other Wordsworth properties as well as Ruskin's home proved less popular, only being mentioned by around 16% (26-27) of visitors in each case. Other places cited by fewer than 5% of visitors included the Ruskin Museum in Coniston, Hawkshead Grammar School where Wordsworth was a pupil, Grasmere Churchyard, and several areas connected with Ransome's *Swallows and Amazons* books.

Visitors were also asked whether they had seen places with literary connections elsewhere in the U.K. Unfortunately, this question was problematic, especially for North American visitors. Given the professional, middle to upper-middle class nature of the sample, it is surprising that so many people had to be prompted with examples before understanding what kind of site constituted a literary place. Although 64% of those surveyed affirmed that they had visited other literary sites, I am wary of attaching too much credence to this figure. Possibly my use of the term 'literary place' was misleading for respondents tended to name any castle or 'historic' village that came to mind. Others simply could not recall any names of places associated with writers so responded negatively to the question, even though some later assured me that they must have visited at least one literary site, usually Stratford-upon-Avon.

It is interesting that ordinary visitors did not seem to conceptualize their visit to Hill Top in terms of 'literary tourism'. Certainly it was clearly identified as a 'heritage site' and given the number of respondents who mentioned that they were members of the National Trust, the importance of free admission as an adjunct to such heritage concerns cannot be overlooked. Visitor motivations, however, lay embedded in a particular ideology of heritage and conservation, of which the visit to Hill Top was part of a much larger schema. Respondents raised some of these issues in the open ended questions, and they were extensively explored in the small discussion groups. The visitor profile, however, offers a way in to understanding some of these

processes.

### Summary

This chapter has been concerned with methodology and how qualitative and quantitative approaches may be used together and to great advantage. In tourism research particularly, where there has been scant consideration of questions of meaning or engagement with visitors beyond standardized assessments, there is enormous potential for the development of qualitative methods. Some of this potential was explored in the design of the Hill Top study. To assess the wider framework within which visitors were experiencing the literary place, while negotiating some of the constraints of using qualitative methods in tourism, various strategies were employed; a social survey comprising semi-structured interview questions, participant observation, and small group discussions. The latter provided a forum for individuals to interact within a social context, enriching the qualitative material generated. The basis upon which to build interpretations of this material, however, is the social survey and the visitor profile resulting from this survey was summarized in the last part of the chapter.

The integration of these different methods offers a way of contextualizing the Hill Top study within a much broader pattern of cultural attitudes and values. As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, Beatrix Potter is a focus for popular ideas about childhood and countryside. In turning to this material, however, it is worth emphasizing that theory and method are linked

through analysis. It is erroneous to see qualitative and quantitative approaches as substitutes for one other. Instead, they offer different ways of seeing and interpreting various kinds of data.

*Chapter 5*  
*Creating Childhood, Creating Adulthood:*  
*Interpreting Inter-Generational Sharing*

"I've loved the books since I was little. They were read to me, I read them to my children, and I'm now reading them to my grandchildren. I grew up on *Peter Rabbit* so it's an important part of our family tradition."

Interest in Beatrix Potter is embedded in a wider cultural context, mediated by a particular ideology fostered first by the stories, and subsequently through their appropriation into other forms. Sustaining this ideology are some pervasive moral values rooted in notions of class, gender and well-ordered family life. These values have in turn been singularly important in constructing ideas about childhood. For adults, Beatrix Potter's books are a means of inter-generational sharing but, concurrently, they are also a medium through which ideas about childhood are perpetually negotiated and re-defined.

This chapter considers some of the ways that visitors at Hill Top and members of the small discussion groups conceptualized childhood experience. Beatrix Potter repeatedly evoked memories and impressions about childhood, and was also used to construct and re-interpret these experiences for younger generations. Why, for instance, did people want to visit Hill Top? Over half of my sample (59%) made specific reference to their own interest in Beatrix Potter and/or particular characters and stories. Since another 17% mentioned

a child, or other friend/family member's interest, 77% of respondents overall had decided to visit Hill Top on the basis of some prior interest and knowledge. These results are important because they raise questions about whether visitors were interested in Beatrix Potter herself, or instead were drawn to what she might represent; a way of defining childhood and adulthood, and a morality of childhood conveyed not only in the family but also at school. Embracing this morality, however, is a wider tension between high and mass culture, ultimately leading to contested notions of childhood.

### Childhood and Adulthood

At Hill Top, visitors expressed their interest in Beatrix Potter in different ways. While the closed interview questions suggest the magnitude of Potter's continued popularity, responses to some of the open-ended questions, in conjunction with dialogue from the small groups, facilitates exploration of the different facets to her appeal.

How respondents constructed ideas about childhood and by implication adulthood, merits particular attention because references to childhood or children were used to mediate a range of fundamentally adult attitudes and values. Thus, the importance of childhood memories and family tradition, cited by 40% of those making specific reference to their interest in Beatrix Potter, masks other issues.

Before discussing some of these themes, however, it is important briefly to highlight how cultural differences, and to some extent gender,

influenced how, and indeed if, Beatrix Potter was used to mediate child and adult experiences. Many Japanese visitors, for example, discovered the Beatrix Potter characters in late adolescence and incorporated them into their lives through souvenir purchases. As such, it was only the English and North American visitors who overtly used Beatrix Potter as a way of reminiscing about child life. For the Japanese, usually young women under the age of thirty, Beatrix Potter was not part of their childhood or family tradition and thus was not conceptualized as part of these experiences.

Gender too played a role in this dialectic between childhood and adulthood. Why, for instance were women more interested in visiting Hill Top than men? As the visitor and small group dialogues illustrate, knowledge of Potter was primarily part of a female cultural experience, expressed not only through the intention to visit the literary sites, but also through a profound sense of communicating this heritage to others.

### Inter-generational sharing

This communication process reflects an ideology of the family wherein the connections between child and adult are singularly important. Aries (1973) has traced the history of the family in western culture from the medieval to modern era, emphasizing how the concept of family changed as relations with wider society shifted. Prior to the eighteenth century, a dense network of external social relationships worked against the concept of a family unit. In contrast, 'the modern family...cuts itself off from the world



and opposes to society the isolated group of parents and children. All the energy of the group is expended on helping the children to rise in the world....'(Aries 1973, p.390). Today, this idea of the family is enshrined in political rhetoric and countless consumer advertisements. Correspondingly, it also features prominently in the world of children's books.

In English children's fiction, the family story occupies a distinct sphere; Nesbit's Bastable family, Ransome's *Swallows and Amazons*, and the many families in Streatfeild's books are some well-known examples of this genre (see Cadogan and Craig 1976; Landsberg 1989). Until very recently, such family portraits have reinforced the ideological hegemony of the traditional white, middle class family unit. Less understood, however, is the role that reading children's books plays in familial culture. Specifically, why are the so-called 'classic' children's writers, Beatrix Potter included, valued today? Read in different social and cultural contexts from that within which they were originally written, their popularity persists.

This popularity is arguably a reflection of the ways that these texts are a basis upon which an idealized image of childhood and child life has been constructed. As one visitor at Hill Top commented: the Beatrix Potter books "capture the spirit of childhood." Correspondingly, however, Beatrix Potter was used as a bridge between childhood and adulthood. As one woman said: "I like the books and I buy them for my grandchildren. They're nice stories for the children." Justifying her own liking for the books through her grandchildren, she describes them as 'nice' stories, embodying values that

she wants to share with others.

Beatrix Potter is so indelibly associated with childhood that memories about the books were usually grounded in this context even if it later proved false. One woman replied that her interest in Potter was rooted in "childhood memories of reading the books and wanting to know more about the author." As she later added, however: "But when I think of it, it's probably my daughter's childhood." Others spoke about childhood as a *place*: one that could be retrieved through Potter and in this instance, through the visit to Hill Top. "I've always loved her. I was brought up on her. Just want to get back into fantasy land again." Similarly, seeing the real places featured in the books brought back "memories of childhood....Hankering after the past."

In the small discussion groups, many of these themes were further explored, and there too for both English and American participants, Beatrix Potter was a way of defining important family relationships. Those who had been brought up with Potter could, like Louise, a middle-aged American primary school librarian, "hardly wait to read them to my children" (Transcript 4, p.3). This motif is especially important, not only because it recurs in both the small group and general visitor comments, but also because it synthesizes how a particular value has been assigned to Beatrix Potter as part of a wider culture in which education, family tradition, and latterly the visit to Hill Top help to sustain.

In this sense, Catherine, also middle-aged, from the south of England and with a special interest in collecting children's books, described what is

perhaps the experience of many families.

"I bought Peter Rabbit for my elder son before he was born, and we read all the Beatrix Potter books...as my two sons grew up and every time we went on holiday we bought a new one to take with us....They both, I think quite clearly remember being read to....So it's sort of part of the family saga" (Transcript 2, p.1).

Other members of the group shared similar anecdotes. As Edith, who grew up in the north of England and now lives in the South-East, close to her grown children explained: "Beatrix Potter must have been read to me but I simply can't remember her being read to me....I then read her to my younger sisters and brother...the books greatly appealed to me, and then I read them to my son" (Transcript 2, p.1).

For many people then, Beatrix Potter occupied an important place in the fabric of their family heritage. This appropriation of Potter, however, merits scrutiny. In a critical appraisal of children's literature, Hunt (1991) is concerned with 'how meaning is made from a text and....what [readers] bring to books, how they read, what their contexts are, and how these affect the meanings they make with books' (pp.15-16). One of the meanings that has become closely associated with Beatrix Potter is of middle class family culture, where the storybooks are the material basis through which a widely accepted set of values is perpetuated.

## Gender

One of these values is closely associated with reading to children and in this context, the maternal influence is especially important. Amongst the

interview sample, there was an almost equal division between the people who remembered having Potter read to them (45%) and those who had encountered her independently, either at school or as an adult (55%). Of those who could remember having the books read to them, however, 37% mentioned that they were read by their mother or another female relative: a sister, aunt or grandmother. As one American woman said: "I remember being cosy sitting next to Mother. That warm feeling of sharing looking at the pictures across her lap but I don't remember the actual stories from that time." This feeling of warmth and sharing was reiterated by other respondents. As another woman put it: "My Mother [read the books to me] and now reading to my grandchildren brings all those lovely memories of warmth and closeness beside my Mother back." Jean, one of the small group participants with a professional interest in Potter described her "earliest memory [as] having *Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle* read to me by my Mother" (Transcript 2, p.1).

In these anecdotes, Beatrix Potter is of secondary importance. Rather, her stories are a vehicle for the recovery of early childhood memories, usually associated with maternal closeness, and often the re-enactment of these memories through sharing the books with others. The majority of respondents (64%) had read the books to children, and of the 36% who had not, 77% claimed that they would read them to children in the future. As one woman remarked: "I read them with my daughter who always said 'squeezed under the gate.' I couldn't imagine childhood without Beatrix

Potter." And, as yet another told me: "I read to our own children. They're just so lovely. It sort of sums up childhood somehow. All children can relate to them I think."

These women, for most of those who shared such stories *were* women, see childhood as synonymous with Beatrix Potter and define one of their tasks as passing on this heritage to children. In the process, however, Potter has become a symbol for a variety of other feelings about childhood of which the strongest is probably nostalgia. Most of the women who told these kinds of stories, both at Hill Top and in the small discussion groups were in early to later middle-age, with adolescent or indeed grown children who had already left the family home. After telling me that she had read the books to her children, one of these women went on to describe these experiences: "All washed and in pyjamas sitting on the bed. Sleepy, quiet times. Magic times. Hot chocolate and bath time." Then she added: "Although it probably wasn't like that! I wonder what happened! They grew up!"

### A Golden Age

This woman's children grew up and became adults; hence, in retrospect, their childhood has been progressively idealized. As Williams (1973) puts it: 'Nostalgia...is universal and persistent....A memory of childhood can be said persuasively, to have some permanent significance' (p.21). Thus, the ways in which respondents constructed an image of

childhood is rooted in patterns of inter-generational sharing but these patterns are themselves embedded in a wider sphere wherein a particular set of images about childhood and adulthood are also important. Although ostensibly anxious to differentiate between childhood and adulthood, visitors and group members privileged childhood in nostalgic terms and, in the process, ascribed fundamentally adult values to reflections about child-life.

This tension is captured in Patricia's account of reading the books to her own children.

"I think [Beatrix Potter's] a superb storyteller and...children just absorb the stories and they do love them. And the pictures, if you, we used to go through every single one looking at all the details, you know there were the flowers and look there, we've got some like that in the garden....Or, oh look, you know, there's a frog or there's a bird you know and you'd rush home and find the page with the bird on it. Or the little animals, they really were absolutely absorbed and surely, I mean they certainly did learn an enormous amount from them. They learnt, I meant quite apart from the words in the books, they learnt to actually look at a picture and...sort of compare it to things outside. They had a wonderful time" (Transcript 1, p.17).

In this passage, the juxtaposition between 'they', 'you' and 'I' enables Patricia to project her own fascination with the reality of the books onto her children. Yet, nostalgia for her children's childhood resonates as Beatrix Potter elicits memories of that 'wonderful time' now gone forever.

At Hill Top, ordinary visitors were similarly nostalgic. As a middle-aged American man on holiday with his wife said:

"I'm very drawn to the paintings. They're such lovely, subtle colours with an inviting feel. You want to get into the paintings. They're a very important part of our children's childhood. Coming here is the most deeply moving experience I've had since coming to the U.K. It's overwhelming."

It is interesting, however, to compare these kinds of remarks with those of younger people, usually under thirty, without children, or whose children were still small. Because the connections to actual childhood are more immediate, child-life and by extension Beatrix Potter, are not so idealized. For one woman, Potter's books were something she liked when she was "younger", and as an American college student remarked: "[They're] just something I read when I was a little kid."

It is also useful to set this narrative against the experiences and impressions of real children. For one small boy, the strongest memory of his visit to Hill Top was the chocolate ice cream that the family had for lunch! Other children searched for the characters and some parents were disappointed that there was so little at the site to interest children.

At the conference, one of the participants was a twelve year old American girl, on holiday in England with her grandmother. As the only child there, and indeed one of only four participants under the age of forty, the Beatrix Potter Society gathering was clearly a rather strange experience. Unlike the adults, Amy had few stories to relate. As she frankly said: "I just always liked her animals and her stories and how they - I just always liked them because they were kind of...I just always thought they were cute" (Transcript 4, p.1). For her, it was "fun looking at all these places, where Squirrel Nutkin went....I like him" (Transcript 4, p.8).

In comparison with the other responses, Amy's reaction highlights the ways that adults create a nostalgic and idealized image of childhood,

ascribing attitudes and values to children, which then allow them as adults, safely and publicly to articulate what would otherwise be very private sentiments. Sandra, for example has teenage children, and in conjunction with the conference, was visiting England to research the history of family members who emigrated to North America in the nineteenth century. At first, she told her group that she had not discovered Beatrix Potter until she was grown up and working as a librarian. Yet, toward the middle of the session she was asserting that Hill Top was "like a doll's house...like a big playroom, I guess that's why, actually as a child that's why, I always wanted to, you know, get into it" (Transcript 1, p.15). In this excerpt, the phrase 'actually as a child' is especially important. Ascribing her emotions to her child self, although she was unfamiliar with the books as a child, gives public credence to an intimate revelation.

For both group members and visitors at Hill Top, Beatrix Potter was appropriated as a symbol to represent a wider dialectic between childhood and adulthood. Attempts to make sense of, and define these two experiential spheres focused around her. As such, Beatrix Potter has come to symbolize a variety of feelings about childhood with the writer as an individual, and the stories that she created secondary to their symbolic importance. Those respondents who had not encountered Beatrix Potter in childhood often expressed surprise when asked how they had found out about the stories. While the majority (29%) found out about her when they had children of their own, a number of people also cited general knowledge saying



"everyone has heard of Beatrix Potter and Peter Rabbit"; or "she's part of our heritage", and "she's kind of a legend, you've always heard of her."

What is particularly important, however, are the ways that respondents constructed this knowledge as part of a shared adult heritage. Many admitted that the books were more important to them as adults than they were to the children they were reading them to. As one man described that experience: "it's possible that I liked the books more than my son did. You appreciate them more as an adult." Or as yet another man put it: "It was quite strange having them read to me and then reading to him. You start to read other things into them being an adult. Moving from childhood to adulthood I suppose."

The nature of this transition preoccupied both ordinary visitors and members of the small groups. Rose, for example, comes from the western United States and is part of a large, closely knit family, many of whom are involved with her in running a business. She conceptualized this transition process thematically, linking interest in Potter with discrete stages in family life: "Children, when they reach their teen[s], more or less put Beatrix Potter stories out of their mind until they have their own children and then it all comes back to them. And that's what happened to me" (Transcript 3, p.6).

Others, however, challenged what they saw as an artificially-constructed distinction between child and adult experience. As Beth, an office administrator from middle America, and one of the most forthright members in any of the groups maintained: "it's for the child in all of us. It's a

connection to children. It's my way of holding on" (Transcript 3, p.15). Ben, a librarian from London, and one of the few men at the conference, also made this point saying: "people wonder why you're interested in these books [which] you know, you should have left when you're out of childhood....I think it's just a case of how much in contact you are with the things that appealed to you as a child" (Transcript 1, p.12).

This continuum linking child and adult experiences is premised upon nostalgia for an imagined childhood golden age, discovered or invented as a new family unit is created. Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) talk about the invention of tradition, or the systematic creation of a cultural heritage premised on popular mythology. This association of Beatrix Potter with a childhood golden age reflects just such a tradition; one fostered not only in the family but also at school.

### Education

The large number of visitors at Hill Top who were involved in teaching or related professions has already been noted in Chapter 4. In the small groups, this career pattern was even more pronounced, undoubtedly yielding shared ways of seeing amongst participants. As such, it is difficult to allow the different audiences for Beatrix Potter's work to speak for themselves. Rather, one of the themes that emerges strongly from the discussions is the way that education, in the home and in the classroom, was used as a basis for a particular moral ideology not only about childhood but

ultimately childhood as embedded in ideas about elite and popular culture.

Since discussants thought that this ideology or morality in Potter was so important, it is worth spelling out more clearly what it seems to entail. Hall and others have referred to 'differentiated readings of the same text; the way in which different meanings are constructed on the same 'site' and from the same textual system exerting its cueing' pressures' (Corner 1986 p.54). Beatrix Potter has progressively been associated with an image of 'niceness', and even respondents who had never read the books felt that they were somehow 'good' for children. Specifically, a particular reading of the text has been given preference with the less cosy elements of these so-called 'nursery classics' tacitly ignored.

The violence, for example, that lurks beneath the surface of many of Potter's books is accepted because the stories are a connection to childhood, and childhood by definition is 'good'. In *The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin*, that naughty squirrel has his tail broken in two by Old Brown, the owl and narrowly escapes being skinned. And, in *The Tale of Mr. Tod*, one of Mr. Tod's homes is surrounded by 'rabbit bones and skulls, and chickens' legs and other horrors' (Potter 1989, p.263). Such aspects could, however, be rationalized for as one woman remarked: "Because I'd always grown up with them I know look at it and think they're quite cruel....But I still read them because of my childhood." As another woman commented: "they're lovely stories. There's no violence in them really. Not the violence as we know today."

Beatrix Potter is esteemed precisely because paradoxically, she is seen to represent a taken-for-granted version of traditional, white middle class family values. To sustain this image, however, certain aspects of not only the storybooks but also Potter's biography, must be overlooked. In one of the groups, for example, the question was raised: "I often wonder...latterly did [Beatrix Potter]...have any sort of conscience about where all the money came from for these Scottish holidays with the enormous houses? Um, it was from the cotton mills wasn't it?" (Transcript 2, p.7). Nobody was willing to engage with the cultural politics of class and work that this statement seems to necessitate and after a lengthy pause, the group as a whole moved to re-direct the conversation into 'safer' channels, a consideration of Hill Top Farm as Potter's emotional refuge.

Education is one medium through which this way of seeing Beatrix Potter has been formalized and this process again often first occurs in the home. As Jean described her impressions, other members of the group agreed.

"You can always tell if a family has had Potter read to them as children, or rather if the family is...Potter minded because there are certain expressions that come out. I mean one recognizes immediately if you hear somebody say, 'oh she's a terribly tidy person'....You know quite well...they've read *Mrs. Tittlemouse* as a child or at least there's a tradition of Potter in the family" (Transcript 2, pp.3-4).

In another group, Isobel, a retired primary school teacher from the east coast of the United States, also pointed to this tradition, and its currency beyond the immediate family unit saying:

"I...find people who may not remember her name or may not ring a bell when you say Beatrix Potter, all you have to do is say 'Once

upon a time, there were four little bunnies and their names were Flopsy, Mopsy, Cottontail and Peter' and they know what you're talking about" (Transcript 3, p.12).

Together, Jean and Isobel emphasize how even cross-culturally, certain readings of Potter's texts persist, are incorporated into child and later adult life, and thereby define membership in a particular social group. An American woman at Hill Top contributed another dimension to this cross-cultural perspective. As she said: "I think today a lot of it needs to be interpreted, especially for U.S. children because of the language, but it doesn't take away from the charm of the stories. The reader imparts this to the listener."

In imparting the charm of the stories, though, the reader whether subconsciously or by design also imparts some pervasive cultural values. In contrast to Britain, Beatrix Potter is widely used in the American primary curriculum; various respondents mentioned Potter theme days at local schools, plays and other activities. Lynne, a kindergarten teacher in the northeastern United States with adult children of her own, described her views:

"...I'm very interested in children's literature as opposed to what comes out of the supermarket stalls and so I have gotten into what I consider "good literature", in quotes, and Beatrix Potter fits my description of what I want my...[school]children to hear....We use Beatrix Potter and others...to pass on values" (Transcript 1, pp.1-2).

It is noteworthy that these values were presumed to be so widely understood that Lynne did not consider it necessary to explain further, and nor did others ask her to do so. Using the 'Care Bears' as an example of

'supermarket' literature she later added: "there's no substance to them, there's nothing behind the story, there's nothing children can read into it or get from it other than just the words" (Transcript 2, p.3).

In a recent guide to choosing children's literature, Landsberg (1989) makes this analogy more explicitly. As she argues:

'Among the charms of Beatrix Potter's 'The Tale of Peter Rabbit...is its delicious frankness: Peter is naughty, Mrs Rabbit is loving but stern, Mr McGregor is emphatically an enemy....In the falsely sentimental toddler books that clog our chain book shops, a rabbit could only be an adorable bunny....The best works always seem to radiate an acknowledgement of children's nature as it really is....That is why the commercial flatteries of Smurfettes and Care Bears are so irrelevant to children's development; they encourage a simpering niceness that is incongruously imposed on a child's nature, like a crust of caramelized sugar on top of an interesting stew' (p.94).

I have cited this excerpt at length because it is a useful corollary to some of the comments made in the small groups particularly. From the critic's perspective, the best works may indeed 'radiate an acknowledgement of children's nature as it really is'. What goes unrecognized, however, are the ways that adults have created an idealized image of what childhood is about; a process wherein Beatrix Potter has been appropriated, often through the medium of education, because she is seen to represent a certain value. Although this value may not be the 'simpering niceness' of the Care Bears, it is a version of niceness nevertheless: one reflecting nostalgia for an idealized golden age.

As Teresa, another American kindergarten teacher put it:

"Parents and grandparents that want to give a nice present, I think are more apt to give a Beatrix Potter item than a mutant Ninja turtle or some of these other strange things....At least you know that those are values that you want your children to have, the children that you teach,

and they are good little animals and everything always works out fine and [they're] living in a nice clean little woods versus these turtles living in the sewers of New York has a lot to do with what I would choose for my children" (Transcript 4, pp.18-19).

This excerpt can be read at several different levels. The dialectic between country and city is discussed in Chapter 6 but what is most important in the present context is how the passage gives prime emphasis to values of niceness drawn from a particular interpretation of the text: good behaviour brings rewards and cleanliness is equated with virtue.

These values may be learnt at home or in the classroom but occasionally there is a link between the two. Connie also incorporates a Beatrix Potter unit into her work at school and told the group about some of her experiences:

"A lot of my girls when we start doing this...go back and bring me things that were their grandmothers....it's a wonderful communication between...little girls, young ladies and their grandmothers and...I've had some very old china pieces brought to me wrapped up in a kleenex. But they were really excited that they can talk to their grandmothers about this and they seem to talk about it and bring in all their little treasures...."(Transcript 4, pp.10-11).

Chinaware depicting the Beatrix Potter image is clearly a 'good' product, a nice present, and in terms of its antique value, a medium for some powerful kinds of inter-generational sharing.

Concurrently, however, Beatrix Potter has also been used to advertise a variety of other products. This material is discussed at greater length in Chapter 7, but must briefly be mentioned here because it has frequently been brought to the classroom, and integrated into primary education. Several discussants mentioned the McDonald's 'Peter Rabbit's Happy Meal'

programme, promoted by the Corporation across the United States and recently featuring a Beatrix Potter theme (see also Morse 1991, p.30). Lynne highlighted what she considered to be the broader implications of this marketing campaign:

"...our children are brought up on McDonald's and Burger King. And McDonald's I guess it was had a promotional that they got their little happy meal and there was a book in there, which exposed almost every American child to Beatrix Potter because every child from every social level goes to McDonald's at least once a week. And so many of our children were exposed that way. So they brought those little books back in to us [at school]" (Transcript 4, p.4).

The McDonald's Corporation is obviously not concerned with promoting Beatrix Potter. Rather, it seems they are trying to associate their corporate image with the set of values Potter is seen to represent. In conjunction with 'big business' commercialism, there is also an intense family morality to McDonald's, reflected in their advertising as well as community service activities - the Ronald McDonald Houses for terminally ill children and their families, for instance. The children who are getting Beatrix Potter books through the McDonald's Happy Meal programme, and bringing them back to their teachers at school, are perhaps a different audience from those who encounter the stories at home. But in the classroom the same sorts of family values are still communicated.

### High and Mass Culture

These values reflect several ideological strands employed in different combinations: childhood and adulthood, (including inter-generational sharing,



gender and a golden age) and education (whether at home, in the classroom, or through links between the two). Fundamentally, however, this value system is driven by ideas about high and mass culture.

Writing in 1930, F.R. Leavis launched a powerful critique of culture in mass society. This critique was 'almost entirely couched in terms of a nostalgic return to an ideal, organic, pre-industrial society' (Swingewood 1985 reprint, p.10). In rejecting capitalist culture, Leavis, for whom the cultural meant literary, saw 'culture' being threatened by 'the profit-seeking capitalist mass media' (Swingewood 1985 reprint, p.10). Thus Leavis argued that as forces of mass production destroy cultural vitality, only a minority culture is left 'upon [which] depends our power of profiting by the finest human experience of the past; they keep alive the subtlest and most perishable parts of the tradition' (Leavis 1930, pp.3-5).

In modern culture, Leavis saw a progressive trend toward dehumanisation, a fragmentation of community, and a crisis in values: many of the concerns raised by visitors at Hill Top and members of the discussion groups. Group members in particular seemed to define their role as that of upholding the traditions of what may be conceptualized as Leavis' minority culture. Sandra, for example, described her enjoyment in attending the conference in terms of "talking to other people that are interested because you do tend to be a kind of a select group" (Transcript 1, p.4). Not only is 'select group' a class-laden term, it also implies a fundamental division between 'us', the stewards of high culture, and 'them', an encroaching

popular mass.

This tension between the elite and the popular was expressed in various ways. An interesting example is the Beatrix Potter merchandise. The Hill Top survey highlights that over 92% of the interview sample had purchased one or more Potter products. In the groups too, many participants spoke about collecting some type of book-related merchandise, or giving it as gifts. What united these discussions, though, was a fear of 'tasteless' commercialism where the valued heritage or tradition being preserved for future generations might be tarnished.

As Jonathan, who devotes much of his professional and leisure time to heritage and conservation concerns, explained:

"...I'm so afraid one day I'm going to pick up a cornflake packet and shake it out and there will be little Flopsy Bunnies and (laughter) Tiggy-winkles and plastic ones ending up on my plate like they do with Mickey Mouse and so on. But I think that would be appalling if that does happen" (Transcript 3, p.17).

Here again, the 'them' and 'us' relationship resonates, and is strikingly reminiscent of Hoggart's (1957) discussion of the Americanization of traditional working class culture in *The Uses of Literacy*. In singling out the plastic Mickey Mouse figures as an illustrative example, Jonathan, although coming from an entirely different perspective, echoes Hoggart's fear of 'faceless Hollywood culture' (1957, p.280). Although American herself, Beth quickly reinforced Jonathan's point. In reply to a question from another group member about whether the current resurgence of interest in Beatrix Potter is anything more than one of many fads that come and go, she

replied: "But those are orchestrated by Walt Disney and this is just above all that" (Transcript 3, p.12). Beatrix Potter is set on a higher plane than Walt Disney with the latter clearly associated with mass (American and therefore negative) popular culture.

This concern with preserving high culture relates to the kind of heritage that group members were anxious to pass on to children and, by implication, the ways they defined childhood. Some of the visitors at Hill Top, though, were more specific about why this heritage was really being preserved. As one man said: "They're the sort of books that are more for adults than children. Children now have moved on into the space age rather than imagination." Amongst those respondents who had read the books to children, 28% made specific mention of these adult values suggesting that Potter symbolises shared cultural values which should be passed on to the next generation, regardless of that generation's own inclinations.

What is interesting, however, is that participants in the small groups were keen to differentiate between what they saw as the 'authentic' Beatrix Potter and other representations of her work, most notably the *Ladybird* versions and the American piracies. The details of these different editions have been discussed in Chapter 3, but it is now important to consider how these books were used by group members to make value judgements. Isobel, for example, was vehement in her disapproval of the *Ladybird* editions of the Beatrix Potter books:

"I bought them last time I was here, bought as many as I could get a hold of just because they're so horrible. To take them home and share them with the teachers so they'll know the horrible stuff that can

happen to something as good and precious and wonderful literature as Beatrix Potter's work is....Especially your English children [who] don't know the real Beatrix Potter books, to pass off those Ladybirds on them, it's cheating them....it's thievery" (Transcript 3, pp.17-18).

Since it was usually American mass culture that was seen as threatening the English heritage of which Beatrix Potter is a part, it is curious that Isobel and indeed many of the American participants were setting themselves up as guardians of English tradition. Her powerful and very angry statement, 'your English children' seems to underscore the outrage she feels at the destruction of this tradition which she, on behalf of the children, cherishes. There is also, however, a morality in the metaphor of thievery to be considered. Namely, this act of theft wherein something precious and wonderful is lost, contrasts with the 'good' values that Beatrix Potter has traditionally been seen to represent.

Hunt (1991) has considered both sides of the Ladybird debate and uses it to illustrate

'a far simpler and cruder set of assumptions which infuse all discussion of children's books. These are that the Beatrix Potter 'original' edition supporters are elitist snobs, who think that old is good, per se....On the other side are those who would rather have children read anything...than nothing. They do not understand or care for the book-culture at all, and merely wish to appropriate it for their own subversive ends. In doing so, they patronize the child and undermine the book, and give in to lowest common denominators of culture' (p.31).

This is precisely the Leavis argument, taken one step further to summarize how ideas about high and mass culture may be appropriated for different purposes. From a commercial perspective, anything that extends Beatrix Potter's already substantial popularity must be good. Yet, the question of

tastefulness, and how taste is defined, remains singularly important.

In defending the 'elite' position, Jonathan emphasized this idea saying: "we need to bring all the pressure we can to stop any more of the Ladybird tragedies...being flooded onto the market" (Transcript 3, p.17). Here, it is not the market that is perceived to be the problem. At issue is the flooding of this market with 'tasteless' products like the Ladybird editions. Similar views were expressed about the American piracies. Ellen, for example, now a grandmother, described an old family photograph where she is sitting reading to her infant son:

"I'm not reading him one of the little books, I am reading a pirated big paper book....So actually children, a lot of children my age growing up never knew the author of the Peter Rabbit books they read because most of the...pirated book editions don't have Beatrix's name. So when I hear people saying that they grew up on Beatrix Potter's books, I think you're very fortunate" (Transcript 1, p.2).

In these comments, there is an explicit attempt to differentiate between the 'authentic' Beatrix Potter books and the vulgarized 'tragedies' that have appeared in their place. The nature of the tragedy, though, is more complex because it is tied to other views about modern mass culture that are only peripherally concerned with Potter. These are the disintegration of the traditional family unit where reading to children is important, and the erosion of certain moral values associated with a stable, community oriented way of life.

In other words, this tragedy is associated with the 'tragedy' of modernity. Beth, for instance, considered the 'beautiful language' in Beatrix Potter's books to be especially important because children today "don't hear

beautiful language, they hear all this crud on television" (Transcript 3, p.7).

In another group, Connie also made this point, criticizing the role of the media in fostering a less literate culture.

"...so many of the toys come from movies, I mean it's this big production thing and a lot of them are attack toys....So I find it a pleasure as a teacher and as a mother to be able to buy my child or give my kids a prize, for something that has to do with a book instead of a movie that's been promoted over and over, or a video. It's really nice to be able to extend a literature book instead of a visual experience that's questionable" (Transcript 4, p.21).

Although Connie does not explain why certain visual experiences are 'questionable', they are almost certainly those that challenge the values she wants to pass on to the younger generation. These comments also reflect a more general argument about the relationship between television and cinema viewing and a decline in literary standards, particularly amongst children. Modern mass culture is seen to be a violent culture expressed through 'crud' not only on television but also through attack toys promoting senseless destruction.

### Childhood Contested

It is not my intention here to apply Leavis' arguments about high and low culture to a critical reading of children's literature. After all, children's fiction has rarely been considered 'great literature' and would undoubtedly be exempt from the tradition that Leavis' 'minority culture' sought to sustain. Where some of Leavis' ideas are useful is in interpreting the ways that contemporary readers are making sense of different representations of

the Beatrix Potter texts, and linking these ideas back into attitudes about childhood. Following Williams, Hall theorizes culture as 'threaded through *all* social practises, and...the sum of their inter-relationship' (1986, p.36). The culture of childhood reflects this dynamic - one that is perpetually being negotiated by ordinary people in their everyday lives.

It is interesting to explore this idea of negotiated social practises further for as Williams writes:

'...our way of seeing things is literally our way of living, the process of communication is in fact the process of community: the sharing of common meanings, and then common activities and purposes; the offering, reception and comparison of new meanings, leading to tensions and achievements of growth and change' (1961, pp.38-39).

One of these common meanings concerns childhood and attitudes about the nature of childhood experience. Tension between reality and an ideal image of childhood was expressed in both the questionnaire responses and dialogue from the small discussion groups. In turn, this tension raises the question of whether Beatrix Potter is actually for children, or is instead a basis upon which a idealized image of childhood is being contested against the forces of mass culture.

In highlighting the subversive dimension of much children's literature, Lurie (1990) makes direct reference to this way of seeing. As she argues, grown-ups

'prefer to think of children as ingenuous and confiding. Usually..we like to believe that everything is all right in our immediate world....But if...we should want to know what has been censored from establishment culture in the past, or what our kids are really up to today, we might do well to look at the classic children's books and listen to the rhymes being sung on school playgrounds' (p.15).

As the group discussions and evidence from the questionnaire interviews illustrate, however, few adults are willing to engage in alternate readings of well-loved texts for such readings would destroy the basis of a valued tradition. It is much easier, for example, to overlook the fact that *Mr. Jeremy Fisher* was almost eaten by a trout, and that a central theme in *Jemima Puddleduck* is seduction and murderous intent.

In maintaining this childhood tradition, the American contribution merits particular attention. Beatrix Potter has been a way for many American parents to recreate an idealized image of English childhood. As one couple said: "It enlightens American children about their links to England....it's bridging the English past....It's part of our tradition, our memories, our heritage." And as another woman remarked: "People in the U.K. would be surprised how well loved Beatrix Potter is in the U.S. The giftshops are full of it and reading [her] books is important to our family."

This emphasis on 'our' heritage and the appropriation of Beatrix Potter into American culture is interesting because it seems that in some ways Americans are more devoted to Beatrix Potter than are most English people. Certainly in England, Beatrix Potter is a national institution and when this institution is threatened, as in the case of the Ladybird Books editions, the letters column in the *Times* newspaper, amongst other media, records voluble public protest (see for example Fox 1987). In England, though, the audience for the stories is more narrowly defined and class based than it is in America. Hence, the books are closely associated with one version of



childhood; white, middle-class and affluent. As one man gently pointed out, he had never read the Beatrix Potter books because "the stories aren't in Punjabi." A much angrier statement came from a young labourer who said: "My girlfriend told me about it but I don't know anything about [Beatrix Potter]". When asked if he would ever read the books to children he replied: "In Liverpool and Birkenhead? You must be joking!"

Members of the small groups were remarkably silent on these questions of the different audiences for Potter's work, and it was rare even in the interviews that these dominant meanings of what is essentially a middle-class childhood experience were contested. The admission charge at Hill Top (£2.50 for adults and £1.20 for children in 1990, and raised to £2.90 and £1.50 in 1991) undoubtedly discourages many visitors, but it must also be emphasized that reading Beatrix Potter has not traditionally been part of working class family life. Yet, this is the audience for which the Ladybird Beatrix Potter books have been designed. As Hunt (1991) claims: '[They] will sell in supermarkets and corner shops, and not just in bookshops, which appeal only to a minority. They will reach a mass audience of non-book people, and put thousands of children, who have previously been deprived, in touch with an important part of their culture' (p.29).

Is Beatrix Potter truly of their culture and can the Ladybird editions really hope to rectify this 'deprivation'? This question reaches far beyond what some people might think of the Ladybirds, with their 'updated' language and soft toy characters set against painted scenery. Rather, it is

concerned with different ideas about childhood and the ways they are contested. The elite, or high culture view has privileged childhood in an idealized and, fundamentally, adult guise. The classic children's books, Beatrix Potter included, are used as justification for a morality of childhood imposed on real children by the adults who buy books for them, read to them, and teach them at school.

### Summary

This chapter has tried to unpack some of the themes in the construction of the culture of childhood. As Aries (1973) writes: 'The idea of childhood is not to be confused with affection for children: it corresponds to an awareness of the particular nature of childhood, that...distinguishes the child from the adult' (p.125). Children occupy an important place in English and North American family life and children's literature is one of the ways in which ideas about childhood are constructed and contested. Why do Roald Dahl's books, for example, although loved by children, make many parents and librarians uncomfortable? (Landsberg 1989, p.88). Simply put, his depiction of childhood is often one that challenges what, for the majority of adults, is an idealized image of childhood experience.

As this chapter illustrates, Beatrix Potter has been appropriated into a particular ideology of the family: one perpetuated through inter-generational sharing. Women are singularly important in this communication process, but for both genders Beatrix Potter offers a way of publicly articulating what

would otherwise be intensely private sentiments. Concurrently, however, Beatrix Potter has also become associated with a morality of the family, based upon nostalgia for an idealized childhood golden age, and expressed through an emphasis on values, virtue and the rewards of good behaviour. This morality is especially powerful in American schools where Beatrix Potter is widely used in the elementary curriculum.

These values, however, reflect a tension between high and mass culture, expressed in the ways that one set of ideas about childhood, in this case represented by Beatrix Potter, are vigorously defended against others, such as the Ninja turtles for example. Fundamentally, this tension is not so much about Beatrix Potter as it is about the creation of meaning contested between groups, with different social practises and ways of seeing.

In defining childhood, though, discussants also used these meanings to mediate ideas about rural life and countryside conservation. The links between childhood and the pastoral are particularly important and provide a setting within which to assess wider heritage debates. Thus, just as she has been appropriated as a symbol for childhood, Beatrix Potter has also become associated with an ideology of countryside and country life, the focus of the next chapter.

*Chapter Six*  
*'It's Countryside':*  
*Exploring Contemporary Values for Rural Life*

'Fat Friesian cows and limestone walls; bacon and eggs and large cream teas; green, green fields and carpets of heather; the congenial togetherness in pubs with wet clothes drying around the fire....'

'Primroses; hawthorn flowers; children singing; swifts at twilight....'(Barrett 1991, p.44).

A travel writer in a weekend newspaper asked his readers: 'When you return home after a holiday abroad, is there anything that makes you feel glad about getting back to Britain?' The excerpts that I have cited were among some of the replies. The author of the first piece lives in Bradford; the second in south London. Together, they illustrate the power of country motifs in contemporary, often urban, culture. For many people, Beatrix Potter's books, and the settings captured in her illustrations, provided one basis for these sorts of impressions about country life and heritage conservation. This chapter explores some of the ways that both visitors and members of the small groups constructed ideas about countryside and, on this basis, made powerful criticisms of contemporary development.

The chapter begins by focusing on some of the links between childhood and the pastoral, for this way of seeing countryside, formalized in a literary tradition, also has an important popular significance by enabling people to situate themselves within a broader cultural heritage. The second part of the chapter explores the dialectic between country and city. Images

of countryside do not work in isolation, and neither are they solely a function of childhood memory. Rather, they are perpetually negotiated against a changing urban context. Finally, the chapter considers questions of heritage. Tourism is a vehicle for urban dwellers to experience country life but this experience is premised on different understandings of authenticity. This invokes wider debates about heritage preservation.

Williams (1961) has written about 'the culture of the selective tradition', suggesting that it connects a lived culture or way of life with its historical antecedents (pp.48-49). As a cultural symbol, both Potter and the way of seeing countryside associated with her work are part of this tradition, not only sustained in the family and at school but also through a tourist setting that has been preserved to fulfil popular expectations of the rural past.

### The Pastoral

Much of the contemporary appeal of Potter's stories lies in their depiction of a past rural life. At Hill Top, 28% of U.K. and overseas visitors mentioned the country setting as that aspect of the site they liked best. A further 22% cited Hill Top's links with the illustrations in the books and 42% referred to its 'authentic' atmosphere. These results raise questions about why people considered countryside to be so important, important enough in some cases to stimulate a second visit to the area. Amongst the Japanese in particular, for whom Potter's illustrations were often more

appealing than the text, 'the country' has a powerful ideological significance. For them, as for many Americans, the English countryside is the source of a tradition they are anxious to adopt as their own.

### Happy Childhoods

This tradition has much to do with the pastoral and its connections to ideas and myths about the happy childhood. Ward (1978; 1988), for example, has considered the relationship between children and both the rural and urban environments and writes:

'Although Britain is an urban nation, or perhaps because it is, there is a persistent tradition that puts our lost personal landscape in a rural past....the enormous weight of literary convention, filtered through school books, pop songs and magazine adverts, postulates a childhood piping down the valleys wild, rather than roaming the city streets....' (1978, p.5).

It is not only Britons, however, who situate this 'lost personal landscape in a rural past'. For Americans too this sort of nostalgia has had an enduring appeal. In evaluating nineteenth century Anglo-American travel literature, Mulvey (1983) notes that the English landscape was already familiar to these American visitors through childhood reading (p.114).

North Americans experiencing the English landscape for the first time today, give Mulvey's statement a contemporary relevance. That this childhood reading is still important was succinctly expressed by a Canadian woman at Hill Top who said: "*The Tailor of Gloucester* (and the stories of *Mr. Tod*) probably coloured my whole childhood....I think reading those stories made you think of this kind of country. The countryside as it used

to be and, really surprisingly, still is." Or, as an elderly man related: The "Beatrix Potter books are some of my earliest memories. My Mother reading them gave me my first links with the English countryside [because] I left England when I was too young to remember it."

Williams' (1973) analysis of childhood and the pastoral is particularly relevant here. Although he was considering this tradition historically, as it is expressed in literature, peoples' comments highlight the contemporary importance and expression of his ideas. Reflecting on the 'green language' or nature poetry of John Clare, Williams writes:

'A way of seeing has been connected with a lost phase of living, and the association of happiness with childhood has been developed into a whole convention, in which not only innocence and security but peace and plenty have been imprinted, indelibly, first on a particular landscape, and then, in a powerful extension, on a particular period of the rural past....' (1973 p.172).

For visitors at Hill Top and members of the small discussion groups, this excerpt mirrors one of the ways that countryside has been assigned a particular social and cultural value: one indelibly linked with the realm of happy childhood memories.

In one of the groups, Simon, a doctor from the Midlands, made this point forcefully:

"I came up on the way up here through the little village where I used to live...And it was a lovely Georgian village when I was a child in the early fifties, forties and fifties...but now the great executive houses have been built in the fields by the road and it's just become a little dormitory village....And I saw the beech hedge which my Father planted in about 1950, which is now overgrown, it's still there, it hasn't been tended like it should be, it should be just the level but it's not and it distressed me...." (Transcript 3, p.25).

Exile, from place and from childhood runs through this passage and, although the lack of care for the hedge is important, symbolically it is being used to mediate other emotions, principally those of nostalgia. Thus Simon's distress reflects a wider lament for a vanished rural past, a way of life he indelibly associates with childhood. Or, as Williams writes, again referring to Clare: 'Nature, the past and childhood are temporarily but powerfully fused' (1973 p.173).

This relationship was important to both English and North American visitors to Hill Top, for childhood as pastoral transcended geographic and cultural boundaries. For some North Americans, for example, experiences in the English countryside were linked to memories of childhood in an American pastoral idyll. Janet is a retired librarian from the western United States and the conference visit to a Lake District farm where sheep were being sheared by hand, was particularly meaningful for her. As she told the group:

"This has been absolutely wonderful for me because it has brought back to me childhood memories because my Father raised sheep, and...as a very tiny girl I would go out to the ranches and watch the sheep being sheared exactly as they were being sheared yesterday. And we don't see that now where I'm from, everything has become so mechanized and they have everything done so automatically and they're...doing many many at one time and it's just wonderful to see this. It's bringing back to me memories that I had that are just very beautiful and special" (Transcript 4, p.12).

Considered together then, Simon and Janet's comments echo Williams when he writes: 'This country life...has many meanings: in feeling and activity; in region and in time' (1973 p.13). Simon's childhood was spent in



England; hence he is sensitive to changes in the English countryside of his personal memory. By contrast, Janet sees England as a remnant of her rural American childhood idyll, now gone forever. For her, as for many Americans, the English countryside has become a substitute for a pastoral they can no longer find in their own country.

### Family Histories and Cultural Traditions

There is another dimension to this substitution process, however, which Mulvey highlights when he claims: 'Americans...are oriented towards the Europe from which their ancestors emigrated, not to the Europe which exists today' (1983 p.114). In one of the small groups, Isobel echoed this theme when she expressed her pleasure at being in Lancaster: "I liked being here cause it's not all that far from where my ancestors emigrated to America. It just feels kind of good being here" (Transcript 3, p.29).

Since the majority of North American conference participants could trace their family heritage to Britain, it might be argued that Potter's children's stories, and the visit to England, are for them a particularly meaningful way of discovering an imagined past. In other words, the pastoral of childhood memory and a more distant family history have become closely inter-twined.

Visitors at Hill Top made this point too, making frequent mention of the links between Potter and the perpetuation of an English family heritage. As a young college student said, "my parents were English and they always

read Beatrix Potter to me." And as a middle-aged woman with teenage children remembered: "My husband's aunt sent my first copy from England when I had my first baby."

What is important about these comments, though, is that they have been elicited within the context of a holiday experience. One of the functions of tourism is to allow people to indulge in memories and idylls which are reluctantly put aside when they return home to 'normal' life. Some English tourists, for example, found in Potter a connection to immediate family heritage. As one man said, describing his impressions of the site: "it's typical old-fashioned, like me Gran used to have. An era I was sort of brought up in, so it's familiar." And as a woman with young children commented: "what I say to my children is that when I was a child, country people used to live like this. I suppose it's nostalgic for me because none of those cottages that I remember when going to visit aunties' house exist any more."

These links between childhood and the pastoral are fluid in terms of both time and place. For younger visitors, the country cottages they remember and tell their children about might not figure in the idyll celebrated by their parents. And for American visitors in particular, the English countryside is the locus of a powerful set of images, rooted not only in memories of childhood reading about England but also childhood experienced in an American landscape now coloured with an English pastoral gloss. Thus, 'Old England, settlement, the rural virtues - all these...mean different things at different times, and quite different values are being

brought to question' (Williams 1973, pp.21-22).

This question of perspective is important for it shapes the way Beatrix Potter's books have been appropriated into a pastoral tradition that transcends geographic barriers. Indeed, for many Americans, part of the appeal of Potter's illustrations undoubtedly lies in their close association with what Leo Marx (1967) describes as

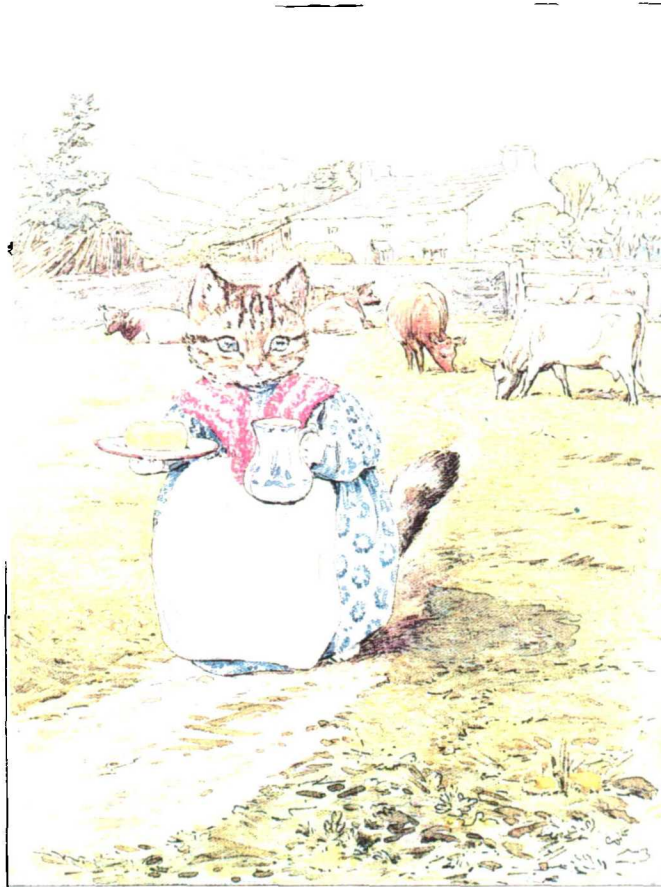
'...the cardinal image of American aspirations...a rural landscape, a well-ordered green garden magnified to continental size. Although it probably shows a farmhouse or a neat white village, the scene usually is dominated by natural objects: in the foreground a pasture, a twisting brook with cattle grazing nearby, then a clump of elms on a rise in the middle distance and beyond that...a line of dark hills' (p.141).

One of the settings depicted in Potter's work matches this image almost exactly (Figure 28). In this example, taken from *The Tale of the Pie and the Patty-Pan*, there is a farmhouse, a pasture and grazing cattle. Clumps of trees dot the middle distance and beyond too, are the hills encircling the scene. Many visitors spoke about the appeal of Potter's art and today the links between these illustrations and the real-life setting preserved by the National Trust. Part of the appeal of this setting, however, also lies in its contrast with other places, notably cities.

### The Rural and the Urban

Williams (1973) highlights the broader pattern of capitalist social relations which have historically shaped notions of country and city (pp.362-363). From a literary perspective, he provides one account of the meanings of rural life. Building on Williams' work, what is needed is some

Figure 28  
Potter and an American Pastoral



BUTLER AND MILK FROM THE FARM

*The Tale of the Pie and the Patty-Pan* by Beatrix Potter. London: Frederick Warne. Copyright (c) Frederick Warne & Co., 1905, 1987, facing title page. Reproduced by permission of Frederick Warne & Co.

appreciation of how ordinary people interpret countryside today, and how tourism can help to perpetuate rural myths.

'Countryside' is defined, dialectically, in relation to other places and settings. While one of these is the city, another is embodied in what Barrell (1980) has termed 'the dark side of the landscape': the patterns of social organization and the labour that sustain the picturesque rural scenes in many landscape paintings. In much the same way as one set of meanings has become associated with these paintings, so too are ways of seeing the countryside embedded in a dominant culture of rurality.

Most tourists look at rural scenes with the same detachment as their counterparts touring art galleries. The countryside, or indeed heritage more generally defined, becomes something to gaze upon, often with admiration and emotion but which does not require a high degree of personal involvement. The urban visitor usually sees countryside in discrete segments, often framed by a car window. Forays to places like Hill Top are part of a stage set, helping to reinforce socially constructed expectations of what rurality is about. Specifically, there are several inter-related issues to consider. First, the way visitors perpetually ascribed one set of meanings to rurality with little recognition of a 'darker side', and second, the dialectic between country and city upon which these dominant meanings rest.

### Constructing Countryside

I have already noted that when visitors at Hill Top were asked what

they liked best about the site, references to countryside, links with the books, and a sense of authenticity recurred. Some visitors were impressed "to know that everything was hers and preserved just as she left it", while others remarked upon "the garden and the flowers" saying "that's what I'll remember about England also."

These links between the Beatrix Potter landscape and the English countryside more generally merit special attention because many visitors, most notably those from overseas, made no distinction between the two. As one man, clearly unfamiliar with the books, described Hill Top:

"It's a pretty garden and peaceful setting. A typical English house of the period. Sweet and nice. We're told it's hers but there's not much that signifies Potter. It could be Mrs Jones. It all looks the same. Wordsworth. Stratford. It's all old England."

Other North Americans described Hill Top as a "quaint English house", "a beautiful English setting", "very English", "very representative of country life in England at the turn of the century." On occasion, this image was even linked with literature. As a Canadian woman said: "It's essentially English. The absolutely quintessential English atmosphere that has always been in all the books and novels you've ever read." Many Japanese visitors also found this fulfilment in a fantasy conjoining Potter with English country life. As one man told me: "It's a very natural place. Around here is most beautiful and most very England. Very unsophisticated but that's good." Even a Japanese family temporarily resident in Oxford, and therefore able to experience England beyond the usual confines of a holiday visit were seeking out this myth. On behalf of his wife, the man said: "Even in Oxford

it's very modern, so I wanted to see countryside and very traditional things. I found that here....I like old style English things."

English people also recognized this idyll. As Ben, a librarian from London who participated in one of the small groups said:

"I think people have a...very romantic view about England...and you know they expect, they somehow conjure England to be all land of you know quiet life and countryside, and if people have gardens they're all very nice...." (Transcript 1, pp.25-26).

What is important to emphasize, however, is that people's expectations of the English countryside rarely include recognition of a darker side to the picturesque image. In the groups, this issue was the source of some discussion. It is therefore interesting to begin by considering some of the dialogue from the second group. There, people expressed views that relate to contested meanings of countryside and rural heritage.

As managed by Potter and latterly the National Trust, Hill Top is meant to be a working farm. As Jean contended, though, with agreement from the rest of the group:

"I don't think visitors to Hill Top have any conception that...the farm's there at all....It doesn't intrude upon the house....Occasionally someone opens the gate and wanders through and wanders back again. I...although you're aware that there are sheep round about I don't think you're aware that it's part of Hill Top...." (Transcript 2, p.10).

Catherine carried this analogy further, asserting that "the fact that there are sheep and there are ducks...is more or less all laid on with the ornaments" (Transcript 2, p.10). In other words, 'work' does not intrude upon the tourist setting for it is simply part of the picturesque background upon which ideas about rurality have been constructed.

This notion of a stage set has links with MacCannell's work (1976) about authenticity in tourism, but it also embraces an image of Potter which some members of this group disputed. Fiona, for instance was adamant that "Beatrix Potter was not cosy", and although admitting that in her books "she did have sunny landscapes....certainly in her everyday life she was...most realistic...she was a working farmer" (Transcript 2, p.14).

Marcie is American and runs a small gift shop in California specializing in Beatrix Potter merchandise. She also has numerous friends in the village so is different from ordinary visitors. Yet, in seeing Hill Top as a working farm, she nevertheless distinguished between the tourist setting and 'work' by saying:

"...different times of year there are things going on. I mean you can see lambs in the Spring and...chickens in the yard if you're privileged as we were...a couple of years ago. But it's...part of the interest of it as well, so it isn't just to visit the place, but there's work going on around it as well which she intended to go on" (Transcript 2, p.10).

Marcie's use of the word 'privileged' is interesting because she is privy to part of what MacCannell (1976), following Goffman (1969) terms the 'back regions' of the tourist site. The last part of the comment, however, merits attention too because she differentiates between work and leisure. Labour goes on around the place that tourists come to see, and is thus peripheral to the main attraction.

As Williams writes, 'a working country is hardly ever a landscape. The very idea of landscape implies separation and observation' (1973, p.149). Tourism, then, is one medium through which this process of separation



occurs for as the discussions illustrated, the Beatrix Potter landscape rarely embraces the idea of work.

### Imagining the Country from the City

For this image of countryside to work, it must also be premised upon separation from the city. This dialectic between the rural and the urban comes from a pervasive value system which ascribes virtue to country settings and evaluates cities negatively. As Cindy, a Canadian student explained:

"...I know when I was little I had a very romantic view of England and when you come to London and you get off the plane it's kind of destroyed for a while (laughter) but as soon as you come up here [to the Lake District] it's restored" (Transcript 1, p.9).

As Sandra replied: "You should fly to Newcastle you see. Newcastle's much better because you're instantly in the country" (Transcript 1, p.9).

Visitors at Hill Top expressed similar views. As one American woman said: "I guess it's sort of romantic....Coming from a city the country is very appealing. I feel so peaceful here. More an emotional thing I suppose." The Japanese, too, drew repeated comparisons between country and city motifs. As one young woman wrote: "[Hill Top's] cute. Tokyo is very crowded. This is countryside. I feel better and refreshed here." Others reiterated this point: "I feel by visiting this place as if my brain, my heart is purified. I'm away from the city."

It was not only overseas visitors, though, who made pointed reference to this dialectic. A young man from an industrial city in the English

Midlands commented: "It's a dream. This is where you'd like to be. No noise from the road outside." And as other English visitors remarked: "It's so quiet and peaceful, especially in these days", and "it's countrified, you can keep your towns."

This contrast between the rural and the urban, past and present, and the old-fashioned and the modern was raised by most visitors. Yet it rests on a transitory experience in the countryside, and these visitors have no obligation to engage with any of the realities of rural life. As one woman said: "I love the history of it, the antiquity. Thoughts of a bygone age. How lovely and peaceful it would have been to have lived here before there were motorcars and things rushing about. It's even better than I imagined it....unspoiled and natural." For women in particular, comparing an imagined image of Hill Top with the reality of a tourist visit, was often an emotional experience. As an American primary school teacher exclaimed: "When I walked in the house I had chill bumps....We don't live like that now....It's not like Texas where everyone is rushing around. I'd like to stay here."

While the 'countryside' was consistently set up against the 'other', usually the 'urban' and the 'modern', the dialectic operated at several levels. Principally, Potter was a catalyst for discussion about a tension between a valued tradition and the modern, usually expressed through perceived changes to rural life.

All the small group participants came from urban or suburban environments. Although many had spent their childhoods in the country,

educational and/or economic opportunities had drawn them into cities. Hence, the country was now something to be experienced at a distance, perhaps filtered by childhood memories but still in no way part of their everyday lives. Teresa who lives in the highly urbanized Boston-New York corridor of the eastern United States made this point explicitly:

"...Even the farmland that I grew up on is all built up with houses....and the idea that there can be a little secret corner in the world somewhere where these animals live and they're not dodging the cars as they run across the street from one tree to another or they're not, you know trying to, to get across the street rather than even a lake and I think that is important too. I think that's one of the drawing cards because it is their own secret little world...." (Transcript 4, p.11).

Although it is interesting that such a commercialized, and popular commodity as Potter can be valued for its ability to evoke a private world, what must be stressed is that this world is not only about Potter. Rather, it intersects with a wider value system where modern life, synonymous with busy streets and dodging cars, is inherently negative; countryside, with its lakes and trees and little animals living peacefully, is special and desirable.

Although members of the small groups never described the characteristics of Potter's countryside, they referred to her love of the 'country' in the abstract, using her life and work as a basis upon which to structure their own impressions of country life. Sandra, for example, began talking about Potter's work for the National Trust and Lake District conservation but soon took a more personal stance.

"You know, when I think of country it's peace and green and quiet, and the water. And it's kind of the opposite...I hope I'm not anti-social but you know...there's more scope out in the country, it's not so. In cities there's so many people in small places. It's kind of intense"

(Transcript 1, p.6).

Ben supported this idea saying: "I think people are just inherently, they don't like the sort of hustle and bustle of the city....they like the...peace and quiet you'll get in the outside" (Transcript 1, p.6).

This distinction between 'inside' and 'outside', cityscape and countryside, was made in each of the four groups, complementing and enhancing material from the open-ended interviews. Although the conference was based in Lancaster, many of the sessions were held in the Lake District and the daily journey between these two places provided some interesting comments. Ben, for instance, justified the length of the journey by saying: "It's ninety minutes and you spend most of that sort of driving through...the countryside" (Transcript 1, p.27). And for Fiona, it was "exciting re-discovering the Lake District every day. I think it hits you (group agrees) because you've been out and then you're going in" (Transcript 2, p.21).

This idea of crossing boundaries, leaving Lancaster and going into the countryside, is important. When it is set against some of the images conference members had of Lancaster in general and the university in particular, it underscores how different environmental experiences were repeatedly evaluated in terms of country and city. As Patricia said: "in a curious way we're nowhere here because it could be a modern university anywhere" (Transcript 2, p.21). In reply, Marcie reaffirmed this view, saying that she was glad to come back to Lancaster in the evening "because I don't feel guilty about not looking at everything around me (laughter). Because

when we're in the Lake District I feel as if I should be absorbing the Lake District and not...taking in conversations" (Transcript 2, p.21).

There is a strong moral and reverential dimension to Marcie's comment, implicit in her choice of words 'I should be absorbing the Lake District', which did not come out in responses to the open ended interview questions. Not only is the Lake District special because it is 'countryside', it is also valued for its close links with Potter. Similar views were expressed in the other groups, perhaps most forcefully by Rose who said:

"Lancaster really holds no interest to me. However I was told before I came here that there...was a great deal of history here...but it really didn't interest me....I was anxious to get on with the conference and it didn't matter to me where it was [although] I'm sure it would have been much better to have it where we were closer to the subjects" (Transcript 3, p.29).

This comment, 'closer to the subjects' is interesting because it reflects how Rose and others have conceptualized the Potter landscape. Although Lancaster is historical, its history is meaningless because it is not part of what Urry (1990) describes as the object of the tourist gaze. Regardless of its history, Lancaster is viewed as the 'modern' (urban) which could be anywhere, while the Lake District embodies the old-fashioned and picturesque rural virtues which those attending the conference, especially the Americans, have come to see.

### Preserving Heritage

The dialectic between country and city also influenced discussions about heritage preservation, and countryside change. As Shoard (1981)

writes: 'the countryside plays an immense role in English national life. There is reason to suppose people care far more about the rural landscape than care about the treasures of the built environment....' (p.83). Tourism offers one way of experiencing countryside, but its preservation carries a range of meanings.

### Saving the Countryside

For Sarah, who has a keen personal and professional interest in farming and rural husbandry, much of Potter's contemporary appeal lies in the fact that "she really did understand far more clearly than anyone of her time just what was going to be needed in the countryside. To save the countryside for us!!" (Transcript 2, p.6). In another group, Sue, a teacher from the American Mid-West, made a similar point.

"...we've had a lot of bombardment as teachers about earth saving and...conservation and saving things. And if you can show [children] this is the way [the Lake District] looked when she was there and it's, all these years have passed and look what she was able to do by just taking care of it and it's still beautiful. That's another lesson we can draw out of this" (Transcript 4, pp.5-6).

While this extract is yet another example of the way that adult values are handed down to children, the morality implicit in these statements is equally important. Sue's emphasis on 'saving things', 'taking care' of the countryside, and the 'lessons we can draw' from Potter are part of a wider conservation ethic. This ethic focuses on childhood education as a means of effecting change, and sees the roots of environmental empowerment as lying not in grand corporate gestures but in small everyday actions.

In each of the groups, discussants were united in the view that the heritage of the English rural landscape, should be preserved. As Isobel said, the countryside should be preserved simply "because it's there" (Transcript 3, p.23). In other words, it is part of the taken-for-granted heritage or unexamined discourse. This discourse, however, rests upon an aesthetic judgement which raises questions about which kind of past should be retained, and why.

Advocating Potter's approach, Simon, for example, described it as "preserving what was right without being sentimental about it" (Transcript 3, p.25). Reflecting on the farm visit, he explained:

"...I don't think we're into preserving things for sentimental reasons. We're preserving things because they represent a certain value which you're losing today. I mean take that chap doing his...sheep shearing. And he said, when you show the sheep you do it by hand because you get a lovely surface left on the sheep. And if you do it on a machine, it shaves them that clean that the sheep look awful. I thought, yes, that's what it's about. It's about preserving...it in the right way. Not because it's necessarily sentimental, but because it's good and it has period value " (Transcript 3, pp.23-24).

This observation encompasses several different sources of value: the 'good', 'period value' and a particular aesthetic judgement concerning the appearance of the sheep. In this sense, it is interesting to set Simon's comments against Wright's (1985) analysis of historical consciousness and nostalgia for the past. As Wright contends:

'In a world where values are in apparent disorder and where the social hierarchy has lost its settled nature, it is not so surprising that old forms of security have become alluring....In the same way, a modern interest has developed in the lost crafts of foregone times when the traditional techniques and understanding (the practical reason) of everyday life were apparently still sufficient to the world and when, as can be fondly imagined, age brought wisdom rather than meaningless

decrepitude' (1985, p.22).

The imagined past that Simon has constructed demonstrates the ideological appeal of 'values' which are seen to be lost with modern development. In this example, certain agricultural practises are synonymous with Wright's 'old forms of security' and 'lost crafts of foregone times', and are then used to integrate the past into everyday life.

Group members extended this ideology of preservation beyond Potter's Lake District. As Rose asserted:

"I don't think it should be preserved just because she used it in her illustrations....It should be preserved because it is beautiful and...we would hate to see it spoiled. We have the same problem in the United States with beautiful countryside....There are so many people in the world...just driving through that countryside today you know you look at them and you say, gee you know there's some...builders that would just like to fill up these countrysides with condominiums and...they'd do it if they could" (Transcript 3, p.23).

And as Isobel replied: "it's very comforting to come here and go through the Lake Country and see the fields and sheep and all this. It's comforting to know that something's been allowed to stay...." (Transcript 3, p.23).

More than any government planning report, these remarks highlight the regret many in the groups feel about the rapid changes brought about by urbanization and modern development. In this sense, it is also useful to consider another exchange amongst three of the American women in this group for it again illustrates how past values were being invoked to describe heritage, and contrasted with modernity. Nancy, a health-care worker from a large city in the northeast, opened the discussion saying:

"...I think we're hopefully learning our lesson like the Japanese....I don't know how long it'll take the Americans. But like a species of



animal, once it's...gone, it's gone forever. And there's nothing you can do to get it back. And then the same way with the countryside. You know if you let it go to the railroads - like they were afraid of when they started the National Trust and so on - and you put up billboards, and you open up a fish and chips place or God forbid a Kentucky Fried Chicken or something! (laughter). Then it's gone, and you can't get it back because you can't build it like that again. You know, you just can't find the right materials and so on. If you were to tear down one of those homes [Lake District cottages] and put up something ugly with aluminum on the outside....We're terrible. I mean we rip something down that was built in 1950 because it's falling down, in our country."

Patricia: "We rebuild our cities every twenty years."

Nancy: "And the quality isn't there. They're building more or less just to have something to do-"

Isobel: "to make millionaires and billionaires -"

Patricia: "Yeah, the Donald Trump syndrome" (Transcript 3, pp.24-25).

This extract illustrates Hewison's argument when he writes, 'in the face of apparent decline and disintegration, it is not surprising that the past seems a better place. Yet it is irrecoverable, for we are condemned to live perpetually in the present' (1987, p.43). The present, however, is transitory and 'ugly'. It is 'ripped down every twenty years' and lacks the 'quality' of past craftsmanship. While a 'fish and chips place' is slightly better than a Kentucky Fried Chicken, neither belongs in beautiful countryside.

Hewison says that the past is 'irrecoverable' and in the strictest sense, this is of course true. Correspondingly though, for these women, the relationship between past and present is premised upon a somewhat static view of history. Modern development is the agent which changes the past but there is no sense of the dynamics of countryside change and rural life.

Rather the past, in this instance the countryside, is an object, appreciated in visual terms, as part of a holiday visit. This appreciation, however, also says much about understandings of authenticity.

### Authenticity

At Hill Top, the Beatrix Potter heritage is part of a wider tradition of country life now preserved by the National Trust. As Wright (1985) comments, 'the National Trust has become an ethereal kind of holding company for the dead spirit of the nation' (p.56). Part of this 'spirit', rests on an ideology of preservation that fuses the past with the rural. Today, this rural past is the source of a flourishing economic enterprise but Lowenthal (1985) points to an implicit paradox in preservation. 'Vestiges are saved to stave off decay, destruction, and replacement and to keep an unspoiled heritage. Yet preservation itself reveals that permanence is an illusion. The more we save the more aware we become that such remains are continually altered and reinterpreted' (p.410).

One aspect of this interpretive process rests with those individuals and agencies who are directly involved in the business of heritage preservation. In a searching look at Britain's heritage industry, Hewison (1987) challenges a popular myth of heritage which he describes

'...as bogus history...enclos[ing] the late twentieth century in a bell jar into which no ideas can enter, and, just as crucially, from which none can escape. The answer is not to empty the museums and sell up the National Trust, but to develop a critical culture which engages in a dialogue between past and present' (p.144).

The development of this critical culture, however, also depends upon the 'consumers', often the tourists who visit these sites in search of authentic heritage experiences. In perpetuating the heritage industry, their role has typically been overlooked.

Amongst the visitors I interviewed at Hill Top, 42% voluntarily mentioned authenticity or atmosphere as that aspect of the site which they liked best. In this way, the tourist visit gave tangible form to something which was previously imaginary. Although the house and garden have clearly been preserved as Potter's home and, more generally, to conform to a recognized image of what rural life should be about, visitors embraced this setting oblivious to its inherent artificiality.

A comment by a woman from the south of England highlights this point. As she said: "it's like stepping back into your childhood. You remember the books you read and then you see the things there. It's comforting, it's reassuring, isn't it? Suddenly they're there in reality." Other English visitors confirmed this attitude: "It's an absolutely blissful place really. Everything is so real. It's turned fantasy into reality." Or as an American man put it: "Like a physical photograph of a time....Genuine. Complete reverse of Disney. It's an actual, genuine setting rather than manufactured."

This last comment is interesting because of the different notions of authenticity it embodies. Despite the fact that Hill Top is a National Trust property, presented to paying visitors as a tourist site, it is not seen to be

fake in the same way as Disneyland. This concept of authenticity is particularly important. Its links with Relph (1976) and MacCannell (1973; 1976) have already been noted in Chapter 2, but it is useful to return to some of these themes here.

For many of the visitors at Hill Top, 'authenticity' was associated with tangible, living history. As an American visitor described the site: "A setting of extreme natural beauty has been nurtured. It's not blighted." This man's use of the word 'nurtured' is interesting because it relates to how visitors were interpreting the meanings of authenticity. In MacCannell's and Relph's work for example, there is no sense of the ways that different audiences may construct different versions of authenticity. Cohen (1988a) has also made this point by arguing that 'mass tourism does not succeed because it is a colossal deception, but because most tourists entertain concepts of 'authenticity' which are much looser than those entertained by intellectuals and experts' (p.383).

Authenticity is thus a social construct that is re-negotiated. Although the Beatrix Potter landscape has been "nurtured" and the National Trust has "preserved history", this process is authentic because it is necessary if a valued setting is to be retained. Indeed, preservation and authenticity were frequently synonymous, even for English visitors. As one young woman commented: "It's very well preserved and authentic. You really get a sense of how Beatrix Potter lived...."

Just as particular values have been assigned to Potter and one reading

of her books given preference to others, these values are also associated with the way of life represented at Hill Top which became the locus for a shared image of what the rural past should be like. It is valued because "there's nothing modern about it....it harks back to an earlier time when people were more innocent and had simple pleasures." And, from an American perspective, this kind of authenticity counters "a plastic society. The real things in life which are important are right here."

In describing their impressions of Hill Top, visitors repeatedly emphasized the lived-in feel of the house, claiming that it was "like going back in time." History is thus suspended and distorted. As an American teacher said: "It's nice and tidy....You just imagine it to have stood still in time....The back door's always open as it never rains."

As Hewison argues, the conservationist frame of mind is fuelled by nostalgia (1987, p.28), a sort of nostalgia brilliantly captured in this last comment. From this perspective, heritage is always 'tidy' and one-dimensional, never contested, and part of a world immune from not only bad weather but also a range of other potentially unpleasant realities. Amongst visitors at Hill Top, this view of heritage was only very rarely challenged. An elderly English man compared Potter's home with his childhood memories and remarked: "How unpleasant it would be to live that way these days." And, as a young American visitor mused: "At that time, you always imaging people living in more squalid conditions than this."

It is notable that so few respondents took a more critical view of

heritage preservation, looking beyond this ideal image of the rural past to mention some of its alternate dimensions. While it could be argued that the cynics would have gone elsewhere in search of 'real' heritage, it must be emphasized that the majority of visitors were engaged in an unconscious process of collusion. As one man put it, "modern technology excluded, [it's] a very quiet place."

These visitors were not duped by the staged authenticity of Hill Top as Relph's and MacCannell's theses might imply. Rather, they were actively negotiating the meanings of authenticity in an attempt to fulfil expectations and fantasies about what Potter's home, and the version of English country life within which it is embedded, should be like. Progress, in this case modern technology, is denied. 'Heritage' is privileged through a selective vision that reduces the object of the tourist gaze to something enjoyed on holiday but which is remote from everyday experience.

These sorts of issues were also raised in the small groups where Louise made an interesting comment about the overseas visitor's role in perpetuating this selective vision of Britain.

"I think Beatrix Potter represents what lots of adults would like to think England is like....We have a friend who brings groups to England and he says, 'well, I'm only going to show them the real England, the beautiful rural areas. And you have to admit, unfortunately, that if it weren't for the National Trust and Beatrix Potter's royalties, you wouldn't have this countryside this way. And it's an unnatural development which we all cherish because this is the way we'd like it to be" (Transcript 4, pp.10;12).

Although it is in the economic interest of those who manage this heritage to preserve it, preservation succeeds because it fulfils certain cultural needs.

These needs are reflected in how authenticity is re-negotiated, but they also have much to do with an integrated relationship between the local and the global.

### Everyday Life and Global Tourism

Expressed through tourism, values for the English countryside involve the fusion of a local way of life with global interests. In considering this issue, two themes are particularly important. First, how 'authentic' everyday life is incorporated into preservation and second, how global interests are used to justify understandings of the heritage industry.

In some of the groups, people were concerned with the ways in which the Potter heritage is presented to visitors. As Ben observed:

"...the Beatrix Potter books, they always seem to have this idyllic view of the countryside....And...it sort of seems like if you go around where we went, Sawrey and Hill Top...as if they're trying to preserve an ideal....And you wonder how much of that is, you know place is actually living....?" (Transcript 1, pp.6-7).

In talking about whether this kind of preservation was beneficial for local community, Sandra mentioned the group's visit to Hill Top and commented: "...there was an older lady...sitting facing Hill Top and I wondered what was going through her mind....She seemed kind of interested, she was sitting there watching everybody" (Transcript 1, pp.19-20). As Ben then replied: "...she was like a still-life....I couldn't work it out. I thought it was somebody had sort of done, put a waxwork there (laughter). In the distance, really it was strange" (Transcript 1, p.20).

Although the rest of the group laughed, Ben's description highlights some of the implications of preserving a picturesque image. To many visitors, local residents must merely be props, bringing to life the picture book illustrations and contributing to what is for visitors, an authentic heritage experience. In the Lake District, literary heritage is a business practised not only at Hill Top but also in various places associated with Wordsworth, Ruskin and Arthur Ransome. Set against this heritage business, however, is 'normal life' lived by people such as the working farmers who also operate the bed and breakfasts and tea rooms catering for, and sustained by, the tourist trade.

There is thus a tension between preserving the image that visitors want to see, while also guarding against a situation where local residents (and their way of life) are props on an increasingly global stage. Louise made this point especially well.

"...I thought about those farmers as we stood there. And I thought this is enchanting for us to see you hassle the sheep. And you have just 250 sheep and it's a hard life for you and the dogs. And how long are people going to be willing to lead this life?...I'm sure there are many returns of being close to the land and close to the animals and satisfaction...[but] I wonder, are the rest of us playing a game with these people's lives? But maybe they'd be unemployed and go to the city. I don't know, um, I grew up in a city that's on the verge of being turned into a museum too. With this many tourists around can you lead any kind of normal life?" (Transcript 4, p.16).

This comment represents one of the rare instances when the enchantment of a holiday visitor is juxtaposed with recognition that 'normal' life is hard for these farmers, and that the heritage industry might be part of a game that tourists are unconsciously helping to play with ordinary people's lives.



Louise's reference to the museum is also interesting, for it relates to an often cited remark about the growth of Britain's heritage attractions and fears that 'the whole country [is becoming] one big open air museum, and you just join it as you get off at Heathrow' (Hewison, 1987, p.24). This development of Britain's heritage industry is explicitly connected with the global. Implicitly, Hewison's example highlights how global interests may come to serve as a justification for local preservation.

This issue was briefly raised by some members of the small groups. Some of the younger people in particular were adamant that the Lake District landscape should be preserved exactly as it now looks. If the farms were to be abandoned, or simply used as homes, the fells would revert to deciduous forest: a 'natural' development not considered authentic and which preservation should guard against. As Teresa put it, "if they became trees then you could see them in New Hampshire, you could see them in Maine, you could see them in the South....I don't think there would be a reason to [come here] because you would not see all those little walls and all those little paths" (Transcript 4, pp.16;17). In other words, the valued object of the tourist gaze, however unnatural, would have been destroyed.

In another group, Patricia extended this argument, giving it a slightly different dimension. In suggesting that "there's just certain things you have to protect", she cited the example of a wilderness area in her home state and maintained:

"It's not a [state] resource, it's not an American resource, it's a world resource....I think you have to look at it globally...and that's why I come here. I don't come here because I like the British. They're nice,

but I think it's everybody's...it's important to the whole world" (Transcript 3, p.26).

This appropriation of the Beatrix Potter landscape into the status of a world heritage site is astonishing. But it underscores the global appeal of this version of English rural life. Similarly, it also illustrates how the global interest may come to impinge on a variety of decisions about heritage preservation.

### The Cult of the Countryside

This chapter has attempted to explore contemporary values for the English countryside: values embedded within a wider context of culturally constructed attitudes about the rural past. As expressed through an interest in Beatrix Potter, some of these attitudes are linked with the pastoral, communicated in myths about the happy childhood, and ideas about family and national heritage. Other ways of seeing countryside reflect an important dialectic between the rural and the urban. Countryside has been created in a particular way and the Potter landscape was often used as a prototype for England more generally. At the same time, however, this countryside was also a function of the urban imagination.

This imagination shaped attitudes towards the preservation of rural heritage. People discussed why countryside should be saved, and these ideas were then linked to different understandings of the meanings of authenticity. Finally, heritage preservation also involved an implicit relationship between the local and the global.

This chapter has been about images, how ways of seeing the English countryside, and heritage generally, are coloured by nostalgia. To sustain this imagery, however, reality must consistently be revised. Sandra described this selective vision in an especially meaningful way.

"The thing is, maybe that image is really something necessary in people. You can go away with your dream....I mean, it is a place but for lots of people, it's an idea. They walk in. It's what they expect and they go home. We've all read and worked ourselves all up and, you know! (laughter). I mean, we see what we want to see. I think people have reasons you know, dreams of something or other. Why, they're desires and (pause) don't take it away" (Transcript 1, pp.26-27).

Such dreams are personal but they are also consistent with a dominant myth of pastoral England. Given tangible expression, these dreams are the source of much tourist travel. As modernity has eroded the countryside and irrevocably changed that which is perceived to have been a more stable and understandable world, dreams and desires become infinitely more precious. Sandra's poignant refrain, 'don't take it away', is only peripherally referring to her dreams about Potter's storybook world. Rather, these dreams are fundamental to the way that cultures are created. The present is reshaped in the guise of the past, reality is masked with an ideal image, and tourism is a vehicle through which to live out, however temporarily, some of these fantasies.

*Chapter Seven*  
*Beatrix Potter, Patron Saint of Marketing*

'Is Beatrix Potter the biggest single crowd-puller in Lakeland today? How can you possibly prove such a thing? And does it really matter? Well, in the Top Ten Lakeland Names League her home certainly gets the greatest crowds and her books sell in the greatest numbers....'(Davies and Pemberton-Piggott, 1988, p.18).

In providing the infrastructure for people to live out certain fantasies, tourism is premised on economic exchange. In the tourism literature, the economic return or multiplier effect to communities experiencing or countenancing tourist development has already been documented (see for example Holloway 1988, pp.246-252). Less understood, however, are the links between producers and consumers and ultimately, their integration into wider symbolic systems.

The relationship between production and consumption is premised upon meanings and images that are constantly being negotiated between those who create the product or experience, and those who buy it. As Abercrombie (1991) suggests, 'enterprising consumers are continually trying to give new meanings to their consumption activity. There is a never-ending process of the creation of meaning' (p.179). Yet, the meanings about childhood, countryside and English heritage now associated with Beatrix Potter not only involve consumption. Rather, following Johnson (1986), they are also a function of different forms of production.

This chapter develops more fully these different meanings of cultural production. This process has occurred in three phases: first, a stage in which Beatrix Potter was personally involved; second, new productions led by Frederick Warne and the National Trust; and more recently the use of the Beatrix Potter theme by corporations to promote their own products. As the meanings associated with Potter are taken from one context and used in another, new meanings are created. In looking at these three phases, this chapter is concerned with symbolic production, exploring different discourses at local and global levels through which communications about Potter have circulated and been transformed.

### Beatrix Potter as the Producer

#### Early Books and Merchandise

As I discussed in Chapter 3, many of Potter's stories originated as picture letters to children. The most famous of these was the 'Peter Rabbit' letter in 1893. By 1900, she had revised this letter to create a children's story but as I noted, the manuscript was rejected by at least six publishing companies. Potter therefore decided to publish 'Peter Rabbit' privately and, in December 1901 she had 250 copies of her book printed. While many of these were given away as Christmas presents, others were sold at a nominal cost - so successfully that by the end of the year, she had already ordered another 200 copies (Taylor 1988, p.72).

Meanwhile, her friend Hardwicke Rawnsley who took a keen interest in her work, had sent the 'Peter Rabbit' book to Frederick Warne, a London publishing company who a decade earlier had expressed interest in some of Potter's drawings. In an attempt to make the book what he thought would be more commercially appealing, Rawnsley re-wrote the now familiar text in verse. Warne's were not impressed, preferring a simple narrative as in Potter's original, but they agreed to publish the book if the illustrations could be re-done in colour. When Potter eventually agreed, plans for the publication of two editions went ahead: a cloth binding priced at 1/6d and another in paper boards for 1/-. As Taylor (1988) explains: 'The contract, signed at last in June 1902, gave no payment at all to the author on the first 3,000 copies of the 1/- edition but a 10 percent royalty on the 1/6d edition.....' (p.76).

The first Frederick Warne edition of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, published in October 1902, was for 8,000 copies, all of which had been ordered prior to publication. In the same month, Potter also published *The Tailor of Gloucester* in a private edition of 500 copies. When she later submitted the manuscript to Warne's and received their comments she replied: 'I perceive that your criticisms are just; because I was quite sure in advance that you would cut out the tailor and all my favourite rhymes! Which was one of the reasons I printed it myself' (as cited in Taylor 1988, p.80).

Only the first two of Potter's books were privately printed, but the

differences in both text and illustrations between these editions and those produced by Warne's demonstrate how she began to alter her product to meet the dictates of a commercial market. Warne's version of *The Tailor of Gloucester* and another book, *The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin* were published within three months of each other in 1903. From the popularity of *Peter Rabbit* which had sold over 50,000 copies by the end of 1903, Warne's evidently recognized the tremendous market potential of Potter's stories. As her books succeeded, the financial return to both Potter and Warne's increased, and Potter requested that her royalties be paid by monthly cheque. It was with this money that she purchased the first of many Lake District properties: a field in the village of Sawrey.

As she continued to write and illustrate her books, however, Potter also became actively involved in developing associated products. Her first project was a Peter Rabbit doll, patented in December 1903. She urged Warne's to find a company to manufacture the toy. As she wrote: 'I wish you could do something at once about the doll...there is a run on toys copied from pictures' (cited in Taylor 1988, p.92). Not only were these sorts of toys becoming popular but Potter also recognized that others were profiting from the success of her characters. Squirrel toys marketed as 'Nutkin' were appearing in shops and she suspected others would soon follow.

With the advice and encouragement of Warne's, Potter drafted designs for a variety of products including nursery friezes, more dolls, china tea-sets and figurines, painting books, and a Peter Rabbit board game. Indeed, as

early as 1908, this kind of merchandising was well developed and 'on each sale Potter was paid a royalty' (Taylor 1988, p.114). As Taylor comments: '[she] was closely involved in every transaction and showed herself to be a keen businesswoman' (1988, p.114). In addition to the growing amount of money she was earning from her books, the royalties from these transactions were then directed towards the purchase of more land.

In conjunction with the products she developed from the books, however, there was also an interesting, although brief political dimension to Potter's work. Prior to the 1910 general election, she became particularly concerned with tariff reform. Under the existing free trade agreement, Peter Rabbit dolls were being made more cheaply in Germany and imported into Britain. Potter was therefore afraid that the same thing might happen with her books and that they would be printed in the United States, albeit under copyright, for shipment to the U.K.

With the support of Warne's she campaigned actively for tariff reform. Potter distributed leaflets, many of which she had drawn herself, and made personal appeals to a number of publishing and printing houses, alerting them to the importance of copyright protection. Although her efforts did not avert election defeat for the Unionists and a Liberal government was returned to power, Potter's involvement in this campaign is important because she had personally been affected by loopholes in copyright legislation. As noted in Chapter 3, the American rights to *Peter Rabbit* had been pirated which meant that Potter no longer held the copyright nor



received any royalties from book sales.

These piracies continue to be circulated, primarily in the United States, but such major changes were not as widespread during Potter's lifetime as they are perhaps today. She herself remained directly involved in both publishing and marketing - or as she called the latter, her 'sideshows' (Taylor 1987b, p.106).

### In Sawrey After 1913

After her marriage in 1913, Beatrix was able to live permanently in the Lake District and her career as a writer and illustrator was virtually over. Yet, based on her early success, she remained one of Warne's most important authors. When the company faced bankruptcy in 1917 she was anxious to help. To facilitate corporate restructuring she arranged to publish *Appley Dapply's Nursery Rhymes*, a project originally conceived as early as 1902, as well as two *Peter Rabbit* painting books. Thus, when a new company was registered in 1919, Potter no longer only received royalties but was also paid in shares.

The publication of the nursery rhyme book marked a new stage in this phase of Beatrix Potter as producer. Henceforth, her work was published for a specific purpose; first to help the Warne family, and then to raise money for Lake District preservation. Yet, although she became less interested in her books during the last twenty-five years of her life, her publishers who were anxious to safeguard their own financial interests remained active on

her behalf. French translations of the books were approved in the early 1920's and throughout that decade Warne's were busy contesting various imitations and piracies, both in Britain and America. As Taylor (1987a; 1988) has documented, Potter was also at this time receiving many letters from both children and adults living overseas. Thus, as she was becoming more reclusive in Britain, her international acclaim was growing.

One result of this acclaim were links with an American librarian who encouraged her to write a companion volume to the *Appley Dapply* collection. *Cecily Parsley's Nursery Rhymes* was published by Warne's in 1922, but was dedicated to a child in New Zealand whom Potter had never met. In the following years, these international links were solidified as she welcomed overseas visitors to Hill Top and, with the support of her American friends, sold a series of *Peter Rabbit* drawings to save property near Windermere from development (see also Morse 1991). Indeed, it was from a friendship with a young American boy that she was inspired to write and illustrate *The Fairy Caravan* (1929).

Although Potter arranged to protect her copyright in Britain, *Fairy Caravan* was published by a Boston firm and she made no secret of the fact that the book was primarily for the American market. In her long career, this was the first time she had broken her ties with Frederick Warne. A year later, *The Tale of Little Pig Robinson* was published jointly in America and the U.K. This was followed by *Sister Anne*, not published in Britain, and a book which Potter had refused to illustrate, pleading tiredness and failing eye

sight. While the royalties from these books were translated into the purchase of more land, this was the last time that Potter was willing to meet demands from her market. While all of the books remained in print, and were selling well (nearly 200,000 thousand copies in 1941-42), she had little contact with Warne's beyond royalty payments. With her death in December 1943 this particular phase of the production cycle ended.

### Post Potter Publicity

The Beatrix Potter books have almost always been linked with the associated merchandise (Connolly 1987). Until the late 1920's, Potter was actively involved in many different merchandising activities. During the 1930's and 1940's until her death, these were largely reduced to two aspects: first, associated with the publishing business and thus directly concerned with the books; and second, the production of products inspired by the books or the use of the characters for charitable purposes. After 1943, however, other opportunities for Potter production emerged.

In her will, Potter left her shares in Frederick Warne and the rights and royalties to her books to a Warne nephew while all of her Lake District property holdings went to the National Trust. In this legacy to the Trust, Potter specified that 'the rooms at Hill Top should be kept as she had left them and were not to be let to a tenant' (Taylor 1988, p.204). The National Trust opened Hill Top to the public as a Beatrix Potter Museum in 1946. Until 1985, when they were moved for conservation reasons, most of her

original drawings were displayed there too.

Throughout the 1950's and 1960's, all the Beatrix Potter books remained in print through Warne's, and the same sorts of products continued to be produced: figurines and china sets, friezes and other items for the nursery. In America, the piracies were still being sold but the 'genuine' Beatrix Potter books and merchandise were distributed through Warne's New York office. Meanwhile, Hill Top remained in the care of the National Trust, included in information sent to Trust members but not widely advertised.

During the 1960's and 1970's, several commemorative Beatrix Potter exhibitions were held in London: at the Victoria and Albert Museum and the National Book League. The 1971 film *Tales of Beatrix Potter*, choreographed by Frederick Ashton also generated wide public interest. Then in 1987, a major exhibition sponsored in part by the Ford Motor Company was staged at the Tate Gallery. Items from this and other collections have since been sent to Japan, Australia and the United States for exhibitions there. Concurrently, Frederick Warne has recently published new editions of the books, re-originating the first printing plates to replicate Potter's illustrations as accurately as possible. Testifying to Potter's continued popularity, the first print run for the new 1987 edition was 910,000 copies (Connolly 1987).

Together, these different kinds of publicity have helped to shape popular interest in Potter and her work. It is this period from 1943-1991 that is my primary concern. The ethnographic evidence from the small groups and interviews explores meanings that have become associated with the

books since Potter's death. There are thus various strands in the promotion of the Beatrix Potter heritage. The one I want to consider first is promotion of the places associated with her work.

### Promoting the Literary Places

Promotion of Potter is part of an economic discourse in which various agencies and commercial interests profit from visitation and product sales. In terms of the sites, however, this promotional discourse is far from straightforward, for the National Trust actively restricts publicity about Hill Top. As visitor numbers continue to increase (76,000 in 1990), carrying capacity becomes of greater concern. To keep numbers down, the site is not widely advertised.

Publicity in recent National Trust handbooks and advertising leaflets (1990; 1991) highlights this point: 'The cottage is so small that visitors may have to be limited at peak times' (p.77). And for this reason too, Hill Top was not even mentioned in the 1990 Cumbria and Lake District Holiday Guide (Cumbria Tourist Board 1990). In one of the small groups, Sandra commented:

"What I always notice in the tourist literature is...that, when I first was trying to find out everything about Beatrix Potter, they would be advertising Wordsworth! And even now they still don't put Beatrix Potter in....Or it's negative. They put in the long queues, or say you may have to wait....And whenever I've been here, I've had no problem getting in. But the literature is very off putting....It's almost as if the Trust doesn't want people to come" (Transcript 1, p.19).

When Potter's home is advertised, however, it is interesting to consider

how this material is presented for it relates to some of the themes developed in previous chapters. In the National Trust leaflet, Hill Top is represented by three images: the kitchen with the range featured in some of the stories, the vegetable border and cottage garden, and the doll's house containing some of the items Potter drew for *The Tale of Two Bad Mice* (Figure 29). Just under two-thirds of my sample belonged to the National Trust, and 24% of the visitors said they had learned of the site's location from the Handbook or other Trust leaflets. Interestingly, the images depicted in this advertising were ones that many visitors later seized upon when describing their impressions of the site: the cosy interior, the doll's-house, and the rural cottage. As such, there are certain links between visitors' impressions of Hill Top and the sorts of images being promoted.

Other agencies are also involved in promoting the Beatrix Potter story. As discussed in Chapter 3, 'The World of Beatrix Potter Exhibition' in Bowness-on-Windermere stages a journey through the tales in three dimensions. The Mountain Goat Touring and Holiday Company based in Windermere offers half and full day literary tours which include a visit to Hill Top, and also promotes week-long Beatrix Potter theme holidays. And at Brockhole, the Lake District National Park Centre has a small Beatrix Potter exhibition where visitors are sometimes greeted by a large model of Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle. For children, Brockhole also organizes various Potter inspired activities and crafts.

In Japan, the British Tourist Authority has begun to market Cumbria

Figure 29  
Promoting Hill Top

The National Trust. *Visitors' Guide: The Lake District 1990*. London: The National Trust.

as 'Peter Rabbit Land' (Davies 1991). Apart from this new initiative, though, promotional material has only limited circulation beyond Lake District tourist offices, or members of the National Trust. Thus, what it cannot really illustrate is the wide range of discourses into which the Beatrix Potter heritage has been incorporated.

It seems important, for instance, that when visitors were asked how they had found out about Hill Top, 24% cited friends and relatives. Correspondingly, however, certain information sources were more important for some visitors than others. For the Japanese and North Americans in particular, guidebooks published in their own countries were mentioned frequently, as were television programmes about Potter and newspaper and magazine articles. By contrast, very few U.K. respondents mentioned such sources.

It was difficult to acquire any of the advertising texts circulated about Potter overseas, but an exception was an article published in *Gourmet* in 1988, an elite food and travel magazine circulated mainly in the United States. Amongst those visitors who mentioned magazine articles, this one was often referred to explicitly. Some of the Americans in the small groups talked about it, too. The article, 'A Tale of Beatrix Potter', outlines Potter's biography while also telling readers about Hill Top Farm. In the process, both the text and photographs convey powerful impressions of the English countryside: impressions echoing some of the themes discussed in Chapter 6.



By way of illustration, consider the following excerpt:

'Hill Top, Beatrix Potter's beloved cottage, is secreted away in an ideal Cumbrian village we have all visited once upon a time in the pages of her immortal...books for children, the Peter Rabbit series....Near Sawrey, a pretty village of white and gray stone houses cropping out of the hillside, is nestled into a snug valley bordered by gently rising stone-walled sheep pastures and green fields abloom with buttercups and daisies....' (Kluger 1988 p.62).

There are certainly links between this kind of description and the way visitors and group members were constructing countryside. Here is the rural idyll as publicized by the travel writer and as the author of the piece continued, describing her journey to Hill Top:

'On an afternoon in late June, when all of England seemed a solid sea of roses, foxgloves, and lavender, a friend and I arrived at Windermere, which is as far into the Lake District as one can travel by railway....[In Sawrey] the next morning the raucous cawing of birds outside my window awakened me at the crack of dawn. I looked out, hoping to see jackdaws or magpies, but they were hidden in romantic English mist. The scene was perfectly appropriate....I tiptoed downstairs in a search of a hot beverage...and settled down in a chintz-curtained window, watching the mist, listening to plaintive bird calls, and enjoying a sense of place....When the mist lifted we set out [for Hill Top] in the most practical manner - on foot- by a well-trodden path leading through the fields. We followed it through a meadow where cows were grazing, down a sloping hillside below an old country church, across a narrow singing brook, and up a grassy knoll to the edge of Near Sawrey. It was a walk straight from the pages of English rural literature....' (Kluger 1988 pp. 96;99).

For the publicist who knows his or her market, this is the kind of language that helps to reinforce existing images of place. In North America, impressions of English rural life have been shaped by long familiarity with rural literature, and in these passages several different discourses are being conveyed. There are various allusions to some standard literary motifs; jackdaws, magpies, mist, grassy knolls and so on. At the same time,

however, this is a landscape of rustic cottage gardens and chintz curtained windows, where modern country style has been incorporated into earlier pastoral rural imagery.

The *Gourmet* article was published in 1988 and makes no reference to any of the other Beatrix Potter sites in the area. As such, it highlights how advertising and promotions have developed since that time. The Beatrix Potter Gallery in Hawkshead, for example, is also a National Trust property which was opened in 1988 to display Potter's original illustrations. To deflect visitation from Hill Top, the Gallery has been widely advertised, principally through leaflets distributed to local information centres, bed and breakfast facilities, and pubs. In my sample at Hill Top, 68% of the visitors were aware of the Gallery and amongst this group, 58% said they had either already visited, or intended to visit it.

In this sense, it is also worth considering the contrast between public awareness of the Gallery, usually as a result of advertising, and their minimal knowledge of the Derwentwater Walks. These walks encompass some of the places drawn by Potter in three stories - *Benjamin Bunny*, *Squirrel Nutkin*, and *Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle*. The longest is three miles and none are especially demanding. Yet, in my sample at Hill Top, only 13% of the visitors had any knowledge of the walks and in this group, few (16% or 13 people) had actually taken any of them. Since the walks are not widely advertised, their commercial potential has not yet been exploited in comparison with the more celebrated Potter sites - the Gallery and Hill Top

- which have been extensively developed for the paying visitor.

The Derwentwater walks are not uniquely associated with Potter for parts of the route have been publicized in other discourses, notably the Wainwright Guides. What must be emphasized then, is that in terms of their associations with Potter, the symbolic value of the walks has not yet been validated in economic terms. Apart from buying a guidebook or leaflet, people wanting to take the walks would not incur any cost. Hence, they are not part of the experience currently packaged for visitors.

#### Merchandising: Producers and Consumers

In addition to the sites, another aspect of advertising and promotions concerns the Beatrix Potter merchandise. The copyright for the books and associated Potter products remains with Frederick Warne, now incorporated by Penguin Books who control any new product licensing. Under English law this copyright expires in 1993, fifty years after Potter's death. There are thus several dimensions to contemporary merchandising activities.

At present, the books and products are available worldwide through various subsidiaries and licensed companies associated with Penguin Books. In Britain, the Frederick Warne Marketing Department oversees the merchandising business and publishes an annual catalogue of book-related products. As of April 1991, sixty-two other firms also had permission from Frederick Warne and Copyrights, its licensing company, to use the characters on a range of gift items (Copyrights U.K. Product List, April 1991).

Royal Doulton offers a good example of how the licensing process works. Through the registered trademarks of Royal Albert and Beswick, the Royal Doulton company has obtained permission from Warne's through Copyrights to produce much of the Beatrix Potter china. These items are manufactured in England and are then distributed to companies around the world. Other products, however, although licensed through Frederick Warne, are not produced in the U.K. Echoing Potter's own concerns about the 'Peter Rabbit' doll manufactured in Germany, many of the soft toys taking advantage of cheaper labour and manufacturing costs are today made in Taiwan, Korea and other parts of the Far East. Through companies like Eden Toys the products are then distributed to various western markets.

In the United States, thirty-two companies are currently licensed to manufacture and distribute Beatrix Potter merchandise and many more items are undoubtedly being produced illegally. In Australia too, thirty companies have the Copyrights approval and manufacture everything from Beatrix Potter clothing and baby products to ceramic gifts, jewellery, stained glass and games (Copyrights U.S.A. and Australian Product Lists, April 1991). The system, however, rests on consumer recognition of the product symbols, and consumers sustain what is today a thriving Beatrix Potter industry.

As my survey results show, 92% of the people I interviewed had purchased products for themselves or to give as gifts to others. A woman from California described how important the merchandising was to her: "I have a complete collection of things of Beatrix Potter. I've studied all about

her life and works and I have two complete collections of figurines, plates and jugs. Everything about her in fact." Other women said they were "interested in the toys and animals", and "collected everything to do with her...for a Beatrix Potter room at home."

In the small groups too, interest in Potter was frequently expressed through collecting certain objects. As Ellen, for example explained:

"...my husband was coming over here...and he asked what he could bring me and I said...how about some figurines....Every shop he went...all he saw were rabbits and he recognized Peter, and Flopsy, Mopsy and Cottontail....So he came home with three or four of the little figurines....Then we bought a few more...and I was off....Now I have over seventy...." (Transcript 1, p.2).

Others reinforced this point. As Nancy said, "I enjoy shopping for these things and giving them as presents" (Transcript 3, p.18). And as Katherine, an American educator remarked, "some women like to shop and that's why they're drawn to Potter" (Transcript 2, p.15).

The links between shopping and tourism are beginning to be explored (as selected examples see Littrell 1990; Butler 1991). Martin and Mason (1987) argue that 'shopping is becoming more significant to tourism, both as an area of spending and as an incentive for travelling' (p.96). At Hill Top, visitors were not only consuming images of place, purchasing souvenirs was also a singularly important part of the tourist experience. An American woman for instance described her interest in Potter and said: "I have a collection of her work and the Beswick figures....I wanted to get the last book here." A young English woman and her mother were even more specific. Their favourite part of Hill Top was "the shop"; everything else was

secondary to the purchase of souvenirs to take home. And as another woman commented: "I wanted to come [here] and see what is available for the nursery. We're furnishing it on a Beatrix Potter theme."

In both the groups and amongst the visitors, it was women who spoke at length about shopping and purchasing Potter products. As one man put it: "it's my wife's thing. She buys [the china] as christening gifts." Although many more women were interviewed than men, shopping has also traditionally been a female activity. As Urry (1990) maintains: 'shopping is a sphere of social activity in which women are empowered. It links together the public and the domestic and involves activity in which women are permitted to demonstrate competence' (p.152).

Nowhere was this empowerment more effectively demonstrated than amongst young Japanese women for whom the characters, shopping and the visit to Hill Top were indelibly linked. As one Japanese visitor wrote, "In Japan we can buy Peter Rabbit's goods." Another said: "Peter Rabbit is very famous in Japan. Most people don't know her stories but they like her drawings. The china is very popular." And finally, another woman linked this interest explicitly with tourism. "I like Peter Rabbit. I wanted to have some souvenirs for myself, to buy character goods." Clearly, buying the Beatrix Potter merchandise at Hill Top has a certain status, and tourism gives shopping an enviable cachet.

Participant observation and comments from National Trust staff confirmed this aspect of Japanese visitation, which was especially

pronounced in the large tour groups. There, consumption was self-perpetuating, fuelled by a desire to collect the same sorts of items as one's peers. Similarly, exchanging Potter products as gifts was also important to these Japanese women. As one wrote: "For teenagers it is very popular to have Beatrix Potter things....Friends give them to each other." Others commented: "I was given a handkerchief as a present" and "My friend gave me Peter Rabbit when I was twenty-four."

*The Tale of Peter Rabbit* was only translated into Japanese in 1971, so it is still in its first generation of popularity. The way that the Japanese have embraced Potter through purchasing the products, however, raises a more important issue: the extent to which commercialization of the literary image has created new meanings often where none existed before.

Cohen (1988a) has considered commoditization in tourism and asks what happens to other cultural and social meanings when a tourist infrastructure is developed. Here, this argument may be extended to assess what happens to the meanings associated with someone like Potter when she is transformed into a commercial product, and evaluated in terms of her economic value. Taken to an extreme, this process would ultimately 'result in all human relationships becom[ing] commercial transactions' (Abercrombie 1991, p.182). I would argue, however, that the transformation of meaning is more fluid, and that commodification works in conjunction with other practises. Thus, as new meanings are created it does not necessarily follow that older ones are destroyed.

Amongst the visitors who did not have the books read to them as children, a number said they had discovered Potter through seeing the merchandise in shops, or having things given to them as gifts. As a middle-aged man commented: " I remember Peter Rabbit especially because I had a set of dishes I always ate off." Others shared similar memories, such as "having a bowl and having to eat the porridge until the bunnies appeared on the bottom." The china in particular was not seen as overly commercial. Rather, there was tremendous nostalgia for some of the items because they were part of childhood and family continuity. As an American woman said: "we give Beatrix Potter things as gifts, every family member has some now." Or, as a young English visitor explained again noting the importance of inter-generational sharing: "I used to read the books when I was little and when I got pregnant I bought the books and souvenirs. We're hoping our daughter will be keen on Beatrix Potter too."

These ideas about purchasing products with a Beatrix Potter theme as a way of marking important family relationships, or as a link to childhood memories, are important because they highlight that merchandising does not necessarily destroy cultural meaning. Rather, the book-related products can be an important part of the whole Beatrix Potter experience.

### New Texts and Contested Meanings

Dyer (1990) has described advertising as 'a complex industry and powerful form of social communication' (p.12). In other words, and as



Williamson (1978) writes: 'The product, which initially has no 'meaning', must be given value by a person or object which already has a value to us, i.e. already means' (p.31). Focusing on Beatrix Potter, the chapter has until now considered several representations of this form: the books, the places and book-related merchandising. The final strand is how the Potter theme has recently been appropriated to advertise unrelated products. This kind of advertising was noted briefly in Chapter 5 with reference to the McDonald's Corporation 'Peter Rabbit's Happy Meal' programme. Such promotions merit further attention here.

#### Literary Symbols in Other Systems

In the past decade or so, Potter's popularity has increased dramatically. Prices for early editions of her books have soared (Stockham 1991), and this surge of interest is undoubtedly related to broader cultural trends, reflected in the popularity of not only Potter, but other children's characters too - Winnie the Pooh, Paddington Bear, and Rupert are selected examples. In conjunction with this popularity, however, various corporations have profited from using the Potter characters for their own commercial benefit.

Amongst some of the visitors at Hill Top, there was a sense that Potter was so much a part of taken-for-granted culture that it was surprising to be asked how they had discovered her. A middle-aged English woman described it "as part of English heritage" while others cited her fame; in the words of an Australian woman: "I haven't read many of her books but I recognize her

name and fame. It's common knowledge isn't it?"

This comment about Potter's name and fame is important because it reflects how she has been commodified to the extent that she is today celebrated not uniquely on the merits of her work, but also because she is already famous, incorporated into other discourses which are perhaps unrelated to the books. Many Japanese visitors, for example, told me they discovered Hill Top through a television advertisement for mayonnaise. In studying British advertising and communication, Dyer (1990) notes the appeal of television for advertisers (pp.57-63). Cross-culturally, and from the consumer's perspective, the nature of this appeal was highlighted by the Japanese visitors. As one woman wrote: "We love Peter Rabbit. It's famous in Japan and sometimes used to sell products like mayonnaise. They say that the vegetables in the story are suitable for mayonnaise." As a man explained further: "It was introduced in Japan on t.v. and Peter Rabbit was used in a television commercial for mayonnaise so the character is very popular...amongst young women."

This commercial was filmed at Hill Top, permitted by the National Trust only on the condition that the advertisement would never be shown outside Japan. Yet it is only one example of the way that the meanings associated with Potter have been transferred into different contexts. In young women's magazines, the Potter theme is incorporated into articles on the preparation of English afternoon tea and food products (personal communication, Yuki Kajitani), while advertisements for a major bank use

the characters as a way of enticing financially independent young women to open savings accounts (Figure 30).

In this advertisement, the characters have been abstracted from both the literary and cultural contexts within which they were created and so understanding depends upon immediate recognition of Potter's illustrations. As Williamson (1978) explains: 'Images, ideas or feelings...become attached to certain products, by being transferred from signs out of other systems...to the products, rather than originating in them' (p.30). Clearly, the bank has no intention of promoting Potter. Rather, they are incorporating the range of meanings associated with her, and her popularity amongst young women into their advertising for a quite different reason: namely, to increase their own profits.

Looking at this advertisement more closely, it is also interesting to consider the images that have been included. Mrs Rabbit entrusting the blackberry baskets to Flopsy, Mopsy and Cottontail; Peter and Benjamin in the onion patch; and the squirrels counting their nuts all evoke impressions of thrift and prudence; qualities with which any financial institution would wish to be associated. In this way, then, the advertisement works on 'images, notions, concepts [and] myths already available in the culture' (Dyer 1990, p.129).

In North America too, Potter has been appropriated for a variety of other advertising purposes. In addition to McDonald's, Peter Rabbit has been used to advertise BP products on freeway hoardings in California, to

**Figure 30**  
**A Japanese Bank Advertisement**

encourage Canadian consumers to buy Shell petrol, and regularly appears in Easter displays in many of the large shopping malls. These advertisements were frequently mentioned by both visitors and members of the small groups in their discussions of Potter.

### Meanings of Marketing

One of the more important questions, then, arising from not only this kind of advertising but indeed the wide range of Potter merchandise now being produced, is about what might happen after 1993 when Potter's characters are no longer protected by copyright legislation. This issue was debated in the small groups, and was one of the few points over which American and English participants disagreed. As Jonathan put it:

"I think there's far too much merchandise being churned out and I can see the reason for it, because they're ...trying to make a fast buck before...1993, and they're doing extremely well...." (Transcript 3, p.19).

Jonathan's views were echoed by most of the English members of the groups, so it is useful to consider a subsequent exchange between Jonathan and two American women, Patricia and Isobel. As Jonathan reiterated his fear of the characters being used as plastic prizes in cereal packets, the women raised other issues.

Patricia: "Mmm. I can see...why you'd be upset but on the other hand if it...did something to get kids an entry to reading the books-"

Jonathan: "Yes, but-"

Patricia: "I guess you know there's that side of it."

Isobel: "Well, that's one of the advantages of the spin-offs is they do draw attention to the books and to the author-"

Jonathan: "Yes-"

Isobel: "Perhaps...you know sort of like free advertising in a way."

Jonathan: "Oh, it's good marketing which you'd appreciate."

Isobel: "Right, right (laughs). But every time-"

Patricia: "And I-"

Jonathan: "But I object to cereal boxes-"

Isobel: "But every time you market a plate you're also marketing the book at the back of the plate."

Patricia: "And Beatrix did...have standards and I mean-" (Transcript 3, pp.21-22).

Unfortunately, Patricia was unable to elaborate upon what she meant by 'standards' for Simon and others members of the group forcefully interrupted to talk about Potter's own involvement in merchandising. Notwithstanding, there remained major, and unresolved, differences between the English and Americans over marketing. For the Americans, advertising and promotions of both book and non-book related products seemed more acceptable than it was for the English people. In this context, the English participants had set themselves up as stewards of the 'authentic' Potter heritage. By contrast, the American view was perhaps best expressed by Rose who said:

"I was a little nervous...when I heard the story about the...gasoline station...that has billboards...with Peter Rabbit....Now in one way, looking at it in a business way...that may help as long as it doesn't overkill. That's what I'm afraid of" (Transcript 3, p.16).

These advertisements have contributed to the wide range of meanings

now associated with Potter, and it must be emphasized that for most of the American participants, merchandising was simply an extension of their interest in the author. Although there was no overt mention of Christian beliefs in any of the groups, this interest was often expressed in spiritual terms. Rose, for example, spoke about her "devotion" to Potter (Transcript 3, p.30), while Sandra described her visit to Hill Top as a trip "to the shrine" and her involvement with Potter "as like a minister and a disciple" (Transcript 1, pp.12;26).

Some of the links between tourism and the religious pilgrimage have already been noted (see for example, Turner and Ash 1975), but this religious analogy is interesting because elsewhere one of the conference members described Potter as "the patron saint of marketing." Perhaps because Potter was herself so actively involved in producing book-related products and appropriating the characters for other purposes (as in the campaign for tariff reform), some of her 'followers' and the Americans in particular, saw nothing wrong in perpetuating and further developing this heritage.

#### From the Local to the Global

Three kinds of cultural production have been considered in this chapter: the first was initiated by Potter, the second involved the National Trust and Frederick Warne, and more recently the third relates to corporations who use the literary theme in their advertising. Underlying these different phases,

however, is an interaction between the local and the global and especially, the growing influence of a global economic system, and its role in the creation of a global cultural system.

In his study of television viewing, Morley (1991) argues that 'the traditional equation of community with geographical boundary and physical place is something which we simply have to ditch if we are to understand contemporary culture and communication' (p.15). Modern communication technologies are an integral part of the global economy. They are re-shaping notions of community, social practises and the cultural fabric within which these are embedded. Ultimately, it is this inter-relationship that is fundamental to how Potter has been transformed from a late Victorian English children's author/illustrator into an important contemporary cultural symbol.

As I noted at the end of Chapter 6, Beatrix Potter's countryside was appropriated by some members of the groups as a world heritage site. This kind of appropriation is only part of a much larger argument I want to develop briefly here. Specifically, through the global economy of advertising, publishing, merchandising, and the growth in global tourist traffic, Potter has been transformed into an object of international attention.

In the first instance, the books are produced and sold around the world; primarily in bookshops, department stores, gift shops and book clubs. Second, while some of the merchandise such as the china for example, is manufactured in Britain both for sales within the country and export abroad,



many of the other products are made in parts of the Third World where labour and production costs are lower. And finally, recognition of the literary theme is such that advertisers around the world use it in an attempt to get consumers to make associations between Potter and the products they are trying to sell.

Correspondingly, though, there remains an intensely local, if not individual set of meanings to Potter. For English people, these meanings have to do with nationalism and the links between national and cultural identity (see also Williams 1983 'The Culture of Nations'). An English family living on the continent made this point forcefully: "Since we've always lived abroad we've made a great effort to sustain our cultural roots and Beatrix Potter is of course an important part of that." Further, the number of overseas visitors at Hill Top was the focus of some speculation. As one woman said: "I've noticed a lot of people from abroad here but I like to think it's *our* English. I'm a bit possessive about it you know." Others were more specific, singling out the Japanese and wondering "what could they possibly see in Beatrix Potter?"

In this sense, though, it is also interesting to consider some of the overseas visitors' views about Potter's influence. As one woman commented: "My son was brought up on Peter Rabbit. Americans know as much if not more of English literature than English people do because we've had to study it from childhood. It's our background." A young Japanese woman made a related point. As she wrote: "Beatrix Potter is famous in Japan. Is

she famous here too?" These comments illustrate, then, that regardless of country of origin, many of the visitors at Hill Top considered part of the Beatrix Potter heritage to be uniquely their own.

As such, the 'local' has different meanings in different contexts. For the British and North Americans, as outlined in Chapter 5, Potter's value is often a function of inter-generational sharing and family tradition. By contrast, the Japanese have appropriated Potter quite differently. Not yet part of their childhood tradition, she has been incorporated into everyday life as a commercial commodity, and as part of a much broader emulation of the west. First expressed economically, this emulation now has an important cultural dimension. In the process, however, this western cultural tradition has been re-shaped into something that fits Japanese ways of seeing.

A member of one of the groups was a middle-aged Japanese woman, and despite certain difficulties with spoken English, Keiko strove to explain what she saw as the important links between Potter and Japanese folk tradition.

"Beatrix Potter's watercolours are very English, traditional watercolour of England, but at the same time they are very familiar to us, they remind us of our blush painting, especially misty lake scenes and the hill top in the snow. And we have mist too and you have mist so there are some similarities....And we Japanese...have few fairies but instead we make a fairy kingdom....Beatrix Potter didn't draw fairies very often...but instead she made...a fairyland out of little animals....And that's the same way of our fairytales and we have the kingdom of mice underground....and the Japanese nightingale...and we see little animals as fairies...so I think there's some sympathy between us" (Transcript 4, pp.9-14-15).

Keiko's comments support the argument I developed earlier that it is the

paintings and the characters which constitute Potter's fundamental appeal for the Japanese. Perhaps because they have less cultural transferability, the stories seem less significant. As one young woman confided: "Rabbits don't get put in pies in Japan, so the first time I read it I was embarrassed."

Knowledge of Potter and her incorporation into a number of symbolic discourses has been shaped by a global economic system. One expression of this system is through the vagaries of publishing and advertising. Potter is less well known in many European countries because her books have either not been translated, or their circulation is limited. A Danish family, for example, had strong memories of the ballet film shown in their country, but had never read the books because "they're not available in Danish." Another woman made a similar point: "My Potter books came from a cousin in West Germany because we don't have many in East Germany. I fell for them at the age of forty-five."

What these comment highlight, then, is that the local and the global are constantly interacting to reinforce each other. Morley (1991) argues that television viewing must be understood 'as simultaneously, a ritual whose function is to structure domestic life and to provide a symbolic mode of participation in the national community; as an active mode of consumption; and as a process operating within the realm of ideology' (p.5). As part of a local-global dialectic, this analogy might also be applied to an understanding of the different ways that people may engage with Beatrix Potter.

In many families, reading Potter's books and buying the merchandise are indeed part of a domestic ritual. Correspondingly, however, knowledge of Potter facilitates symbolic participation in certain segments of national and international culture. And finally, interest in Potter is part of cultural consumption, but this process also operates ideologically, and carries a range of culturally constructed attitudes and values.

Looking at this process in another way, there are also some important links to be drawn between this kind of argument and Johnson's (1986) circuits of culture model. Interactions between the local and the global underlie processes of cultural production and consumption, as well as Johnson's argument about public representations and private lives. As such, the themes in Chapters 5 and 6 about childhood and adulthood, and country, city and heritage preservation resonate here too. They all reflect the appropriation and transformation of meanings between different textual systems, by different groups of people over time. Locally as well as globally, marketing and merchandising are drawing in existing meanings which consumers then make sense of, and re-define in various ways.

### Summary

This chapter has been about different aspects of Beatrix Potter marketing and in particular, how the ethnographic evidence from the visitor survey and small group discussions engages with different forms of symbolic production. In this sense the chapter has been more explicitly concerned with

the relationship between production and consumption than any of the preceding discussions.

The economics of marketing Potter can be separated into three stages, beginning with Potter's entry into the commercial sphere and her relationship with Frederick Warne. Potter's active involvement with book design and merchandising diminished after 1913 but she nevertheless remained interested in, and encouraged the development of products associated with the books. After her death in 1943 a new cycle of promotions and publicity began. Led by the National Trust it has been centred on advertising some of the places Potter depicted in her work, principally Hill Top Farm. Frederick Warne who still hold the copyright on Potter's books have remained active too, licensing various product lines for sales both within Britain and abroad.

The last phase in this cycle of symbolic production is also the most recent. It involves the ways that large corporations are now using Potter images in their advertising. This represents an attempt by companies to get consumers to associate and transfer pre-existing meanings about Potter to the particular products they hope to sell. In this sense, it was also important to consider briefly how British and North American consumers held different views of merchandising.

Ultimately, though, the relationship between production and consumption is premised on interactions between the local and the global. The discussions in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are linked through notions of symbolic appropriation and transformation as part of an increasingly global

economic system. In building upon this idea, the final chapter brings the discussion back to a more theoretical level to explore the implications of this case study within a wider realm of cultural-geographical research and tourism studies.

## *Chapter Eight* *Charting New Paths*

'They are holed up in some bar among the dives of Deptford, deep in their cups, and a packet of cashew nuts, like Chippy Hackee and cute little Timmy Tiptoes hiding from their wives' (Morrison 1987).

'Meanings must always be related to the material world from which they derive....Cultural maps are capable of multiple readings' (Jackson 1989, pp.185-186).

As expressed through literary tourism, this thesis has been about meanings and different forms of cultural appropriation and transformation. Morrison's analogy is yet another example of Beatrix Potter's wide cultural currency: here the allusion is to one of her lesser known books, *The Tale of Timmy Tiptoes* (1911). But as Carpenter (1989) who originally used the piece comments: 'It is a bit of a jolt to find Beatrix Potter cited in such a context' (p.271). While Lewis Carroll, for example, is widely seen as an important influence on the development of the twentieth century literary imagination, Carpenter has not envisaged a similar role for Potter. Hence his surprise. I would argue, though, that this surprise may also be interpreted in a quite different way.

In proposing a new agenda for cultural geography, Jackson (1989) emphasizes multiple textual readings and recognition of cultural plurality. He also suggests: 'a revitalized cultural geography would be just as interested in seeing how dominant values are institutionalized through the operation of hegemonic forces at the national level as it would be in tracing the detailed

contours of particular subcultures at the local level' (Jackson 1989 p.185). Morrison's reference to Potter's work nicely captures these different understandings.

Traditionally, Potter has been associated with dominant white middle class values. As such, allusions to her characters in different contexts, as for example the working class pub in Deptford, might surprise some readers. Yet, this is precisely what cultural transformations are about, and it is one of the reasons why Potter offers such an interesting case study. This concluding chapter summarizes the main arguments of the thesis, and considers some of the potential contributions and implications of the research.

### Summary and Review

With few exceptions, geographers have been reluctant to devote serious attention to popular culture or to explore the social meanings of tourist places. With a focus on children's fiction, and taking Beatrix Potter as a case study, literary tourism suggests one way of studying some of the links between tourism, culture and society. The introductory chapter highlighted how different forms of cultural expression have been interpreted: from Sauer's Berkeley tradition to more recent questions about cultural construction and representation. The chapter also pointed to geographers' neglect of children's fiction, suggested various ways of approaching literary tourism, and considered briefly why Potter was chosen as a case study.



Finally, it provided an overview and synopsis of the thesis organization.

The aims and scope of the project necessitated consideration of a wide range of literature. This literature was critically reviewed in Chapter 2 where theoretical perspectives were also developed. In particular, the chapter linked tourism studies with different research traditions in human geography: an economic focus; humanistic appraisals including work on landscape tastes, literary landscapes, sense of place and authenticity; and finally, contemporary cultural perspectives. Two models, one by Jakobson (1960) and the other by Johnson (1986) were used to summarize theoretically different understandings of processes of cultural production and consumption. The chapter then explored some of the links between the 'new' cultural geography and new research directions in both literary and tourism studies.

In contrast, Chapter 3 took a very different approach, focusing on Beatrix Potter's biography. The chapter detailed aspects of her early life and her important connection with the Lake District, not only through her stories but also as an indefatigable worker for and patron of the National Trust. Subsequently, it considered traditions in writing about children's literature, focusing on how work on Potter forms part of these various appreciative dialogues. Finally, the chapter highlighted connections between Potter's books and ideas about the pastoral, and noted the more popular appeal of different representations of her work today: specifically, the Ladybird editions of her books and 'The World of Beatrix Potter Exhibition'.

Building on theoretical understandings of meaning creation, Chapter 4

was then explicitly concerned with methodology and preliminary analysis of the social survey results. After reviewing analytical trends in tourism research, the chapter drew on some of the literature about qualitative methods in human geography to emphasize the largely unexplored potential for qualitative analysis in tourism. The connections between more interpretive techniques, and the research strategies I used in the Beatrix Potter case study (a social survey with open-ended interviews and workshops) were also discussed. Finally, the chapter presented some of the results of the Hill Top questionnaire survey. As summarized in a series of histograms and tables, this data established the main characteristics of the sample visitor population. The social survey was an important building block for many of the themes I developed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. In particular, it suggested questions about visitors' impressions and motivations that were further examined through material from the Beatrix Potter Society workshops, and the open-ended interview questions at Hill Top.

Chapter 5 explored how people used Potter to define notions of childhood and adulthood, and to interpret inter-generational sharing. In some cases, for example, the tourist visit offered a way of discovering an imagined and idealized kind of childhood experience. The chapter then considered the particular morality now widely associated with Potter and how it may be conveyed; in the family, and also at school. These ideas were eventually contextualized within a broader framework of high and mass culture emphasizing how notions of childhood may sometimes be contested.

Chapter 6 drew upon these culturally constructed understandings of childhood and focused on contemporary values for countryside and rural life, exploring first the relationship between childhood and pastoral imagery. This relationship is part of a widely recognized literary tradition but its modern and popular significance is less well understood. Inspired by Williams (1973), the chapter also considered the dialectic between country and city, and highlighted how ideas about the countryside are a function of separation from the realities of rural life. In the final section of the chapter, debates about heritage preservation and authenticity were invoked to understand how urban dwellers experience country life through tourism.

While Chapters 5 and 6 were about processes of cultural consumption, the discussion in Chapter 7 considered production in the guise of Beatrix Potter marketing. The chapter looked at three different phases of such production beginning with the circulation of the books and associated merchandise during Potter's lifetime. It then assessed promotion of the literary places such as Hill Top, after her death and stressed the continued role of her publisher Frederick Warne in developing and licensing book-related products. The third phase concerned corporations who use the Potter characters to advertise unrelated products. The chapter considered briefly several examples of this advertising to illustrate how symbolic meanings may be transferred from one cultural system to another. These different arguments were then re-stated in terms of ideas about the local and the global.

The themes developed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are linked theoretically

through Johnson's (1986) notion of circuits of culture. Literary tourism offers one way of studying processes of cultural production and consumption and, correspondingly, highlights some important links between tourism and a range of personal, social and cultural values. The meanings now popularly associated with Potter are not static. Neither do they reflect uniquely 'literary' influences. Formalized by many producers and spanning a range of cultural and textual systems, these meanings are negotiated and re-defined by different groups of people, at different times, in different social contexts.

### Contributions and Implications

In studying the social meanings of a tourist place, this thesis encompasses and builds upon a number of research traditions and analytical themes. While the study has the potential to make some practical contributions in terms of future site management at Hill Top, it also and more importantly has a range of implications for contemporary debates about tourism and social and cultural geography. Although focusing first and very briefly on some possible management suggestions, the remainder of the chapter situates the research findings in a context of wider discourses about theory, culture and society, notes possible ways forward, and highlights an important tension between 'Potter the person' and 'Potter the myth'.

### Site Management

Potter has been appropriated symbolically: today, her books are widely

associated with particular attitudes about childhood, countryside and heritage preservation. As such, this role of cultural icon has some interesting implications for future site management at Hill Top Farm. In noting some of these implications, I want to emphasize the issue of visitation and specifically, the importance of Japanese tourists.

Potter has become so culturally significant that her popularity, ironically, is undermining the National Trust's policy of restricting site advertising. My research highlights that knowledge of Potter and Hill Top is circulated in a large number of discourses. Some of these discourses, word of mouth for example, are beyond the Trust's control. An increase in visitor numbers, and especially a growth in repeat visitation, poses significant future management problems. Such problems would include coping with crowding during the peak summer period (particularly in August and on Bank holiday weekends), the stress on already inadequate parking facilities, and further footpath erosion and structural damage to the house.

As yet, these issues remain somewhat within the realm of speculation. The results of my work with the Japanese visitors are of more immediate concern. The National Trust has a particular interest in the Japanese and, while restricting publicity about Hill Top in the U.K., they are anxious to further develop the Japanese market. Not only do the Japanese spend proportionally more money than other visitors but they are also seen to inflict less site damage. They rarely travel with children and, as one staff member recently explained: "they're polite and orderly. They don't cause any

trouble at all!"

Given this interest in the Japanese, it is somewhat surprising that ways of accommodating these visitors at the site have not really been thought through. There is a pressing need for more signs, route markers and information material in Japanese, and a translation of Taylor's (1989c) guidebook would also be useful. Furthermore, the National Trust does not have a comprehensive understanding of the souvenirs the Japanese would like to buy - replicas of some of the smaller items in the house, for example. The potential market for such products is substantial. In the large Japanese tour groups particularly, when one member of the party buys a specific product, many others do so as well. Finally, the Japanese interest in Potter and Hill Top reflects a fascination with countryside and indirectly, the conservationist aims of the National Trust. An American branch of the Trust, the Royal Oak Foundation, already exists, but they might also profitably look towards organizing a Japanese chapter.

This thesis is not, however, uniquely or even predominantly about Beatrix Potter and tourism at Hill Top. Although policy issues are undoubtedly an important part of tourism studies, my empirical research has always been conceptualized as a case study designed to explore broader social and cultural questions. Thus, some of the more important implications of the study involve these other issues and are linked with key themes in cultural and social geography.

## Tourism, Culture and Society

In exploring popular values for Beatrix Potter my work represents an attempt to situate tourism within a larger discourse about theory, culture and society. In this sense, Jackson's (1989) interpretation of culture provides a useful synthesis:

'...cultures are maps of meaning through which the world is made intelligible. Cultures are not simply systems of meaning and value carried around in the head. They are made concrete through patterns of social organization. Culture is the way the social relations of a group are structured and shaped: but it is also the way those shapes are experienced, understood and interpreted' (p.2).

Tourism is one of the ways the social relations of groups may be structured and experienced but recreation and leisure have rarely been either part of cultural studies research, or recent debates in human geography. One of the important contributions of my work, then, is to focus attention on some of the meanings of tourism in contemporary social life.

As my study highlighted, people were using Potter to mediate a range of personal, social and cultural values. As such, Potter's stories were typically secondary to this other sphere of meanings: starting points for introspection about childhood and adulthood; city, country and heritage preservation; and the local and the global. These meanings were rarely contested and, in conventional terms, they were certainly not overtly political. Yet, the cultural is always political and in my study, the fact that one set of meanings went largely unchallenged was in itself significant.

In geography, the contemporary cultural critique has tended to focus on subordinated groups, thereby challenging dominant cultural forms. My

research took a different approach by considering how hegemonic culture may be represented and perpetuated. Through tourism, my exploration of different facets of contemporary interest in Potter highlighted how certain meanings have dominated particular sectors of British society. And, since Potter is part of an elite culture, these meanings may also influence how outsiders construct notions of 'Englishness'. The pretty pastoral image, for example, which attracted many overseas visitors is part of a dominant cultural myth which does not include any recognition of the darker side to rural life. In studying cultural values, however, my work integrated two popular but neglected forms of cultural expression: children's fiction and tourism. James (1990) notes that geographers' have overlooked children and their geographical experiences. The subsequent exchange between Sibley (1991) and James (1991) develops further this idea. As Sibley notes: 'we have to...identify the different meanings of childhood associated with age, gender, culture, place and time' (1991, p.270).

Some of these meanings are conveyed in children's books and geographers' disregard of such sources is significant. My research is one of the first studies to emphasize the role of children's literature in communicating some powerful cultural codes. Similarly, the ways in which many adults seize on artifacts of child-life, books included, to fashion a nostalgic and idealized image of childhood experience, has gone unrecognized. My study therefore opens up a variety of possibilities for future work.



There is great potential, for instance, to explore how grown-ups use childhood to mediate adult experiences. And similarly, it would be interesting to assess how advertisers appropriate childhood imagery to appeal to adult consumers. There is also wide scope for more case study research, looking at other children's writers to see if the same sorts of meanings and values, about inter-generational sharing, for example, recur. By extension, the question could then be asked if the notion of inter-generational sharing is important in terms of adult fiction. Finally, how important are children's books, and indeed literature in general, in shaping cultural values in an increasingly visual, television and video-oriented age?

My research also suggests a new approach to tourism. Developing James' (1990; 1991) and Sibley's (1991) arguments, geographers could profitably study children's environmental experiences through considering their role as tourists. Tourism generally, however, is a vehicle which enables people to live out certain fantasies. This theme remains virtually unexplored but it suggests an important way forward. So too, is developing an understanding of tourism as a social construct. Hughes (1991) also makes this point, and it is worth emphasizing here because in geography, most tourism research remains uniquely concerned with spatial analyses. Much more case study work needs to address the links between tourism, culture and society, at different times and in different places.

One of the reasons why researchers have barely scratched the surface of these social meanings of tourism undoubtedly concerns methodology.

Among the more important contributions of my work is its attempt to integrate theory and method, while also suggesting new techniques for tourism research. Johnson's (1986) work offered a useful way of synthesizing and understanding cultural transformations theoretically. In particular, it emphasizes the myriad of producers, consumers and meanings which underlie any interpretation of cultural forms. Taking Johnson's model as a starting point, my research has attempted to apply it in an empirical case study, looking at how cultural production and consumption might actually function in practise. As Jackson (1989, p.179) points out, empirical cultural studies research is much less well developed than theoretical debates. My study therefore attempted to bridge this gap, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques to explore empirically what has tended to remain largely theoretical.

In bringing tourism into contemporary cultural geography the project has broken new ground, but the questions I asked and the methods I employed to study those questions have contributed to recent debates in tourism studies, too. Urry (1990) writes about 'the tourist gaze' but understandings of the different aspects of this gaze have rarely been scrutinized empirically. In geography, and to some extent other disciplines, tourism research has been dominated by economic perspectives and quantitative analyses. My study highlighted the enormous potential for developing qualitative interpretive approaches in tourism. Although there are certain constraints to using qualitative methods in a tourist setting, my

strategy of open-ended interview questions and small groups suggested some important new directions for work with visitors. Specifically, the results of the research point to the value of engaging with people beyond the confines of a conventional questionnaire survey. While the social survey provided a visitor profile, it also raised important questions about meanings which were then explored through the more interpretive techniques.

Previous studies have not explored the meanings of tourism in quite this way. The research therefore suggests some interesting new directions. Ideally, I would have liked to use the focus group strategy with visitors at Hill Top, recruiting group members on-site. Although this option was not feasible with the constraints imposed by my particular research setting, it is nevertheless an approach which could fruitfully be developed elsewhere. In my study, there is a difference between the elite group of Beatrix Potter specialists who participated in the focus groups, and the 'mass' group I interviewed at the site. Members of the Beatrix Potter Society were a great help, but it would also have been useful to undertake similar discussions with 'ordinary' visitors.

As it stands, however, the research makes an important practical contribution to Urry's (1988;1990) arguments about the links between tourism and non-tourist social practises. In particular, my study demonstrates that interest in Potter and the tourist visit to Hill Top could not be separated from a material context and set of social relations only peripherally related to the tourist experience. These include white, middle class family values,

for example, and ideas about high and mass culture. For future studies, the research also suggests that more attention could be paid to the role of shopping in the tourist experience, highlighting its relationship with gender.

In this sense too, the research also contributes to a continuing discussion about the connections between social and cultural geography. This debate, implied by Jackson and Smith (1984) and further developed by Cosgrove and Jackson (1987), emphasizes 'alternative ways of theorising culture without specific reference to the landscape concept' (Cosgrove and Jackson 1987, p.98). Although some aspects of my study were indeed concerned with landscape, this theme was not its exclusive preoccupation. And, if culture is the 'medium through which social change is experienced, contested and constituted' (Cosgrove and Jackson 1987, p.95), tourism must surely be part of such discussions.

There is much scope to speculate about tourism's importance within a wider framework of social change and especially with regard to recent debates about the nature of post-modern societies (Gregory 1989). Although I did not explore such themes here, they suggest fruitful and interesting research possibilities. The current fascination with heritage and the past, of which interest in Potter is only one expression, reflects other social trends - the transition from an industrially-based to a service-oriented economy, for instance. These trends may be mirrored by parallel developments in tourism and leisure activities.

As my case study of Potter suggests, literary tourism carries a variety

of meanings. Contemporary interest in Potter, reflecting escapism into childhood perhaps, or nostalgia for an imagined rural past, results from shared cultural understandings which are compared and contrasted against other realities, here in the guise of modern, usually urban life. These sorts of meanings are always produced and consumed within a social context.

My research has attempted to unpack some aspects of this context but in tourism studies generally, and cultural geography particularly, much work remains to be done. In geography, the contemporary cultural agenda has not yet recognized tourism's important role as a form of cultural expression and representation. By the same token the social meanings of visitors' experiences have gone unexplored in much tourism research. From both perspectives, then, there is an urgent need for more inter-disciplinary discussion, and a willingness to take a fresh look at what contemporary tourism is really about.

In a brief but significant paper, Gregory and Ley (1988) have described the 'new cultural geography [as] neither a celebration of the parochial nor a contemplation of the bizarre. It is instead a serious intervention in the critique of modernity' (p.116). As part of a general review I noted this paper in Chapter 2. I want to mention it again here as the paper offers a useful synopsis of themes and ideas which seem particularly appropriate to my own work.

Tourism and children's literature, to say nothing of an attempt to forge significant academic links between them, might indeed raise the spectre of

both the parochial *and* the bizarre. As I have sought to demonstrate, however, the results of the Beatrix Potter case study implicate a range of wider issues, and thereby contribute to serious discussions about contemporary cultures and societies.

Gregory and Ley (1988) also note that discussions in the 'new' cultural geography have focused on three inter-related areas or strategies: theory, method and representation. My work has attempted to bring together different strands of this overlapping triad. Theoretically, the work was grounded in processes of cultural production and consumption, and situated literary tourism within a broader framework of social life. New methodologies were invoked to tease out the cultural formations amongst which literary tourism is embedded, and to study the different representational strategies through which these cultural forms were expressed. And, as Gregory and Ley (1988) also emphasized, 'culture's geographies are extraordinarily complicated' (p.115). Developing this argument further, I would add that this complication is undoubtedly, and in part, a function of the transformation of meanings over space and time.

### New Myths, New Realities

What is literary tourism about? Unfortunately, there are no easy or straightforward answers. Beatrix Potter tourism is about meanings, myths and memories: texts that mediate a wide range of social and cultural values. Decoding this geography, in my case through a study of tourism and

children's fiction, reveals much about contemporary interests and concerns.

As such concerns are expressed through Beatrix Potter tourism, however, they also highlight an interesting tension between 'Potter the person' and 'Potter the myth'. Now so indelibly linked with her books, and Peter Rabbit in particular, Potter has in a sense become her books. Amongst the people I interviewed at Hill Top, many spoke of their "love for Beatrix Potter." I would suspect, though, that this is not so much a love for Potter as a person, as it is an affection for what she has been appropriated to represent.

Apart from specialists like members of the Beatrix Potter Society, Potter's life is less well known than her characters. The visit to Hill Top therefore offers many people a glimpse of what they assume is the 'real' Beatrix Potter. In some ways, though, Hill Top is part of a new mythology from which new meanings and memories are created. Since Potter never lived permanently at Hill Top, it is in a sense more of a shrine to the books than it is a place commemorating her as an individual. Her life as Mrs. Heelis was spent at nearby Castle Cottage, still a private home and not identified to tourists. As Sandra in one of the small groups commented: "That's the house where she really lived and we don't go in that. She really is still a very private person" (Transcript 1, p.16).

This tension between 'Potter the person' and 'Potter the cultural icon' involves different realities, and forms part of a myth which Potter herself helped to perpetuate. In specifying that Hill Top was to be preserved as she

had left it, and precisely documenting the history of its furnishings, she must have realized that it would someday be opened to visitors. In this sense, she consciously chose to expose one part of her life to public scrutiny. At the same time, however, she zealously guarded other aspects to retain her privacy. Wordsworth's grave in Grasmere churchyard is a popular attraction, widely promoted in the tourist literature but no such tomb commemorates Beatrix Potter. Instructing her shepherd to scatter her ashes, she also extracted a promise that he would never reveal their whereabouts.

In a fundamental way, then, Potter remains an elusive figure. One of her most tangible memorials is the English Lake District but today it is not as Potter knew it. Rather, the Lake District, like Beatrix Potter and her books, provides graphic illustration of the tension between high and mass culture. Many of the elite U.K. visitors have fled and have been replaced by what one woman at Hill Top described as "hordes of trippers eating ice creams."

Underlying this tension between high and mass culture, though, is another question. Namely, what happens to the meanings and values associated with someone like Potter if the special object becomes irrevocably tarnished? The Beatrix Potter Society recently spent £1,250 to acquire a 1922 vintage 'Peter Rabbit' children's tea-set. As the owner wrote to the Society's membership secretary: 'I am really happy and content that the tea set is with your lovely caring people. I do appreciate the dedication you have in keeping the treasures of our heritage in this country' (cited in



Whalley 1991, p.6). Meanwhile, other Potter enthusiasts have saved Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle's 'last resting place', preventing the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea from concreting the school grounds on the site of Potter's childhood home where her pet hedgehog was buried (Kemble 1991).

Concurrently, however, Potter's publishers Frederick Warne have just signed an agreement for £5 million with Video Distributors Pickwick to transform Peter Rabbit and some of the other characters into cartoon videos ('Video Hop for Peter Rabbit', 1991). What will this mean for preservation of the 'authentic' Potter heritage? How might these new representations change the ways in which Potter may be appropriated and transformed in the future? Such questions again involve broader patterns of cultural production and consumption - patterns always integrated into an ever changing and emerging cultural fabric.

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*Appendix 1*  
*Beatrix Potter's Books by Date of First Publication*

(Unless otherwise noted, the publisher is Frederick Warne)

*The Tale of Peter Rabbit.* Privately printed editions, December 1901 and February 1902; Frederick Warne edition, October 1902.

*The Tailor of Gloucester.* Privately printed edition, 1902; Frederick Warne edition, 1903.

*The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin.* 1903.

*The Tale of Benjamin Bunny.* 1904.

*The Tale of Two Bad Mice.* 1904.

*The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle.* 1905.

*The Tale of the Pie and the Patty-Pan.* 1905.

*The Tale of Mr. Jeremy Fisher.* 1906.

*The Story of a Fierce Bad Rabbit.* 1906.

*The Story of Miss Moppett.* 1906.

*The Tale of Tom Kitten.* 1907.

*The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck.* 1908.

*The Tale of Samuel Whiskers or the Roly-Poly Pudding.* 1908.

*The Tale of the Flopsy Bunnies.* 1909.

*The Tale of Ginger and Pickles.* 1909.

*The Tale of Mrs. Tittlemouse.* 1910.

*The Tale of Timmy Tiptoes.* 1911.

*The Tale of Mr. Tod.* 1912.

*The Tale of Pigling Bland.* 1913.

*Appley Dapply's Nursery Rhymes.* 1917.  
*The Tale of Johnny Town-Mouse.* 1918.  
*Cecily Parsley's Nursery Rhymes.* 1922.  
*The Fairy Caravan.* 1929. David McKay (Philadelphia).  
*The Tale of Little Pig Robinson.* 1930.  
*Sister Anne.* 1932. David McKay.  
*Wag-by-Wall.* 1944. Horn Book Magazine (Boston).  
*The Faithful Dove.* 1955.  
*The Sly Old Cat.* 1971.

*Appendix 2*  
*Preliminary Reconnaissance: August 1989*

The aim of this five day, preliminary reconnaissance visit was to gain some familiarity with the proposed study area. I visited Hill Top Farm twice, toured the Beatrix Potter Gallery in Hawkshead (also a National Trust property), and took the three Derwentwater walks as outlined in Bartlett and Whalley (1988). At this stage of the research, I had not yet chosen a specific field site so the reconnaissance visit enabled me to evaluate a variety of possible options.

Amongst these three sites, it was clear that Hill Top Farm was the main centre for Beatrix Potter tourism and the most appropriate research setting. Other strategies I explored at this phase, but later dropped, were liaising with the Cumbria Tourist Board to include a question about Potter in one of their visitor surveys, and working with the Mountain Goat Touring and Holiday Company in Windermere. This company operates a number of Lake District tours, some with a literary theme including Potter.

I also used this reconnaissance to visit some of the Lake District's other attractions. In particular, I was concerned with how literary heritage was being promoted at the Wordsworth properties in Grasmere, Rydal and Cockermouth, and the Ruskin sites at Brantwood and Coniston. Further, because of my interest in Potter as a children's writer, I also wanted to find out if there was any kind of promotion associated with Ransome's *Swallows and Amazons* books. At that

time, the Ransome heritage was not widely advertised (as one exception see Wardale 1988). Since then, however, and in conjunction with the recently founded Arthur Ransome Society, various promotions have begun to be developed.

Finally, the reconnaissance also suggested that it might be interesting to conduct a comparative study, using two different field sites. In conjunction with a proposal to work at Hill Top Farm, I contemplated trying to set up a similar project at Frederick Warne's Beatrix Potter shop in Gloucester (setting for *The Tailor of Gloucester*). Intending to pursue this idea, I visited Gloucester in October 1989. I soon realized that a comparative study would not be practical and so focused exclusively on the Potter heritage in the Lake District.

*Appendix 3*  
*The Pilot Study at Hill Top: April 1990*

Additional Site Information and Selection of the Visitor Sample

Hill Top is a small property. When discussing research access with the National Trust, I had to assure site staff that the project would not disrupt visitor flows. Visitors enter the property through the gift shop building but the admission area is separate from the rest of this facility. After paying an admission fee (or for National Trust/Royal Oak members showing the appropriate card), visitors exit the gift shop building and walk up the garden path toward the house. Once inside the house, most visitors will tour the ground floor (entrance hall and parlour), before proceeding past the scullery, and up the staircase and landing to the first floor. On the first floor, visitors can see Beatrix Potter's bedroom, the 'New Room' where she did her writing, the Treasure Room where some of her curios are displayed, and a sitting room.

This path through the house is formalized in the Hill Top souvenir guidebook (Taylor 1989c) which is sold on-site. Ideally, I wanted to approach people after they had toured as much of the property as possible. Since visitors eventually leave the site by walking back down the garden path, and into the gift shop, the best strategy for my purposes was to approach people in the garden, after they had left the house but before they visited the shop. When the weather was wet, a compromise strategy involved approaching people in the house as they were coming down from the first



floor, and inviting them into the small scullery, ordinarily roped off. This last strategy was very successful as visitors were anxious to explore a room closed to others, and therefore welcomed the chance to be interviewed.

### Accommodation

Apart from enabling me to test one version of the social survey, the pilot study allowed me to look for accommodation for the summer field season. For the pilot study I was based at the Ambleside Youth Hostel, but I wanted to find other accommodation for the more extended field study period. As I soon discovered, the Lake District is such a popular tourist destination that long-term, non-holiday accommodation is virtually non-existent. As such, this pilot phase indicated that hostel accommodation would probably be the only affordable option.

### Results of the Pilot Study

The results of the pilot study are summarized in the report included in this Appendix. I prepared this report in May 1990 and submitted it to the administrator at Hill Top, as well as to staff at the National Trust Northwest Regional Office in Ambleside. These results were never incorporated into an interpretive framework, nor used comparatively with other data. Their importance relates to the study design, and how they enabled me to revise the social survey for the main study, and justify these revisions to the National Trust.

## **Pilot Study at Hill Top 13-16 April 1990: Preliminary Compilation of Results**

During the four day period, 13-16 April, 77 questionnaires were completed. The variety of responses highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the questionnaire design and suggested ways that it could be modified in preparation for the main part of the study this summer.

### **Tabulation of Results (based on a sample size of 77 responses)**

#### **1. Where are you from?**

U.K.....68%

(32% from London and the Southeast)  
(23% from the Midlands)  
(42% from the North of England)  
(3% from Scotland and Wales)

North America.....8%

Europe.....0%

\*Other.....24% (includes 10% Japanese)

\*Japan will be denoted separately and, if possible, a Japanese language version of the questionnaire will be made available

#### **2. Is this your first visit to Hill Top?**

Yes.....79%

No.....21%

#### **If YES, would you come back again?**

Yes.....65%

No.....35%

#### **3. How did you find out about Hill Top?**

National Trust guidebook.....22%

Newspaper/magazine article.....3%

\*Tourist brochure/advertising.....20%

Friends/Relatives.....12%

Passing through the area.....3%

\*\*Other.....40%

\*In this category, respondents typically cited advertising material that they had either seen or been given while travelling within the Lake District.

\*\*Since such a large proportion of respondents found out about Hill Top in ways 'Other' than those previously categorized, this question will have to be modified. Responses recurring in the 'other' category included 'a television documentary (in Japan)'; 'a book about Beatrix Potter'; 'English folklore/local knowledge'

#### 4. How did you travel to Hill Top?\*

Car.....	89%
Part of Package tour.....	1%
Other.....	10%

\*The possible response categories to this question will be modified with 'local bus' and the distinction between 'private' and 'hired' car being deleted, and 'pedestrian' being added.

#### 5. How many are in your party?

1-2.....	47%
2-4.....	29%
4-6.....	19%
6-10.....	4%
more than 10.....	1%

#### 6. What kind of party is it?

Family/friends.....	98%
Package tour.....	2%
Other.....	0%

#### 7. Are there any children in your party?

Yes.....	33%
No.....	67%

#### If YES, are they under 16?

Yes.....	96%
No.....	4%

**8. Why did you come to Hill Top today?**

Specific interest in Beatrix Potter.....55%  
Day outing.....10%  
Part of Lake District Holiday.....25%  
Included in package tour.....0%  
\*Other.....10%

\*Responses in this category included 'it was too wet to go walking so we decided to visit Hill Top instead'; 'brought friends/relatives who had an interest in Beatrix Potter'

**9 and 10. 'Could you please describe for me your main feelings about Hill Top' and 'What did you like best about Hill Top?'**

Questions 9 and 10 were complementary with the following themes and/or comments being raised in response to both:

- 'peaceful'
- 'relaxed'
- 'cosy and homey'
- 'warmth'
- 'quaint and charming'
- 'sense of history and of going back in time'
- 'the feeling that Beatrix Potter lived at Hill Top and has only just left; nice to know that she owned the contents and did the embroidery work'
- 'you feel comfortable at Hill Top because it's not like a stately home - you could move in'
- 'the smell of the fire is evocative and you don't see that at other National Trust properties'
- 'real English country'
- 'the books have come to life'
- 'original and unspoiled'

**11. Was there anything about Hill Top that you didn't like?**

Comments that recurred in response to this question included:

- 'admission is expensive and then you have to spend £2 on a guidebook because there aren't any explanations on things inside the house'
- 'no student discounts for admission'
- 'it was too dark inside to read the guidebook so you felt that you were missing out on things'
- 'too crowded'

- 'lack of parking facilities'  
 - 'when you are walking to Hill Top from the ferry, there aren't any signs to tell you which direction to go and it's confusing' (Japanese respondents seemed to emphasize this point)  
 - 'why doesn't the Beatrix Potter Gallery have the same opening hours as Hill Top?' (many respondents wanted to visit the Gallery after learning about it at Hill Top and were disappointed that it was closed)

**12. Did you have the Beatrix Potter stories read to you as a child?**

Yes.....56%  
 No.....44%

**13. Have you read the books to any children?**

Yes.....87%  
 No.....13%

**14. Are you aware that there is an exhibition of Beatrix Potter's original drawings and paintings at the Beatrix Potter Gallery in Hawkshead?**

\*Yes.....57%  
 No.....42%

It must be emphasized, however, that many of those who answered YES had just found out about the gallery, usually while walking around Hawkshead. It might be useful to add a question here asking people where/when they found out about the Gallery.

**15. Are you planning to visit the Gallery?**

Yes.....52%  
 No.....48%

This question proved to be somewhat problematic. Respondents often said that they would not be visiting the Gallery because they only found out about it when I mentioned it to them or because the Gallery was closed on the day that they visited Hill Top. You might generate a more useful data set if the question was modified, and followed more explicitly from question 14.

For example: If respondents answered YES to question 14, they could then be asked: 'Are you intending to visit the

Gallery today?' YES/NO. If they then answered NO, they could be asked 'Why not?'

Conversely, if respondents answered NO to question 14, they could then be asked: 'Do you think you would like to visit the Gallery?' YES/NO. (And then, as above, 'Why/Why Not?')

#### **16. Sex**

Male.....	34%
Female.....	66%

#### **17. Age (categories need to be revised for main study)**

Under 16.....	4%
16-40.....	65%
40-65.....	29%
Over 65.....	3%

#### **18. Occupation**

Professional/Managerial.....	57%
Supervisory/Clerical.....	20%
Manual.....	7%
Other (student, retired etc.).....	16%

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*Appendix 4*  
*The Beatrix Potter Society Discussion Groups*

Recruitment, Organization and Format

The recruitment circular I distributed through the conference registration package is included with this Appendix. Each of the four groups was convened in the evening at the end of the day's conference activities, and lasted approximately ninety minutes. The meetings were held in different seminar rooms at Lancaster University, and prior to each meeting I re-arranged the seating plan into a circle. All the sessions were tape recorded.

Each of the four groups began with a very general introduction. I told group members more about myself and the project, and the discussion then moved around the circle. Each person introduced themselves, told the group where they were from, and very briefly, something about how they had discovered Potter, and why they were interested in her. In three of the four groups, this strategy worked well. My role as moderator was simply to monitor conversations to ensure that people remained focused on the broad topics I wanted them to consider (childhood memories and countryside, for example), and to ensure that everyone had the opportunity to express their views.

One of the groups was much different, and it is interesting to briefly consider why that might have been the case. In that particular group, many of the participants already knew each other well. Since these people were

used to interacting at other levels, as friends for example, it was difficult for them to come together in a more formal group setting, and have their views recorded. This made my task as moderator especially difficult, and was ultimately reflected in the fact that this group ran much less smoothly than any of the others.

### Group Profiles

Group 1: Met on the 13th July, 1990 at 11:15 P.M.

- three women and one man
- one British, one American, two Canadian

Group 2: Met on the 14th July, 1990 at 9:15 P.M.

- six women
- five British, one American

Group 3: Met on the 15th July, 1990 at 9:45 P.M.

- six women, two men
- six American, two British

Group 4: Met on the 16th July, 1990 at 10:45 P.M.

- seven women
- five American, one British, one Japanese

### Analyzing the Group Transcripts

After each group meeting, I made brief notes about the nature of the interaction, any problems that had arisen, and how I felt the session had gone. When I later transcribed the tapes from each of the four groups into



textual form, these notes were a useful reminder of proceedings.

After listening to each tape, and reading the transcripts through a number of times, I began to read the texts more closely, fracturing each bit word by word, and then line by line. Jones (1985) suggests different ways of analyzing depth interviews, but for my purposes, I found coding the data in sentence form on large sheets of paper to be the most useful.

Following Strauss (1987), I wanted to code the data around sets of narrative themes, deriving grounded theory from 'organizing many ideas which...emerged from analysis of the data' (p.23). I began with a set of theoretical questions about the importance of the pastoral, and I expected that the pastoral would be a dominant theme in the discussions. Although the pastoral resonated in the data, other issues that I had not expected were important too: specifically, childhood and inter-generational sharing, and the globalization of a local heritage.

In coding the data, I initially derived a large number of themes and then organized them into broad categories. In reading the transcripts closely, I focused on the words people used, the thematic links between their interpretations of particular issues, and the interactions between certain sets of people within each group. I also found it was important to read the transcripts for silences. In my groups, for example, issues were rarely contested. While this might partially have been the result of tiredness amongst participants, owing to the late hour of the group meetings, it also reflects their similar social status and world view.

From the broad categories, I eventually derived three core categories to which all the material, in the form of conceptual themes, was related (Strauss 1987, pp.34-36). As analytical units, these categories were the basis for Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Deriving these core categories involved integration and comparison, and I kept detailed notes about this process, and the kinds of decisions I made.

My analysis of the transcripts involved 'breaking down and building up analytic structure in the data' (Jones 1985 p.69). With minor modifications, I used a similar strategy in coding the open-ended interview questions from the Hill Top survey. This approach allowed me to grasp the complexities in the data (fracturing) while at the same time, relating this complexity to a comprehensive textual whole (integration and comparison).

**Notice of Conference Workshop Option:**

**'Why Beatrix Potter's Work Matters to Me'**

**How did you first encounter the Beatrix Potter stories?**

**Why is Beatrix Potter's countryside important to you?**

A chance to come and share, in an informal, small group setting (6-10 people) some of your personal reflections about Beatrix Potter's work.

My name is Shelagh Squire and I am a Ph.D candidate in Geography at University College London. My research is concerned with Beatrix Potter tourism at Hill Top Farm and why people value the Beatrix Potter stories today. With the approval of the National Trust, I am spending the summer at Hill Top conducting interviews with visitors. At this Study Conference, the Beatrix Potter Society has kindly allowed me to hold small group workshops - a chance to talk with others about why Beatrix Potter's work matters to you.

A workshop will be held each evening so there are 5 workshop times for you to choose from. As places in each group are limited, please sign up on the form provided on the notice board for the session that is most convenient for you.

No experience or advance preparation is necessary! Only the willingness to share your feelings for Beatrix Potter's work with other enthusiasts.

Thank you. I look forward to meeting you.

*Appendix 5*  
*The Main Study at Hill Top: 15 June-12 August 1990*

The questionnaire I used in the main study (in English and Japanese), is included in this Appendix. The Japanese language version was re-translated by a young Japanese woman studying in London. Most of the data I collected through this survey was coded, tabulated, cross-tabulated and used to establish the general visitor profile as outlined in Chapter 4. The responses to the open-ended interview questions were recorded in note form at the site, and I later compiled them into question groups. I then analyzed these different transcripts in much the same way as the small group transcripts discussed in Appendix 4.

The part of the study which I want to provide more information about here has to do with the time I spent at the site, and indirectly, the problem of finding accommodation. Initially, I had planned to stay in Cumbria from the middle of June until the end of August, approximately a ten week period. Since I was limited to youth hostel accommodation and caravan hire, I was obliged to return to London during those periods when no accommodation was available. As such, and since I found I was able to complete more interviews than I had anticipated each day (approximately 20), I was able to reduce the time I spent in the field.

**Introductory remarks prior to each interview:**

Good morning/afternoon. I am a member of the Department of Geography at University College London. With the approval of the National Trust, I am doing a survey of people's opinions about Beatrix Potter and Hill Top. The interview will take about ten minutes, and I would be very grateful if you could spare the time to answer a few questions.

**1. Where are you from?**

- |                     |   |                          |
|---------------------|---|--------------------------|
| U.K. (county)       | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| U.K. temp. resident | 2 |                          |
| U.S.A.              | 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Canada              | 4 |                          |
| Japan               | 5 |                          |
| Australia/N.Z.      | 6 |                          |
| Europe (country)    | 7 |                          |
| Other (specify)     | 8 |                          |

**2. Is this your first visit to Hill Top?**

- |     |   |                          |
|-----|---|--------------------------|
| Yes | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No  | 2 |                          |

**If NO, when did you last visit Hill Top?**

- |                |   |                          |
|----------------|---|--------------------------|
| Approx. Year   | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Can't remember | 2 |                          |

**Why did you last visit Hill Top?**

**If YES, would you come back again?**

- |     |   |                          |
|-----|---|--------------------------|
| Yes | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No  | 2 |                          |

**If YES, are there any particular reasons why you would come back again?**

**If NO, are there any particular reasons why you wouldn't come back again?**

**3. How did you find out about Hill Top?**

- |                     |    |                          |
|---------------------|----|--------------------------|
| N.T. Guide          | 1  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Newspaper/Magazine  | 2  |                          |
| Tourist advertising | 3  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Friends/Relatives   | 4  |                          |
| Book about Potter   | 5  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| U.K. t.v. programme | 6  |                          |
| T.V. prog. at home  | 7  |                          |
| Local knowledge     | 8  |                          |
| Passing By          | 9  |                          |
| Other (specify)     | 10 |                          |

**4. How did you travel to Hill Top?**

- |       |   |                          |
|-------|---|--------------------------|
| Car   | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tour  | 2 |                          |
| Foot  | 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | 4 |                          |

**5. How many are in your party?**

- |      |   |                          |
|------|---|--------------------------|
| 1-2  | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2-4  | 2 |                          |
| 4-6  | 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6-10 | 4 |                          |
| >10  | 5 |                          |

**6. What kind of party is it?**

- |                |   |                          |
|----------------|---|--------------------------|
| Family/friends | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Package tour   | 2 |                          |
| Other          | 3 |                          |

**7. Are there any children with you?**

- |     |   |                          |
|-----|---|--------------------------|
| Yes | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No  | 2 |                          |

**If YES, are they under 12?**

- |     |   |                          |
|-----|---|--------------------------|
| Yes | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No  | 2 |                          |

**8. Why did you decide to visit Hill Top?**

Interest in Potter	1
Day outing	2
Holiday in area	3
Included in tour	4
Other (specify)	5

**If 1, 'Interest in Potter': Could you tell me a bit more about that please?**

**9. What did you like best about Hill Top?**

**10. Could you please describe for me, in as much detail as possible, your main impressions about Hill Top?**

**11. Was there anything about Hill Top that you didn't like?**

**12. Did anyone read the Beatrix Potter stories to you when you were a child?**

Yes	1
No	2

**If YES, Could you tell me a bit about that please?**

**If NO, How did you discover the Beatrix Potter stories?**

**13. Have you read the books to any children?**

Yes 1  
No 2

**If YES, could you tell me a bit about that please?**

**If NO, would you read them to children in the future?**

Yes 1  
No 2

**14. Have you ever bought or been given any of the following Beatrix Potter products?**

Story books 1  
Books about Potter 2  
China 3  
Soft toys 4  
Toiletries 5  
Clothing 6  
Paper goods 7  
Other (specify) 8

**15. Are you aware that there is an exhibition of Beatrix Potter's original drawings at the Beatrix Potter Gallery in Hawkshead?**

Yes 1  
No 2

**If YES, How did you find out about the Gallery?**

N.T. Guide 1  
Tourist Advertising 2  
In Hawkshead 3  
Other (specify) 4

**If YES, Are you intending to visit the Gallery on this trip?**

Yes 1  
No 2

**If 2, Why Not?**

**If NOT Aware of the Gallery, Do you think that you would like to visit the Gallery?**

Yes 1  
No 2

**16. Are you aware that there are several self-directed Beatrix Potter Lake District walks?**

Yes 1  
No 2

**If YES, have you taken any of these walks?**

Yes 1  
No 2

**17. While in the Lake District have you visited any other literary site?**

Yes 1  
No 2

**If YES, which ones?**

Dove Cottage 1  
Rydal Mount 2  
Cockermouth 3  
Ruskin Mus. 4  
Brantwood 5  
Potter Walks 6  
Other (spec.) 7

**18. Have you visited literary sites elsewhere in Britain?**

Yes 1  
No 2

**Finally, I would like to ask you a few questions about yourself:**

**19. Sex**

Male 1  
Female 2

**If MALE, are you visiting Hill Top with spouse, female friends etc.?**

Yes 1  
No 2

**20. Age**

Under 15 1  
16-24 2  
25-35 3  
35-45 4  
45-55 5  
55-65 6  
Over 65 7

**21. Occupation (code later)**

Prof./Higher Managerial 1  
Intermed. Managerial 2  
Supervisory/Clerical 3  
Semi & Unskilled Manual 4  
Unemployed (seeking work) 5  
Other (student;retired) 6

**22. Do you or any member of your family belong to a heritage organization?**

Yes 1  
No 2

**If YES, which ones?**

National Trust 1  
English Heritage 2  
Royal Oak Fnd. 3  
WWF 4  
FOE 5  
RSPB 6  
In home country 7  
Other (specify) 8

**Thank Respondent**

Date.....1990

**Remarks about weather:**



こんにちは。 私はロンドン大学ユニヴァーシティカレッジ地理学部の学生です。  
ナショナルトラストの承認のもとに、ベアトリックス＝ポッターとヒルトップについての  
意識調査をしています。 このアンケートにお答えいただくのに少しでもお時間を割い  
ていただければ幸いです。 ご協力ありがとうございます。

必要な箇所は適当な番号を○でかこんで下さい。（2つ以上可）

1. ご出身はどちらですか。

1. イギリス（地方名                      ）
2. イギリスに一時的に滞在（地方名                      ）
3. アメリカ      4. カナダ      5. 日本      6. オーストラリア・ニュージーランド
7. ヨーロッパ（国名                      ）      8. その他（国名                      ）

2. (i) ヒルトップを訪ねるのは初めてですか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

(ii) (i)で” いいえ” とお答えになった方：最後に訪れたのはいつですか。

1. およその年（    年）      2. 覚えていない

(iii) なぜ訪れましたか。

(iv) (i)で” はい” とお答えになった方：もう一度訪れたいと思いますか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

(v) (iv)で” はい” とお答えになった方：

もう一度訪れる特別な理由がありますか。

(vi) (iv)で” いいえ” とお答えになった方：

もう来たくないという特別な理由がありますか。

3. どうやってヒルトップをお知りになりましたか。

1. ナショナルトラストのガイドブックで      2. 新聞・雑誌で  
3. 観光案内で      4. 友達・親戚から      5. ポッターについての本で  
6. イギリスのテレビ番組で      7. イギリス以外のテレビ番組で  
8. この地域に住んでいるから      9. たまたま通りかかったから  
10. その他 (                      )

4. どうやってヒルトップまで来られましたか。

1. 車      2. ツアー      3. 徒歩      4. その他 (            )

5. 何人で来られましたか。

1. 1~2人      2. 3~4人      3. 5~6人  
4. 7~10人      5. 10人以上

6. どういうご関係の方々とご一緒に来られましたか。

1. 家族・友達      2. パッケージツアー      3. その他 (                      )

7. お子様とご一緒ですか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

”はい”とお答えになった方：12才未満のお子様ですか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

8. なぜヒルトップを訪れようとお決めになりましたか。

1. ポッターへの興味      2. 日帰りにちょうどよい      3. ホリデーに最適の場所  
4. ツアーに含まれている      5. その他(                      )

”ポッターへの興味”とお答えになった方：詳しくはどういったことですか。

9. ヒルトップのどういうところが気に入りましたか。

10. ヒルトップについての印象をできるだけ詳しくお書き下さい。

11. ヒルトップについて何か気に入らないことがありますか。

12. 子供の頃にどなたかがベアトリックス＝ポッターの物語を読み聞かせてくれましたか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

”はい”とお答えになった方：詳しくお書き下さい。

”いいえ”とお答えになった方：どうやってポッターの物語を発見なさいましたか。

13. 今までにお子様にベアトリックス＝ポッターの物語を読み聞かせたことが  
おありですか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

”はい”とお答えになった方：詳しくお書き下さい。

”いいえ”とお答えになった方：将来読み聞かせますか。

14. 今までに下記のベアトリックス＝ポッターの商品をお買いになったことが  
ありますか。

1. 物語      2. ポッターについての本      3. 陶器      4. ぬいぐるみ  
5. 化粧・洗面具      6. 洋服      7. 文具      8. その他（                      ）

15. (i) ホークスヘッドのベアトリックス＝ポッター ギャラリーにポッター直筆の  
絵があるのをご存じですか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

(ii)(i)で”はい”とお答えになった方：

どうやってギャラリーを見つけられましたか。

1. ナショナルトラストのガイドブック      2. 観光案内  
3. ホークスヘッドで      4. その他（                      ）

(iii)(i)で”はい”とお答えになった方：今回ギャラリーを訪れる予定ですか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

(iv)(iii)で”いいえ”とお答えになった方：なぜですか。

(v)(i)で”いいえ”とお答えになった方：ギャラリーを訪れたいと思いますか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

16. ベアトリックス＝ポッターの散策コースがいくつかあるのをご存じですか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

”はい”とお答えになった方：コースのどれかを歩かれたか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

17. 湖水地方に滞在中、他に文学ゆかりの地を訪れましたか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

”はい”とお答えになった方：次のうちどれですか。

- 1. Wordsworth's Dove Cottage
- 2. Rydal Mount (Wordsworth's Home)
- 3. Wordsworth House at Cockermouth
- 4. Ruskin Museum
- 5. Brantwood (Ruskin's Home)
- 6. Potter Walks
- 7. その他(                      )

18. イギリスの他の地方で文学ゆかりの地を訪れたことがありますか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

最後にあなたご自身についてお伺いします。

19. 性別

1. 男性      2. 女性

男性の方：ヒルトップへは奥様または女性の友達と来られましたか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

20. 年齢

1. 15才未満      2. 15～24才      3. 25～34才      4. 35～44才  
5. 45～54才      6. 55～64才      7. 65才以上

21. 御職業（既婚の方は配偶者の御職業もお書き下さい。）

22. あなた、またはご家族のどなたかが、遺跡保存の協会に属していますか。

1. はい      2. いいえ

”はい”とお答えになった方：次のうちのどれですか。

1. National Trust                      2. English Heritage  
3. Royal Oak Foundation              4. World Wildlife Fund  
5. Friends of the Earth      · 6. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds  
7. 自分の国のもの                      8. その他（                      ）

どうも御協力ありがとうございました。

\_\_\_\_\_年    \_\_\_\_月    \_\_\_\_日