Resolving conflict in a divided society: contact, community relations and identity in Northern Ireland

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by

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Declaration

The work in this thesis is entirely my own. I certify that this thesis contains no material which has been previously submitted for the award of any other degree, and that, to the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously written by any other person except where due reference is made.

........*Taylor*...........

Helen Taylor

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, John and Sue Taylor

Abstract

Recent census data and successive surveys within Northern Ireland have recorded that a significant minority of both Catholics and Protestants choose not to identify as Irish or British, opting instead to identify as Northern Irish. Using data from the Northern Ireland Social Attitudes (NISA) and Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) surveys, this study estimates connections between this trend and community relations initiatives that aim to increase contact between Catholics and Protestants. It is the first study to explore and compare systematically the relationships between five key indicators of cross-community contact—school integration, residential mixing, mixed religion friendship groups, mixed religion kinship ties, and mixed religion marriage—and national identity preferences.

Understanding these relationships is important, since the rationale for many community relations initiatives is that increasing intergroup contact will lead to a reduction in prejudicial attitudes and help foster the emergence of a shared society. The key findings are that individuals who have had regular contact with people across the communal divide are significantly more likely to identify themselves as Northern Irish and not as Irish or British. The strength of these relationships, however, is found to vary against key socio-economic and socio-demographic dimensions and reasons are advanced for these variations.

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Abbreviations

ARK	Northern Ireland Social and Political Archive
BCDA	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
BRIC	Building Relationships in Communities
CCRU	Central Community Relations Unit
CH	Cultural Heritage
CRC	Community Relations Council
CRU	Community Relations Unit
DCCRP	District Council Community Relations Programme
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
EMU	Education for Mutual Understanding
EU	European Union
IFI	International Fund for Ireland
IRA	Irish Republican Army
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
NISA	Northern Ireland Social Attitudes survey
NICIE	Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

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Chapter 1. Introduction

This study investigates a range of community relations policies in Northern Ireland that seek to promote contact between members of the Protestant and Catholic communities. [1] Specifically, it explores the relationship between experiences of intergroup contact—a central component of community relations policies—and various forms of group identification that are evident in social survey data. As a means of analysis, the study compares group identification amongst those who have experience of intergroup contact with those who claim to have little or no contact outside their own community. It is thus a contribution to survey-based analysis of identity patterns in Northern Ireland.

Social surveys provide evidence that increasing numbers of both Protestants and Catholics are moving away from traditional and divisive forms of identification—such as the British/Irish dichotomy—towards more inclusive forms that encompass both of these two main community groups. Since 1989, for example, survey data has recorded that a significant, and growing, minority of both Protestants and Catholics are identifying as Northern Irish and not as British or Irish. Using social survey data, I examine possible connections between this trend and initiatives that aim to increase intergroup contact between Protestants and Catholics.

This is the first study to explore systematically the relationships between five key indicators of intergroup contact—school integration, residential mixing, mixed

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[1] The terms 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' serve as important boundary markers in Northern Ireland identifying individuals as belonging to one of two main ethno-national groups (see Whyte 1990; McGarry and O'Leary 1995; Hayes and McAllister 2009a). It should be noted that a minority of Protestants and Catholics refuse membership of either community (Nic Craith 2002; O'Dowd 2009). However, the terms Protestant and Catholic are regularly used to refer to other important political and national identities. Indeed, Doherty and Poole (2002: 75) have suggested that the divide within Northern Ireland can be understood as 'essentially ethnic notwithstanding the fact that it is denoted by the religious labels "Catholic" and "Protestant"'. I use the terms Protestant and Catholic throughout the thesis to refer to those who self-identify as such.

friendship groups, mixed kinship ties, and mixed marriage[2]—and national identity preferences. Understanding these relationships is important, since the rationale advanced by government and non-government bodies for promoting engagement between communities at the grass roots level is that prejudice will decrease and, through mixing[3], commonalities will increase. This study is thus also a contribution to the evaluation of approaches that aim to transform conflict in deeply divided societies.

Northern Ireland as a deeply divided society

Relative to its size, Northern Ireland has been the site of one of the most entrenched and violent conflicts in modern European history (Hayes and McAllister 2005). During the 30 year period from the beginning of the contemporary conflict to the signing of the Belfast Agreement in 1998 (hereafter referred to as the Agreement), over 3,200[4] people have lost their lives and over 40,000 have been injured due to sectarian-related violence. As Table 1.1 illustrates, if proportionate numbers of people had been affected in Britain, 111,000 would have died and around 1.4 million would have been injured. Likewise, it is estimated that in the United States, over 500,000 would have died and over 6.6 million would have been injured.

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[2] For the purposes of this research, I use the term mixed marriage pertaining to marriages between Catholics and Protestants. I provide a detailed explanation of this term, as well as other terms that are used to describe this phenomenon in chapter 7.

[3] The use of the terms 'mixed' and 'mixing' are used throughout the thesis. I use these terms for a few reasons. The term 'mixed' is commonly used within the literature to describe the phenomenon of a couple from two different religious backgrounds entering into a 'mixed' marriage. Similarly, some schools in Northern Ireland are said to be 'mixed' rather than integrated and, as I shall demonstrate, there is a difference between these two types of schools that justifies the use of separate terminology. Finally I use the term 'mixed' residential areas to describe areas in which there is a 'mix' of residents from both Protestant and Catholic background. It should be noted that most 'mixed' areas have a rough demographic ratio of 70:30 and thus to use the term integrated here would be misleading.

[4] It should be noted that estimates of the numbers of deaths that have occurred in Northern Ireland due to political violence vary.

Table 1.1. The relative scale of political violence in Northern Ireland, 1969–1998

	Nth Ireland	Britain	USA
Deaths	3,289	111,000	526,000
Injuries	41,837	1,406,000	6,673,000

Source: Adapted from Hayes and McAllister (2001a).

Darby has aptly described Northern Ireland as displaying a 'culture of violence' (Darby 1997: 118). This has eroded investment, employment and industry. Accordingly, in some localities, the dominant role model has become the paramilitary hero or the hunger striker. And whilst the violence (or at least heavily organised violence) may have significantly diminished in recent years, sectarian attacks, riots, prejudicial attitudes, and the continued physical and social separation of communities are enduring reminders of the fragility of peace that exists within Northern Ireland (Hayes and Dowds 2006).

Northern Ireland therefore remains a deeply divided society. Following Lustick (1979: 325) I understand deeply divided societies to be those in which ascriptive group ties have generated 'antagonistic segmentation of society' based on divided identities with high political salience that are sustained over a substantial period of time and across a wide variety of issues. Divided societies are characterised by distinct social cleavages and these exist where social differentiation is particularly salient (Lijphart 1977: 3) and may be based on religious, class, ideological, linguistic, regional, cultural or ethnic differences. As a result, social and political life tends to be organised along segmented lines and these invariably overlap leading to mutual reinforcement in which all the politically relevant sources of division exist along parallel lines and where group loyalty is paramount (Duffy and Evans 1996: 123). Fundamental to the study of divided societies is thus an understanding of the nature of the social cleavages that create and separate groups.

At the same time, research has found that so-called crosscutting cleavages within society tend to diminish the political salience of group identity and thus help to

moderate social conflict (see Almond 1956; Dahl 1956, 1982; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Goodin 1975; Lijphart 1977). A crosscutting cleavage occurs when social groups that are homogenous with respect to one social cleavage are heterogeneous with respect to another. Andeweg (2000: 509) provides the following example, 'In his trade union a church member interacts with secular working-class comrades, and in his church he encounters upper- and middle-class brethren. The individual is pulled in different directions.'

The individual is pulled in various directions because multiple categories of identification are available that can undermine the salience of other cleavages. Such individuals make more moderate demands because their interests pull them in different directions. Northern Ireland is regularly described as a divided society containing mutually reinforcing cleavages with a high degree of overlap in religious, political and national identification.[5] It is suggested, therefore, that there is little room in Northern Ireland for crosscutting cleavages to emerge. Writing during a period of heightened tensions between both communities in the mid-1990s, McGarry and O'Leary (1995a: 323) commented that whatever common allegiance the people in Northern Ireland may share does not significantly cross-cut what separates them. They contend that a society-wide loyalty is absent and, rather, 'national solidarities deepen other cleavages'.

National identity and the Northern Ireland conflict

There is widespread agreement amongst scholars that competing national identities both fuel and are a central feature of the Northern Ireland conflict.[6] This study supports the contention that competing claims as to what constitutes the relevant 'nation' lie at the heart of the conflict and that these claims—expressed through competing national identities—are central to maintaining division. Thus, Dryzek (2005:

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[5] There are many well-known commentators on the conflict in Northern Ireland who support this claim (see for example Rose 1971; Lijphart 1975; Whyte 1990; McGarry and O'Leary 1995a; Duffy and Evans 1996; Darby 1997; Hayes et al. 2007; Wolff 2012).

[6] See for example Darby 1986; Moxon-Browne 1983, 1991; Whyte 1990; McGarry and O'Leary 1995a, 2004; Dryzek 2005, 2006; Wolff 2003, 2012.

219) suggests that mutually contradictory assertions of identity can reinforce conflict because 'one identity can only be validated, or at worst, constituted by the suppression of another'. These competing identities are often constrained by group allegiance with little room for multiple and fluid forms of identification that can cut across these divisions. As such, much social life occurs within, rather than between, communal cleavages (Nagle and Clancy 2010: 1).

Within Northern Ireland today most people can be broadly described as belonging to one of two main communal groups. On the one hand are those who view themselves first and foremost as belonging to the United Kingdom, and on the other hand are those who (while either accepting or actively rejecting the constitutional link with the United Kingdom) view themselves as belonging first and foremost to the Republic of Ireland.[7] While there are many states in which its citizens hold more than one national identity, or in which a number of national identities are acknowledged, the existence in Northern Ireland of two national identities—British and Irish—overlaps with other significant cleavages including religious and political identity. Accordingly, many people in Northern Ireland tend to identify with one of two competing and multi-layered identities: Protestants who see themselves as British and who wish to remain part of the United Kingdom; and Catholics who see themselves as Irish and who aspire to reunification with the Republic of Ireland (Hayes and McAllister 2009a).[8] And while

7 This is not to deny that people in Northern Ireland may hold more than one national allegiance and may hold several identities of varying strengths at any one time. Indeed, for some, Britishness and Irishness are not seen as mutually exclusive categories (see Fahey et al. 2005; Muldoon et al. 2008). Moreover, there is also varying degrees of heterogeneity within each of the main communal camps with regards to a range of identities including differences between nationalists and republicans (see Todd 1999); differences between Ulster loyalists and unionists within the Protestant community (see McGovern 1997; McAuley 2004); and differences between ethnic, national and state identities (see Hayes and McAllister 1999a).

[8] I note, however, that the divisions are more complex. For instance, while Irish unity is an important goal for many Catholics, it is not the most pressing issue. As Ruane and Todd (1999: 17) explain, Catholic interests rest first and foremost on remedying inequality both material and cultural. They contend that even republicans, who are strong proponents of Irish unity, have noted that equality within Northern Ireland is the primary goal and the first step towards reunification with the Republic of Ireland.

the conflict is often understood as one between the 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' communities, these are really 'proxy words' (Moxon-Browne 1991) used to signify more salient political and national identities.

In contemporary Northern Ireland the existence of competing national allegiances are expressed territorially. This is evident to anyone that walks through a unionist or nationalist area. In the former, one is likely to see flags of the Union Jack, while in the later, street signs are in Gaelic. These symbolic and linguistic markers serve as a reminder to both insiders and outsiders that the area is loyal to either Britain or Ireland. More than this, however, these markers also serve as a form of commemoration and a reminder of the past. In Northern Ireland, history assumes a great significance in communal discourse. Perceptions of the past, the sense of history and the popular historical narrative held by individuals and communities have been influential in shaping identities and hostilities. Commenting on Northern Ireland, Lijphart (1975: 83) notes 'the extraordinary contemporary political significance of the events and symbols of the past'.

The origins of the contemporary conflict in Northern Ireland can be traced back to the Ulster Plantation of the seventeenth century when religious identity assumed an importance as the boundary marker between the new settlers (predominantly English Protestant and Scottish Presbyterian) and the local Gaelic population (predominantly Roman Catholic) (Darby 1997). [9] During this period, these two groups became locked in a struggle over territorial and political control (Coakley 2007).

The construction of oppositional identities in present day Northern Ireland is rooted in this period of colonization. For example, during this period the same territory became occupied by two groups hostile to one another, one believing the land had been usurped and the other fearing that that they were constantly under threat from Catholic rebellion (Darby 1997: 21). Second, governance and control of the area would

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[9] Although it may be possible to trace the roots of the conflict in Northern Ireland back to the Norman invasions of Ireland in the twelfth century, it was during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that religion became a salient feature of political life (Barritt and Carter 1972; Darby 1976).

ultimately reside with those Protestant landowners and indeed by 1703, less than 5 per cent of the land of Ulster was owned by the Catholic Irish (Darby 1997). Protestant landowners acquired tenure of the land and took over management from which the Catholic population was excluded. The result was the emergence of two distinct and hostile groups who occupied the same territory. Thus the lines of division were drawn and the two communities identified their differences by religious labels: 'To the Protestant, the fact that a man was a Catholic was prima facie evidence that he would be disaffected and disloyal to the state: to the Catholic the fact that a man was a Protestant suggested that he was an alien invader maintained by a foreign military power' (Barritt and Carter 1972: 12).[10] The Ulster Plantation thus provided fertile ground for competing interpretations of historical events that were employed by groups to legitimate their claims to the territory of Ulster. Yet it was not until the outbreak of violence following the civil rights campaign in 1968 that survey evidence began to capture these mutually reinforcing cleavages.

More often than not, to say one is Protestant or Catholic is also to state one's political and national aspirations (Whyte 1990) or at least to provide a good indication of the political and national aspirations that one rejects. Empirical evidence supports this claim. Table 1.2 highlights the relationship between religion—as either Protestant or Catholic—and national and political identity through analysis of data collected from the 2010 Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) survey. Beginning with national identity, a Protestant is more likely to identify as British (62 per cent) whereas a Catholic is more likely to identify as Irish (59 per cent). Most importantly, however, while almost one-third of both Protestants and Catholics opt for the Northern Irish identity, almost no Protestants or Catholics are willing to cross the traditional divide and

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[10] While the events of the seventeenth century laid the foundations for contemporary boundaries that exist today, competing national identities were yet to take full form. Indeed, up until the early twentieth century many Protestants were conscious of their Irishness as well as their outward profession of loyalty to the British Crown. It was not until the outbreak of violence following the civil rights campaign that survey evidence captures the polarisation of national identities along religious lines.

identify with the out-group national identity, namely Irish or British respectively. The same is true for political identity. A majority of Protestants identify as unionist (67 per cent) and a majority of Catholics identify as nationalist (54 per cent). While a substantial minority of both Protestants and Catholics chose to opt for 'other', no Protestants identified as nationalist and only 1 per cent of Catholics identified as unionist.

Table 1.2. Religion by political and national identity, 2010

	Protestant	Catholic
Political identity		
Unionist	67	1
Nationalist	0	54
Other	33	45
Total	100	100
(N)	(511)	(430)
(Chi square 769.042, 6 df, p<.01)		

	Protestant	Catholic
National identity		
British	62	8
Irish	3	59
Northern Irish	27	25
Ulster	6	1
Other	1	8
Total	100	100
(N)	(514)	(435)
(Chi square 543.034, 12 df, p<.01)		

Source: NILT survey 2010.

While mutually reinforcing cleavages do not of themselves necessarily create conflict, they do serve to highlight and exacerbate existing tensions between groups. It is possible to identify several societal problems that stem from this. Firstly, the pattern of mutually reinforcing cleavages exacerbates perceived differences between groups. In turn, these perceived differences manifest in less favourable out-group attitudes and less intergroup tolerance (Muldoon et al. 2007: 100). Social identity theory, which is discussed in detail in chapter 2, has been widely applied to instances of intergroup

conflict (Tajfel and Turner 1979; Hewstone and Brown 1986; Hewtsone and Greenland 2000; Pettigrew and Tropp 2011). This theory suggests that given a particular context— for instance where one group identity is threatened by the existence of another— individuals may seek reassurance within their in-group by comparing and contrasting favourably their own group (for instance their national or religious group) with the out-group. Intergroup comparison establishes positive distinctiveness, or positive self-esteem, for the members of the in-group (Turner et al. 1987; Hewstone and Greenland 2000). While this is a common feature of all groups, distinctions made between the in-group and the out-group become problematic in deeply divided societies where the demands of one group are generally perceived to negatively affect the welfare of the other.

Second, evidence suggests that the existence of mutually reinforcing cleavages can serve the interest of political elites who may play up perceived differences between groups in pursuit of intra-group power and representation thereby further exacerbating intergroup conflict. [11] This usually involves a heavy emphasis on identity through invoking shared myths and symbols that provoke group sentiments and justify group actions. Finally, in instances of violent intergroup conflict, the physical separation of conflicting communities may be viewed as the best possible way of protecting group interests and providing group security. Thus, many divided societies are characterised by high levels of physical separation between groups which in turn leads to the separation of important social institutions such as schools, shopping centres and leisure facilities. This creates a vicious cycle in which fear of the 'other', fuelled by negative stereotyping, creates the desire to deepen the separation. This is because the physical separation of communities limits the amount of contact between groups.

A significant body of research finds that the separation of groups may increase the likelihood for negative stereotypes of the 'other' to be accepted, for mistrust to foster and subsequently for further intergroup tension to occur. [12] Any intergroup contact that

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11 See for instance Hadden 2005; Coakley 2008; Gormley-Heenan and Mac Ginty 2008.

12 See for example, Whyte 1986, 1990; Frazer and Fitzduff 1994; Dixon 1997a; Darby and Cairns 1998; Pettigrew 1998; Horowitz 2001a; Taylor 2001, 2006, 2009; Darby and Mac Ginty 2003; Oberschall and

is experienced will most likely be of a negative nature and may lead to instances of violence, which in turn may provide further justification for continued separation of communities. In such ways, the separation of communities becomes self-reinforcing, leading to a society of 'high fences'. Within Northern Ireland, division is expressed in high levels of separation in key areas of social life. Accordingly, it is not unusual for members of the two main communities to have had no contact with the 'other' until they enter the labour force or attend university (Hayes et al. 2007: 455).

Managing and transforming intergroup conflict

The troubling features of intergroup conflict identified above make it a practical and theoretical concern across a wide range of disciplines. Attempts to understand and to ameliorate the effects of intergroup conflict have been the focus of important social scientific research. Several schools of thought have advanced a number of different theories on intergroup conflict in divided societies. Two groups of approaches for managing or resolving intergroup conflict in divided societies are identified in the literature. The first regards intergroup conflict as based on structural problems and proposes that conflict management or conflict settlement be achieved through institutional engineering by elites. These approaches seek to manage conflict by reforming the social system through the enactment of laws and constitutionally embedded provisions. I refer to variants of this group throughout this study as institutional approaches. Some theorists advocate institutional approaches because they regard group identity as typically resistant to change. The primary challenge, on this account, is to design institutions that can harness competing identity group claims while at the same time acknowledging the existence of such claims (see, for example, Lijphart 1969, 1977; McGarry and O'Leary 2004). Such institutional approaches include consociationalism which favours power-sharing by group elites and the maintenance of a 'separate but equal' society. However, other advocates of institutional approaches regard the salience of identities to be contingent on institutional support and party political mobilization (Horowitz 1985, 1993; Reilly 2001).

Kendall-Palmer 2005; Hughes and Donnelly 2006; Cairns et al. 2007; Hayes et al. 2007; Hughes et al. 2007; Oberschall 2007; Nagle and Clancy 2010.

The second group of approaches proposes instead that societal transformation may be achieved through identifying and tackling systemic sectarianism and inequality and by improving relationships between divided communities. There are two main avenues through which relationship building between communities may be promoted—either through deliberation in the public sphere (see Dryzek 2005; O'Flynn 2007; Wilson 2009; Luskin et al. forthcoming) or through initiatives that promote social mixing between communities.[13] This approach emphasizes the value of conflict transformation through civil society arguing that this serves to address the causes and consequences of division (see Dixon 1997a, 2012; Taylor 2001, 2009; O'Flynn 2007, 2009; Farry 2009; Wilson 2009). Following Dixon (1997a, 2012) I refer to variants of this group throughout this study as civil society approaches. I focus specifically on work that seeks to promote social mixing between divided identity groups.[14] As will be demonstrated, both institutional and civil society approaches are being employed in Northern Ireland.

While my focus is on civil society approaches, I also argue that one approach alone will be insufficient to resolve conflict. Rather, a mix of both institutional and civil society approaches is likely to be required. Focusing solely on civil society will result in failing to take the reality of constraints on political actors and the role of politicians in bringing about societal change adequately into account (Dixon 2012). Settlement at the elite level and support from the state will be required for necessary political stability that can then provide space for initiatives that aim to improve relationships between communities. Since the implementation of the Agreement which highlighted the need to address division and segregation of communities, an agenda for promoting community relations has been made a priority within government with the aim of creating a 'shared

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[13] There is an extensive literature on conflict resolution through intergroup contact and social integration. See for example Wilford 1992; Ruane and Todd 1996; Dixon 1997a; Pettigrew 1998; Taylor 2001, 2006, 2009; Hughes and Donnelly 2006; Shirlow 2006; Shirlow and Murtagh 2006; Cairns et al. 2007; Hewstone et al. 2008.

[14] The civil society approach is also known as the social transformation approach (see Taylor 2001, 2009; Nagle and Clancy 2010, 2012; Nagle 2012). However, following Dixon (1997a, 2012) I refer to this as the civil society approach as civil society is seen as the vehicle through which society may be transformed.

society' (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) 2005, 2010). In practice, this goal is being sought, in large part, through the development of specific policies designed to increase the level of mixing between Protestants and Catholics in a range of social arenas.

This research is conducted during a critical phase in the ongoing development of peace in Northern Ireland. This phase is critical for at least two reasons. First, nearly 15 years have now passed since the adoption of the Agreement—a sufficient amount of time to evaluate the degree to which it has effectively addressed the conflict. Indeed, while the Agreement has been described as 'a means of regulating conflict, not transforming it' (Taylor 2001: 37), others have disagreed, stating that the consociational nature of the Agreement 'is more likely to transform identities in the long run' (McGarry 2001: 124). And others have suggested that the Agreement 'can be expected to produce changes in attitudes, identities and even aspirations' (Ruane and Todd 1999: 22).

Second, it is a critical phase in the development of a whole of government community relations strategy. For example, the government's major community relations strategy *A Shared Future: Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland* released in 2005 was recently replaced in 2010 by a new draft strategy for 'a shared and better future' entitled *Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration*. At the level of government policy, articulation of, and a coherent position on, a 'shared society' remains ambiguous. Moreover, the implementation of a new community relations strategy is yet to take place due to disagreements among Northern Ireland's political parties as to the best way to envisage a shared future. It is therefore timely to re-visit community relations policy in Northern Ireland and to assess whether particular initiatives have borne fruit. That is, is there evidence to suggest that community relations initiatives are associated with increased sharing? I contend that one way to examine this is to measure the relative strength of traditional national identities within particular environments and to assess whether a shared public identity may be present within the population.

Justification for this line of inquiry is based on survey evidence that suggests increasing numbers of both Catholics and Protestants are choosing not to identify with

either the Irish or British identity. Instead, an increasing number of people are identifying as Northern Irish, which is now the second most popular identity choice of both Catholics and Protestants. A preference for the Northern Irish identity over traditional identities among members of the Catholic and Protestant communities indicates that an alternative and potentially shared public identity is gaining adherence in Northern Ireland.

In two recent and significant contributions to this literature, Hayes et al. (2007) and Hayes and McAllister (2009a) argue that those who adopt a Northern Irish identity may represent a population that occupies a growing middle ground within Northern Irish politics. They contend that such identification results from a growth in the number of people who wish to distance themselves from traditional dichotomous group allegiances. They suggest that insofar as the number of people who identify as Northern Irish increases, this may help to break down territorial allegiances and create a space for the development of a shared identity since it is the only identity currently shared by both Protestants and Catholics (Hayes et al. 2007; Hayes and McAllister 2009a).

The present study continues this line of inquiry and argues that the importance of this particular identity is that those identifying as Northern Irish come from both sides of the communal divide. Irrespective of whether the Northern Irish label holds different meanings for different groups, Protestants and Catholics who choose to identify in this way are at the very least making a conscious choice not to identify with the traditional and divisive identities. Moreover, there is reason to believe that those choosing a Northern Irish identity are aware of the cross-community nature of this identity. If a Northern Irish identity is seen as having the potential to further the development of a more inclusive society, it is important to investigate whether, where, and why it is emerging.

Accordingly, the aim of this study is to investigate the emergence of the Northern Irish identity and in particular to examine whether it can be associated with civil society approaches that have sought to promote intergroup contact between the Catholic and Protestant communities in the areas of education, housing and social networks. To this end, a number of research questions are developed which investigate the civil society

approach within community relations policy, and the extent to which cross-community contact is promoted as a specific policy objective.

The study then turns to in-depth analyses of the nature and extent of intergroup contact within particular social arenas including in education, housing and through social networks and asks whether individuals (from either a Catholic or Protestant background) who have intergroup contact within these social arenas differ from the rest of the adult population in relation to their national identity preferences. I uncover evidence to suggest that individuals who have had regular contact with people across the communal divide are significantly more likely to identify themselves as Northern Irish and not as Irish or British. I argue, however, that while intergroup contact is a predictor of identity other key socio-economic and socio-demographic factors are also related to identity preference and reasons are advanced for these variations.

The concept of identity

The concept of identity is therefore central to the theoretical framework and empirical investigation undertaken in this study. Here identities are operationalised as variables that define individuals as belonging to particular groups. Following Fearon and Laitin (2000: 848) these groups are distinguishable by two main features: the group has rules of membership that decide who is and is not a member; and they possess a set of characteristics (shared beliefs, commitments, or physical attributes) that are deemed to be typical of its members.

There are many kinds of group identities. And for any one person, there may be many different groups with which they identify. For example, an ethnic Greek living in Melbourne could simultaneously identify themselves as Greek, European, Australian, Victorian, trade union member, labour party supporter and so on. Just which group identity is most salient may vary significantly across individuals and within particular contexts.

National identity is a group identity, but it has several features that make it distinctive from other types of identity. Political theorist David Miller (1995), for example, notes several features that national identities are commonly considered to possess. First is the idea that national communities are constituted by belief. That is, its

members recognize one another as compatriots, and have a shared belief in and mutual commitment to the nation.

A second feature, acknowledged widely among theorists of nationalism (see Smith 1986; Miller 1995; Connor 2001; Hutchinson 2001; Guibernau 2007), is that nationality is an identity that has historical continuity. Historical events, traditions and symbols are used to build and legitimate a sense of common allegiance (Gellner 1983; Anderson 1983; Hobsbawm 1983, 1990). Indeed, calls for self-determination and national sovereignty that are often asserted by groups often rest on claims about ancestral and territorial belonging (Coakley 2003). This leads to a third aspect of national identity—that it connects a group to a particular geographical place (Miller 1995; Connor 2001; Guibernau 2007). That is, nations claim homelands (Connor 2001). Miller (1995) also plausibly contends that national identity is active— nations are communities that make collective decisions that affect its members. Finally, national identity requires that people who share it have distinguishable attributes in common such as race, ethnicity, language, customs, beliefs, moral codes or religion.

British and Irish identity in Northern Ireland can be classified as national identities. Yet while Northern Irish identity is certainly a group identity, it is difficult to say precisely what sort of group identity it is. Northern Irish identity does not seem readily describable as a national identity. This is because it lacks some of the characteristic features of national identity mentioned above. Indeed, it lacks arguably all of these features save that the group is connected to a particular geographical place. But it is also not an identity that is tied up to any particular political agenda or ideology. There is no easy way of describing what Northern Irish identity is, other than that it is a tied to a particular region and to a shared sense of life with those who inhabit the region.

While Northern Irish identity lacks some of the features of national identities, this does not make it insignificant. Indeed, given (as pointed out above) that any particular person can ordinarily ascribe multiple group identities to themselves, the fact that people are choosing this identity over British and Irish national identities is indicative of the salience that these identities have for that person. A Catholic who identifies themselves as Northern Irish is not necessarily thereby denying their national identity (as Irish), nor their political identity (as nationalist). However they do seem to be

signalling that a group identity that is not tied up with either of these other identities (national and political) is the one that they take to be important when defining themselves in a public way. Moreover, those identifying as Northern Irish come from both sides of the communal divide. I will therefore refer to the Northern Irish identity simply as a shared public identity, distinguishing it from national identity, and noting that it may mean different things to different people.[15]

Thesis outline

The thesis is presented in three sections. The first section is made up of chapters 2 and 3. It is focussed on the theoretical framework and empirical background to the study as well as the methodological approach and research design employed.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of relevant theoretical issues and aims to situate the conflict in Northern Ireland within debates over the best way to deal with problems inherent in deeply divided societies. In particular, I identify and explain institutional approaches and civil society approaches to conflict resolution. . I demonstrate that institutional approaches have been dominant and most widely utilised, in both theory and practice. In particular, consociational theory and power-sharing as a type of institutional approach has heavily influenced the governance structures and the social system more generally in Northern Ireland. Yet it has also attracted considerable criticism, most notably for having allegedly entrenched divisive group identities. I argue that institutional approaches are limited in that they favour management of division at the elite level, and tend to neglect some of the root causes of the conflict.

The chapter then turns to an exploration of the utility of civil society approaches to tackling divisions that move beyond managing supposedly fixed identities. In particular, I draw on theories from social psychology that are widely considered within the social science literature as having real-world potential in reducing intergroup

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[15] The use of this terminology is not new. Indeed the potential for a shared public identity to gain strength in Northern Ireland has recently been the subject of a small but growing debate within the social science literature (see Dixon 1997a, 2012; Farry 2009; Nagle and Clancy 2010, 2012a, 2012b; Nagle 2012).

conflict. These theories have been influential in formulating strategies that seek to transform intergroup relations in divided societies by promoting environments in which positive cross-community contact can occur with the aim of challenging the supposedly fixed nature of group identities

Chapter 3 begins by providing data evidence for the existence of the Northern Irish identity and its relative salience among Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. I then explain the research methodology that I shall employ in pursuing my investigation. This chapter describes the data used in the study and provides a description of all of the variables used in the analysis including the dependent, independent and control variables. Several limitations pertaining to the methodology are addressed and the benefits of this type of survey research are also discussed. Finally, I explain the structure of the empirical analysis to follow.

The second section contains the main empirical analyses of the study. Within this section, chapter 4 conducts an evaluation of government policy aimed at tackling division between Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland. The specific objective of this chapter is to understand how division between communities has been dealt with at the policy level, and to explain the role that theories of intergroup relations have had in the development of community relations policy. This chapter is both descriptive and analytic. It charts the evolution of community relations initiatives that seek to promote positive contact between members of the Catholic and Protestant communities. I therefore detail the history of community relations policy in Northern Ireland and provide examples of initiatives devised to tackle division between communities. I then go on to important developments and shifts in the focus of such initiatives and highlight the centrality of cross-community contact (and later, 'sharing') to this development. I also investigate the extent of funding for community relations by undertaking data collection from multiple sources.

In chapter 5 I investigate residential mixing within Northern Ireland. I begin by providing an account of the history of residential segregation in Northern Ireland which highlights and explains the enduring nature of the physical separation between the Protestant and Catholic communities. This provides the background for an investigation of the extent and nature of residential mixing—as opposed to residential separation—

that has become a focus point for some government initiatives that aim to tackle division. I explore the relationship between separated and mixed living on national identity preferences by utilizing data from the Northern Ireland Social Attitudes (NISA) and NILT surveys.

In chapter 6 I examine the impact of separate-religion and integrated education on national identity preferences in Northern Ireland by analysing data from the NISA and NILT surveys over the period 1989 to 2010. The overall focus of this chapter is on the emergence of the integrated education sector and, in particular, the establishment of two types of integrated schools—planned integrated schools and transformed schools. The chapter starts by exploring the nature of integrated schools through the use of data analysis. Finally, I apply statistical tests of the effects of attending an integrated school on the national identity preferences of Catholic and Protestant respondents and discuss the relevance of the results to current practices and implications for the future of the integrated education sector in Northern Ireland. In chapter 7 I examine mixed social networks in Northern Ireland. I compare three arenas for social mixing: among friends, within families, and between those in intimate partnerships, and examine the manner in which these social networks, as agents of socialization, are related to changes in identity among Catholics and Protestants.

In the final section I present and evaluate the central findings of the research. Chapter 8 therefore draws together the findings of the three main empirical chapters and highlights the commonalities and differences between them. I carry out logistic regression of all the main variables to highlight significant predictor variables of identity while holding the others constant. I then assess a range of proximate determinants of identity that emerged from the models in the empirical chapters and examine the extent to which these have a bearing on the likelihood of identifying as Northern Irish. In particular, I discuss the importance of generational effects on identity showing how political events have influenced identity patterns among particular generations. I then place the main findings in the context of existing knowledge, theory and policy practice arguing that intergroup contact is an important predictor of moderations in identity. In light of this, I discuss the implications of the findings within the broader context of peace-building in divided societies and conclude by making

several recommendations for future work to address the research limitations and to pursue questions that the research has raised.

Chapter 2. Managing, settling and transforming conflict in divided societies

Over the course of the past two centuries, the spread of nationalism and popular support for the principle of self-determination has led to waves of political mobilizations, assertions of identity and the rise of independent nation states. More recently, the dissolution of a bi-polar global system in the aftermath of the Cold War has led to major ethnic and nationalist unrest and in some cases to protracted communal conflicts. The *Minorities at Risk* project finds that among 233 minority groups surveyed in 127 countries, more than 80 have supported secessionist movements at some time between 1945-1990 and of those, around 30 have engaged in protracted civil wars in the pursuit of autonomy (Gurr and Harff 1994: 153). Moreover, in a critique of Samuel Huntington's (1993) *The Clash of Civilizations* thesis, Fox (2002: 433) finds that in the post Cold War era, the vast majority of ethnic conflicts have occurred domestically—between majority and minority groups—rather than between states or civilizations.

This chapter focuses on two broad approaches to dealing with conflict between groups in divided societies. The first approach seeks to manage or settle conflict by reforming the basic ground-rules of the social system through, for example, the enactment of laws and constitutionally embedded provisions (what I will call institutional approaches). The second are those which place an emphasis on social policy and civil society through the adoption of policies and activities within a particular set of ground-rules that seek to transform conflict (what I will call the civil society approach). These two approaches may employ one or more of the following three strategies:

1) to create an environment that contains or limits the negative consequences of ongoing conflict (conflict management);

2) to create an institutional framework which can accommodate the conflicting interests of different groups (conflict settlement); and/or;

3)   to transform society into a well-ordered society in which polarised identities
     become less salient (conflict transformation) (Wolff 2004).

Using this framework, the chapter is divided into two main sections. In the first section, I examine a number of institutional approaches used to either manage or settle conflict at the elite level. I show how these approaches have been applied in Northern Ireland. I argue that whilst each of these approaches has some potential value for a sustainable peace, each falls short, on its own, from achieving this objective. I argue that the shortcomings of these methods are that they overstate the degree to which group identities are resistant to change. A consequence of this, I shall argue, is the institutionalization of competing identity claims. This institutionalization is unconstructive as it simply creates new mediums through which conflict is channelled within formal state structures, rather than dealing with the causes and consequences of intergroup conflict.

While institutional approaches focus on changing the structures of government and institutions, civil society approaches generally focus on interventions at the grassroots level. These may include conflict resolution strategies, community development initiatives, fundraising and advocacy, targeting social need and inequality, as well as promoting cross-community engagement and contact.

Accordingly, the second section explores the utility of civil society approaches in tackling divisions that move beyond managing supposedly fixed identities. Here I outline the theoretical framework utilised in this study, incorporating elements from intergroup contact theory and social identity and social categorization theory. These theories have been influential in formulating strategies that seek to transform intergroup relations in divided societies by promoting environments in which positive cross-community contact can occur with the aim of challenging the supposedly fixed nature of group identities. In explaining this theoretical framework I shall stress that institutional and civil society approaches can be compatible and any approach to dealing with the problems inherent in divided societies are not likely to succeed without both changes to the political and institutional arrangement and changes to civil society. This chapter argues that in order to transform society and reach a sustainable peace a carefully crafted combination of both institutional and civil society approaches is needed.

Institutional approaches to managing conflict in divided societies

As mutually reinforcing cleavages undermine stability in divided societies, several institutional approaches have been used to mitigate their effects. The approaches discussed in this section have all been employed or suggested as potential strategies at some point during the contemporary conflict in Northern Ireland. For this reason, I will introduce each approach in the approximate chronological order in which it was employed. This section shall consider hegemonic control, partition and secession, electoral engineering, and consociationalism. It should be noted that these approaches are not mutually exclusive. Efforts at electoral engineering, for example, may occur simultaneously with efforts to form a power sharing government.

Partition and/or secession

Successful partition and secession are forms of conflict settlement. Secessionist movements usually develop in response to the failure of a multinational state to recognise its national minorities (McGarry 1998a) and have allegedly taken inspiration from the widespread doctrine of self-determination, promoted throughout the nineteenth century with the rise of nationalism and state building in Europe, in the twentieth century with the dismantling of colonial Empires in Africa and Asia, and more recently since the collapse of the Soviet Union (Horowitz 1981). Secessionist movements are based upon the denunciation of an unsatisfactory situation with regard to economic, social, political or security matters stemming from the relationship between the state and a national minority or minorities (Guibernau 1999: 33). The ultimate demand of those wishing to secede is sovereignty. Successful secession may be defined as the partition of a multi-ethnic or bi-ethnic state but may also refer to those groups who seek to leave one state in order to unite or re-unite with another (McGarry and O'Leary 1993).

There are a number of examples of relatively successful secession (for instance Ireland from Great Britain in 1921, Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971, Slovenia from Yugoslavia in 1991, and most recently South Sudan from Sudan in 2011). However, the fact that secession has occurred by no means guarantees an end to violence both within the newly seceded territory and the areas it borders. There are a number of explanations

for this. First, if there is a high degree of ethnic heterogeneity within the proposed seceding territory, further intergroup conflict may result. For example, difficulties may arise in the break-up of territory whereby the proposed seceding territorial area is made up of a mix of ethnic groups other than the community wishing to break away, including groups with different secessionist demands of their own (McGarry and O'Leary 1993; Addis 2009). The ongoing Georgian-Ossetian conflict (see Coppieters 2001) and the Cyprus conflict (Richmond 2002) are examples of how such problems can manifest.

A second explanation is that access to territory and natural resources are often an issue which further complicates the process of secession. The interests and opportunity structures of the various groups in relation to the territory in question are most likely to be different, and this can exacerbate conflict (Wolff 2004). Eritrea's secession from Ethiopia is an example of this phenomenon. Following the Eritrean war for independence in the 1970s and 1980s, a referendum in 1993 resulted in the formation of an independent Eritrean state. According to Joirmen (2004: 181) this was the first major change in African colonial boundaries since the era of decolonization in the 1960s. After initial optimism for peace and development in the region, conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia over territorial questions soon erupted. This led to violent conflict over land claims between local people in the border areas. This in turn led to economic and trade disputes between the two countries and further violence (Joirmen 2004).

The partition of British India into India and Pakistan in 1947 provides another example of the adverse consequences that can accompany division of a contested territory. Following partition, both India and Pakistan laid claim to Kashmir, an ethnically complex region nestled between the borders of India and Pakistan. India claims the state of Jammu and Kashmir while Pakistan claims the area of Azad Kashmir, also known as Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. The struggle for control over the territory of Kashmir continues to this day and has been further complicated by calls for Kashmiri independence (Kennedy 2003).

The historical roots of the contemporary conflict in Northern Ireland also illustrate problems associated with attempts to break up territory. By the early twentieth century, support within Ireland for the nationalist cause of self-determination grew, culminating

in the Irish War of Independence from 1919 to 1921 and the *Government of Ireland Act 1920* which led to the partition of Ireland in 1921. While Irish nationalists sought an independent non-partitioned republic, they were forced to accept a compromise solution. Rather than being granted outright independence, Ireland was given the status of a dominion in the British Empire (this later changed under the *Republic of Ireland Act 1948*.) Significantly, however, to reach compromise Ireland agreed to give up six counties of Ulster, which together became Northern Ireland (Hechter 2000: 82). The partition of Ireland led to the establishment of a contested territory in which a significant Catholic Irish minority remained in Northern Ireland. Partition, argues Moxon-Brown (1983), created a legacy of bitterness for both religious groups. For Protestants living in the North, Irish identity became something to be rejected. For Catholics, on the other hand, rejecting British identity was associated with denying the legitimacy of partition. Since partition Irish nationalists have continuously sought to re-unify with the Republic of Ireland (Phoenix 1994).[16]

Hegemonic control

One method for managing conflict is hegemonic control. Lustick (1979: 328) defines this system of control in divided societies as 'the maintenance of a relationship in which the superior power of one segment is mobilised to enforce stability by constraining the political actions and opportunities of another segment or segments'. Hegemonic control often requires the oppression of large numbers of people whose fate happens to fall within the 'sub-unit' population. Power is monopolised by the dominant group, which serves to diffuse potential challenges to state order (McGarry and O'Leary 1993: 23). Shneckener (2004) identifies three variants of systems involving hegemonic control. The first is coercive domination in which the authoritarian elite uses force or terror to obtain and retain power. Apartheid South Africa under Afrikaner minority rule is one such example of coercive domination. Under the apartheid regime enforced segregation was enacted with millions forcibly removed from their homes and placed in settlement communities. A pass system was enacted under which any person from the

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[16] Repartition, as a potentially viable option for settling the conflict, was first noted in Richard Rose's (1976) work *Northern Ireland: Time of Choice.*

sub-unit populations found not carrying a pass were arrested and held, and in some cases violently beaten and killed. Other examples include Israel's occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in which the Palestinian majority was tightly controlled by the Israeli military regime (Weingrod 2003).

The second system of control is known as co-opted self-rule in which the dominant group rules by the principle of 'divide and rule' (Schneckener 2004: 22). While the subordinate groups may have access to certain high level positions within politics, these are mostly symbolic and involve no real power or influence. The British colonial system employed this strategy throughout its Empire, employing local elites at high-level positions in attempts to appease the local populations through giving them the perception that they enjoyed political representation. Finally, Schneckener outlines limited self-rule as a system of hegemonic control. This system allows for a limited amount of self-governance for subordinate groups while denying them any real political influence and power.

The system of government enacted after the partition of Northern Ireland in 1921 was arguably a case of limited self-rule (see for example O'Leary and Arthur 1990). Northern Ireland was governed by a home-rule parliament that enabled a system of localised hegemonic rule over the Catholic minority. In the first elections of the new House of Commons, unionists took 40 seats and the remaining 12 seats were divided between nationalists and Sinn Fein (Budge and O'Leary 1973: 142). Between 1921 and 1969, unionists monopolised the state apparatus, security force and judicial system, and practiced economic discrimination in employment and the allocation of housing (McGarry and O'Leary 1994; Ruane and Todd 2003). Accordingly, the unionist majority was able to exercise political, cultural and economic domination over the Catholic population. For example, the official state education system was designed to teach from the Protestant faith. And while control over Catholic schools was transferred to the Catholic Church in the late 1920s, these schools relied heavily on financial support from the unionist majoritarian government (Gallagher 2004a). The Catholic population was also subject to discriminatory practices in the allocation of housing by Unionist local government. Moreover, the majority of senior public sector positions were held by Protestants and the same pattern of discrimination was found within local

government (Barritt and Carter 1972: 96). O'Leary and Arthur (1990) argue that the current conflict in Northern Ireland resulted from the breakdown of this system of hegemonic control in the wake of Catholic civil rights protests that occurred across Northern Ireland in 1968–69 in response to unionist majoritarian rule and its attendant resulting inequalities.

The domination over and oppression of one or more sub-groups within a given territory is hardly a desirable method for conflict management. It is clear that hegemonic control, far from creating and maintaining stability, very often tends to further intensify and prolong conflict. In South Africa the apartheid regime collapsed after years of international pressure and numerous internal uprisings and violence clashes with police forces. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission has since been established to deal with the legacy of the apartheid regime under which countless people lost their lives, homes and possessions (Wilson 2001). Unionist majority rule in Northern Ireland was brought to an end when civil rights protests erupted and many from the Catholic Irish community mobilised over economic and social grievances and allegations of discrimination by the state. This, in turn, sparked a number of riots that led to widespread violence and culminated in the beginning of a protracted conflict that continued for 30 years.

Electoral engineering

Electoral engineering for divided societies has also been put forward as a democratic method for managing and reducing conflict. As a major proponent of this approach, Benjamin Reilly (2001, 2002, 2006), has argued one reason that democracy is inherently problematic in conflict-prone societies is because of the pressures for politicization of identity issues. For example, in societies divided along ethnic lines, it is easier for political parties to attract voter support by appealing to ethnic allegiances rather than other cross-community commonalities such as class. As a result, politicians are incentivised to mobilize followers along ethnic lines, since playing 'the ethnic card' can bring electoral success (Reilly 2006). Adding to the politicization of identity issues, a process of 'outbidding' begins whereby rival intra-communal parties try to attract support. As a result of this, the locus of political competition moves towards the

extremes and emotive rhetoric is employed to play up differences between groups (see also Mitchell and Evans 2009). This has the effect of strengthening division.

In order to counter these tendencies, proponents of institutional engineering call for the creation of incentives through the electoral system that serve to moderate political parties. One such method that has attracted significant attention is to make politicians reciprocally dependent on votes from groups other than their own through the use of vote-pooling 'preferential' electoral systems, thereby creating incentives to 'make moderation pay' (Horowitz 1990; Reilly 2002). This method, known as 'centripetalism' (see Horowitz 1985; Sisk 1995; Reilly 2001, 2002) aims to provide a 'centripetal spin' (Sisk 1995: 19) to politics in divided societies through encouraging political leaders to moderate their platforms and by creating disincentives for extremist outbidding (Horowitz 1985; Sisk 1995). Two types of electoral systems for encouraging moderation in divided societies have dominated the academic literature.

The first type of electoral system, most notably associated with the work of Donald Horowitz (1985, 2008), is to design electoral rules that encourage vote-pooling, bargaining and accommodation between rival political parties. This, it is argued, creates incentives for alliances to form across cleavages. Horowitz (1985, 2008) advocates the use of voting systems that promote electoral integration and support 'catch all' political parties that oblige politicians to appeal across group divides. This model aims to promote majorities that actively seek support from more moderate sections of society, thus bolstering the middle ground.[17] Electoral incentives are given to those ethnically-based parties that are willing to appeal to voters from groups other than their own (usually in coalition with another ethnic group). The underlying mechanism is that in

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[17] While Horowitz supports electoral design for divided societies, he is also a strong proponent of civil society approaches to peace-building. Indeed, Horowitz (1991: 140-141) cautions against overemphasizing the role of elites in peace-building. He writes, 'there is no reason to think automatically that elites will use their leadership position to reduce rather than pursue conflict.' This line of argument is endorsed by others (see Dixon 1997a; Hechter 2000; Darby and Mac Ginty 2003; Hamber and Kelly 2005; Hadden 2005; Coakley 2008), and is discussed in the section below on the critiques of consociationalism and in detail in chapter 8.

order to appeal to voters other than one's own and to form interethnic coalitions in a conflict-prone society, ethnically based parties must demonstrate that they are moderate and willing to compromise on divisive issues (Horowitz 2008: 1216–17). Variants of this type of system have been used in Lebanon, where ethnic proportions in each constituency are pre-assigned, and therefore incentivizing parties to present an ethnically mixed slate of candidates (Reilly 2002).

The second type of electoral system, most notably associated with the work of Reilly (2001, 2002), although also endorsed by Horowitz (2004), is argued to be the most 'powerful' system for encouraging accommodation. Through the use of a well-crafted preferential voting system, electors indicate how they would vote among the remaining candidates if their preferred candidate were to lose (Reilly 2002). Preferential electoral systems include the use of the 'alternative vote' or the 'single transferable vote' (STV) depending on whether the election is held in a single-member (using alternative vote) or multi-member (using STV) district. [18] As Reilly (2002: 158) explains, because alternative vote and STV both enable electors to rank candidates in their order of preference, they can encourage politicians in divided societies to campaign not just for first-preference votes from their own community, but for second-preference votes from other groups as well. In order to attract second-level support, candidates may need to appeal to groups other than their own. Adding to this, where a moderate or non-aligned 'middle' part of the electorate exists, candidates may need to move to the centre on policy issues to attract these voters.

The STV voting system was used in the 1998 Northern Ireland Assembly elections held in the wake of the 1998 Belfast Agreement, resulting in the appointment of a First Minister and deputy First Minister for the new devolved power-sharing government in Northern Ireland. [19] Reilly (2002) contends that the use of the STV

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[18] STV is also used in Ireland and Malta, and in Australia for upper house elections as well as for many elections at the state level (see Farrell and McAllister 2000).

[19] STV was first used in Ireland in in 1919 when the British government sought to protect minority groups by introducing STV into local elections and into the new parliamentary institutions. In 1932, the new

system was beneficial to the outcome of the elections because it encouraged those voting for the anti-agreement unionist party—namely the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) —to transfer their second-order votes to the pro-agreement Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). Moreover, Reilly (2002) argues that the STV system was also instrumental in encouraging Sinn Fein to adopt more moderate positions on certain policy issues in order to attract second-order votes from the more centrist nationalist party the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP). STV is used in all elections in Northern Ireland, with the exception of the United Kingdom Parliamentary general elections.[20] Indeed, the STV system has been championed by McGarry and O'Leary (2009) who contend that it has promoted moderation among Northern Ireland's main political parties.

There is some evidence to suggest that such an electoral system may be producing dividends with political leaders of the more traditional parties making inter-communal appeals. A recent example was the announcement by First Minister Peter Robinson (DUP) at his party's annual conference in 2012 that the DUP would in future seek out Catholic votes. He was quoted in the Belfast Telegraph as stating, 'As the leader of a party that seeks to represent the whole community I'm not prepared to write off over 40% of our population as being out of reach'.[21]

Yet while STV has been the preferred method of vote counting in Northern Ireland, it has not led to an increase in the popularity of the more moderate parties. As elections since 1998 indicate, both Sinn Fein and the DUP have prospered, while the more moderate SDLP and UUP have been beset with difficulties and internal division (Tonge 2003: 39). Research by Hayes et al. (2005) finds that despite efforts to enhance the middle ground in politics, Northern Ireland has become more, not less, divided since

Northern Ireland House of Commons used the STV system in electing the members of the Northern Ireland Senate (see Coakley 2009b).

[20] See the Electoral Reform Society of Northern Ireland at <www.electoral-reform.org.uk>.

[21] See 'DUP leader Peter Robinson makes bid to win Catholic vote', 26 November 2012, *Belfast Telegraph*, accessed 3 January 2013 at <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/politics/dup-leader-peter-robinson-makes-bid-to-win-catholic-vote-16242670.html#ixzz2HWNaZ2pJ>.

1998 with regards to electoral behaviour and party preferences. Indeed, at the 2011 Northern Ireland Assembly elections the DUP secured 38 seats and Sinn Fein 29 seats, while the UUP and the SDLP secured only 16 and 14 seats respectively.[22] And while there is some evidence to suggest that political leaders are appealing to voters across the divide, in the Northern Ireland Assembly election in 2011 only 2 per cent of DUP transfer votes came from Catholic voters (Nolan 2012). Indeed, while STV may provide incentives for the more hard-line parties to moderate their positions in order to attract more voters, it has not incentivised voters to vote for candidates across the communal divide.

In a society with mutually reinforcing cleavages, it may be unduly optimistic to expect that such institutional engineering will have any significant impact (at least in the short to medium term) where divisive ideologies form the basis of politics and are reflected in other arenas of social life (Duffy and Evans 1997).

Consociationalism or power-sharing

The most influential of all institutional approaches prescribed to the conflict in Northern Ireland is consociationalism- defined by Arend Lijpahrt (1969: 216) as 'government by elite cartel designed to turn a democracy with a fragmented political culture into a stable democracy.' Lijphart (1969) first derived the theory of consociationalism as an explanation for the presence of stability in societies in which there were high degrees of social heterogeneity—namely in Austria, Belgium, Switzerland and The Netherlands (McGarry and O'Leary 2009).[23] Lijphart (1969: 207) argued that stability in these societies could be explained by the existence of a system whereby political elites were able to make 'deliberate efforts to counteract the immobilizing and unstabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation' (1969: 212). As the theory developed, so did its normative implications. For example, Lijphart (1977) argued that consociationalism, as a theory for deeply divided societies, had to

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[22] See Northern Ireland Assembly elections at <http://www.ark.ac.uk/elections/>.

[23] Andeweg (2008) argues that Austria, Belgium and The Netherlands are now 'post-consociational'.

acknowledge the durability of mutually exclusive group cleavages and the strength of collective group identities. And rather than attempting to gives less credence to these divided identity groups (through majoritarian rule) or to dilute them (through an integrationist approach) they should be used as 'building blocks' through which a power-sharing arrangement incorporated into the governance structure and social institutions could provide stability (Lijphart 1977: 45).

The overall assumption of consociationalism is that 'rival segments may coexist peacefully if there is little contact between them and consequently little occasion for conflict' (Lijphart 1977: 140). For consociational theorists, then, the key element for creating a sustainable peace is institutional engineering from above. The aim is to achieve stable settlement through elite negotiation. Indeed, for Lijphart (1977: 1) the role of elites for maintaining stability is paramount, since it is through their cooperation that 'the destructive forces inherent in a plural society will be mitigated'.

In its original formulation, consociational theory put forward four classic conditions. First, government by grand coalition made up of representatives from all the main rival segments. This coalition cooperates to govern the territory through political decision making in an executive body. Second, mutual group veto rights, whereby each community is able to prevent changes, by means of veto, that would put their vital interests at risk. This is an important element in the consociational approach to institutional design, since it acts as a safeguard for minorities in a grand coalition. Third, proportional representation for communities in the legislature and in the bureaucracy. This element provides a method for allocating civil service appointments and financial resources among the different segments in an equitable fashion. Fourth, cultural, or segmental, autonomy is provided so that communal groups can run their own internal affairs. This is mainly in the areas of education and culture (e.g. on matters that do not affect the common interests of the grand coalition).

A closer look at the defining criteria of consociationalism, however, reveals some important qualifications. Coakley (2009a: 123), for example, suggests that the first and the third criteria can be collapsed into one as the third naturally incorporates the first. That is, the principle of proportionality necessarily implies grand coalition. Additionally, Coakley (2009a) argues that the notion of segmental autonomy is not a

natural fit within the consociatonal model. This is because whereas consociation refers to a form of sharing power, segmental autonomy refers to the division of power between groups and is thus part of a different category of conflict management approaches.

Consociational structures have been applied to Lebanon, Malaysia, Cyprus, South Africa during the transition from apartheid rule, and in Fiji—although this attempt at consociation was short lived ending in a military coup. Institutions elsewhere have been classified as semi-consociational when they have possessed some but not all of the features mentioned above, such as Canada and Israel (see Lijphart 1977).

Consociationalism in Northern Ireland

Consociational theory was first discussed in relation to Northern Ireland in Lijphart's (1975) article on the 'Northern Ireland problem'. However, Lijphart (1975: 105) argued that while power-sharing was theoretically possible it would be 'unworkable in Northern Ireland'. It is interesting to note that this statement came in the wake of the failure of the short-lived Sunningdale Agreement 1973–74 which contained consociational principles and which was the first attempt at power-sharing in the province. The Sunningdale Agreement was crafted following escalations in violence between unionist and nationalist paramilitaries in 1972 during which time the British government suspended the Northern Ireland parliament at Stormont and implemented direct rule from Westminster.[24] Following the presentation of a Green Paper by the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) entitled *The Future of Northern Ireland: A Paper for Discussion* in October 1972, the NIO set out a series of proposals aimed at breaking unionist monopoly on power by introducing a power-sharing executive that would bring unionist and nationalist parties into a new political arrangement (Wolff 2001). In this context, in December 1973 the Sunningdale Agreement was negotiated between the Official Unionists, the SDLP and the Alliance Party. The settlement involved a British-Irish dimension with the creation of a council of Ireland at the insistence of the SDLP (Dixon 2001).

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[24] Direct rule refers to the system of government through which Northern Ireland is governed directly and solely by the United Kingdom government at Westminster.

The Sunningdale Agreement would only last until May 1974 when it was brought down during the 14-day long strike by the Ulster Workers' Council, who disagreed with the inclusion into legislation of a council of Ireland. This highlighted the fact that institutional engineering requires not only the support of the elites, but also the support of the communities that they represent. Indeed, the pro-power sharing Official Unionists headed by Brian Faulkner only represented a minority of the unionist population (Dixon 1997b). The DUP and Vanguard moved to form an anti-power-sharing alliance calling themselves the United Ulster Unionist Council (UUUC) (O'Duffy 1999). And at the British general election held in February 1974, power-sharing unionists were 'decimated' in the polls—winning only 13.1 per cent of the vote (Dixon 1997b: 6). Indeed, the anti-Sunningdale parties won a clear majority. The final blow to the Sunningdale Agreement came about in May 1974 during the 14-day long strike by Ulster Workers' Council. This strike, Dixon (1997b: 7) argues 'paralyzed Northern Ireland and brought the power-sharing executive to its knees'.[25]

In the years following the collapse of the Sunningdale Agreement the British and Irish governments sought a settlement that would draw cross-community support. The signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 was an important step towards the realization of such a settlement (Guelke 2009; McGarry and O'Leary 2009). In the Anglo-Irish Agreement the Republic of Ireland was given a role in policy making in Northern Ireland which garnered positive support from nationalists and republicans. Importantly, reference was made to the prospect that at some point in the future a power sharing agreement on a devolved government could be reached between unionists and nationalists (see O'Leary 1987). A commitment by the United Kingdom government to finding a settlement was also outlined in the Downing Street Declaration in 1993 and the publication by the British and Irish governments of the Joint Framework Document in 1995. As Tonge (2000: 50) contends, 'The Framework Document provided the basis for the Good Friday Agreement'. However, support from unionists of a new agreement was reliant upon the restoration of an Irish Republican Army (IRA) ceasefire.

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[25] Tonge (2000: 43) also notes that even with greater unionist support for the Sunningdale Agreement, continued republican violence would have placed the working of the agreement under considerable strain.

Moreover, conditional upon the restoration of a ceasefire, it was asserted that a new agreement should be the product of local negotiations that would allow the input of representatives from loyalist paramilitary groups, the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) and the DUP as well as from republicans (Tonge 2000: 51).

The Agreement was reached in the multi-party negotiations on 10 April 1998, providing a framework for the establishment of a new power sharing devolved government. The role of the political elites, most notably Prime Minister Tony Blair, An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern and President Bill Clinton, was of particular importance in sealing agreement. The leadership of Sinn Fein and the UUP were also crucial in winning support for the Agreement among their supporters—as was the final event of the campaign involving a concert by the music band U2 in which lead singer Bono appeared on stage with the soon-to-be First Minister David Trimble and leader of the SDLP John Hume (Ruane and Todd 1999). Finally, on 22 May referendums in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland secured the support of the majority of the people with 71 per cent in Northern Ireland and 94 per cent in the Republic of Ireland voting in favour of a power-sharing, devolved Northern Ireland Assembly and Northern Ireland Executive.

The Agreement is, as Ruane and Todd (1999: 16) contend, 'a highly complex, well-crafted document'. It contains strong egalitarian and liberal elements designed to correct the inequalities between Protestants and Catholics. These include the establishment of a human rights commission, the provision for the establishment of a civic forum to consult and report on social, economic and cultural issues, an investigation of current policing practices, and cross border links through a north-south council as well as a British-Irish council.

The Agreement is also 'strongly consociational' (O'Flynn 2003).[26] For example, the institutional framework set up under the Agreement explicitly recognises the existence of mutually exclusive identity groups by stipulating that both the British and

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[26] A number of commentators agree that the Agreement is consociational. See, for example, Bew 2000; Horowitz 2001a; Obershall and Kendall-Palmer 2005; Taylor 2006.

Irish governments 'recognise the birthright of all the people of Northern Ireland to identify themselves and be accepted as Irish or British or both, as they may choose' (NIO 1998: Annex A 1(vi)). Furthermore, as part of the Agreement's consociational structure, it requires that all 108 members of the new devolved Northern Ireland Assembly state their communal affiliation as 'nationalist', 'unionist', or 'other'. This measure underpins the group veto powers as well as weighted majority provisions because it effectively designates members to the appropriate communal bloc. As a result, the Agreement and its institutions give legitimacy to the 'two traditions' model. As Little (2003: 24) asserts, the 'two traditions' model underpins the Agreement and this is particularly evident in the provisions for designation, parallel consent and weighted majority voting.

A special report commissioned by the United States Institute for Peace contends that the Agreement is based on an assumption of continued conflict management. This assumption, it is argued, is influenced by the dominant view underlying the Agreement that Northern Ireland is divided into two distinct and irreconcilable communities: one Protestant/unionist/British and the other Catholic/nationalist/Irish (Farry 2006). Moreover, power is shared in the Northern Ireland Executive—a joint executive based on cross-community power sharing, with the First Minister and Deputy First Minister holding equal authority. At its inception these positions were held by David Trimble of the UUP and Seamus Mallon of the SDLP respectively.

The Agreement is not, however, representative of classic consociationalism. As Stephen Farry (2009: 167) points out, the traditional concept of consociationalism was designed for divided societies marked by religious, linguistic or ethnic divisions, rather than national differences. Yet, consociationalism does not make any fundamental distinction between polities that are linguistically, ethno-nationally, or religiously divided. Self-identified 'revisionist consociationalists' McGarry and O'Leary (2009: 24) argue that a specific diagnosis of the Northern Irish conflict as bi-national in nature is crucial for an accurate explanation and compelling prescription. Accordingly, consociationalism as it is applied to Northern Ireland has been modified to take into account the bi-national nature of the conflict, and the need for external cross-border

institutions as well as institutions linking the sovereign governments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.[27]

Adapting consociationalism to the Northern Ireland case, O'Leary (1999) describes the settlement as 'consociation plus'. By this O'Leary is alluding to the added external institutional links including the establishment of cross-border links through North-South and British-Irish councils. Conversely, Coakley (2009a) has described the Agreement as 'consociation minus'. It is consociation minus because the condition of segmental autonomy in Lijphart's classic prescription of consociational democracy is not present in the Northern Irish case. The closest form of segmental autonomy is found within the de facto separate networks of Catholic and Protestant schools, but as Coakley (2009a: 124) points out this 'hardly amounts to a system of segmental autonomy'. The approach used in Northern Ireland can therefore be understood as a hybrid consociational model, incorporating many features of the classic prescription while modifying others.

The ongoing question regarding the future constitutional status of Northern Ireland adds yet another unique feature to the Agreement. That is, although the Agreement formally recognises the current constitutional status of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom, its status remains conditional on the majority of people wishing to remain as such (NIO 1998: Annex A, 1(iii)). If, at some point in the future, the majority of people are in favour of seceding from the United Kingdom to join the Republic of Ireland, then the Northern Ireland secretary of state is legally bound to call a referendum on the matter (NIO 1998: Annex A, 1(iv)). As such, the Agreement contains an acknowledgement on the part of both British unionists and Irish nationalists that the constitutional status of Northern Ireland could change.

The Agreement, therefore, offers an interim settlement and also provides a framework within which the ongoing territorial dispute can be settled in the long term (Ruane and Todd 2003). If literally interpreted, the Agreement sends mixed messages and false promises to both unionist and nationalist political aspirations—this is the so-

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[27] See for instance McGarry and O'Leary 2004, 2006a, 2009.

called 'terrible beauty' of the Agreement (Wilford and Wilson 2003). For unionists, the status quo is, at least for now, preserved. For nationalists, the Agreement gives hope to those who seek a united Ireland.[28]

Consociational approaches have been vigorously criticised.[29] One of the most fundamental criticisms directed at consociationalism is that by freezing social cleavages and apparently accepting identity as fixed, consociational regimes may actually reinforce or even aggravate the kinds of conflict that they were designed to manage (Taylor 1994; Dixon 1996, 1997a; Wilford and Wilson 2003; Dryzek 2005; Horowitz 2008). For instance, in the Northern Irish case, by obliging Assembly members to self-designate as either 'nationalist', 'unionist' or 'other', the incentive for members will be to choose either main communal bloc in order to have some influence when political decisions require a weighted majority.

In addition, the political and social communication and interaction of ordinary people tends to be directed into within-bloc channels in consociational regimes. This in turn creates obstacles to deliberative interactions across different blocs below the elite level. This may undermine the prospects for different groups to engage in constructive ways and live together through deliberative and democratic means (Dryzek 2005: 222–238). Some commentators go as far as to claim that consociationalism 'conveys a rather bleak view of humanity' as 'the jealous regard for identity afforded by high fences...betoken an endemic distrust between relevant peoples' (Wilford 1992: 31–32).

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[28] Note that while this apparent contradiction within the Agreement has been flagged as a potential source of further conflict, the hope of securing the constitutional status of Northern Ireland through majority rule was arguably the attraction for competing groups to engage in the negotiations which led to the signing of the Agreement. Moreover, Guelke (2009) notes that the constitutional question is not a point of anxiety for many unionists. This is because a nationalist majority in Northern Ireland may not eventuate for decades and even then, survey evidence suggests that a much higher proportion of Catholics favour maintaining the link with the United Kingdom when compared to Protestant support for a united Ireland.

[29] For some of the most notable and detailed criticisms see for example see for example Barry 1975; Horowitz 1985, 2002, 2001; Dixon 1996, 1997a; Taylor 1994, 2006, 2009; Hechter 2000; Dryzek 2005; Oberschall and Kendall-Palmer 2005; Farry 2009; Wilford 2009.

The consociational model is also criticised for overemphasizing the role of elites. For consociationalists, the management of conflict in divided societies is best explained by the actions of the political elites rather than other societal variables (Dixon 1997a: 4). This is problematic in that this model of conflict resolution depends principally on the motivation of the elites. That is, it assumes that those in positions of power are in agreement (or can be brought into agreement) about how to facilitate the transition towards peace. This concern is given credence by the remarks of the then soon-to-be first minister of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Rev. Ian Paisley, who at a DUP conference in 1998 stated, 'there is no such thing as a peace process' (quoted in Darby and Mac Ginty 2003: 6). Moreover, Darby and Mac Ginty note that Paisley was not the only politician in Northern Ireland at the time to suggest this.

Individuals in positions of power in divided societies may try to undermine the system in order to gain maximum resources for themselves at the expense of gaining consensus and diffusing intergroup conflict (Hechter 2000: 137). Horowitz argues further that the presupposition that political leaders in severely divided societies are less ethnocentric than their followers (and therefore willing to forego zero-sum outcomes for cooperative schemes) is not generally well supported (1991, 2008). In some countries, he argues, leaders are more tolerant than followers but in other countries the opposite is true. Indeed, as Budge and O'Leary (1973: 373) argued more than 30 years ago, 'there was nothing in the basic nature of Irish religion to link it irreversibly with party conflict …The connection was fostered by politicians for their own advantage.'

Also relevant to this critique of consociationalism is the significant body of research that finds that political elites may play up perceived differences between groups in the pursuit of intra-group power and representation, further exacerbating nationalist conflict, rather than regulating it effectively. [30] Party platforms become characterised by what Mitchell and Evans (2009: 148) call 'ethnic outbidding' between rival parties within each communal bloc in which extremist and emotive rhetoric is used to mobilize their community (Mitchell and Evans 2009). Indeed, while proponents of

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[30] See for instance Hadden 2005; Gormley-Heenan and Mac Ginty 2008; Coakley 2008.

liberal consociations McGarry and O'Leary (2007: 675) have advocated for a system that rewards 'whatever salient political identities emerge in democratic elections' in practice this has meant the persistence and institutionalisation of divisive national identities.

Within Northern Ireland, the main political parties, in particular the DUP and Sinn Fein, advocate the competing constitutional claims of their divided electorates and as such help to reinforce differences in national allegiance (Moxon-Browne 1983). An example of this is evident in the following excerpt from a speech by Rev. Ian Paisley, then Leader of the DUP delivered to the DUP Annual Conference in Belfast, 4 February 2006:

> The Democratic Unionist Party was born in conflict, and
> unlike others, will never surrender to Ulster's enemies… We must
> go forward in strength. That strength must be imparted. We are
> weaklings in and of ourselves. Dependence on the power of God
> outside of ourselves [sic] is the only strength. This comes by
> prayer… In the Battle of Britain our nation prayed and we were
> miraculously delivered from the threatened invasion. In the battle
> of Europe our nation prayed and the miracle of the Normandy
> landings took place.

Here, Paisley is utilizing British historical memory from the Second World War and employs both theological and historical rhetoric to legitimate his party's claim to be the true defender of Ulster. Such rhetoric is not intended to be objective, but rather serves the purpose of justifying the group's present existence. Dryzek's (2010: 328) notion of bonding rhetoric is a useful concept here. Bonding rhetoric is described as the kind of rhetoric that is 'likely to deepen divisions with out-groups, to invoke dangerous emotions, to mobilize passions, to move groups to extremes'. By utilizing emotive language, Paisley is firmly situating himself, his party, and Ulster within the British state.

Whilst the power sharing arrangement has significantly changed the political landscape in Northern Ireland to the extent that cooperation between the main political

parties is now possible, the real prospects for fruitful interaction between the two group blocs nevertheless remains limited. O'Leary (1999: 78) contends that consociational settlements should be transitional, since 'by protecting and making secure the most presently dominant identities they may assist in diminishing their public salience, and permitting a deeper pluralism to flourish'. However, Northern Ireland remains, it seems, an 'arena of conflict' (Graham and Nash 2006: 276) between identities and the formal procedures of consociational democracy. For example, as demonstrated above, hard-line rhetoric continues within Northern Ireland's main political parties. And outbursts of violence, usually in the form of riots and bomb threats, continue within and between communities. It can be argued, then, that while the consociational model has provided conditions for conflict management, it cannot claim to have reached the longer term goal of conflict resolution.

The civil society approach to peace-building

The persistence of mutually reinforcing cleavages and collective group identities—expressed both at the grass-roots within communities and at the elite level within the structures of government—remains a central feature of life within Northern Ireland. Coupled with persisting high degrees of segregation in key areas of social life, Northern Ireland remains a divided society. As noted above, institutional approaches may in fact institutionalize mutually exclusive identities and leave little room for engagement across the divide. The heavy emphasis placed on structural and political engineering in divided societies makes such approaches much less effective in addressing grass roots issues, such as intergroup hostilities, reparation claims or processes of reconciliation. These are issues that can undermine the value and stability of institutional changes if they are not addressed. Peace that is achieved through institutional design alone may be short lived due to the existence of underlying group hostilities that erode the structural and political conditions for peace.

A research report reviewing the comparative literature on public policies towards improving inter-community relations in divided societies concluded, 'many initiatives bring together people at the level of influential leaders and the elites but they do not increase the level of contact, communication and understanding at the level of the ordinary citizen' (McCartney 2003: 2). Yet, long term stability is arguably dependent

upon whether institutions provide conditions that may lead to greater social cohesion (O'Flynn and Russell 2005). In practice, however, it is often the case that structural and institutional change is emphasised, while attempts to deal with the problems that persist at the grass roots level are neglected (Darby and Mac Ginty 2003: 263).

Whereas the institutional approach favours elite-level conflict management, the civil society approach challenges ethno-national group politics, arguing for a greater emphasis on transforming structures of division at the grass-roots (Taylor 2009: 327). Importantly, proponents of this approach regard identities as being malleable to change arguing that 'to think otherwise is to run the risk of trapping individuals within rigidly defined collective identities' and thereby 'strengthening the hands of those within each group who wish to impose on its members uniform beliefs and standards of conduct' (O'Flynn 2007: 136).

A number of different approaches for tackling intergroup conflict can be classified as a type of civil society approach. Taylor (2009) explains that this approach may entail promoting contact, reconciliation and desegregation through cross-community networks and initiatives and through the formulation of public policies that tackle enduring inequalities and encourage greater deliberative interaction. Here I distinguish between two main types that have been discussed within academic literature in relation to the Northern Irish case. First there are those that seek to encourage reconciliation through deliberative interaction within the public sphere. And while at present, they remain largely theoretical prescriptions for social transformation there is reason to believe that they may prove to have considerable practical utility in the future (see Dryzek 2005, 2006; Addis 2009; Luskin et al. forthcoming).[31]

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[31] Northern Ireland's first deliberative poll was conducted in 2007 by the Centre for Deliberative Democracy at Stanford University in collaboration with Newcastle University and Queen's University Belfast. The research team consisted of Ian O'Flynn, David Russell, James Fishkin and Robert C. Luskin. The sample consisted of parents from both main communities in Northern Ireland deliberating on the public policy issue of children's educational future. Professor James Fishkin, Director of the Centre for Deliberative Democracy at Stanford University stated, 'we put a microcosm of the two communities in a room where they could think together about issues confronting their common future. They became more

Second, are those approaches that seek to promote contact between identity groups through, for example, the creation of public policies to encourage integration within schools or to tackle segregation in residential and urban areas. At their core, these approaches borrow from intergroup contact theory (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998; Brown et al. 1999; Brown and Hewstone 2005), which as Durrheim and Dixon (2005) argue is one of the most enduring and frequently applied approaches to the study of intergroup relations in divided societies. Intergroup contact theory originated in response to calls for the desegregation of schools in America and was influential in the United States Supreme Court's ruling in favour of desegregation in *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954). And as I will demonstrate, it also has a long history in empirical academic research in Northern Ireland.[32]

Deliberation for divided societies

For deliberative democratic theorists the challenge has been to identify and create avenues through which opposing groups with mutually contradictory assertions of identity can channel their competing discourses in the public sphere. These theorists are hopeful that such deliberation can foster an environment of mutual understanding and cooperation. Deliberative democratic theorist John Dryzek (2005, 2006) argues, for instance, for a discursive democracy that can handle contentious group issues within a divided society. Dryzek argues that deliberative democracy 'can process contentious issues in a politics of engagement in the public sphere, even if it has problems doing so when it comes to deliberation within the institutions of the state' (2005: 223). Dryzek argues that as '[c]ulturally, [for instance] there are few differences between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, and between Serbs, Croats, and the world's most

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informed, they changed their views and they found a greater basis for mutual understanding' (Stanford University Press Release, 31 January 2007 accessed at <http://cdd.stanford.edu/polls/nireland/2007/omagh-results.pdf>. See also the forthcoming article by Luskin et al. forthcoming.

[32] See for example Waddell and Cairns 1986, 1991; Darby and Cairns 1998; Pettigrew 1998; Trew 1998; Cairns and Hewstone 2000; Niens et al. 2003; Hewstone et al. 2006; Hayes et al. 2007; Hayes and McAllister 2009a.

secular Muslim community in former Yugoslavia' it is a mistake to treat identity conflicts as merely a matter of multiculturalism. Rather, he contends, identities are bound up in discourses. As such, the promotion of a public sphere, at a distance from the state, can offer alternative forums in which discourses can be channelled and framed in less divisive ways (2005: 224). O'Flynn (2007: 744) backs up this claim arguing that the creation of a public space within which citizens of a divided society can engage with one another across group lines is crucial for social transformation.

There are at least two types of institutions within the public sphere through which people may engage in deliberation.[33] The first consists of informal social networks of individuals from different class, religious or ethnic backgrounds. Such networks are created through a series of local actions in response to concerns or issues that may affect all citizens. For instance, local and global issue-based social networks have been formed in response to environmental, health care or welfare concerns. These networks cut across other cleavages to connect individuals with common concerns.

The second type of institution consists of what Dryzek calls 'discursive designs'. These are forums such as citizens' juries, deliberative polls, planning cells, policy dialogues and participatory problem-solving exercises. These forums may be supported by non-government organizations (NGOs), governments, academic bodies or foundations and may be small scale or attempt to link large groups in deliberation. Exercises sponsored by the AmericaSpeaks Foundation, for example, were established to facilitate and promote active deliberation among citizens and leaders on important policy issues (Dryzek 2005: 230). Within Northern Ireland, a number of small-scale issue-focused community forums have been established at various points during the

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[33] Note that while Dryzek (2005: 220) proposes that deliberation in divided societies should be held in the public sphere 'at a distance from the sovereign state', elsewhere deliberative democracy has also been proposed as an institutional approach for fostering political stability in divided societies (see O'Flynn 2006, 2007). Indeed, O'Flynn (2007: 744) argues that without the right sorts of institutional conditions the influence of discourses will be significantly reduced. He contends, 'If deliberative democracy is to provide meaningful guidance for deeply divided societies, it must therefore take questions of institutional design extremely seriously, no matter how difficult these questions prove in practice.'

peace process. The most notable of these was the Derry Shared City Forum, which was established to deal with local inter-communal disputes following unrest in the city over the previous marching season. The forum met between May 1998 and June 1999 during which time a range of individuals and organizations discussed the impact of parades in the city. Unfortunately after only a year in operation, disunity and a perceived lack of organization and resources led to the breakdown of the forum (Kelly 2006).

Even if such forums are short lived or lack a direct influence on policy processes they may be important insofar as they provide a space in which exploration across differences can take place. In 2001, for example, a deliberative poll was conducted in Australia among randomly selected citizens on issues with regards to relations between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. The poll was televised and as such the proceedings reached a wide audience. Whilst the results of the poll had no immediate impact on public policy, the fact that the poll took place constituted, what Dryzek (2005: 231) calls 'one moment in a long process of reconciliation across a deep divide.'

South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission which was conducted in 1995–98 is another example of public deliberation where engagement and reflection across racial and ethnic lines was promoted. The Commission was a deliberative institution whose terms of reference were the product of broad public debate (Dryzek 2005: 235). The Commission offered a forum where perpetrators and victims of apartheid-era crimes told their stories and dealt with issues such as healing, apology, acknowledgement and, hopefully, forgiveness. The South African process also comprised mixed-race discussion groups, and efforts to rethink identity in the media, educational institutions, and elsewhere in the public sphere (Dryzek 2005: 235).

Within Northern Ireland the issue of whether a Truth Commission for Northern Ireland should be established remains a matter of debate and indeed there are major religious divisions on this issue. Indeed, the management of emotions in the wake of conflict is rife with complications. As Brewer and Hayes (2011a: 7) note, '[p]art of the problem here is who constitute the victims of conflict and how they might be differentiated'. For example, the DUP has called for a re-definition of 'victim' arguing that current understandings of a 'one fits all' definition alienate many victims of (republican) terrorism (DUP 2003: 5). Conversely, for nationalists the inclusion of and

equality for victims of state-centred violence was found to be of particular importance in a study by Lundy and McGovern (2005). Brewer and Hayes (2011b) argue that the ambiguity surrounding the categories 'victims' and 'perpetrators' in post-conflict societies creates serious policy dilemmas for societies emerging out of conflict.

Adding to this complexity, research in Northern Ireland has found that attitudes towards truth and justice differed in significant ways between nationalists and unionists (Lundy and McGovern 2005). For example, in a localised attempt at truth telling organised by Lundy and McGovern (2005) the majority of unionist respondents were found to be wary of exercises in truth telling with many of those interviewed concerned that truth and justice issues were part of a 'republican agenda' to 'attack the state' (Lundy and McGovern 2005: 76). In a later study, Lundy and McGovern (2008) noted a high level of community distrust of the idea of a formal truth commission. In particular they found scepticism that such a commission would be transparent and egalitarian in nature. However, the authors did note that survey research indicated that high numbers of people supported the idea of community-based initiatives as a means to help people come to terms with the past.

Proposals for the establishment of a civic forum have also been highlighted as a means through which members of civil society can engage with a range of issues affecting the people of Northern Ireland. Indeed, strand one, paragraph 34 of the Agreement provided for a civic forum to comprise of representatives from the business, trade union and voluntary sectors, to be consulted on social, economic and cultural issues. However, the establishment of such a body is yet to be realised. As Nolan (2012: 171) explains, when the Northern Ireland Assembly was suspended in 2002 the idea of a civic forum was suspended along with it. And when the Assembly was restored in 2007 the civic forum was not. Nolan argues that the forum's return was not demanded by any of the political parties in the manifestos for the May 2011 election.

Indeed, while the type of deliberation outlined by theorists may prove useful in the future for establishing constructive channels of communication, at present attempts at deliberation have usually ended in 'one-off' attempts at cross-community engagement. Rather than acting as a catalyst for conflict transformation, this type of deliberation may only be sustainable once Northern Ireland has actually already reached

a phase where the conflict has been transformed. Moreover, given the frequent 'one-off' nature of many deliberative forums, empirically assessing the impact of such attempts to challenge conflict at the grass roots level is a difficult task.

Improving community relations through intergroup contact

The second type of civil society approach consists of those that seek to improve community relations through promoting contact between groups. This type comprises of the central focus of my research in this dissertation. More specifically, I examine initiatives that promote micro-level interactions between groups of ordinary citizens from both Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland. The focus here is on people who engage in varying degrees of cross-community contact in a range of social environments. These environments include the education system, residential areas and informal networks such as social networks of family and friends.

Community relations initiatives have sought to encourage positive engagement across the divide. [34] These initiatives constitute an important component, in both government and voluntary sector strategies, of addressing conflict and division in Northern Ireland at the grass-roots level. Community relations initiatives in Northern Ireland have taken a variety of forms and target different audiences. They include, for example, neighbourhood renewal projects that target communities throughout Northern Ireland suffering from high levels of deprivation;[35] single identity work that aims to provide marginalised communities in Northern Ireland with economic and social support; and work which focuses on improving relations between the two main communities in Northern Ireland through creating and promoting opportunities to mix with individuals from the other main identity group.[36] It is work that falls into this latter

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[34] Several types of initiatives will be discussed in detail in chapters four, five, six and seven

[35] For more information on the Neighbourhood Renewal Program visit the Department for Social Development at <http://www.dsdni.gov.uk>.

[36] A more in-depth discussion of community relations work is provided in chapter 4.

category that is the focus of the remaining discussion in this chapter, since it serves as important background to the aims of the empirical chapters that follow.

As I will demonstrate in chapter 4, this type of community relations work relies on some fundamental theoretical assumptions that are prevalent in a strand of social psychology, and more specifically in theories of intergroup relations. With this in mind, the following section situates such work within a broader theoretical framework. I first introduce the theories of social identity and social categorization. These theories highlight the importance of identity in every day social interactions and help to explain how and when identities become salient or when they may be subject to change. I then turn to discuss intergroup contact theory, and show how this theory has been utilised as a framework for conflict transformation in divided societies. Finally, I argue that the current political and social environment in Northern Ireland provides an excellent opportunity for examining the efficacy of the civil society approach.

The social psychology of group identity

A significant body of research has claimed that in Northern Ireland psychological processes of social categorization and social identification have served to structure identities in oppositional terms.[37] At the same time, however, research has suggested that it is an over-simplification to describe the Northern Ireland conflict as between two monolithic ethno-national cleavages.[38] Rather, patterns of identities are much more complex. Much of this work has drawn on the theories of social identity and social categorization. Social identity theory, initially advanced by Tajfel (1978) and later developed by Turner et al. (1987), offers a theory of intergroup relations, which has been used to help explain some of the underlying causes and consequences of

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[37] For one of the initial accounts of the application of social identity theory to the Northern Ireland conflict see Cairns 1982. For further in-depth accounts of these processes as they relate to Northern Ireland see Waddell and Cairns 1986, 1991; Whyte 1990; Cassidy and Trew 1998; Trew 1996, 1998; Darby and Cairns 1998; Pettigrew 1998; Cairns and Hewstone 2000; Coakley 2002.

[38] See references in footnote 37. I will discuss the complexity of patterns of identity in Northern Ireland in detail in chapter 3.

intergroup conflict in Northern Ireland. Social identity theory defines a person's social identity as 'that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership' (Tajfel 1978: 63). To have a social identity is to identify with a particular group or groups and when this social identity becomes salient it implies seeing things, first and foremost, from the group's perspective. For instance, a proposal to build a new airport near a residential area creates a backlash from local residents who form a group in order to block the proposal. The salience of their identities as residents in a threatened area increases.

Given a particular context—for instance where one group identity is threatened by the existence of another—individuals may seek reassurance within their in-group by comparing and contrasting favourably their own group as superior from the threatening out-group, establishing positive distinctiveness, or positive self-esteem, for the members of the in-group. While this is a common feature of all groups, distinctions made between the in-group and the out-group may become problematic in situations of violent conflict where the existence and actions of one group is perceived to threaten the existence of another.

Social categorization theory, developed after social identity theory, seeks to explain the process through which individuals categorize themselves as belonging to certain groups (Turner et al. 1987; Hewstone and Greenland 2000). As individuals, we categorize the world around us in order to help us make sense of the infinite number of social interactions and daily encounters that impact upon our lives. When meeting others we tend to categorize them in terms of the groups to which they may belong. Social categorization theory argues that each individual belongs to several social categories, but that one of them is typically most salient at any given time. Self-categorization may occur at different levels of abstraction: personal identity at the individual level, social identity at the intermediate group membership level, identity as a human being at the superordinate level (Turner et al. 1987). It is the intermediate level of an individual's social identity that is relevant to this current study.

The level of group salience is determined by the degree to which that particular social identity may systematically affect the individual's welfare. For instance,

identification as a member of a neighbourhood association may become more salient at times when the neighbourhood is threatened (for example by proposed development in the area, vandalism, or theft). The salience of national identity may increase when there is a perceived threat to the nation and the people in it. Further examples of intermediate in-group/out-group categories may include, for instance, parent/teacher, trade union member/non trade union member, environmental activist/logger, republican/monarchist and so on. Through the process of social categorization, people often favour in-group members ('us') over out-group members ('them') in terms of evaluations, attributions, material resources, helping, and social support.

Social identity theory and social categorization theory have been advocated as a fruitful means of studying intergroup relations in divided societies since they recognise the importance of social, historical, political and economic factors in shaping an individual's identity. While processes of categorization exist in all societies, they can become problematic in cases of intergroup conflict in which group boundaries are perceived as mutually exclusive. Because of a history of conflict, people in divided societies often conceive of themselves in terms of mutually exclusive identities, whether they are national, religious or ethnic in form. In such societies people tend to favour in-group members and differentiate themselves sharply from out-groups. This process can result in in-group favouritism and out-group hostility. In contexts where groups are under threat (whether the threat is real or perceived), these processes take on much greater importance since the survival of the group is viewed as of crucial significance. The challenge in such contexts, therefore, is to reduce the salience of hostile social identities by blurring or breaking down perceived group boundaries.

Intergroup contact theory

In many divided societies contact between conflicting groups is minimal, and group (or national) identities are defined in opposition to one another. As part of attempts to reduce and manage conflict, it may be prudent to keep contact between hostile groups to a minimum in order to help prevent potential flare-ups of hostility and violence. However, in the long run such segregation will tend to lead to mutual ignorance, misunderstanding and fear of the other (out-group). Once political compromise has been achieved, the challenge is to address division at the grass roots

level and create environments in which alternate and less hostile identities can take root. For this to occur, institutional support and the willingness of participants to engage in intergroup contact are necessary.

The underlying rationale of intergroup contact theory is that conflict and prejudice arise between groups when there is a lack of positive interaction and information between groups and where opportunities for contact that would facilitate the acquisition of such information are lacking. Without contact, this theory maintains, it becomes impossible for individuals to realize their similarities and to accept their differences.

As a framework for the analysis of social problems, intergroup contact theory has been applied to many social contexts, most notably in the desegregation of schooling in the United States, and more recently within both academic and practitioner circles in Northern Ireland. Durrheim and Dixon (2005: 19) assert that the contact paradigm is arguably the 'most important framework for understanding the social psychology of desegregation.'

Intergroup contact theory proposes that simple contact between groups alone is not sufficient to reduce intergroup bias and prejudice (Allport 1954). Instead, the contact must have certain characteristics if it is to do so. In its initial formulation, this theory asserted that four conditions are necessary for contact to be beneficial for intergroup relations. First, all parties in the contact situation must perceive of themselves as having equal group status. Second, all participants must share common goals. Third, all participants must work towards these common goals through cooperative intergroup interaction. Finally, intergroup contact must have institutional support within and outside of the contact situation. Over the years the conditions have been refined and revised in response to important criticisms that have been levelled against the theory, and the claims made on its behalf have in some ways been weakened.

As a method for reducing prejudice, some important limitations have been acknowledged and addressed in relation to contact theory. In its original formulation this view emphasised interpersonal as opposed to intergroup relations. Subsequent research has found, however, that in order to challenge group stereotypes and for

contact to have broader, generalizable effects, it is necessary that it occur at the intergroup level. For instance, friendships forged at the interpersonal level may not present a challenge to existing group stereotypes, since individuals may treat each other as exceptions to the group norm (see for example Hewstone and Brown 1986; Pettigrew 1998). Only when individuals are interacting at the intergroup level can contact serve as a potential mediating factor and lead to favourable attitude change.

Others have warned of the risks involved in promoting intergroup contact. Indeed, empirical research indicates that other contributory factors including conflicts of interest, differential status positions and environmental or institutional factors can contribute to the formation of prejudicial attitudes (Stephan and Stephan 1985; Mac Ginty and du Toit 2007). Some groups may maintain that they have no problem with an out-group as long as they have access to the same services, and that equality in the provision of education, employment and housing is their primary concern. Indeed, this was the underlying premise of the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland. With regards to status differentials, Tropp and Pettigrew's (2005) majority-minority thesis contends that the impact of contact may vary significantly not only in terms of the contact situation but also in terms of the social status of the groups involved. As such, what may appear as equal group status to majority group members may be perceived as potentially threatening and unequal to the minority. Indeed, the potential for status differentials to impact on political attitudes was uncovered in a recent study on political attitudes in the education system in Northern Ireland. Here Hayes et al. (2007) found that Catholics who had attended an integrated school (a school with both Protestant and Catholic pupils) were significantly more likely than those who had not to favour the dominant or majority view (retention of the link with Britain) (Hayes et al. 2007: 476). The authors argued that a plausible explanation for these differences was the fact that Catholic pupils were in the minority at these schools and therefore may have pressure to conform to the majority view.

Moreover, mere contact between groups is insufficient to guarantee positive intergroup experiences. In fact, some studies (Stephan and Stephan 1985; Pettigrew 1997, 1998; Christ et al. 2010) have found that in certain situations, intergroup contact can increase prejudice and reinforce negative stereotypes rather than reducing or

mitigating them. Stephan and Stephan (1985) reveal that heightened feelings of anxiety within a contact situation—feelings of threat and uncertainty in particular—can have negative consequences for intergroup relations. Feelings of this sort arise from concerns about how they should act and how they might be perceived in contact situations. Stephan and Stephan (1985) further emphasize the importance of the level of perceived threat to positive or negative contact. When the contact situation is perceived to benefit one group over another, or when an encounter is involuntary and not desired, this can engender negative consequences for intergroup relations.

Indeed, there are instances in which intergroup contact may be detrimental for community relations. For people in marginalised, segregated communities, for example, relating to outsiders and structures of power may contribute to feelings of helplessness and resentment towards others. Those who are most firmly entrenched within their own tradition are the least likely to become involved in community relations activities and therefore rarely experience cross-community contact (Church et al. 2004: 283). These feelings can contribute in turn to community tensions. There are a number of deprived segregated working class estates in Northern Ireland, for example, that feel underrepresented and largely cut off from the rest of society. In such cases it will be necessary to alleviate feelings of marginalization through, for example, economic development and community representation. At a practical level, single identity work is generally espoused for communities who may not yet be psychologically equipped to positively engage at an intergroup level (see for example Knox 1994; Church et al. 2004).

In a similar vein, Cass Sunstein (2001: 16) discusses the importance of 'enclave deliberation' defined as deliberation within groups of like-minded people. Sunstein (2001) argues that within a heterogeneous society less weight is usually given to the viewpoints of minority and marginalised groups. For this reason 'enclave deliberation might be the only way to ensure that those views are developed and eventually heard'. Such deliberation recognises the needs of specific groups to engage at an intra-group level through forums, workshops or similar events in order to discuss, debate and refine issues that they may have before moving towards intergroup contact.

Intergroup contact must therefore be supported by institutional structures that both promote and protect environments in which individuals and groups choose to enter into a contact situation that is mutually agreeable. This can be hard to achieve in societies in which the duplication and separation of services such as schools, transport systems, health care services, and even real estate agencies make it possible to avoid contact with the out-group in large measure. The duplication and separation of a range of services has been a central feature of life in Northern Ireland. Indeed, one of the key findings of a report into the extent of the division in Belfast was that there was 'little opportunity for many Protestant and Catholic communities to routinely come together on a daily basis' (Deloitte 2008: iv).

As such, intergroup contact must be considered within the wider social and political context. It must be structured in ways that takes account of external forces that may prevent positive intergroup contact from occurring (Pettigrew 1998). For example, divided societies in which physical and social separation of communities is the accepted norm may provide little opportunity for positive intergroup contact to occur because individuals from different groups only come into contact at random and against their will. To address these potentially adverse consequences of contact, it is crucial to ensure that intergroup contact is entered into voluntarily and in a neutral environment, and that the form and nature of the contact is agreeable to all of the groups involved.

There are several environments in which positive intergroup contact may occur. Within Northern Ireland, these may be found within mixed residential areas (as discussed in detail in chapter 5), within integrated schools (as discussed in detail in chapter 6) and within less structured settings such as between friends or family (as discussed in chapter 7). Positive intergroup contact may also occur in settings that have been purposefully constructed to accommodate intergroup interaction such as within cross-community holiday programmes or sporting events that are run throughout Northern Ireland targeting young people from the Catholic and Protestant communities. For example, the Ulster Project, one of Northern Ireland's longest running cross-community projects, offers a mixed Catholic-Protestant group of 15–16 year olds the

opportunity to travel to America. During their time overseas the participants take part in workshops in which community relations issues are directly addressed.[39]

There are few examples of divided societies in which the institutional structures and the social and political context provide favourable conditions for positive contact to occur. Since the mid-1980s, however, an important component of government social policy in Northern Ireland has been to manage and attempt to improve relations between the two main communities. This focus emerged in response to deteriorating relations between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland throughout the 1970s. For example, the events and aftermath of Bloody Sunday in 1972 and, three years later, the collapse of the Sunningdale Agreement 1973–74 have been described by Dixon (1997b: 4) as 'landmarks of polarisation' between the Protestant and Catholic communities. Adding to a sense of urgency in finding a way forward amidst the violence were the increased currency of arguments which maintained that the duplication and separation of services was perpetuating division by fuelling prejudice, ignorance and mistrust of the 'other' community.

Central to a range of schemes attached to this agenda has been the assumption that an increase in cross-community contact would be beneficial. Many of these schemes— mixed housing, integrated education and cross-community regeneration projects—fall under the broader theme of 'community relations'. The term 'community relations' can refer to both relations within and relations between communities. I will use 'community relations' here to refer specifically to relations between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. I shall employ the labels 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' to refer to people who identify as belonging to the Catholic or Protestant communities in Northern Ireland, respectively. Similar schemes have also been adopted within the non-government sector with funding and facilitation of cross-community projects a central focus of independent funding bodies and international and regional organizations.

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[39] See the Ulster Project at <http://www.ulsterproject.org/>.

A substantial body of research on contact in Northern Ireland has found that positive cross-community contact is related to a reduction in prejudice, bias and negative stereotypes of the out-group.[40] Intergroup contact theory has consequently gained renewed currency in studies examining attitudinal change within segregated and integrated environments in Northern Ireland. A review of the social psychological literature on the effects of intergroup contact in Northern Ireland conducted by Cairns and Hewstone (2000) concluded that while previous studies of cross-community contact have confirmed the limited extent of contact between Catholics and Protestants in the province, they also suggest a positive association between contact and attitudes towards the religious out-group.

Conclusion

This chapter has had several objectives. It has presented and analysed a number of dominant theoretical approaches that have had practical application in Northern Ireland, and elsewhere, as a means of managing or settling conflict. I argued that none of these approaches, on their own, can generally provide sustainable peace. For example, a focus on institutional and political settlement fails to address the ongoing tensions between groups at the grass roots level. Indeed, as I argued, partition and hegemonic control created more problems than they solved. For example, the partition of Ireland in 1921 led to the establishment of a contested territory in which a sizeable Catholic Irish minority remained in Northern Ireland. The oppression and control over this minority in Northern Ireland led to deep-seated resentment and rebellion against the state. Moreover, while there is merit in approaches that seek to incentivise political parties to adopt moderate platforms through the electoral benefits that this can confer, in Northern Ireland it has not led voters to vote for candidates across the communal divide.

The most influential of all institutional approaches has been the adoption of power-sharing institutions that have brought together traditionally feuding political

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[40] While the list is extensive see for example McClenahan et al. 1996; Cassidy and Trew 2004; Cairns and Niens 2005; Niens and Cairns 2005; Cairns et al. 2008; Cairns et al. 2009; Hughes et al. 2007; Christ et al. 2010; Stringer et al. 2009.

elites in Northern Ireland. However, communities on the ground remain highly segregated. I argued that long-term stability also depends upon whether institutions can provide opportunities for positive intergroup interaction which can lead to societal cohesion. With this in mind, the second section of the chapter shifted the focus from institutional to civil society approaches for dealing with intergroup conflict. Here I explored theories from social psychology that have been influential in conceptualizing some of the problems associated with segregation in divided societies. I demonstrated that a significant body of literature has explored patterns and processes of identification in Northern Ireland in attempts to understand the conflict. This research has heavily drawn on social identity theory and intergroup contact theory. The basic premise of this body of literature is that segregation in Northern Ireland highlights and exacerbates the salience of group identity, whereas opportunities for intergroup contact may encourage the formation of new and more inclusive identities.

Northern Ireland provides a good test case for many of these theoretical approaches outlined in the chapter. For example, to date, little research has examined the potential that positive intergroup contact may have on transforming social identities, yet we know that there is a long history of theoretical and practical application of civil society approaches to peace-building in Northern Ireland. In light of the material and argument presented in this chapter, we can raise a number of important questions. First, what is being done by both government and non-government bodies to promote cross-community contact in Northern Ireland? Second, given the relative stability that Northern Ireland is now experiencing, is there any evidence to suggest the emergence of a shared identity to which both Protestants and Catholics ascribe? In the following chapter I explain the methodology that I shall use to address these questions and related issues.

Chapter 3. Examining identity: a research strategy

Divergent and competing national aspirations have characterised the contemporary conflict in Northern Ireland. This has led some scholars to argue that 'nationality is one of, if not the, central issue in the Northern Ireland conflict' (Waddell and Cairns 1991: 205). Significantly, however, survey evidence suggests the emergence of a 'Northern Irish' identity that is shared by both Protestants and Catholics. While a number of possible explanations for this have been offered they remain quite speculative and further research is needed to evaluate them. This chapter therefore sets out the research questions and methodology employed to conduct in-depth quantitative analysis that can contribute to the explanation of the emergence of this identity.

Large-scale sample surveys have frequently been used to measure a range of social and political attitudes in Northern Ireland. My analysis draws heavily on the NISA and NILT surveys over the period 1989 to 2010 in order to examine the relationship between cross-community contact and national identity preferences. Justification for this focus on national identity as the primary dependent variable for analysis relates to the distinct patterns of national identity preferences among members of the Protestant and Catholic communities

In section one I document the rise in the Northern Irish identity as captured in social surveys, and provide tentative explanations for its increasing popularity. Section two outlines several key research questions that focus on particular environments targeted by community relations policy. The research questions seek to determine whether there is a relationship between cross-community contact in these environments and a preference for the Northern Irish identity among individuals who have experienced this type of contact. I then explain the range of data that I shall use in the analysis and profiles the sample of respondents. This describes the main dependent and independent variables and introduces a set of relevant descriptive statistics regarding social and economic background that will be used to motivate the analysis. I conclude by discussing the strengths and limitations of this survey-based research.

The Northern Irish identity

Patterns of identity have long been a focal point within social science research in Northern Ireland. Richard Rose (1971) first documented national identity preferences among Catholics and Protestants in his seminal survey conducted in 1968 of political and social trends in Northern Ireland. Since then, subsequent surveys have provided evidence of an increase in the polarisation of national identities (see Moxon-Browne 1983; ARK 1989–2010). Yet, previous research utilizing survey data suggests that patterns of allegiance are more complex (see Hayes and McAllister 1999a, 2009a; Coakley 2002, 2007; Devine and Schubotz 2004; Fahey et al. 2005. Indeed, while the majority of Protestants and Catholics see themselves as British and Irish respectively, the NISA and NILT surveys have also highlighted that increasing numbers of respondents are choosing not to identify with either the British or Irish identity, and are instead opting for a third identity preference. This is the Northern Irish identity, which is now the second most popular identity choice of both Catholics and Protestants after the two more traditional identities of Irish and British, respectively. The rise of this identity suggests that a new and potentially shared alternative identity is forming in Northern Ireland. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show the trends in identity choice among Protestants and Catholics between 1968 and 2010.

The dramatic rise in sectarian violence and segregation following the outbreak of the contemporary conflict mirrored the polarisation of divided national identities. Moxon-Browne's 1978 survey (see Moxon-Browne 1983) documented a significant increase in the number of Protestants identifying as British, which had doubled to 67 per cent since 1968. And since this time the incidence of Protestant respondents identifying as British has increased, peaking in 2002 at just below 80 per cent. [41] Significantly, at any time between 1989 and 2010, less than 10 per cent of Protestants have identified as Irish suggesting that national identity patterns have polarised since the beginning of the conflict. Significantly, the data reveal an upward trend among Protestants identifying as Northern Irish. Indeed, the rate of those identifying as such

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[41] It should be noted that less than 2 per cent of Protestants chose to identify as 'Other' at any point between 1989 and 2010.

has almost doubled, from 17 per cent in 1989, to 30 per cent in 2009, overtaking the Ulster identity. Indeed, since 1996 more respondents opted for this identity than for Ulster identification, making Northern Irish the second most preferred identity. And since 2005 the rate of Protestants identifying as British has slowly declined, while those identifying as Northern Irish has risen. In 2010, while two-thirds of Protestants identified as British, almost one-third identified as Northern Irish.

Figure 3.1. Trends in national identity preferences among Protestants, 1968–2010
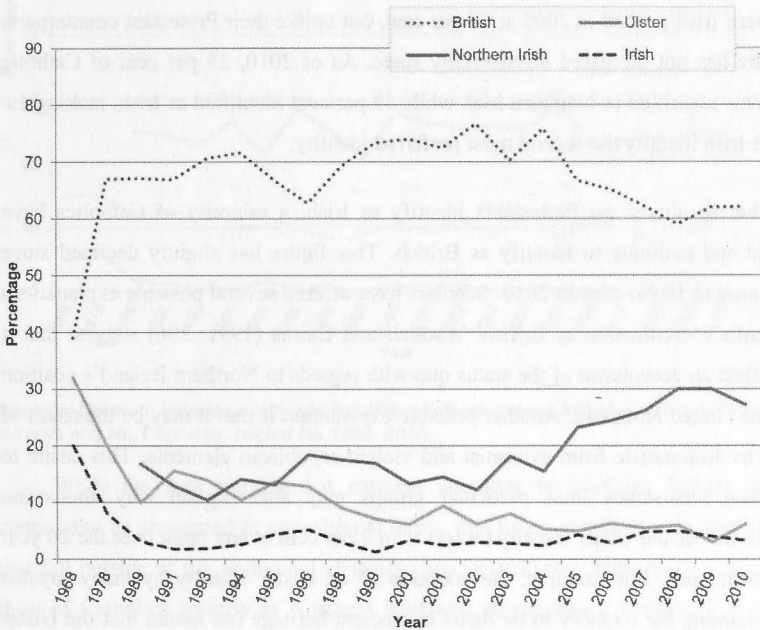
Sources: Northern Ireland Loyalty survey 1968; Northern Ireland Attitudes survey 1978; NISA surveys and NILT surveys, pooled file,1989–2010.

Conversely, among Catholics, early surveys captured a large degree of consensus in national identity. In Rose's 1968 survey, an overwhelming majority (76 per cent) identified themselves as Irish, 15 per cent identified as British and only 5 per cent opted for the Ulster identity (Rose 1971). The rate of Catholics identifying as Irish has

declined since this time levelling out to around 60 per cent with slight annual variation. One possible explanation for this decline could be that some Catholic respondents preferred to avoid revealing their identity due to the outbreak of political violence and the notoriety of the IRA. Respondents may have preferred to avoid being labelled and therefore chose to identify with the more neutral Northern Irish identity.

Since the Northern Irish identity was introduced as an option in 1989, close to one-third of all respondents identify as such and this remained relatively stable over time. In 1989, for example, 25 per cent of Catholics chose to identify as Northern Irish instead of opting for a traditional Irish identity. The percentage of Catholics identifying as Northern Irish peaked in 2005 at 30 per cent, but unlike their Protestant counterparts this figure has not increased substantially since. As of 2010, 25 per cent of Catholic respondents identified as Northern Irish while 59 per cent identified as Irish, making the Northern Irish identity the second most preferred identity.

Whereas almost no Protestants identify as Irish, a minority of Catholics have identified and continue to identify as British. This figure has slightly declined since 1968 to around 10 per cent in 2010. Scholars have offered several possible explanations for Catholic identification as British. Waddell and Cairns (1991: 206) suggest that it could reflect an acceptance of the status quo with regards to Northern Ireland's position within the United Kingdom. Another possible explanation is that it may be the result of a desire to disassociate from extremist and violent republican elements. This desire to disassociate themselves from particular groups may also explain why almost no Catholics choose the Ulster identity (at less than 2 per cent at any point over the 20 year period examined). For example, the adoption of an Ulster identity by many loyalist groups claiming the territory to be theirs by ancient heritage has meant that the Ulster identity became synonymous with loyalism. Moreover, Waddell and Cairns (1991: 206–210) argue that the clear rejection of an Ulster identity is part of a Catholic reaction to partition, through which six of the nine counties of Ulster came to constitute Northern Ireland. Thus, for Catholics identity patterns appear to be complex and influenced by a range of contextual factors.

Figure 3.2. Trends in national identity preferences among Catholics, 1968–2010
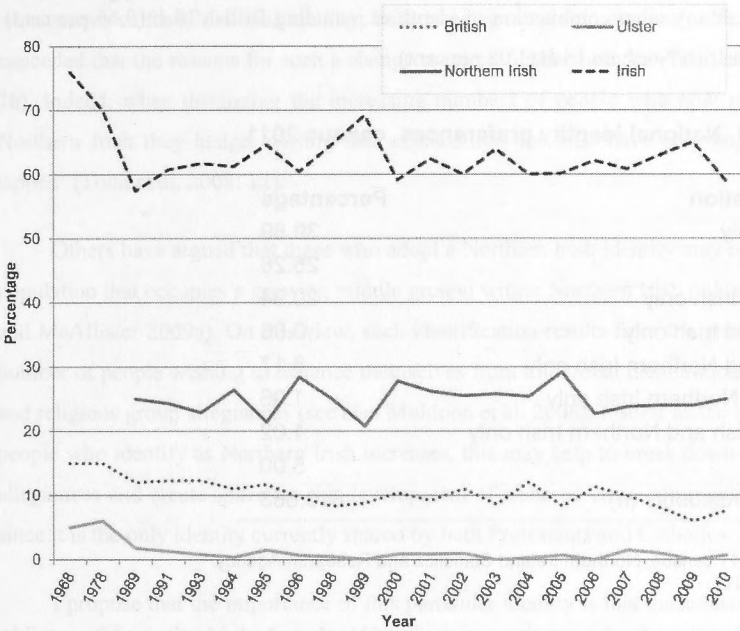
Sources: Northern Ireland Loyalty survey 1968; Northern Ireland Attitudes survey 1978; NISA surveys and NILT surveys, pooled file,1989–2010.

While the data suggest that national identities in Northern Ireland generally continue to be structured in oppositional terms, this by no means implies that identities that fall outside of the traditional cleavages are insignificant. Importantly, almost one-third of Catholics identify as Northern Irish and an increasing number of Protestants identify as such as well. In a recent study, Muldoon et al. (2007) have argued that elements of Northern Irish society may be moving away from traditional and divisive forms of identity and embracing new and inclusive ways of identifying. The increase in both Protestants and Catholics identifying as Northern Irish may be evidence of this (see also Hayes et al. 2007). As Figures 3.1 and 3.2 demonstrate, for both Protestants and Catholics the Northern Irish identity is currently the second most preferred identity, after the traditional Protestant British and Catholic Irish identities. The potential significance of the Northern Irish identity is also revealed in data from the 2011 census.

As shown in Table 3.1 nearly 21 per cent of the population in Northern Ireland identify exclusively as Northern Irish. And it is the third most popular identity choice (out of eight) among the Northern Ireland population. Moreover, it is by far the more preferred identity than any other combination of identities including British/Irish (0.66 per cent) and British/Irish/Northern Irish (1.02 per cent).

Table 3.1. National identity preferences, census 2011

Identification	Percentage
British only	39.89
Irish only	25.26
Northern Irish only	20.94
British and Irish only	0.66
British and Northern Irish only	6.17
Irish and Northern Irish only	1.06
British, Irish and Northern Irish only	1.02
Other	5.00
All usual residents (n)	1, 810,863

Source: 2011 census, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) 2011.

Explanations for the growing popularity of Northern Irish identity and its possible meanings for community relations in Northern Ireland remain tentative. Moxon-Browne (1991: 28) writes, 'the attractiveness of the Northern Irish identity lies in its ambiguity; for Catholics, it avoids any legitimation of the border, which is implied in either British or Ulster; for Protestants, it is seen as having a natural association with "Northern Ireland"'. In an earlier publication Moxon-Browne (1983) suggested that the Northern Irish identity was being purposefully used by groups such as 'The Peace People' to invoke unity because they viewed the Ulster label as too divisive. Indeed, as demonstrated in chapter 1, the Ulster identity is most readily associated with extremist elements within unionism that assert a territorial claim on the land of Ulster, invoking historical myths as proof of an ancient lineage and valid title. Thus, while at certain points in the history of Northern Ireland promoting an Ulster identity as a means of uniting communities has largely been abandoned given its sectarian associations. Trew (1998) notes that there are no obvious institutions that could be viewed as explicitly promoting this new identity.

In their qualitative study, Todd et al. (2008) explore the meaning of identity change in Northern Ireland, as well as the importance of national narratives in identity formation. Results from the interviews that they conducted showed evidence of 'substantive shifts in national identity, both in category and in content', although they conceded that the reasons for such a change required further analysis (Todd et al. 2008: 26). Indeed, when discussing the increasing numbers of people who now identify as Northern Irish they hedge, writing that explanations for this 'have only begun to be tapped' (Todd et al. 2008: 12).

Others have argued that those who adopt a Northern Irish identity may represent a population that occupies a growing middle ground within Northern Irish politics (Hayes and McAllister 2009a). On this view, such identification results from the growth in the number of people wishing to distance themselves from traditional dichotomous national and religious group allegiances (see also Muldoon et al. 2008). Insofar as the number of people who identify as Northern Irish increases, this may help to break down territorial allegiances and create space for the development of a shared cross-communal identity, since it is the only identity currently shared by both Protestants and Catholics.

I propose that the importance of this particular identity is that those identifying as Northern Irish come from both sides of the religious and political divide: Catholics and nationalists, Protestants and unionists. Irrespective of whether the Northern Irish label holds different meanings for different groups, what is most important is that Protestants and Catholics who choose to identify in this way are making a conscious choice not to identify with the traditional and divisive identities. As Trew (1998: 67) has argued, the potential strength of the Northern Irish identity could be its ability to offer a basis for shared identification for Catholics and Protestants while at the same not threatening important ideological commitments of either group. Moreover, those choosing a Northern Irish identity are most likely aware of the cross-community nature of this identity.

With the theoretical framework outlined in chapter 2 in mind, I suggest that one plausible explanation for the rise in Northern Irish identity is that those who have had experience of positive intergroup contact are more likely to perceive of themselves as members of a superordinate group, one that it is inclusive of both the Protestant and

Catholic communities. I argue that the Northern Irish identity may be one such superordinate identity to which some members of the Protestant and Catholic communities ascribe. According to Pettigrew (1998), through a number of interrelated and sequential processes intergroup contact may not only lead to positive attitudinal change, it may also result in the development of an overarching identity. If a Northern Irish identity is seen as having the potential to further the development of a more inclusive society, it is important to investigate where and why it is emerging, and whether it is likely to become significant for the promotion of improved community relations in Northern Ireland.

Methodology and research questions

The aim of this study is to investigate the emergence of the Northern Irish identity and whether this can be associated with community relations initiatives that have sought to promote intergroup contact between the Catholic and Protestant communities in the areas of education, housing and social networks.

With this in mind, I explore the following research questions in the empirical investigation that follows:

1) How has community relations policy dealt with the problems associated with division in Northern Ireland?

2) How much of this is aimed at promoting contact between Protestant and Catholic communities?

3) Do individuals (from either a Catholic or Protestant background) who have intergroup contact differ from the rest of the adult population in relation to their national identity preferences?

4) What other factors are associated with identifying as Northern Irish?

5) Has the peace process impacted on patterns of identity?

To address these questions the central methodology that I employ is secondary analysis of representative survey data from the NISA (1989–1996) and NILT (1998–2010) surveys. I supplement this analysis by drawing on census and government statistics in the public domain from various government departments and public bodies in Northern Ireland. I also conduct content analysis of government and non-government policy documentation. In the section below, I explain the use of each of the measures from the NISA and NILT surveys that I employ.

The data

The main empirical investigation employs data from the NISA and NILT surveys from 1989 to 2010. Here I analyse data from individual survey years and from two pooled data sets collated by Dr Paula Devine at the Northern Ireland Social and Political Archive Access Research Knowledge (ARK). The first pooled dataset (NISA/NILT 1989–2010) contains data for all survey years between 1989 and 2010. The second dataset (NILT 1998–2005) contains data from the NILT surveys conducted between 1998 and 2005.[42]

The present study uses a measure within the survey as an indicator of national identity and of community/religious background and employs several measures as indicators of levels and types of cross-community contact. The study also includes several important socio-economic and demographic variables. I draw on this data to examine the strength of relationships between different types of contact and national identity preferences both within individual survey years and within aggregate periods of time.

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[42] See Appendix 1 for further details on the NISA and NILT surveys.

The dependent variable for this study is national identity.[43] It is coded from responses to an indicator for measuring national identity preferences that has been standardised and included in surveys since 1968. In order to take into account the range of response options and to maintain continuity across the surveys, the measure for national identity within the surveys uses a close-ended format presenting the respondent with five options. Since 1989, survey participants are asked the question 'Which of these best describes the way you think of yourself?' given the options 'British', 'Irish', 'Ulster', 'Northern Irish', 'Other', 'Don't Know'. [44]

National identity is used as the dependent variable for several reasons. First, based on the theoretical framework outlined in chapter 2, this thesis seeks to uncover whether a superordinate identity may be emerging to which members of both the Protestant and Catholic communities may ascribe. Second, given the weight of academic literature which suggests that intergroup contact may effect attitudes and behaviour, it also seems plausible that intergroup contact may effect identity preferences. Finally, while the NISA and NILT surveys contain other measures of identity, such as political identity, the indicator for national identity includes several identity options that fall outside

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[43] See Appendix 2 Table 2A for specific wording, response categories and the survey years in which the measure was included.

[44] Importantly, people who are given these options are presented with the choice of two national identities and two non-national public identities (namely Ulster and Northern Irish). If the survey question had been worded different—the actual survey question does not ask them to state their national identity but to 'describe the way you think of yourself'—then it seems reasonable to expect that we might get quite different results given that Northern Irish and Ulster identities might to be perceived as truly national identities. Moreover, the wording of the variable within the surveys (NINATID) implies that it is a measure of respondents' national identity. This is problematic in that it necessarily groups together national within non-national identities. However, I will use the terminology 'national identity' because it is the way in which the survey data has been discussed and the way in which the measure has been defined.

traditional categories that are generally regarded as being representative of either a Protestant or Catholic background.

Community/religious background

Respondents' religious/community background is used to select cases for analysis. As will be demonstrated, religious/community background has been and continues to be an important determinant of national identity (see Coakley 2007). As this study is concerned with relations between Catholics and Protestants, only those respondents who state their religion as either Catholic or Protestant are included in the analysis. The use of respondents' religious background for selecting cases is appropriate, since correlations between religion and national identity reveal a strong positive relationship across each of the surveys. The variable religion[45] is coded from the question in the survey that asks respondents 'Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion? If yes, which?' Responses to this question have been coded in the study to fall into one of four categories, 'Catholic', 'Protestant', 'Other' or 'No Religion'.

While I only select cases in which a respondent states his or her community background as Catholic or Protestant, it is important to note the growing proportion of the population who do not claim a religious affiliation. This trend was evident in the 1971 census with 9.3 per cent of the population choosing to leave the religious affiliation question unanswered. Since this time, surveys have consistently found that around 10 per cent of the adult population is not religiously affiliated (see Moxon-Browne 1983; Hayes and McAllister 1995; NISRA 2001; Fahey et al. 2005).

A plausible explanation for this trend is that, due to the onset of violence, many census respondents refused to identify their religion (Coakley 2007). In 2001, however, a new variable was added to the census in an effort to capture those who did not wish to indicate a denomination. The supplementary question asked respondents to identity in

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[45] See Appendix 2 Table 2B for specific working, response categories and the survey years in which the measure was included.

which religion they had been brought up. This variable was named community background and in the 2001 census the breakdown by community background was 43.9 per cent Catholic, 53.1 per cent Protestant and Other Christian, 0.4 per cent Other, and 2.7 per cent No Religion (Coakley 2007).

It is also possible to measure religious background (otherwise known as community background) using another indicator used in the NISA and NILT surveys. Using a similar question to the 2001 census, respondents are asked, 'In what religion were you brought up?' The respondent is then classified as belonging to one of the following categories: 'Protestant', 'Catholic', 'Other', and 'None'. This question has been included in the surveys in order to mitigate the effects of respondents refusing to identify their religion. While this is a perfectly suitable measure for religious/community background, I employ the first measure for religious background in this study. I do so for two reasons. First, response rates in the pooled dataset to the question 'Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion?' remain high throughout the survey years, with around 1 in 10 stating that they do not belong to any religion (see Table 3.1). Second, this measure also more accurately captures the respondent's current position as part of a particular community within Northern Irish society. It is therefore appropriate to use this measure in the study as I am particularly interested in analysing those people who currently identify as either Catholic or Protestant, as opposed to those who were brought up in a particular religion but who may no longer identify with that community. This variable I employ will be referred to throughout the thesis as either religious or community background.

The independent variables

The independent variables consist of five indicators of intergroup contact. Niens et al. (2003) distinguish between two types of measurement of intergroup contact. The first is the quantity of contact, referring to how frequently or how much opportunity individuals have to meet with members of the out-group. This contact may occur through meeting with neighbours, friends and family, work colleagues, leisure activities or at school. Generally, quantity of contact is measured by asking about the frequency with which an individual meets with members of the other community. The second is by measuring the quality of intergroup interactions, referring to how positive or

negative the contact experience is to the individual and how meaningful it is to them. Quality of contact may be measured by asking individuals about their experience of an intergroup situation and whether the contact experience was of an intimate (as between good friends) or casual (as between strangers of acquaintances) nature.

Due to the nature of the measurements available, I focus primarily on an investigation of quantity of contact. Several indicators are used to measure the quantity and type of intergroup contact an individual has. These are the five main independent variables used in the study and each of these will be described in turn.

The independent variable type of education[46] is coded from responses to two questions: 'Did you ever attend a mixed or integrated school in Northern Ireland, that is, a school with fairly large numbers of both Catholics and Protestants?' And since 1998, a follow-up question to this was included in the surveys that sought to distinguish those who went to formally integrated school and those who attended a relatively mixed school. This has been operationalised by the question, 'Was this a formally integrated school or was it a school that was just fairly mixed?' (emphasis in original). From these two questions, three types of schools can be distinguished: formally integrated, mixed and separate-religion.

The independent variable residential area[47] was created from a question in the surveys that asks respondents to state the approximate number of co-religionists who live within the same area as the respondent. The question asks, 'What about your neighbours? About how many are the same religion as you?' Responses to this may include, 'All', 'Most', 'Half', 'Less than half', or 'None'. Responses to this question have been grouped in to two categories with those in areas consisting of all or most co-religionists classified as living in a segregated area and all other respondents classified as living in a mixed area.

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[46] See Appendix 2 Table 2C and Table 2D for specific wording, response categories and the survey years in which the measures were included.

[47] See Appendix 2 Table 2E for specific wording, response categories and the survey years in which the measure was included.

The variable friendship network[48] is coded from responses to the question, 'Among your personal friends how many would be of the same religion as yourself?' to which the response categories include 'All or most', 'Half', and 'Less than half' and 'None'. Responses to this question have been grouped in to two categories—those who state that all or most of their friends are the same religion (corresponding to homogenous friendship networks) and those who state that half or less of their friends are of the same religion (corresponding to mixed friendship networks). It was appropriate to create a variable with only two categories as only 1 per cent of respondents indicated to have no relatives of the same religion.

The variable kinship ties[49] is coded from responses to the question, 'How many of your relatives are the same religion as you?' The response categories are 'All/Most', 'Half', 'Less than half', 'None'. As with the response rate for the friendship network questions, only 1 per cent of respondents indicated no relatives of the same religion and so, again, this measure is coded into two categories for the present analysis—those who state that all or most of their relatives are the same religion (corresponding to homogenous kinship networks) and those who state that half or less of their relatives are of the same religion (corresponding to mixed kinship networks).

From 1998 to 2005, the NILT survey asked respondents to state the religion of their partner. This measure was operationalised by the question, 'Is your husband/wife/partner the same religion as you?' The response categories were: 'Yes, same religion', 'No, not the same religion', and 'No religion at all'. For the purposes of this study religious intermarriage is thought of as a dichotomous variable; that is, a marriage is either intra- or inter-depending on whether or not the spouses belong to the same group—Catholic or Protestant (Lehrer 1998: 247). Accordingly, the variable

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[48] See Appendix 2 Table 2F for specific wording, response categories and the survey years in which the measure was included.

[49] See Appendix 2 Table 2G for specific wording, response categories and the survey years in which the measure was included.

marriage[50] is coded into two categories; those who state that their partner is from the same religion (corresponding to endogamous relations) and those who state that their partner is from a different religion (corresponding to a mixed marriage).

Within this study I regard the independent variables (residential area, education, friendship networks, kinship ties and mixed marriage) as being largely independent of one another. However, it could also be argued that these variables may be too closely related to one another to render analysis of any one variable meaningful. Within the literature there is some indication of a degree of overlap in intergroup contact in different social arenas. For example, it might be argued that who attend an integrated school are also most likely to live in a mixed residential area. Indeed, as I will discuss in chapter 5 some mixed residential areas have links with local integrated schools (Murtagh et al. 2006). A certain degree of inter-dependence between variables is to be expected and is not a problem so long as they are not highly correlated. To check for this, multicollinearity tests have been run on all of the regression models reported and multicollinearity was not found to be a problem in any of the regression models that follow.

Socio-economic and demographic variables

A number of measures are used as control variables in the bivariate and multivariate models. In the bivariate models they are used to examine and compare social characteristics of Catholics and Protestants who had experienced intergroup contact with those who had not. In the multivariate analyses the measures are used as control variables given their significant association with patterns of identity as found in previous research (see for example Fahey et al. 2005). These variables include gender, age, marital status, church attendance, education, employment and occupation. Within the NILT (1998–2005) dataset, an extra control variable was available which measured whether the respondent had lived outside of Northern Ireland for more than six months.

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[50] See Appendix 2 Table 2H for specific wording, response categories and the survey years in which the measure was included.

The socio-economic and demographic variables for the NISA/NILT (1989–2010) dataset are described in Table 3.2. It should be noted here that this dataset does not include all the years from 1989 to 2010 and explanation for this is provided in the section below on the strengths and limitations of survey research. Overall, the characteristics of Protestant and Catholic respondents are very similar although some variation is evident. For example, Protestants are generally older (51.4 years) than Catholics (46.4 years), a difference most likely explained by the higher fertility rate among Catholics.

Catholic respondents are slightly more likely to be female than Protestant respondents, although there are generally more females amongst both Catholic and Protestant respondents represented in the survey. This reflects broader trends found in the 2001 census which showed the Northern Ireland population to be 51 per cent female and 49 per cent male. Table 3.2 shows that Protestants are more likely than Catholics to hold a non-manual occupation, representing the historically better socio-economic position of Protestants within Northern Ireland. Supporting previous research, Catholics are more likely than Protestants to attend church.[51] It is worth pointing out, however, that self-reported data on church attendance may not be reliable (see Fahey et al. 2005: 40). This is due to the social desirability bias referring to the tendency for respondents to give answers based on what they think the interviewer would like to hear. But as Fahey et al. (2005: 41) explain, the uncertainty in levels of church attendance does not undermine the data since people's sense of how they ought to behave is a significant observation in its own right and indicate a continuing positive orientation towards formal observance.

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[51] Church attendance uses a seven-point scale ranging from 'attend church weekly' through to 'do not attend church'. I have grouped attendance into two categories: 1 = those who attend church from once a week to once a month (regular attenders) and 0 = those who attend less often to do not attend at all (irregular attenders). I had originally grouped attendance into three categories- 'regular attendance', 'irregular attendance' and 'no attendance'—but this did not make a significant difference in the analyses. To simplify, I therefore chose to code the measure into two categories—'attend' and 'no attend'.

Table 3.2. Description of independent variables, NISA/NILT 1989–2010 pooled sample

Variable	Coding	Protestant (N=5, 157) Mean	Catholic (N=4, 103) Mean	Total (N=9, 260) Mean
Gender (female)	1=Female,	.56	.59	.57
Church attendance	1=Attend,	.40	.65	.54
Age (years)	From 18 to 96	51.40	46.40	49.20
Education:	Coded 1 or 0			
Tertiary		.12	.13	.12
Secondary		.48	.46	.47
No qualification		.40	.41	.40
Occupation	1=Non manual,	.54	.46	.51
Employment	1=In labour	.48	.48	.48

Source: NISA surveys and NILT surveys, pooled file, 1989–2010.

The variables for the NILT 1998–2005 pooled dataset are described in Table 3.3. Once again Protestant respondents are found to be older (51.2 years) than Catholic respondents (46.8 years). There are also more females than males represented in the sample. Once again, Catholics are more likely than Protestants to attend church. They are also more likely to have lived outside of Northern Ireland, perhaps having lived previously in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere in Europe. Again, Protestant respondents are more likely to have a non-manual occupation.

Table 3.3. Description of independent variables, NILT 1998–2005 pooled sample

Variable	Coding	Protestant (N=6,601) Mean	Catholic (N=5,083) Mean	Total (N=11,684) Mean
Gender (female)	1=Female, 0=Male	.58	.59	.59
Church attendance	1=Attend, 0=No	.53	.76	.63
Age (years)	From 18 to 96	51.20	46.80	49.30
Education:	Coded 1 or 0			
Tertiary		.11	.12	.12
Secondary		.33	.31	.32
No qualification		.56	.56	.56
Occupation	1=Non manual,	.54	.46	.51
Employment	1=In labour force,	.47	.50	.49
Lived outside	1=Lived outside,	.20	.23	.21

Source: NILT surveys, pooled file 1998–2005.

Analysing the data

For the main component of the empirical investigation, the data analysis proceeds in a number of stages. First, I conduct bivariate analyses of the relationship between the dependent variable [national identity] and the independent variables [experience of intergroup contact in education]; [experience of intergroup contact in residential area]; [experience of intergroup contact through mixed friendship networks]; [experience of intergroup contact through mixed kinship networks]; [experience of intergroup contact through mixed-marriage]. I test the significance of these associations using chi-square tests and t-tests.

Second, I conduct multivariate analyses through the use of a series of binary logistic regression models. I used logistic regression rather than linear regression because the dependent variable [national identity] is a dichotomous categorical variable with only two possible outcomes 1=Northern Irish, 0=British (or Irish). Logistic regression measures the relationship between the dependent variable and predictor (independent variables) through the use of probability scores. The scores represent

probabilities that are bounded between 1 and 0. The probability is measured using the estimated odds ratio or exponent (B) score. This indicates the change in the predicted odds of the dependent variable for every unit increase in the independent variable net of other predictors in the model. Thus, if the exponent (B) score exceeds 1 then the odds of an outcome increase; if the figure is less than 1, any unit increase in the independent variable leads to a drop in the odds of an outcome occurring (see Burns and Burns 2008: 582). Accordingly, the odds of identifying as Northern Irish as opposed to British (or Irish) for every unit increase in the independent variable [experience of intergroup contact] and will either increase or decrease depending on whether the value exceeds or is less than 1. In each model I present the logistic coefficients, the standard errors (in parentheses), and the exponent (B) scores. I interpret the logistic coefficients using the exponent (B) score as this provides the most straightforward way of interpreting coefficients in a nonlinear model (see Lottes et al. 1996; Gow 2009).

Given the major political developments that have occurred in Northern Ireland it was important to factor the potential effects of these developments into the analysis. In order to consider whether the broader political climate had background effects on national identity patterns I run two separate models for each analysis which are aggregated into two time periods: before the implementation of the Agreement and devolution to the Northern Ireland assembly (1989–1998), and after devolution (1999–2010).[52] While it is true that the survey year 1998 was the year in which the Agreement was adopted, it was not until December 1999 that the Agreement was implemented and devolution to the Northern Irish Assembly enacted. Accordingly, for the purposes of this study I group the survey year 1998 with the earlier 'pre-devolution' period.

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[52] The models presented in this study do not control for individual year of survey for a number of reasons. First, given the inconsistency in the survey questions (to be discussed in the 'strengths and limitations' section below) I have only included those survey years in which all measures are present— this represents a total of 10 years. Given that the models are then aggregated into two time periods (pre-devolution and post-devolution), the individual effects of the individual years are negligible. I tested for this by initially including year of survey as a control in the models. As individual year of survey was not found to make any difference in the outcome of the models, I decided not to include it as a measure in the multivariate analyses.

The period from 1989 to 1999 represents a 10 year period under direct rule from Westminster. During this time the official peace process began and eventually culminated in the signing of the Agreement in 1998. The following period from 1999 to 2010 represents the implementation of the Belfast Agreement and the devolution of powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly. This 11 year period also witnessed the suspension of devolution and a decline in Protestant support for the Agreement. However, it was also the period during which the first comprehensive whole of government community relations policy (to be discussed in detail in chapter 4) was enacted and, since 2007, powers have been returned to the Northern Ireland assembly.

Strengths and limitations of survey-based research

The use of survey data to conduct analyses of social and political phenomenon has a number of strengths and limitations. The particular strength of the data used here lies in their large size and the representativeness of their samples. It is therefore possible to make inferences which are more readily generalised to the broader population. Another strength of this type of quantitative analysis is that survey research in Northern Ireland has since 1968 followed a relatively consistent path with regards to measuring identity patterns. This enables researcher access to long time-series data. The ability to analyse consistent time series data over such an extended period of time (from 1968 to 2010) makes it possible to identify and generalise trends in national identity patterns.

Of particular importance to this study is the ability to establish relationships between measures, and more specifically between select measures of cross-community contact and national identity preferences. Moreover, using quantitative data analysis it is possible to assess whether relationships exist between these variables holding other important and potentially influential variables constant. For instance, we can explore whether living in a mixed neighbourhood renders one more likely to identify as Northern Irish. In order to assess the significance of this relationship, however, it is necessary to cancel out the effect of other factors that might also be influencing it, such as an individual's level of education or occupation. This type of in-depth analysis is not possible using qualitative data.

Of course, there are also a number of limitations to using quantitative methods and survey data in particular. One significant limitation that is particularly challenging when conducting research on divided societies is response reliability (see Coakley 2007). For example, it has been acknowledged that politically extreme views tend to be understated in surveys (Whyte 1990). Citing Mitchell et al. (2001) Coakley (2007) suggests that if the public were anywhere near as moderate as they represented themselves in surveys, there would be no Northern Ireland problem. The reliability of surveys is also somewhat compromised by the misreporting of respondents due to social desirability. This has been discussed with reference to the over-reporting of voting (see Bernstein et al. 2001). A related problem is that certain views may be overestimated in surveys because those who are more inclined to follow current affairs are more prone to answer surveys. Respondents may also be less likely to answer questions truthfully out of fear for their security, wishing to disassociate themselves with a particular view or political position to avoid the risk of being targeted or type-cast.

Another limitation involves the adequacy of interpretation of survey questionnaires. For example, as Coakley (2007: 575) points out, simple questions designed to document complex patterns of identity cannot accurately capture the subtlety of meaning attached to identities that may be reached through qualitative means. As such, it is not possible to interpret the content of specific identities through simple survey questions.

A further limitation of the study is the issue of causality. That is, given the cross-sectional nature of the data employed, it is not possible to accurately discern the direction of the relationship between social mixing and national identity. For instance, it could be argued that those who hold more moderate views may choose to live in mixed areas or send their children to integrated schools and that more prejudiced people may avoid contact with out-groups. What has been termed 'the causal sequence problem' (Pettigrew 1998) remains a challenge for those undertaking such research. Indeed, only by employing longitudinal data can definitive conclusions be reached as to the direction of the relationship between mixing and identity. In the absence of such data, however, inferences can still be drawn as to the importance of such environments for more moderate identities. Added to this, a strong theoretical and empirical literature (as

discussed in chapter 2) suggests that positive intergroup contact can lead to attitude change. Indeed, the weight of this academic literature was neatly summarised in Pettigrew and Tropp's (2006) meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory which found overwhelming support for the contention that intergroup contact can reduce group prejudice.

But the most significant challenge to drawing inferences from the data used in this study results from the inconsistency over time in the use of certain survey questions. For example, while some important measures such as the variable for religion, the dependent variable national identity and the independent variables for type of education remain consistent through the survey years, others measures have not. In particular, the measures used to create the independent variables for residential area, friendship networks and kinship ties were not included in the survey years 1994 through to 2004 and the measure used to create the independent variable for marriage was only included from 1998 to 2005.

The lack of continuity across the survey years poses a problem for the development of consistent time series. To address this problem and to ensure consistency throughout the analysis, I have therefore only included those years in which all measures are present. This leaves the survey years 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 for use in the main empirical chapters. The pooled sample (1989–2010) that I utilize in this study is therefore comprised of these years.

For analyses of the relationship between mixed religion marriages and national identity preferences in chapter 6, a different pooled dataset of the NILT surveys (1998–2005) is applied. This is because the measure for mixed marriage was not included in the NISA/NILT 1989–2010 pooled dataset. A separate pooled dataset (NILT 1998–2005) is therefore developed for the purpose of measuring mixed marriage. Unfortunately, this does not include measures for the rest of the independent variables under analysis and because of the different survey years included in the two datasets used, it is not possible to draw direct comparisons with the rest of the independent variables.

Despite these limitations, the datasets utilised are the most in-depth and sophisticated datasets available to measure social attitudes in Northern Ireland. And even after omitting particular survey years, the number of respondents for the datasets and the individual variables remains large enough for useful analyses and comparisons. Furthermore, the pooled datasets that I employ here have demonstrated to be of significant utility in previous research which has investigated a range of social and political attitudes in Northern Ireland (see for example Hughes and Donnelly 2001; Hayes et al. 2007; Hayes and McAllister 2009a; Devine et al. 2011; Lloyd and Robinson 2011). Through the use of the pooled data sets this research has made significant contributions to ongoing debates on the state of community relations and the impact of community relations projects in Northern Ireland.

Conclusion

This chapter identified the presence of the Northern Irish identity, prevalent among a significant minority of both Catholic and Protestant respondents within the NISA and NILT surveys. I showed that this Northern Irish identity has also been captured in the latest census (2011) of the Northern Irish population that found a total of 21 per cent of the population claim a Northern Irish identity only. I argued that this identity is significant as it is the only identity currently shared by both members of the Catholic and Protestant community. Furthermore, those who choose to identify as Northern Irish are making a conscious choice not to identify with the traditional and divisive identities. Given its potential significance, I developed a research strategy to explore potential connections between Northern Irish identity and government and non-government initiatives that aim to increase intergroup contact between Catholics and Protestants.

I proposed a quantitative research strategy that would make use of a number of measures found in the NISA and NILT surveys which record the attitudes, values and beliefs of the people of Northern Ireland on a range of social and political issues. I supplement this quantitative approach by drawing on census and government statistics in the public domain and conduct content analysis of government and non-government policy documentation.

Accordingly, in the chapter to follow I examine government community relations policy crafted to promote and provide opportunities for intergroup contact in Northern Ireland. I will demonstrate that theories from social psychology have been adopted and adapted in successive governments' community relations policy in Northern Ireland over the past two decades, and reveal some of the tensions that can exist between efforts to increase cross-community contact and the political pressures of managing (as different to resolving) issues within a divided society.

Chapter 4. Contact theory and community relations policy

While Northern Ireland remains a divided society, promoting positive community relations has been a central component of government social policy as well as a main focus of voluntary sector organizations and external funding body initiatives since the mid-1980s. This chapter charts the evolution of community relations initiatives that seek to promote positive contact between members of the Catholic and Protestant communities. It identifies important developments and shifts in the focus of such initiatives, and highlights the centrality of cross-community contact and later 'sharing' to this development.

Accordingly, I develop two main arguments. First, I advance the claim that fundamental assumptions of contact theory as developed by Allport (1954, 1979) and Pettigrew (1998)—in particular, that increasing intergroup contact between members of different groups can lead to a reduction of prejudice and an increase in more favourable attitudes towards the out-group—has informed a number of community relations policies and initiatives in Northern Ireland. According to this rationale, if people from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds live in the same neighbourhood, these residents will, over time, come to realize the similarities between them—that they share common concerns and aspirations for their neighbourhood—and that this will lead to feelings of similarity rather than of difference.

I shall show that many initiatives are based upon a simplistic understanding of contact theory that does not take into account the complexities associated with intergroup contact explained in chapter 2. While initiatives have been influenced by some of the claims of intergroup contact theory, it is not possible to attribute the success or failure of initiatives solely to soundness of its premises. Rather, the political context has influenced the direction and focus of community relations policy. I show how the competing aspirations of political parties have been particularly influential. I argue, however, that the contact approach remains central to community relations initiatives and has become more influential over time.

The chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, I trace the development of community relations policy under the regime of direct rule from Westminster, a period that lasted from 1972 until the devolution of power to the Northern Ireland Assembly in December 1999. In particular, I focus on policies that were designed on the basis of some fundamental assumptions of contact theory.

The second section examines community relations policy in its present form with a particular focus on the government's community relations policy document *A Shared Future: Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland* (OFMDFM 2005) (hereafter referred to as *A Shared Future*) and more recently the consultation document entitled *Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Consultation Document* (OFMDFM 2010) (hereafter referred to as *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration*). I provide a close reading and analysis of these documents paying particular attention to their core aims, strategies and underlying principles. The third section consists in an overview of external funding bodies that have contributed resources and funding for community relations initiatives. Notable here are the activities of the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and the European Union (EU) Peace Programmes. Finally, I discuss existing research concerning the effectiveness of initiatives on community relations in Northern Ireland.

The main contribution of this chapter is to highlight the centrality of the 'contact' approach to the development of community relations policy. This chapter, therefore, sets the scene for the empirical chapters that follow in which I examine the efficacy of such initiatives by measuring patterns of identity among Catholics and Protestants.

Promoting 'community relations' in government policy

Deep divisions between communities, whether symbolic or spatial, have acted as barriers to overcoming conflict in Northern Ireland.[53] Since the 1960s, various attempts have been made to manage and transform conflict through the creation of community

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[53] This view is widely held by scholars of the Northern Ireland conflict. See for instance Darby 1986; 1997; Whyte 1990; Hayes et al. 2007; Hayes and McAllister 2009b.

relations policies but it was the period of direct rule from 1972 to 1999 that saw a flourishing of such initiatives in Northern Ireland (Darby 1997: 71). This section details the emergence of a community relations agenda within government policy. It then demonstrates how intergroup contact has been a key component of this agenda.

The term 'community relations' originated in the United Kingdom in the early 1960s in response to increasing levels of immigration, mainly from African and Asian countries, to the United Kingdom. Initially government policy sought to assimilate new migrants, but later turned towards a focus on promoting awareness and respect for cultural diversity between groups. Government policy therefore referred to the need to promote 'community relations' (Frazer and Fitzduff 1994; Harbison 2002).[54]

During the same period, in response to deteriorating relations between Catholic and Protestant communities in Northern Ireland, British home secretary James Callaghan announced the establishment of the Community Relations Act (Northern Ireland) in 1969. The Act was to 'provide for the appointment and functions of a Commission to foster harmonious relations throughout the community and for the purposes conducted therewith' (*Community Relations Act (Northern Ireland) 1969*). As a result a Ministry for Community Relations and a Community Relations Commission were established. The Commission was broadly modelled on the United Kingdom's Race Relations Board (Harbison 2002) and both the Ministry and the Commission were charged with promoting policies and activities to improve community relations. However, their existence was short-lived with the Commission being abolished in 1974 by the newly formed Assembly for Northern Ireland and the Ministry being disbanded a year later following the collapse of the attempted power-sharing government (Frazer and Fitzduff 1994).[55]

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[54] It is beyond the scope of this study to examine the effectiveness of this 'community relations' approach in the 1960s. For the present purposes reference is made to this approach to pin point the first use of the term.

[55] This was the Sunningdale Agreement (1973–74), discussed in detail in chapter 2. The Sunningdale Agreement lasted three months and attempted to operate a power-sharing government. It was opposed by

What Morrow (2013: 67) calls the 'long absence' refers to the period of relative neglect by the government of community relations between the years 1975-1986. After the abolishment of the Commission in 1974, management of community relations fell under the auspices of the Department of Education and while the department continued to provide financial support to the few existing voluntary agencies involved in community relations work, argues Frazer and Fitzduff (1994), it failed to come up with any policies or strategies to ensure the continuance or effectiveness of community relations work. The hiatus in community relations work was influenced to a large extent by the increase in violence throughout Northern Ireland and the subsequent breakdown in relations between the two communities. As Morrow (2013: 11) explains, 'the inevitable trend within community development under conditions of extreme polarisation was to reflect the priorities of communities under siege.' As such, the sensitive nature of cross-community relations work in light of heightened sectarian tensions rendered efforts to promote a community relations agenda difficult.

By the mid-1980s, however, there was renewed interest in community relations and signs that the government was again considering the role that community relations work could play within Northern Ireland. A number of key political developments were arguably influential in this renewed focus. First, in 1985 the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed establishing formal cross-border links between the British and Irish governments in matters related to policy formulation in Northern Ireland (Morrow 2013). Both governments sought to re-establish the goal of cross-community engagement. For example, in 1986 the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) was established as an independent organization under an agreement by the British and Irish government to 'promote economic and social advance and to encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between unionists and nationalists throughout Ireland' (quoted in Morrow 2013: 13).

Second, British government rhetoric alluded to the need for a fresh approach in dealing with the Northern Ireland conflict. For example, Thomas King, Conservative

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the UUP and DUP and in May 1974 it was brought down by the Ulster Workers' Council strike who disagreed with the inclusion into legislation of a Council of Ireland.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland 1985–89 spoke of the need to address problems between communities as he stated, 'You can have all the written constitutions or the new political plans you like, but if there is basic distrust between the two communities, if there is this defensive attitude…that is not the sort of climate in which you get any generosity or outgoing approach' (quoted in Dixon 1997b: 16–17). Following this, in 1987 Thomas King announced that community relations would become a priority area of government policy, calling for a radical realignment of existing institutional structures to accommodate this priority (Harbison 2002: 16). An outcome of this was the establishment of the Central Community Relations Unit (CCRU) in 1987 as part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service. The rationale for the creation of the Unit was the belief that division perpetuates violence and instability. This is evident in the following statement by the CCRU:

> Northern Ireland remains a deeply divided society, within
> which exist two separate groups with different political aspirations,
> religious beliefs, cultural traditions and social values. It is from this
> essential division that violence flares and political instability
> persists…Reducing these divisions is therefore a major part of
> government policy (quoted in Knox and Hughes 1996: 90).

Funded through the Northern Ireland Civil Service, the CCRU was charged with three main functions: to provide a challenge mechanism within Government by vetting all policy for its influence on community relations; to undertake a review role of policy; and to undertake a role in developing new programmes that would promote cross-community contact, mutual understanding[56] and respect for cultural diversity (Harbison 2002; Kelly 2006). In 2000, the CCRU was renamed the Community Relations Unit (CRU) as part of the new devolved government in Northern Ireland. The Unit now receives funding directly from the OFMDFM of Northern Ireland, estimated at £5.5m per annum (Harbison 2002). The functions and funding roles of the CRU will be discussed in detail later in the chapter.

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[56] Mutual understanding refers to greater understanding of communities' culture and traditions.

Community relations work, as it is understood here, refers to work focused on divisions between the Catholic and Protestant communities. Following Kelly (2006: 11) community relations work can be broadly defined as work that aims to 'develop contact and co-operation, promote greater understanding and increase respect for cultural diversity.' A number of different typologies (see Fitzduff 1991; Hughes and Knox 1997) have been developed to capture the broad range of practices implemented by government and non-government bodies that may be described as community relations work. Adapting and adding to the typologies created by Fitzduff (1991) and Knox and Hughes (1997) I have created a typology of community relations work as shown in Table 4.1. Here, I summarise four types of community relations work: cross-community relations work, mutual understanding and cultural traditions work, community development work and justice and rights/reconciliation work. Table 4.1 provides definitions and examples of each type of community relations work as well as examples of organizations that support such work.

Table 4.1. A typology of community relations work

Type	Definition	Examples	Supporting Organisations
Cross-community contact work	Projects aimed to address the segregation and separation of communities due to the belief that segregation creates fear and prejudice between communities	The development of mixed residential areas; mixed leisure centres; shared spaces; integrated schools; holiday programmes for Catholic and Protestant children; Shared Space Initiative	Derry peace and reconciliation work; CRC; Department of Education; NIHE; NICIE; IFI; EU Peace Programmes; Atlantic Philanthropies
Mutual understanding/ cultural traditions work	Designed to decrease ignorance and prejudice between communities and to develop understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity	Education for Mutual Understanding; cultural traditions groups; Irish language training; Ulster-Scots education	Community Relations Council; Department of Education for Northern Ireland; Protestant and Catholic Encounter (PACE)
Community development work	Designed to enhance the capacity of communities to engage in community relations work through community regeneration and the development of structures and networks that assist in the efficacy of community relations projects	Belfast Interface Project; economic regeneration; implementation of anti-discrimination legislation; Targeting Social Need (TSN).	Community Relations Council; Belfast Interface Project; Derry Peace and Reconciliation; Group; EU Peace Programmes; IFI; Atlantic Philanthropies
Justice and rights work/ Reconciliation work	Development of collectively agreed upon principles of justice and rights to be implemented into political frameworks	PACE public discussions; ongoing discussions over the establishment of a truth commission; group discussions on civil liberties education; use of external bodies including Amnesty International	

Sources: Adapted from Fitzduff 1991; Knox and Hughes 1997.

It is important to note that each of these four types is not mutually exclusive, such that some projects and their supporting organizations may fit in to more than one

category. For example, the Derry Peace and Reconciliation Group run a variety of projects both within and between communities including single identity work within marginalised communities, cross-border and cross-community projects for primary school children as well as facilitating public political debates for secondary students on current events and issues relevant to young people.[57] The IFI, the EU Peace Programme for Northern Ireland, the Community Relations Council (CRC), the CRU and various government departments all provide funding and support for several types of community relations work. Each of these organizations, their roles and functions will be discussed in detail in the sections below.

Contact theory and community relations policy

Mutual understanding and cross-community contact work are two inter-connected types of community relations work that have attracted significant attention in policy circles. As Niens et al. (2003: 138) note, governmental and non-governmental schemes in Northern Ireland have a long-standing tradition of promoting cross-community contact. Indeed, important elements of community relations policy has been predicated on the belief that intergroup contact would improve relationships between communities (CCRU 1992; Harbison 2002; Kelly 2006). For example, a central objective of CCRU was to promote mutual understanding between communities through education and through cross-community contact schemes between segregated schools.

The belief in the benefits of increasing contact has filtered through to other government departments. For example, as educational reform in Northern Ireland was one of the major priorities of the Conservative Government during the 1980s and 1990s (Morgan and Fraser 1999) the education system as a potential avenue through which improved community relations could be promoted. As part of this, the *1989 Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order* was introduced. Subsequently, the Department of Education established a voluntary Cross Community Contact Scheme between

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[57] See the Peace and Reconciliation Group at <http://www.peaceprg.co.uk>.

religiously segregated schools. Government resources were made available to support joint activities between schools. Concurrently, under the *1989 Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order*, a new common curriculum for all schools was established. This curriculum included the units 'Education for Mutual Understanding' (EMU) and 'Cultural Heritage' (CH). The new themes to be taught through EMU and CH were designed to address the history and traditions of the two main communities in order to increase mutual understanding between them (Dunn and Morgan 1999).

Assessment of the effectiveness of such schemes has been limited by a number of factors. Firstly, although the teaching of EMU became mandatory in all schools, there was no formal requirement for joint contact initiatives between segregated schools. This meant that schools could, if they wished, teach the themes set out in EMU without ever establishing links with schools across the divide. Consequently, while some schools were active in promoting cross-community contact schemes, others avoided doing so (Smith and Dunn 1990; Dunn and Morgan 1999).

The lack of a formal requirement for contact between schools may have been partly due to the controversial nature of the scheme in its early years. As an early report by Smith and Robinson (1996) highlighted, the emphasis placed on contact between Protestants and Catholics gave rise to concerns that there was a political agenda underlying and motivating the scheme. For example, they noted how some members of the unionist community argued that such schemes (especially when they involved activities related to Irish culture or links with the Republic) were tactics to encourage Protestants to soften their stance on constitutional issues. Conversely, some nationalists were suspicious of EMU activities, viewing them as covert assimilation tactics.

Secondly, the interpretation and implementation of the various themes attached to EMU has varied greatly across schools (Dunn and Morgan 1999). This is in part due to a lack of adequate training for teachers that would equip them with the skills necessary for teaching and dealing with controversial issues in a classroom setting. Accounts from teachers suggested that they did not feel comfortable addressing certain contentious issues, and consequently chose to avoid them (Johnson 2001). The teaching of EMU themes has also been affected by the lack of an agreed and uniform approach to implementing the themes of EMU across the education system. As a result, EMU has

been regarded as a limited priority in many schools (Dunn and Morgan 1999; McGlynn et al. 2004).

Alongside changes to the curriculum, the *1989 Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order* also called for the promotion of integrated schooling in Northern Ireland in which children from both the Protestant and Catholic traditions would be educated together. The Department of Education was given responsibility to 'encourage and facilitate' the development of integrated schools where there was parental demand for them. Integration in education was defined as 'the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils' (Harbison 2002: 2). In the initial years, however, progress towards formally promoting integrated schools was slow. Once again, state sponsored cross-community contact was generally met with hostility and suspicion. Opposition came both from politicians representing their local electorates and from members of the Catholic clergy (Dunn and Morgan 1999). While the *1989 Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order* was formally in place, the task of creating space for an integrated education system was left to determined parent groups, including, for example, 'All Children Together', with financial support from charities, foundations and individuals. [58]

The CCRU was also charged with promoting community relations at the council level, and it introduced the District Council Community Relations Programme (DCCRP). The DCCRP was designed to encourage local district councils to promote community relations themes consonant with CCRU objectives and many of the project developed had the aim of encouraging cross-community contact (Knox and Hughes 1996; Kelly 2006). The CCRU provided funding for community relations programmes on the understanding that councils would agree on a cross-party basis to participate in

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[58] I will provide more detailed analysis of the history and nature of integrated schools in chapter 6. For present purposes it is important to note that the promotion of intergroup contact has received mixed responses within the wider community, and indeed within political circles. To this day only 5 per cent of schools qualify as having a mix of pupils from both Protestant and Catholic backgrounds. While the number of schools participating in cross-community activities has increased over the years, integration within schools has remained relatively minimal.

the programme; that community relations officers would be appointed; and that all projects designed through the programme would be required to include cross-community contact, mutual understanding or cultural diversity (Knox 1994).

As within the education sector, however, suspicion from community leaders and political representatives over the motivations behind such programmes compromised the longevity and effectiveness of some programmes. As Knox and Hughes (1996) point out, the political make-up of the councils influenced significantly the effectiveness of these schemes. After conducting in-depth interviews with local authorities, they concluded, 'because the programme is located within the remit of local government, it has assumed a certain political aura and provoked, among some councillors, a degree of suspicion' (Knox and Hughes 1996: 89). Interviews with community relations officers highlighted these political tensions. For example, one community relations officer described the reaction to the community relations programme within the council as eliciting suspicion from unionist members of the government's intentions. This was fuelled in particular by concerns arising in the wake of the Anglo-Irish Agreement 1985 that gave the Republic of Ireland a greater say in the internal affairs of Northern Ireland. Sinn Fein members were also described as wary of the Stormont government's intentions. They were particularly concerned that the programme was designed to draw attention away from the pressing issue of inequality (Knox and Hughes 1996: 89).

Other party members on both sides of the divide have expressed concern that the programme has involved a waste of public monies (Burgess 2002). As a result of these competing pressures, some community relations projects (especially those involving cross-community contact) became one-off events with little to no impact on community relations (Knox 1994; Knox and Hughes 1996). Indeed, Knox and Hughes (1996: 94) argued that there was 'little evidence of groups tackling superordinate goals or developing cross-cutting cleavages aimed at breaking the Catholic/Protestant mould'.

While much community relations work can be classified as that which aims to either increase mutual understanding between groups or promote pluralist environments through increasing opportunities for intergroup contact, it is also clear that the implementation of these objectives has been met with some scepticism. There are several reasons for this. In this section, I demonstrated that one reason for scepticism

over the direction of community relations work is due to views over the causes of the conflict and therefore the type of work necessary to address the needs of the communities. For instance, Sinn Fein regards the conflict as one of persistent inequalities and discrimination against the nationalist community. While many within the unionist community were suspicious of what they saw regarded as community relations policy as social engineering. In the section below I examine these criticisms of community relations policy in more detail. I also demonstrate that while the contact approach has become a dominant theme of community relations policy, the language of 'good relations' has now become salient within policy circles.

Socio-economic disadvantage and 'good relations'

In recent years, the contact approach has become a central feature of much community relations work. But it is important to note that not all community relations policy and funding focuses on promoting cross-community contact. Indeed, the 'contact' approach, as it is applied to Northern Ireland, has sometimes been criticised (see Hughes and Donnelly 2002; McVeigh 2002) as being 'symptom driven'—diverting attention away from tackling the so-called root causes of the conflict. These so-called root causes refer to socio-economic inequalities experienced by particular sections of society.

This is a criticism echoed by Sinn Fein. As demonstrated above Sinn Fein views the conflict as one of persisting inequalities between Catholics and Protestants and argues that only through major structural change (including progress of justice issues and changes to the current constitutional status of Northern Ireland) and the elimination of inequality will real progress be made towards an end to conflict. Indeed, Foley and Robinson (2004: 28) detected this scepticism of the 'contact' approach in community relations work in an interview with a senior member of Sinn Fein. The Sinn Fein Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) expressed concern that community relations policy 'ignore[s] the wider political issues. They are as far apart at the end of the day as they were at the start' (quoted in Foley and Robinson 2004: 32). While the development of Fair Employment Legislation and initiatives such as Targeting Social Need and Fair Treatment Guidelines for government departments has sought to address these inequalities, the Sinn Fein MLA called for the continuing need to deal with the

reality of different and sometimes clashing single identity communities (Foley and Robinson 2004: 28). Concerns over the focus on contact were also echoed by a UUP MLA who expressed concern that contact projects encourage tokenism and are a waste of government resources. The MLA stated, 'it could be that you improve the relationships between the communities…by not bringing them together' (quoted in Foley and Robinson 2004: 29).

Socio-economic disadvantage and discrimination remain pressing problems and are present in both highly segregated loyalist and republican wards. In 2011 youth unemployment in Northern Ireland was at 19.1 per cent (Nolan 2012) and by the second quarter of 2012 it had reached 23.5 per cent according to the Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey.[59] Moreover, violence within these areas, and especially in so-called interface areas, is more acute than in other urban areas. Studies show that such communities feel marginalised from society, and that this has led to feelings of resentment and mistrust of government and its ability and willingness to deal with endemic problems in these communities (Bairner and Shirlow 2003; Jarman 2005a).

In conjunction with the persistence of socio-economic disadvantage prejudice, discrimination, and hate crime directed towards minority groups (including migrant workers)[60] have become salient social issues (Jarman and Monaghan 2004; Gilligan 2008). The Derry City Council's 2011–2014 Good Relations Strategy reported, 'a worrying increasing trend in the number of racist and sectarian incidences' and 'prejudice against Irish Travellers and Migrant workers are particularly significant' (Derry City Council 2011: 100–102). Against this background of ongoing marginalization, prejudice and discrimination policy practice is influenced as much by a

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[59] Youth unemployment rate based on 18–24 year old age group. See Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey, NISRA, at <http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/stats-labour-market/stats-labour-market-unemployment.htm>.

[60] See for example, 'Romanians leave Belfast after racist attacks', *The Guardian*, 23 June 2009.

need to promote what is called 'good relations' and equality[61] as by a need to foster cross-community contact (Hughes 2009).

With this in mind, it is important to make a distinction between 'good relations' and 'community relations'. Since it first appeared in the *Northern Ireland Act 1998*, the use of the concept 'good relations' has gained increased currency in policy circles. Foley and Robinson (2004) argue that the prominent use of this idea reflects the need to move beyond the binary model of Catholic–Protestant relations. This concept was first introduced in Section 75(2) of the *Northern Ireland Act 1998*. Section 75 (2) states that:

> Without prejudice to its obligations under subsection (1), a
> public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to
> Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good
> relations between persons of different religious belief, political
> opinion or racial group (Section 75 (2) *Northern Ireland Act 1998*).

What 'good relations' actually means, however, is not further specified or interpreted in the Act itself. This is somewhat confusing. As Foley and Robinson (2004: 13) note '[t]here are different views on what the terms "community relations" and "good relations" denote and how they relate to each other'. While Section 75 (2) speaks of the need to promote 'good relations', this particular Section has formed the basis of much 'community relations' policy to date. Moreover, the term 'good relations' is not defined in legislation. The Equality Commission of Northern Ireland has developed a working definition of 'good relations' as follows: 'The growth of relationships and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial

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[61] The current equality agenda is based on a series of anti-discrimination laws dating back to the 1970s including fair employment legislation designed to address discrimination in the workforce on religious grounds. More recently, Section 75 of the *Northern Ireland Act 1998* places a statutory obligation on public authorities to promote equality between 'persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; between men and women generally; between persons with a disability and persons without; and between persons with dependants and persons without'.

context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms' (Equality Commission of Northern Ireland 2008).

The increasing use of the concept of good relations is probably reflective of the growing numbers of ethnic migrants living in Northern Ireland and the subsequent need to develop policy that is representative of these groups. However, given the scope of the present study I focus on and refer to the term 'community relations' and I take 'community relations' to refer to the relations between members of the Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland.

So far I have charted the development of community relations in Northern Ireland since the early trial phase in the 1970s through to the establishment of a strong CRU within government. In the following section I turn to documenting and analysing the development of a new community relations agenda within government that broadens responsibility for promoting community relations to include all government departments.

An agenda for 'sharing': community relations in post-Agreement Northern Ireland

The period since the implementation of the Agreement has been characterised by a series of major political, structural and legislative changes. These changes have influenced the scope and delivery of community relations policy. This has included further clarification of the difference between 'good relations' and 'community relations' and a renewed focus on the idea that promoting cross-community contact may lead to more positive community relations. In this section I analyse community relations policy and show how this has been influenced by the political restructuring that has occurred since 1999.

A false start

The Agreement came into force in December 1999 and effected a transfer of powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly and a joint power-sharing Northern Ireland Executive. Under the terms of the Agreement (and as a result of political negotiations) the six existing direct rule departments were replaced by 10 new departments together

with an Office for the formally co-equal First Minister and Deputy First Minister. Keeping in line with the consociational prescription of power-sharing and equal representation, the Northern Ireland Executive would consist of six unionist and six nationalist ministers, with 10 heading departments and two sharing power in OFMDFM (Wilford 2009).

Under the terms of the new Agreement, responsibility for community relations was transferred to the OFMDFM. In 2000 the CCRU became known as the CRU, forming part of the Equality Unit of the OFMDFM. The CRU's broad policy objectives mirror those of the CCRU. These are to increase cross-community contact and co-operation, and to encourage mutual respect, understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. In an attempt to meet these objectives, CRU activities involve formulating policy, providing advice to government, undertaking research, allocating funding, and providing support for community relations initiatives.[62]

While the new devolved structures and responsibilities within departments were formally in place, political tensions rendered the proper functioning of the new government impossible. As a consequence there was little progress in the realm of community relations policy during the first phase of devolution (Farry 2009). Conflict between unionists and nationalists attempting to share power are argued to have been the cause of the failure of the new Northern Ireland Executive. For example, tensions emerged within the unionist camp over claims that an IRA 'spy ring' was operating inside the Assembly and unionists called for the suspension of Sinn Fein's participation in government in light of their suspicions (McAuley 2004). In addition, Wilford (2009) highlighted growing tensions between First Minister David Trimble (UUP) and Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon (SDLP) over competing aspirations and preoccupations with how the Executive should be run. Mallon was concerned with making sure that the co-equal status of his position was fully respected and Trimble later reflected that 'the co-equal status of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister was a real necessity…but

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[62] See the CRU website at <http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/equality/community-relations.htm>.

we immediately reflected that by going to opposite ends of Parliament Buildings' (quoted in Wilson 2009: 188).

It had been hoped that the relatively moderate UUP and SDLP would provide stability and act as a counterweight against the more traditional DUP and Sinn Fein (Farry 2009). However, these parties proved incapable of preventing traditional political antagonisms from creating obstacles to reform. As a result of the political impasse in the Executive the initial power-sharing government and Northern Ireland Assembly was suspended in October 2002, and a direct rule caretaker government was installed. [63]

A Shared Future

The community relations policy document *A Shared Future* was crafted during the period of direct rule between 2002 and 2005. It is important to emphasise that while the main political parties in Northern Ireland took part in the consultation process, the document was ultimately prepared by officials answerable to the British government, rather than by Northern Ireland's political parties. Released by the CRU of the OFMDFM in 2005, it has been the most in-depth and influential community relations policy to date. This document was formulated in response to the report entitled *Review of Community Relations Policy* (Harbison 2002), and emphasizes the importance of tackling segregation in Northern Ireland. It is significant for those within the community who advocate for a more focused and coordinated effort to promote sharing over separation.

In 2002, former Deputy Secretary at the Department of Social Development, Dr Jeremy Harbison, was commissioned by the OFMDFM to assist with a review of community relations policy in Northern Ireland. The review was to examine 'current policy and associated policy instruments' that had been established at a particular period in the history of Northern Ireland (between 1987 and 1990). The policy under review

[63] It was not until May 2007, following significant concessions and institutional reform embodied in the St Andrew's Agreement (2006), that the devolved political institutions in Northern Ireland were restored with Rev. Ian Paisley of the DUP and Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein becoming First Minister and Deputy First Minister respectively.

had the objective 'to improve relations between the two main traditions in Northern Ireland through the encouragement of greater contact and the development of mutual understanding and respect for different cultural traditions' (Harbison 2002: 4). The report cited evidence that despite attempts to improve community relations, there had been 'progressively higher levels of residential segregation over the last 20 years with a majority of people choosing to live in polarised districts' (Harbison 2002: 25). Related to this, the report claimed that community relations policy had been inadequately monitored and evaluated (Harbison 2002: 64) and concluded that, 'the evidence does not suggest that significant progress has been made towards a more tolerant or inclusive society' and that there are 'significant areas of Northern Ireland society where increasing separation and polarisation of communities is taking place' (Harbison 2002: 25, 49).

On the basis of the central findings of the Harbison Report, the CRU embarked on an extended public consultation process entitled *A Shared Future: A Consultation Paper on Improving Relations in Northern Ireland* (Darby and Knox 2004). This consultation aimed to promote the widest possible debate concerning the appropriate aims and objectives of future community relations policies. There were 504 written responses gathered through workshops, focus groups, and public advertisement campaigns. These responses came from a wide range of stakeholders including voluntary and community organizations, ethnic minority groups, schools, individuals, political parties and elected representatives, trade unions and church groups. In addition, an Omnibus Survey was commissioned by the OFMDFM to gauge the public's view on the future of community relations policy.

One of the central questions to emerge during this consultation process concerned how best to deal with existing divisions within society (Darby and Knox 2004: 3). Two contrasting approaches were the focus of much debate. One approach maintained that that the pragmatic solution was to accept that existing patterns of segregation and division were likely to remain, at least in the short to medium term. Accordingly, efforts should be focused on stabilising and managing the consequences of such divisions. An alternative view proposed that instead of accepting division, efforts should focus on

promoting rapid progress towards a more integrated and shared society (Darby and Knox 2004: 3).

The first proposal is clearly reminiscent of some of the central arguments made by consociational theorists. Consociational theory stresses the durability of division and argues for the management of division through institutional structures, as discussed in chapter 1. However, the consociational institutions of government were, at the time of the consultation, suspended due to a lack of trust and compromise between the political parties. Indeed, the consultation process also brought to light a generalised public sentiment that deep mistrust between (and of) politicians was blocking progress towards a sustainable peace. The role of elected representatives had earlier been called into question with regards to the effectiveness of community relations initiatives as part of DCCRP. Arguably this mistrust of politicians' motives encouraged many in the consultation process to argue that continued management of division was a far less than satisfactory option for the future of community relations policy.[64]

The result of the consultation process was the OFMDFM's 2005 policy document, *A Shared Future*. A number of important developments and changes to the community relations agenda are apparent in this document. First, *A Shared Future* makes a clear distinction between 'community relations' and 'good relations'. Here 'community relations' is defined as referring specifically to communal divisions between Catholics and Protestants. 'Good relations' is defined as referring to Section 75(2) of the *Northern Ireland Act 1998* which includes relations between 'persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group' (OFMDFM 2005: 63). Second, the language of 'cross-community contact', apparent in earlier policy documents, was replaced by the language

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[64] For example, successive social surveys have continuously shown low levels of trust in government and in politicians in Northern Ireland. In 1998 results from the NILT survey question, 'Do those we elect lose touch with the people pretty quickly? resulted in 72 per cent of respondents having 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statement. Results from this question asked in 2003 showed that 75 per cent of respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed'.

of 'sharing'. *A Shared Future* calls for the promotion of 'sharing' across the whole of government Indeed, all newly appointed Ministers to the Northern Ireland Assembly are now held to a new ministerial code under which they must pledge to 'promote the interests of the whole community represented in the Northern Ireland Assembly towards the goal of a shared future'.[65] However, as will be discussed in detail later in this chapter, nowhere within the *A Shared Future* document is the concept of 'sharing' defined.

Third, the central focus of *A Shared Future* is tackling persistent segregation. For example, the overall vision for *A Shared Future* is to establish '[a] society where there is equity, respect for diversity and recognition of our interdependence' (OFMDFM 2005: 7) and the document identifies the high levels of segregation that persist within society as a major obstacle to achieving this goal. The document regards parallel living and the duplication of services as 'unsustainable, morally and economically' (OFMDFM 2005: 15) and calls attention to the costs of a divided society:

> [S]egregated housing and education, security costs, less than efficient public service provision, and deep-rooted intolerance that has too often been used to justify violent sectarianism and racism. Policy that simply adapts to, but does not alter these challenges, results in inefficient resource allocations. These are not sustainable in the medium to long-term (OFMDFM 2005: 15).

While acknowledging the importance of reducing social and economic inequalities, the document stresses that unless the underlying 'culture of intolerance' is addressed, a more 'normal' society will be unattainable (OFMDFM 2005: 8). Just what this document takes to be the causes of this 'culture of intolerance', and how a 'normal' society is understood, is not made explicit. It maintains that, '[m]oving from relationships based on mistrust and defense to relationships rooted in mutual recognition and trust is the essence of reconciliation' (OFMDFM 2005: 14). Its central

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[65] See *Northern Ireland Assembly 2006 Statutory Ministerial Code,* Section 1.4 (ca)
<http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/work-of-the-executive/ministerial-code.htm>.

message is that to promote and achieve sustainable peace, Northern Ireland needs to undergo major transformations in the way in which relationships are structured. Relationships based on mutual recognition and trust, it asserts, can only come about through increased sharing across the traditional divide.

Finally, the document affirms that identities should be regarded as susceptible to change. Indeed, *A Shared Future* regards identity as 'something that also evolves over time, as we go through life experiences and relate to others- not something unchanging which seals us off from those who are "different"' (OFMDFM 2005: 7). This statement reveals an anti-essentialist view on identity in which identity is understood to be malleable and flexible, influenced by life experiences and changes in social context. This is not to say, however, that entrenched group identities will naturally evolve over time in a positive direction. Indeed, the document warns that in 'multi-ethnic societies that don't work'…'individuals are reduced to simple group stereotypes' (OFMDFM 2005: 7). What this statement suggests is the need to create an environment that discourages the labelling of people according to group stereotypes and in which identities can evolve.

A Shared Future envisages an environment that could achieve these aims—one which emphasizes 'sharing' over separation in all aspects of life, including the sharing of services, neighbourhoods, schools and parks and open spaces (OFMDFM 2006: 11). This has been, in various forms, the philosophy behind earlier community relations initiatives. Earlier initiatives spoke of the need to promote cross-community contact and mutual understanding across a wide range of environments. However, the emphasis placed within *A Shared Future* on the concept of 'sharing' is striking. Moreover, the 'shared' environments are not merely physical environments, but are defined by a culture of tolerance and the achievement of reconciliation and mutual trust (OFMDFM 2005: 3). *A Shared Future* asserts that all public expenditure should promote and support 'sharing over separation' in order to 'facilitate the development of a shared community where people wish to live, learn, work and play together' (OFMDFM 2005: 8).

A Shared Future has many virtues. For one, it is acknowledged that a system premised on the idea of 'separate but equal' will not provide stability in the long term. It affirms the need for a holistic and integrated approach to dealing with segregation and views segregation as a challenge to be overcome, rather than merely managed. Moreover, the document's treatment of identity as something that can be transformed over time suggests a move away from a mind-set, evident in the consociational institutions of government, which regards identity as something that is fixed and to which we must therefore resign ourselves.

However, this policy document is conceptually problematic in a number of ways and each of these shall be dealt here in turn. First, it makes fundamental assumptions regarding cross-community contact, or what is called 'sharing', that are questionable and somewhat surprisingly the concept of 'sharing' itself is not defined within the document. Over the past two decades there has been a proliferation in cross-community projects as well as a substantial amount of research material generated as a result of such projects that go completely unacknowledged. Some of the evidence from previous research has challenged the effectiveness of certain policy interventions. For instance, within the integrated education sector, previous studies (see Gallagher et al. 2003; Donnelly 2004a; Hughes and Donnelly 2006) have found large imbalances in the percentage of pupils and staff from the two main communities within supposedly 'integrated' schools leading to significant underrepresentation of one community within the school. This can lead to group status differentials, in which one group's culture, traditions and identity are given preference. This in turn undermines the supposedly equal relationship that the two main traditions are to be afforded within integrated schools as stated by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education.

Moreover, lack of a uniform definition across all schools of what integration means and how it should be implemented has led to very different teaching methods, with some schools employing norms of avoidance when dealing with difficult issues concerning the two main communities (see Johnson 2001; Montgomery et al. 2003; Hughes and Donnelly 2006). It is somewhat concerning that *A Shared Future* does not

take into consideration the findings of such studies. Increasing integration within schools is widely believed to be a positive development within a divided society. However, simple quantitative increases in intergroup contact that are not accompanied by intergroup contact of a particular kind may produce unintended and long-lasting problems for the integrated education sector.

Social psychological research, as demonstrated in chapter 1, has acknowledged and even highlighted the negative consequences that contact can yield. *A Shared Future* does not specify how it will overcome or avoid these negative consequences. If policy is to draw on such theories, a close and critical reading of the theory is required, including acknowledgement of the negative effects that contact can have and the articulation of strategies for minimizing the risks of such effects. Hughes (2009: 30) concurs with this claim, arguing that *A Shared Future* fails to take research findings adequately into account, leaving the document 'riddled with uncritical assumptions about the potential of actions proposed to transform relationships of mistrust, fear and hostility'. The focus on allocating resources to increase 'sharing' must be matched by concerted efforts to produce interventions that have characteristics of 'quality' contact.

Second, the responsibilities set out in the *A Shared Future First Triennial Action Plan* for departments to meet this aim appear broad and rather unspecific. Little detail is provided regarding how these responsibilities will be implemented. For example, the OFMDFM is to 'lead on all aspects and actions of a Shared Future objective' (OFMDFM 2006: 22). Similarly, the Department of Education is required 'to promote and prioritise sharing in all levels of education' (OFMDFM 2006: 26). It is unclear whether 'sharing' refers to integrating Catholics and Protestants within schools or to increased collaboration and contact between segregated schools. With regards to other departments, the document is more specific. For example, it calls for the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to develop two pilot schemes of 'Shared Future' housing within 12 months (OFMDFM 2006: 29).

Criticism over the direction of the government's policy community relations policy has also been voiced by political representatives. Indeed, it is clear that much of this criticism stems from a lack of clarity over just what are the aims of the government's plan for sharing. For example, research by Foley and Robinson (2004)

found a high degree of scepticism among politicians over the objective of a more shared and integrated society. Indeed, they stated, 'most tend to regard such proposals as unrealistic, inappropriate and, in some cases, dangerous' (p. 25). Overall, many politicians interviewed expressed concerns over what they saw as a 'Big Brother' approach by making sharing a key principle of policy-making and creating artificial environments in which experiments at integration could be conducted (p. 22).

The strong emphasis in *A Shared Future* on the need for sharing (as opposed to separation) may be explained by a number of contextual factors. For example, after the initial optimism following the implementation of the Agreement, tensions within the Northern Ireland Assembly and between rival political parties led to a steady breakdown of relations between those who were appointed to govern together. As discussed in detail earlier, political infighting and stalling within the Northern Ireland Executive led to the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly and a return to direct rule for a five-year period. The issue of trust was flagged in a joint statement by the *Taoiseach* and the British government, who stated that the devolved Government could not be made to work effectively in circumstances where there was a breakdown of trust between those appointed to govern.[66] Moreover, mistrust of politicians was highlighted as a major concern in the consultation document (Darby and Knox 2004).

Alongside these political events, researchers produced evidence that increasing numbers of people were choosing to live in segregated communities. Indeed, as previously demonstrated, the findings from the Harbison Review (2002) suggested that rather than an improvement in community relations since the implementation of the Agreement, there was evidence that deep divisions remained, and indeed had increased

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[66] See Department of the Taoiseach Government Press Release 'Suspension of devolved government in Northern Ireland: joint statement by the Taoiseach and Prime Minister.' 14 October 2002. Accessed 5th August 2010 at
<http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/eng/News/Archives/2002/Government_Press_Releases_2002/Suspension_o f_Devolved_Government_in_Northern_Ireland_Joint_Statement_by_Taoiseach_and_Prime_Minister.htm l>.

in some sections of society.[67] The problem of persisting divisions within society was also stressed in the consultation document (OFMDFM 2005). Clearly, then, sharing power at the level of government was not enough to encourage sharing between communities at the grassroots level. Rather, as the consultation document and *A Shared Future* demonstrated, a renewed and focused effort on promoting sharing across the divide was required at all levels of Northern Irish society.

Cohesion, sharing and integration

The reinstatement of devolved government to Northern Ireland commenced in May 2007 and with it the arrival of a new First Minister Peter Robinson (DUP) and Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness (Sinn Fein) in the Northern Ireland Executive. Since then significant changes have occurred regarding the future direction and emphasis on policy for improving community relations.

The OFMDFM seek to replace the CRU's main community relations policy with the release in 2010 of the Government's draft program *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* (OFMDFM 2010). Published in draft form on 27 July, the *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* document is significant for being the first community relations strategy drawn up and agreed upon by a devolved power-sharing government. The draft programme is set to replace *A Shared Future* and will be the-key strategy for the new Executive in promoting community relations. *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* sets out a number of priorities similar to those in *A Shared Future* that are considered to be matters requiring attention. These include the need to promote and develop shared spaces and shared neighbourhoods as well as to reduce and eventually eliminate segregated services (OFMDFM 2010).

As a preliminary method to address the issues set out in *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration*, the document categorizes issues in terms of a timeframe that includes a

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[67] A substantial body of research has argued that the Protestant community in particular felt that the Agreement unfairly benefited the Catholic community leading to high levels of disillusionment with the Agreement within the Protestant community (see for example Hayes et al. 2005b; McAuley and Tonge 2007).

number of short, medium and long term aims. Short term aims include developing more efficient and effective action plans for dealing with eruptions of violence in interface areas. Within the medium term, suggestions for community relations policy include a new parades framework to ease tensions between groups. Proposals for 'sharing space' related to encouraging mixed neighbourhoods and reducing segregated services are deemed to be long term goals. *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* does not go into further detail about the timing and sequencing of these short, medium and long term goals.

While still in draft form, the consultation document has received significant criticism from a wide range of stakeholders. The Northern Ireland Business Specialist Magazine, AgendaNI (2010: 16) referred to the 77-page document as 'cautious, tending to speak of issues to address rather than problems to solve'. Within the Northern Ireland Executive the draft document received mixed responses. The Alliance Party of Northern Ireland, who had entered the Executive on the condition that real progress would be made towards promoting 'a shared future', regarded *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* as having a 'weak' vision. The Alliance Party (2010: 4) argue that the document does not contain any 'affirmation of a shared society', and nor is there a 'rejection of the notion of "separate, but equal" or "benign apartheid"'. This concern was echoed by the UUP's Danny Kennedy who warned that *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* was unlikely to bring about a shared future as he remained unconvinced that the DUP and Sinn Fein had moved beyond a 'separate but equal' position (quoted in AgendaNI Magazine 2010: 19).

A recent comparative analysis of the two policy documents conducted by Ruane and Todd (2010) reveals some significant conceptual shifts. For instance, they highlight that the concept of reconciliation has been replaced in *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* by 'mutual respect' and an 'acceptance of diversity' (OFMDFM 2010: 41-2). The effect of this is to appear to be much less ambitious with regards to the outcomes of the new community relations agenda. Ruane and Todd (2010: 3) contend that it is imprudent to abandon the process of reconciliation in favour of mutual respect and tolerance of diversity, and warn that a government goal of mutual respect and tolerating diversity may not be enough to hold off the dangers of re-sectarianisation

especially among the young. The authors argue that currently the conditions in Northern Ireland are favourable for moving towards 'a shared future', but 'a sustained strategic effort on behalf of government is necessary to translate political change into better community relations'. In this regard they find the *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* document lacking. Comparing the previous policy, *A Shared Future*, to the current proposals, they contend that *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* 'may underestimate the difficulty of the task, both in its conceptualisation of its goals, and in its strategic orientation' (p.3).

The document is also criticised for seemingly taking cultures and identities as given and stable (Ruane and Todd 2010: 3). Ruane and Todd draw attention to a sharp distinction between the manner in which the two documents conceive of communal identities, and consequently how they can and should be dealt with. Whereas *A Shared Future* called for projects which 'highlight the complexity and overlapping nature of identities' (OFMDFM 2005: 10), *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* seeks to build a society in which cultural identities are celebrated with confidence and pride (OFMDFM 2010: 7). This is problematic because, unlike *A Shared Future*, the document fails to recognise that identities can very easily become polarised and can act as labels for simple group stereotypes. A suggestion for promoting other, more inclusive identities is missing.

The language of *A Shared Future* stresses that identity is a choice that an individual makes, albeit one that is influenced by the socio-political context. In contrast, the language of *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* seems to posit the autonomy of distinct cultures that can hopefully come into contact with one another in a respectful way. The strong assumption within the document, which focuses on the maintenance and celebration of group identities, suggests that the latest government strategy for community relations is to manage polarised identities rather than attempt to transform them. *A Shared Future* stands out as envisioning a transformed, shared society. *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* appears less ambitious in this way and more concerned with maintaining community identity and managing tensions that may arise from this. This conceptual shift becomes even more problematic by the fact that *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* fails to adequately acknowledge how the segregated

nature of society affects social relationships within Northern Ireland. This may have important implications for the way in which community relations policy is conceptualised and formulated in the future.

It is important to view *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* in the context in which it was crafted. The new power-sharing Executive is governed by the two traditional parties in Northern Ireland, namely the DUP and Sinn Fein. As I demonstrated earlier, these parties have traditionally held very different views on the causes of the conflict and the persistence of communal division. This may be why *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* places emphasis on addressing inequality, which reflects Sinn Fein's views concerning persisting inequalities between Protestants and Catholics. The political make-up of the executive may also explain the conceptual shift evident within the *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* document with regards to the understanding of identity. The work of Mitchell and Evans (2009) is particularly illuminating here. They argue that the electoral success of the more hard-line parties in power-sharing is due to the 'ethnic tribune' appeals made by these parties. That is, they have been seen to be the robust defenders of their group's cause—through maintaining that they are the defenders of their respective community's cultures, identities and political aspirations, while making the most out of the power-sharing institutions (Mitchell and Evans 2009: 152). As Mitchell and Evans (2009: 153) explain, 'The ethnic tribune party can be simultaneously pragmatic over resources and intransigent about identity.'[68] To be seen to move away from this role, by adopting a more moderate stance on their community's identity may have potential electoral consequences.

Moreover, *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* was drafted during a period of economic uncertainty following the global financial crisis. In the 2010 (United Kingdom) Treasury Spending Review it was announced that block grant funding to Northern Ireland would be reduced by 6.9 per cent over a four-year period (HM Treasury 2010). This may have impacted on the perceived viability of and questions over the necessity of various community relations projects and thus influenced the

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[68] See also Mitchell et al. (2009).

content of the draft *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* document. The heavy criticism laid against the *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* document have led to the establishment of a five-party working group set up to find a replacement for the *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* strategy. A viable and agreed upon alternative to the strategy has yet to be realised. Progress in this endeavour has been stymied by the recent withdrawal of the Alliance Party from the working group following disagreements over proposed social housing plans in north Belfast. The plans have been heavily criticised by the Alliance Party for furthering the 'segregation of housing under a purely notional framework of sharing'.[69] This recent development does not bode well for the realization of an alternative to the *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* strategy.

Adding to this concern over the future of a workable and agreed upon community relations strategy is the recent research conducted by Kelly (2012). In interviews with key individuals within the political, legislative, policy-making and community and voluntary sectors, Kelly uncovered scepticism among respondents with regards to the ability of the political leadership in effectively addressing the issue of inter-communal division. Indeed, Kelly (2012: 53) noted a sense of frustration among respondents over the significant work that remained in order to develop a clear and agreed upon vision of society for the future in Northern Ireland.

Despite the many challenges involved in formulating a coherent and agreed on community relations strategy, funding from government and from external grant aid have established numerous 'community relations' programmes throughout Northern Ireland. The following section provides an analysis on the extent of funding for community relations over the past decade.

Government and non-government expenditure on community relations

A product of the conflict in Northern Ireland has been the growth in what has been called the 'peace-building' sector defined by a funding regime that has provided

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[69] See 'Alliance pulls out of Stormont's "shared future" group', *BBC News Northern Ireland*, 24 May 2012. Accessed 1 June 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-18186505>.

considerable financial aid for peace-building activities in Northern Ireland (Nolan 2012). This section examines a number of funding bodies that specifically target the promotion of community relations.[70] I find that much of this funding falls into a category of community relations work which encourages the development cross-community contact, as outlined in Table 4.1. While government funding for community relations began in earnest in the early 1980s, I focus on the most recent funding reports which highlight the current levels of funding for community relations work in Northern Ireland.

Since devolution in 1999, central government spending in Northern Ireland has been financed through a block grant from the Treasury as part of the allocation of grants to all devolved administrations within the United Kingdom.[71] According to the Treasury's *Public Spending Statistics 2012*, Northern Ireland received a total of £9.4 billion for the 2011–2012 financial year (HM Treasury 2012). This public funding is then allocated to government departments through the Northern Ireland Executive. Based on an analysis of departmental budgets for the 2011-2012 financial year, I summarise departmental expenditure for stated community relations or related themes in Table 4.2.[72]

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[70] It should be noted that the agencies and initiatives mentioned in this chapter do not represent an exhaustive list of all those involved in the area of community relations in Northern Ireland. Indeed, there are a multitude of associations, organizations, community groups that may fall under the broad umbrella of community relations. Rather, the agencies discussed in this chapter represent the agencies most influential in pursuing community relations agendas and comprise those that have provided the largest financial support for community relations initiatives.

[71] Treasury allocates block grants to all devolved administrations within the United Kingdom based on population size using the 'Barnett Formula'.

[72] Not all government departments had a stated community relations budget. I have only included those departments with a stated budget for community relations or related programmes.

Table 4.2. Allocation of funding for stated community relations and other programmes by government department for the 2011–2012 financial year

	Total budget for 2011-2012 (£m)	Community relations funding (£m)	Programme type
Dept of Social Development	505.5	59.3	Urban regeneration and community development/ EU peace programme match funding
Dept of Education	1,894.6	30.5	Youth and community relations
Dept of Finance and Personnel	188.6	3.8	EU programmes/special EU programmes body
OFMDFM	78.6	48.4	Support for equality, human rights and community relations/EU peace programme match funding
Total	2,667.3	142.0	

Source: Author's calculations based on data collected from the Northern Ireland Executive *Budget 2011–2015.*

For the current financial year, a total of £142 million has been allocated for stated community relations and related programmes by government departments. This represents 1.5 per cent of total government expenditure for the 2011-2012 financial year.[73] As Table 4.2 indicates, there is a significant financial commitment on behalf of

[73] These figures are calculations based on the Northern Ireland Executive *Budget 2011–2015* available at <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/work-of-the-executive/budget2010.htm>.

government towards community relations work. For example, just over half of the OFMDFM budget goes towards its equality, human rights and community relations themes. Yet it is unclear just how much of the allocated budgets for community relations and related projects are actually spent on community relations projects per se. Public expenditure allocation within government departments specific to community relations programmes is not readily identifiable within the departmental accounts. As such, these figures represent broad estimates of budget allocation for community relations and related programmes. In recent interviews conducted with a range of stakeholders engaged in community relations work, Kelly (2012: 85) identified that one of the key challenges was understanding the overall landscape of available support for community relations work, and in particular the aims of each funder and the type of impact they envisage. The vague language of the government's aim of a 'shared and better future' and of a 'strong and shared community' (Northern Ireland Executive 2011b: 29) do not provide a greater understanding of the intended outcomes of this community relations work. More clarity with regards to the emphasis of specific types of projects, the funding amounts for types of community relations work and on the intended outcomes of community relations work should be made a priority.

The recent austerity measures put in place by the United Kingdom government have impacted on government expenditure across all departments. As stated in the *Programme for Government 2011–2015* the reduction of block grant funding to Northern Ireland will have 'severe' consequences 'for funding and investment' (Northern Ireland Executive 2011b: 13). The *Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report* (Nolan 2012) commissioned by the Community Relations Council (CRC) has argued that the current austerity measures coupled with a lack of agreement on a framework to address sectarianism does not bode well for the future of government funding for community relations work. Nolan (2012: 11) states that 'while the Northern Ireland Executive has pledged its draft Programme for Government 2011–2015 to bring forward a new draft of *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration*, it is not expected that there will be a resource commitment that will match that which Northern Ireland has enjoyed from European and American funders'. Rather, Nolan (2012: 11) finds that approximately 80 per cent of what he calls 'peace and reconciliation work' is sustained by external grant aid—most notably the EU Peace Programme.

The CRC was established in 1990 as a result of a public consultation, facilitated by the CCRU, for a new external agency for community relations. The CRC draws members from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, with the aim of ensuring independence from government. According to the CRC website, the Council's strategic aim is to promote a peaceful and fair society based on reconciliation and mutual trust. It aims to do this by providing support (finance, advice, information) to local community groups and organizations; developing opportunities for cross-community understanding; increasing public awareness of community relations work; and encouraging constructive debate throughout Northern Ireland.[74]

A large part of the Council's work is to provide financial assistance to a range of community organizations throughout Northern Ireland. Today, the CRC receives most of its funding from the CRU within the OFMDFM. For the financial year ending 31 March 2010, the CRC received just over £8.7 million for community relations and victims support from the OFMDFM. The Council also receives funds from the independent charity the IFI and from the EU Special Support Programme for Northern Ireland and the Border Counties. Approximately £900,000 of grants to the CRC came from the EU Programme and the IFI (CRC 2010).

The financial assistance received by the CRC is allocated to various community relations projects. Figure 4.1 presents data from CRC annual reports and accounts since 2001 and highlights the amount of direct charitable expenditure by the CRC on an annual basis.[75] As a tax category, direct charitable expenditure refers to all costs directly associated with the financial aid given by the CRC to organizations, including grants and running costs for specific projects. Since 2001, CRC financial assistance to community organizations has steadily increased with the exception of 2002–2003. In

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[74] For further details about CRC strategic aims visit <http://www.community-relations.org.uk/about-us/>.

[75] Annual Reports and Accounts are not available for download before 2001.

2010, from a total of £9.6 million grants made to the CRC, £9.1 million was expended on grants and running costs for CRC supported projects.

Figure 4.1. Community Relations Council direct charitable expenditure 2001–2010
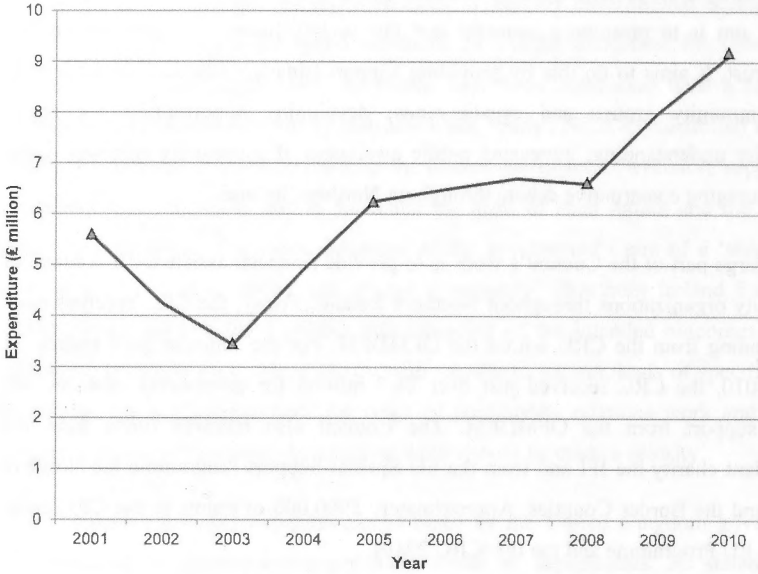
It was not possible to access information about the specific breakdown of costs by community relations projects. As such, it is unclear what percentage of this funding is spent on support for cross-community contact projects. Yet an emphasis on promoting intergroup contact is evident within CRC documents. For example, the CRCs *Strategic Plan 2011-2014* emphasises as a priority the development of 'increased interaction and sharing' between communities and the need to promote 'inter-community engagement' and 'inter-community relations' (CRC 2011: n.p.).

However, the role and functions of the CRC has been the subject of much debate among community relations stakeholders (Harbison 2002; Foley and Robinson 2004; Kelly 2012). Concerns over the role of the CRC were identified in a report by Foley and

Robinson (2004). Through questionnaires and interviews with 190 politicians and community and public sector representatives, Foley and Robinson uncovered division of opinion with regards to the effectiveness of management and impact of community relations programmes. In particular, over half (54 per cent) of those surveyed thought that management of community relations programmes by the CRC needed some reforms and improvements and over one-third of respondents deemed CRC management as ineffective and in need of radical reform (Foley and Robinson 2004: 27).

Similar concerns over the Council's functions were uncovered by Kelly (2012). In interviews with key stakeholders from the community and voluntary sectors Kelly (2012) found widespread concern for the need for clarity on the current and future role of the Council. Indeed, Kelly noted that there were varying views on how respondents understood the current functions of the CRC and what functions should be prioritised. Overall, three main functions were identified; 1) providing information, 2) funding and 3) policy and advocacy. Of particular concern is the current role of the CRC as a funding body. Many of those interviewed held the view that too much CRC time and resources are spent on its funding profile at the expense of promoting community relations work. Indeed, one respondent described the Council as being 'preoccupied' and 'swamped' by its funding profile, while another suggested that the Council's ability to function as a policy advocate had been 'diluted' by its role as a funding body (Kelly 2012: 83).

While official government funding for community relations work comprise a substantial component of the financial aid for community relations work within Northern Ireland, non-government contributions have also been significant. This section examines two external funding bodies that have contributed significant financial assistance for community relations work.

The International Fund for Ireland

In the wake of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985, the IFI was established by the British and Irish governments in 1986. The IFI is an independent organisation established 'to promote economic and social advancement and to encourage contact,

dialogue and reconciliation between nationalists and unionists throughout Ireland'.[76] It is financed through contributions from public funds from the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the EU. As of 2010, the IFI has received a total of £648 million in financial commitments through these public funds (Deloitte 2010).

In January 2006, the IFI launched its five-year strategy entitled 'Sharing in Space'. The language of 'sharing' represents the IFI commitment to and support of *A Shared Future*. The strategy focuses on four key areas of activity, each of which is clustered under an overarching theme: 'building foundations'; 'building bridges'; 'building integration'; and 'leaving a legacy'. The IFI strategy places a strong emphasis on promoting integration and 'a shared future' concurrent with government policy. For instance, in August 2008 the IFI launched the Shared Neighbourhood Programme, which supports and encourages shared neighbourhoods throughout Northern Ireland. The Programme, managed by NIHE, aims to develop 30 shared neighbourhoods over three years.[77] Table 4.3 provides an overview of IFI activities and financial commitment between January 2006 and February 2010. During this period the Fund supported 334 individual projects in Northern Ireland and the southern border counties with a total financial commitment of £89.6m (Deloitte 2010).

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[76] See IFI 2006.

[77] See the IFI website at <www.internationalfundforireland.com> for more information on the Programme as well as its other activities.

Table 4.3. Projects and financial commitments, International Fund for Ireland, January 2006–February 2010

	Projects supported	Financial commitment (£m)
Strategy areas		
Building foundations	90	25.0
Building bridges	88	26.2
Building integration	50	17.5
Legacy	17	14.5
Pre-2006 projects carried over	89	6.2
Total	334	89.6

Source: Adapted from Deloitte 2010.

In July 2011 the IFI announced continued financial assistance of £4.6 million for projects that focus on promoting cross-community and cross-border relations. Speaking in response to the recent riots in East Belfast during the Protestant marching season, Chairman of the Fund, Dr Dennis Rooney CBE announced that the funding 'will go towards a number of projects which will break new ground in our unstinting efforts to overcome the legacy of the Troubles and to establish cross-community cooperation and reconciliation as the norm in our society.'[78]

The European Union Peace Programmes

The EU Peace Programme (officially known as the EU Special Support Programme for Peace & Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties) began funding community relations programs in 1995 following the first round of ceasefires. A recent EU publication (EU Programmes Body 2007) defines the Northern Ireland problem as 'one of perceived national identity and national affiliation with

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[78] See 'International Fund for Ireland announces £4.6m (€5.5m) support for peace-building, reconciliation and community relations projects.' IFI Press Release. 6 July 2011. Accessed
2 August 2011 at <http://www.internationalfundforireland.com/press-release-archive>.

origins that go back four centuries'. Since 1995 financial aid through the EU Peace Programmes has amounted to over €1.9 billion and will continue through to 2013. A breakdown of these figures is provided in Table 4.4. Financial assistance from the EU has amounted to just over €1.3 billion since 1995 with a further €661 million in contributions made by the British and Irish governments.

Table 4.4. Summary of EU and National Funding for Peace I, II and III

	Funding period	EU contribution (€m)	National contribution (€m)	Total (€m)
Programme				
Peace I	1995-1999	500	167	667
Peace II	2000-2004	531	304	835
Peace II Ext	2005-2006	78	82	160
Peace III	2007-2013	225	108	333
Total	(1995-2013)	1,334	661	1,995

Source: SEUPB (2007).

According to McCall and O'Dowd (2008: 29–30), funding from the peace programmes has been overwhelmingly concentrated on promoting peace and reconciliation between the two main communities in Northern Ireland. Importantly, the Peace Programmes allocate funding using a decentralised model so that funds are made directly available to a wide range of stakeholders including voluntary and community-based organizations. In this way, a number of organizations, independent of government, are involved in administering the Programmes.

Peace I, as it is commonly known, ran from 1995-1999. During this period 15,016 projects were funded through the programme (Harvey 2003; McCall and O'Dowd 2008). Implicit in the programme design and delivery is the contention that the peace process can be strengthened through social and economic development, and that cross-community relationships can be fostered through social inclusion and economic prosperity. Peace I emphasised promoting the development of local partnerships, which were claimed to be important for drawing attention to both urban and rural deprivation.

Such partnerships are regarded as essential for working with otherwise excluded groups and bringing antagonistic groups together to discuss, deliberate and decide on salient and often contentious issues (Harvey 2003). For instance, with financial assistance from Peace I the Belfast Interface Project was established in 1995 to support local communities living at interface areas.[79] While the Peace Programme has been criticised, most notably for its paucity in developing the central concepts of peace and reconciliation,[80] a review report concluded 'the Programme created a climate for cross-community projects to be normal, rather than exceptional' (Harvey 2003: 25).

Peace II ran from 2000-2006, including a two-year extension to the Programme known as Peace II Extension. Peace II had a total financial allocation of €995 million and was the largest of the Peace Programmes in terms of funding. The Programme had five priority areas, including economic renewal; social integration and reconciliation; locally based regeneration and development strategies; an outward and forward-looking region (including, for instance, the promotion of tourism); and cross-border cooperation. Funding directed through the CRC from Peace II Extension provided grant aid for 62 projects across Northern Ireland. These included support for shared neighbourhood initiatives and programs to promote shared and safe environments.[81] Peace III, which is scheduled to run from 2007 to 2013, is intended to be the last of the EU Peace Programmes.[82] Peace III carries forward some of the key aspects of the previous Programmes with a particular emphasis on reconciliation and sharing, particularly

[79] For further information see <http://www.belfastinterfaceproject.org>.

[80] See for instance Harvey 1997.

[81] For more information about Peace II Extension funded projects see CRC website at <http://www.community-relations.org.uk/>.

[82] After the recent opening of the Peace Bridge in Derry/Londonderry European Commissioner Johannes Hahn commented that "he would do everything to make sure that the money will be available in the future" raising speculations as to whether the EU Peace Programme would be extended. See 'EU Peace money 'possible' says European Commissioner', 26 June 2011, *Belfast Telegraph*, accessed 27 June 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-13919416>.

through the promotion of shared spaces. The Programme is divided into two main priority areas: reconciling communities and contributing to a shared society. It is anticipated that Peace III will provide total funding of €333 million (€225 million from the EU with further national contributions of €108 million)[83].

Echoing *A Shared Future*, Peace III places considerable emphasis on promoting a 'shared society'. To date, a number of initiatives have been launched with the aim of promoting 'sharing' across divide. One of the most publicised of such initiatives was the launch of the Derry peace bridge. The symbolism attached to such a structure is stark, since its purpose is to 'connect' the predominantly Catholic city side to the predominantly Protestant Waterside. The bridge was funded by the EU Peace III Programme under its shared space initiative which aims to increase cross-community engagement through developing shared public space.[84] Speaking to a large crowed at the opening of the bridge, which was attended by the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn said, 'I believe that the peace bridge will encourage greater levels of cross-community integration and usher in a new period of peace and reconciliation for the city.'[85]

Summary of funding for community relations work

It is clear that Northern Ireland has received considerable funding for peace-building activities. Research conducted by Nolan (2012) finds that since 1987, Northern Ireland and the six border counties of the Republic have received a total of almost £2.5 billion with an average of almost £100 million a year for a wide range of peace-building

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[83] According to the Special EU Programmes Body website <www.seupb.org>.

[84] The concept of 'shared space' is difficult to define and it has only recently been developed, most notably with regards to the EU Peace III Programme's Shared Space Initiative. Goldie and Ruddy (2011: 30) suggest that while the language of shared space is found to be difficult, it is commonly used by practitioners and policy-makers and amounts to a workable description of what is safe, common, civic space for all.

[85] See 'Derry's new peace bridge officially opens on Saturday', 25 June 2011, BBC News Northern Ireland, accessed at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-foyle-west-13914708>.

activities. This is a significant amount by any standard. Indeed, as Nolan (2012: 172) states, 'Nowhere in the world has enjoyed such largesse in relation to population size.' Table 4.5 shows the main donors and their financial contribution for peace-building activities since 1987.

Table 4.5. Donors and contributions to peace-building in Northern Ireland

Programme	Total (£m)	Annual average (£m)	Duration	Cross-community contact work
EU Peace Programmes	1,455.5	76.6	1995-2013	Yes
International Fund for Ireland	628.0	27.3	1987-2012	Yes
CCRU/CRU/OFMDFM	134.0	5.6	1987-2011	Yes
Department of Education Northern Ireland	66.0	2.9	1987-2012	Yes
OFMDFM Victims	70.0	5.0	1998-2011	No
Irish Government	20.0	1.0	1987-2010	Yes
Atlantic Philanthropies	90.0	4.5	1990-2010	Yes
Total	2,463.5	94.75	1987-2013	

Note: This summary table does not include data for other government departments that have contributed funds towards peace and reconciliation work, including the Department of Social Development which funds the NIHE. These figures were not included in the original table. Information was not available on funding amounts for all donors dating back to 1987.

Source: Adapted from Nolan (2012).

Through its Peace Programmes for Northern Ireland the EU is by far the largest donor with a total contribution of almost £1.5 million since 1995 and an annual average of over £76 million. The IFI stands out as the second largest donor with a total of £628 million contributed to peace-building in Northern Ireland and the border counties.

Significantly, all of the major donors have supported projects that can be classified as cross-community contact work (as defined in the typology in Table 4.1). That is, work that aims to increase contact between members of the Catholic and Protestant communities with the aim of reducing prejudice and fostering the emergence of a more inclusive and shared society. Given the unprecedented amount of funding that

has gone into such initiatives, it is not surprising that a large body of literature, including government and external evaluations, academic publications and reports from statutory and non-statutory bodies, has been produced in connection with development of community relations work. In the section below, I provide a review of key contributions to the literature, focusing on work which has addressed the question of the impact of community relations work on attitudes within and between the two main communities.

Assessing the impact of community relations initiatives

A growing body of literature has been developed which has investigated community relations policy and community relations work and its impact on a range of key indicators. This section will not present a comprehensive or definitive review of this literature as this has already been documented in some recent and significant contributions (see Gallagher 1995; Knox and Hughes 1996; Hughes and Knox 1997; Kelly 2006, 2012). Rather, the purpose here is to draw attention to literature generated on cross-community contact work, and in particular, to focus specifically on the research methods that have been employed to assess the effectiveness of cross-community contact work. More in-depth reviews of research conducted on specific types of contact in the areas of housing, education and social networks will be discussed separately in the empirical chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Research into the nature and impact of cross-community contact and segregation can be distinguished between that which employs qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Recent qualitative research has utilised focus groups and semi-structured interviews to draw out the nature of the contact experience, whether it was positive or negative, and how the experience affected participants. Such research has involved participants living in mixed or segregated areas (Byrne et al. 2006; Cairns et al. 2007; Cairns et al. 2008), interviews with past pupils of integrated schools (McGlynn 2003), small-scale surveys of university and college-level students (Craig and Cairns 1999; Bloomer and Weinreich 2003; Niens et al. 2003), and interviews with teachers at integrated schools (Donnelly 2004a, 2004b).

In assessing the overall effectiveness of intergroup contact in cross-community schemes, much of this research remains inconclusive. For example, in assessing the impact of community relations projects on young people's tolerance of the other community, Bloomer and Weinreich (2003: 159) conclude that the projects studied had only partially achieved their intended outcome. Craig and Cairns (1999) found that while intergroup contact within the university setting did lead to a reduction in prejudicial attitudes, this was largely dependent upon the contact situation being perceived as equal by both groups. McGlynn's (2003) study of past pupils at integrated schools found overwhelming support for the proposition that intergroup contact in such a setting leads to more favourable out-group attitudes. The study cautioned, however, that teachers needed to be fully trained to deal with community relations issues 'lest good intentions are sabotaged by a limited understanding and poor delivery of multicultural education' (McGlynn 2003: 22).

While qualitative research has focused on the processes involved in and experience of cross-community contact, quantitative research has employed a range of indicators from the NISA and NILT surveys to monitor that state of community relations in Northern Ireland and to assess the impact of cross-community contact work. For example, two key indicators are commonly used to measure perceptions of the state of community relations (Fullerton 2004; Devine et al. 2011). These indicators relate to people's perceptions of relations between the two main communities over the past five years, and their perceptions about what relations will be for the future five years. Studies utilizing these indicators have found that in general there has been an upward trend in positive perceptions of relations between Protestants and Catholics (Devine et al. 2011).[86]

With regards to cross-community contact, researchers have used indicators that measure levels of mixing between communities within the education sector (see Schubotz and Robinson 2006; Hayes et al. 2007; Hayes and McAllister 2009a), the

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[86] There have been two notable exceptions to this upward trend during times of particular tension between the two main communities. These have included 1996—a year of particular tension surrounding parades during marching season; and 2001–2002 during the Holy Cross Girls' School dispute.

housing sector (see Hewstone et al. 2008); and the workplace (see Dickson et al. 2003). Other indicators include the number of out-group friendships individuals report to have (Schubotz and McCartan 2009) increases in mixed marriages (Lloyd and Robinson 2008, 2011), attitudes towards greater societal integration (see Hughes and Donnelly 2001; Fullerton 2004); and perceptions of relative group status and trust between the two main communities (see Mac Ginty and du Toit 2007). Overall, this research points to a correlation between increases in mixing between the two main communities, especially within these traditionally segregated sectors, and more favourable attitudes towards out-group members. This is seen to be indicative of improvements in community relations. Moreover, these results suggest that policies targeted at promoting cross-community contact are producing beneficial results.

Less attention has been paid to the relationship between the intergroup contact experienced by individuals as part of community relations initiatives and any changes in the individual social identity. In particular, little attention has been given to whether traditionally divisive national identities are becoming less salient among particular cohorts. Using the theoretical framework outlined in chapter 2, one way of improving community relations may be to provide opportunities for groups and individuals to embrace new forms of identity. Opportunities for a restructuring of identity may be present in environments where members of different communities willingly come in to contact, on a regular basis, in a supportive setting.

A number of areas within Northern Irish society have been targeted to create such an environment. For example, integrated schools provide the opportunity for students from the two main communities to be educated together in an institutional setting, sharing classrooms and activities over a sustained period of time. Mixed-housing schemes provide opportunities for individuals and families to share services and facilities as well as find common interest in maintaining a healthy and safe environment. Shared shopping and leisure facilities may increase the likelihood of friendships and relationships developing between individuals from different backgrounds, potentially leading to more mixed social networks and marriages.

In the empirical chapters that follow, I examine in detail the specific community relations policies that have been developed since the mid-1980s in order to target the

separation of communities in the education sector, the housing sector and among social networks, areas that have been traditionally marred by high levels of segregation. In the preamble to the empirical chapters, I demonstrate the measures that this study will utilize in examining the relationship between the contact approach within community relations policy and national identity preferences of self-identified Catholics and Protestants.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the development of the cross-community contact approach under the broader theme of community relations policy beginning with the establishment of the CCRU in 1987. Since this time, a wide range of programmes, projects and initiatives (funded through a variety of government schemes and through external grant aid) have sought to bring members of the Catholic and Protestant communities together. The long term aim of this approach is to promote a culture of sharing where traditional group stereotypes are disconfirmed and where people are seen as individuals possessing common interests, rather than as representatives of traditionally antagonistic communities.

Major political and institutional shifts have occurred within Northern Ireland since 1999 and have influenced the formulation of community relations policy. Significant advances to formulating a strategic plan to tackling segregation were made with the British government's *A Shared Future* policy. The need for a whole-of-government approach to promoting 'sharing over separation' came in response to the *Review of Community Relations Policy* (Harbison 2002) that found that segregation had in fact worsened over the period under review. Added to this was the finding that community relations policy had been inadequately monitored and evaluated, suggesting that some projects carried out during this period may have been ineffectual in improving community relations. The language of 'cross-community contact' was largely absent from the document and replaced instead with 'sharing'. However, I argued that many of the objectives set forth in *A Shared Future*, including for instance the promotion of shared neighbourhoods, shared schools and shared spaces are all based on the fundamental assumption of contact theory—that increasing intergroup contact will reduce prejudice and increase positive perceptions between communities.

Indeed, I showed that since the early 1980s an unprecedented £2.5 billion has been spent on peace-building activities in Northern Ireland and the six border counties and I demonstrated that cross-community contact work has been a central feature of all the main funding bodies' strategy for reducing conflict in Northern Ireland.

With the reinstatement of the Northern Ireland Executive in 2007, a new draft programme for community relations is now under review. Once again the political climate has significantly changed with the more traditional parties now holding office together in the executive. The *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* document reveals some significant conceptual shifts with regards to issues of concern within Northern Irish society. Here, there is much less talk of sharing and a greater emphasis on equality and respect for cultural diversity. While more than half of the allocated budget for the OFMDFM continues to be spent on support for equality, human rights and community relations it is, at this stage, unclear just what the Executive will prioritise when allocating funding for its new community relations policy.

In the chapters to follow, I examine in detail several social arenas which have been targeted as having the potential to improve community relations and which have been the focus of public policy aimed at doing just this. I demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of promoting intergroup contact in these arenas and investigate whether there is evidence to suggest that these arenas provide environments in which more moderate and inclusive identities are being realised.

Chapter 5. Residential segregation, mixing and national identity

The causes, consequences and nature of residential segregation in Northern Ireland have long been the focus of a well-developed body of academic research.[87] With few notable exceptions (Harris 1972; Boal 1982; Buckley 1982), however, it is only recently that attention has turned towards an examination of mixed residential areas. Yet, as Shirlow and Murtagh (2006: 102) point out, 'mixed communities are empirically significant as their capacity to resist the inexorable rise of segregation over time and place and the preparedness of some, outwardly at least, to live at peace with one another is of importance.'

Alongside this, mixed areas are also significant since they have the potential to provide the space in which positive cross-community contact can occur and less divisive forms of identification can be realised. Past studies have examined cross-community contact within mixed areas and the effects that this contact has on a range of attitudes towards community relations (Murtagh and Carmichael 2005). They have also explored the relationship between living in a mixed area and the number of out-group friends a person has (Hewstone et al. 2008).

This chapter, therefore, investigates the relationship between intergroup contact represented by living in a mixed residential area (that is an area in which members from both the Catholic and Protestant communities reside) and patterns of national identity. It asks whether there is any evidence to suggest that those who live in mixed areas are more likely to reject traditional group identities in favour of a more neutral position. As a result of cross-community contact within mixed areas, residents of these areas may be less likely to express competing national allegiances and more likely to identify as members of a Northern Irish community. I therefore consider the impact of living in

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[87] See for example, Darby and Morris 1974; Darby 1976, 1996; Boal et al. 1976; Boal 1982, 1999; Doherty and Poole 1995, 1997, 2000, 2002; Shirlow 2001; Murtagh 2002; Shirlow and Murtagh 2006.

segregated and mixed residential areas on the national identity preferences of Catholics and Protestants using data from the NISA survey and the NILT survey.

This is an important line of inquiry for several reasons. First, because competing national claims are expressed territorially. Second, because the spatial separation of communities has presented a major challenge for those who aspire to a 'shared' future for Northern Ireland. As a perceived obstacle to progress and peace, it is identified as field for reform. Since 1998, official government policy has sought to protect and promote mixed areas as a means of tackling the persistent separation of communities. Finally, it warrants investigation because, although high levels of residential segregation persist, some Catholics and Protestants have lived and continue to live in what are called 'mixed areas'—areas with a 'mix' of residents from both the Catholic and Protestant traditions.

Accordingly, this chapter is structured into four sections. I begin by providing an account of the history of residential segregation in Northern Ireland, and argue that territoriality has helped to reinforce and legitimate competing national allegiances and expressions of identity. I show how the roots of present day segregation can be traced back to the seventeenth century when thousands of Protestant and Presbyterian settlers colonised the land in Ulster. I then demonstrate how the nature of residential segregation has remained an expression of conflicting national aspirations due to the way in which the claiming of territory and the occupation of physical space has been, and continues to be, used to portray images of a 'people' aligned with either the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland (Boal 1987; Poole and Doherty 1996; Shirlow and Murtagh 2006).

In the second section I provide an analysis of the way in which residential segregation has been conceptualised within the literature. I examine a number of measures that have been used in order to assess the extent of residential segregation within Northern Ireland. I then explore the policies that have been adopted to deal with residential segregation. I show that until 1998 official government policy was to manage and stabilise the high levels of residential segregation found primarily within large urban areas. I argue that it was only after residential segregation was explicitly recognised within the 1998 Agreement that more attention has been given to measures

that might transform segregated areas into mixed areas. In section three I show that despite the lack of policy focus on promoting mixed residential areas, mixed communities have continued to exist and protection of these mixed communities has emerged as a policy priority due to their perceived symbolic and real potential in overcoming divisions within society.

The history of residential segregation in Northern Ireland

The spatial separation of competing groups within a defined territory is one of the most visible legacies of a divided society. Spatial separation, whether voluntary or forced, is identifiable by high levels of segregation [88] along communal lines in residential and urban areas. Within Northern Ireland, residential segregation between Catholic and Protestant communities is an enduring feature of the contemporary conflict, and in the context of communal division it has been identified as both a cause and a consequence of conflict (Darby 1976; Boal 1999). For example, Darby (1976) claims that it is a cause of conflict because separation breeds mistrust and inequality between groups; and as a consequence because fear, intimidation, and the need for security influence individual and group decisions about where to live. In a similar vein, Shirlow and Murtagh (2006: 20) argue that segregation engenders political separation and heightens distinctions between physically separated peoples, in effect contributing to poor social relations.

Chapter 1 noted the importance of the Ulster Plantation in the formation of competing national identities. This was in large part due to the creation of spatial segregation between the English Protestant and Scottish Presbyterian settlers on the one hand and the native Irish (who were predominantly Catholic) on the other. Indeed, according to Darby (1976: 26), the period of the Ulster Plantation 'is an appropriate

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[88] I use the terms 'separation' and 'segregation' interchangeably in this chapter. Unlike other forms of separation (such as separate-religion schools or separate communal social networks) in which the use of the term 'segregation' implies that this has been imposed, the use of the term 'segregation' when referring to residential segregation is arguably appropriate given the high degree of community and family pressure (and indeed intimidation) to live in certain areas and not in others.

starting point for any consideration of residential segregation, because the arrival of the Planters established demographic patterns which are essentially those dividing Northern Ireland's communities today'.

Present demographic patterns of segregation have evolved through a number of stages. The first stage occurred in the sixteenth and seventeenth century during which time the British monarchy set about 'planting' English and Scottish settlers in Ireland. The purpose of this was strategic and political. The aim was to gain control of the land of Ulster through co-option and re-distribution of land ownership from the Catholic Irish to the Protestant and Presbyterian settlers. This dramatically changed the demographic landscape of Ulster, which had been occupied and controlled previously by a predominantly Gaelic and Catholic population.[89] Within the estates, there was a segregation of Protestant settlers and Irish Catholics with the Irish occupying much of the poorer settlement on the upland fringes (Robinson 1982: 39–42). Moreover, the native Catholic population was forbidden to hold long leases on land or to buy land from Protestant landowners (Darby 1976).[90]

Across the towns in Ulster, Irish settlement took place on the outskirts and beyond the gates, while inside the towns the population was almost exclusively made up of Plantation settlers (Barritt and Carter 1972: 53). The most symbolic structures of this separation were the city walls of Derry. Inside these walls lived the Protestant settlers, while the Catholic Irish migrants to the town settled outside the walls in an area still known today as the Bogside. Early evidence of discrimination based on religion is found in the 1688 Declaration of the Citizens of Londonderry. Signatories to the Declaration resolved to 'stand on our guard, and defend the walls and not to admit of any Roman Catholic whatsoever to quarter amongst us' (quoted in Darby and Morris 1974: 1). Thus, by the end of the seventeenth century the physical map of Ulster had

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[89] This population was made up of Catholic and Gaelic lords, landowners and peasants.

[90] While the articles of Plantation did not permit British freeholders and leaseholders on Plantation estates to take on Irish under-tenants, research by Robinson (1982) has shown that many Catholic Irish were in fact retained on the estates but were delegated to separate townlands.

been re-drawn and the segregation of communities had begun. The more prosperous settlers occupied the larger town areas and the dispossessed Catholic Irish lived on the outskirts of the towns and in rural areas.

The second major stage of demographic change occurred during the nineteenth century, with mass population movement to the market towns. This was driven by industrial expansion and rapid population growth. The mid-1800s witnessed large-scale internal migration from surrounding rural areas that brought about a significant increase in the proportion of Catholics living within market towns, most notably in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry. By 1911 it was recorded that 93,000 Catholics lived in Belfast—representing 32 per cent of the total Catholic population in what was to become Northern Ireland (Douglas 1982: 111).

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century witnessed a deterioration of relationships between Protestants and Catholics. This was due to conflict over resources and job opportunities leading to bouts of inter-communal violence. Earlier patterns of segregation began to reappear but whereas earlier segregation had meant that Protestants lived within the town with Catholics on the outskirts, the residential segregation witnessed during the nineteenth century occurred within urban areas with the formation of Catholic and Protestant strongholds. Following a period of intense inter-communal riots in Belfast from 1855–74, districts became increasingly homogenous and during periods of heightened tensions and violence, the 'wrong sort' would be intimidated out of their homes (Budge and O'Leary 1973: 91). These riots assumed a momentum of their own, and the residential and social separation of communities in turn fostered prejudices and hostilities, making further riots more likely. This had the effect of strengthening communal divisions as vulnerable minorities moved house to areas of greater security within their respective community clusters (Darby 1976).

The effect of violence on strengthening residential segregation has been documented in historical records. Official accounts of the existence of these riots and subsequent residential segregation within Belfast were recorded in 1857:

Since the commencement of the late riots the districts (in Belfast) have become exclusive, and by regular systematised movement on both sides, the few Catholic inhabitants of the Sandy Row district have been obliged to leave it, and the few Protestant inhabitants of the Pound district have also been obliged to leave the district (Report of Commission into Riots in Belfast, 1857, p.2 quoted in Darby and Morris 1974: 1).

Thus, while increasing opportunities attracted many Catholics to the market town areas, Boal notes, 'at an early phase of Protestant-Roman Catholic contact in Belfast quite high levels of segregation were established (Boal 1982: 253). The next stage in the segregation of the two main communities occurred as a result of the creation of Northern Ireland following the *Government of Ireland Act 1920*. Pursuant to this Act, the six counties of North-East Ireland would remain within the United Kingdom creating the province of Northern Ireland. Under the Act the newly created territory would retain representation in Westminster. It would be governed by a devolved British unionist administration. To ensure a Protestant majority within the province, only six of the nine counties of Ulster were incorporated to form Northern Ireland. The new political unit guaranteed a strong Protestant unionist majority. [91] Entrenching the unequal relationship between the minority Catholic population and the majority Protestant population further, the *Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 1922* removed the proportional representation method for elections, altered the franchise by making property ownership as a qualification for the vote, and created new electoral spatial frameworks. This had the effect of excluding significant numbers of potential Catholic voters who did not own property. Moreover, the new spatial frameworks created opportunities for gerrymandering within the newly aligned electoral boundaries that deliberately favoured the Protestant majority. The realignment of electoral boundaries was facilitated by existing residential segregation in both urban and rural areas. In turn, the allocation of housing for the maintenance of political control in a

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[91] According to Darby (1976) the religious breakdown within the six counties that made up Northern Ireland consisted of 820,000 Protestants and 430,000 Catholics.

particular area, rather than on the basis of social need, further increased residential segregation (Darby 1976; Douglas 1982).

The rapid increase in inequalities between Protestants and Catholics (heightened by the escalating patterns of segregation) would become a catalyst for the contemporary conflict. Discrimination against Catholics in housing and employment, political underrepresentation, and the influence of the civil rights campaign in the United States led to the establishment in 1967 of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association and the Civil Rights Campaign (1967–1972). Civil rights demonstrations and mass protests rapidly escalated into violent conflict. [92] As a result of this, spatial segregation intensified even further (Purdie 1990).

The final stage in the segregation of communities in present day Northern Ireland occurred during the early 1970s, during which large-scale population movement within the major urban areas occurred. This was fuelled by the intimidation of minority communities that lived in mixed religion neighbourhoods. This movement was most visible in Belfast. For example, Darby and Morris (1974) found that an estimated 14,744 families in the Greater Belfast area changed residence between 1969–1973 [93] leading Shirlow to observe that within a European context, population movement in Belfast was, until the recent Balkan conflicts, 'the most significant movement of people due to violence since the conclusion of World War II' (Shirlow 2001: 70).

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[92] Melaugh (1995) notes that many commentators and historians view 5 October 1968 as the beginning of the contemporary conflict in Northern Ireland. On this day, civil rights demonstrators in the Waterside area of Derry/Londonderry clashed with the Royal Ulster Constabulary resulting in violence. Riots intensified after the Apprentice Boys march and in the predominantly Catholic Bogside area police clashed with members of the Catholic community leading to what is known colloquially as the Battle of the Bogside in 1969.

[93] The authors note that these figures are rough estimates and that it is impossible to estimate accurately the total number of families that were forced to leave their homes since 1969. Their figures only refer to those families who contacted either official or unofficial agencies for help (see Darby and Morris 1974: Summary a) and b)).

Intimidation, fear and the need for security thus determined the social geography of much of Northern Ireland. As Doherty and Poole (1997: 532) explain, 'The basic cause of the segregation is violence in the form either of direct intimidation or, more often, of the fear of threat heightened by awareness of the mosaic of safe and unsafe areas.' Within Belfast the erection of a peaceline between the Falls and Shankhill roads symbolised the reality in many parts of the city that Protestant and Catholic perceptions of fear and need for security had increased (Darby 1976). As Hughes et al. (2007: 46) observe, 'psychological barriers became reinforced by physical boundaries'. For the majority of Catholics and Protestants living in urban areas, the violence deepened the sense of identification and commitment to each respective community as well as to the perception of the need for community-based protection (Shirlow and Murtagh 2006: 78).

Today one of the most definitive characteristics of the social geography within Northern Ireland, and particularly within Belfast and Derry/Londonderry, is territoriality. As Graham and Nash (2006: 262) argue, territoriality reflects the perceived importance of the control of space for the maintenance and legitimacy of identity, power and politics. Territoriality links identity with place at a variety of spatial levels from Northern Ireland as a whole, to particular local areas and streets. The marking of a wall with mural paintings and symbols within a particular area, for example, makes both the 'insider' and the 'outsider' aware of their surroundings and social standing in that place.

The visible manifestations of territoriality portray the history of residential segregation in Northern Ireland. Within both Protestant and Catholic segregated are images depicting significant events from the period of the Ulster Plantation and beyond, signifying the importance of this period in history to communities' sense of identity. For example, the Sandy Row district (a segregated Protestant loyalist area of Belfast) is marked with flags flying from street lamps portraying images of Queen Elizabeth II, the Union Jack or King William of Orange. Kerbstones are also clearly marked with the colours of the Union Jack and during the marching season are given a fresh coat of paint. Within the Fountain Estate in Derry/Londonderry similar territorial markings are clearly visible to outsiders, and from the vantage point of the city walls it is possible to

view a large mural, which states 'Londonderry West Bank Loyalists still under siege, No Surrender'. Similarly, segregated Catholic areas are identifiable by the use of the Gaelic language to mark street signs, with the colours of the Irish Tricolour painted on kerbstones and by mural paintings depicting important events or nationalist heroes of the conflict, including, for instance, hunger striker Bobby Sands and civil rights campaigner Bernadette Devlin. [94]

The sharp increase in residential segregation during the initial years of the conflict has had significant and lasting effects on the physical geography of many areas across Northern Ireland, and particularly within urban areas (Boal et al. 1976). One of the causes of the increase in residential segregation is what Boal (1996) calls 'the ratchet effect'. The ratchet effect explains the increasing levels of segregation during times of violence that never reduce back to their pre-violence levels. Using data from four Northern Ireland surveys, Figure 5.1 highlights levels of residential segregation from the beginning of the civil rights movement in 1968 through to the post-conflict and power-sharing era of 2010.

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[94] While the use of such symbols is widely documented in academic literature (see for example Jarman 1997, 2005b; Sluka 1997), these are observations based on my own first-hand experience while conducting fieldwork in Northern Ireland in 2010.

Figure 5.1. Catholic and Protestant residential segregation over time (%), 1968–2010
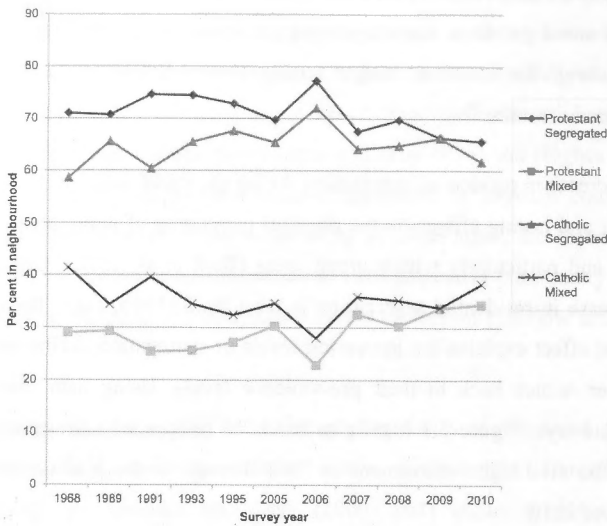
Source: Northern Ireland Loyalty Survey 1968; NISA and NILT surveys pooled file 1989-2010.

The table reveals a relatively stable trend in residential segregation for both Protestants and Catholics since 1968, with around two-thirds of Catholics and Protestants stating they live in an area dominated by their own community group. There is only a slight decline in levels of segregation for the 2009 and 2010 survey years and a slight increase in levels of mixing of Catholics and Protestants within residential areas.

On the whole, therefore, residential segregation remains persistent more than 10 years after the signing of the Agreement. However, while the conflict was officially brought to an end and a devolved power-sharing government installed, episodic violence continues. Following the logic of the ratchet effect, outbursts of violence triggered by the Drumcree parade[95] and the Holy Cross dispute[96] has, as Shirlow and

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[95] The Drumcree parade has been one of the most controversial Orange Order parades during marching season. The traditional parade route begins at Drumcree church and follows along the mainly nationalist Garvaghy Road in Portadown. As Darby explains serious confrontations have erupted between residents

Murtagh (2006: 81) argue, upheld the maintenance of boundaries between segregated spaces. The following section examines how residential segregation in Northern Ireland has been conceptualised and measured.

Measuring residential segregation

The nature of residential segregation has received considerable attention within the social science literature.[97] This literature has developed a series of indexes to measure the extent of segregation and to characterise levels of segregation over time. These have been developed and most widely applied to incidences of racial segregation in the United States (see for example, James and Taeuber 1985; Massey and Denton 1989, 1993). As Douglas and Boal (1982: 11) point out, the complete segregation or complete integration of communities is not static phenomenon; rather, it is a process that varies over time and space and is influenced by larger processes within society. As such, integration and segregation are best thought of as 'connected ends of a continuum' (Douglas and Boal 1982: 5).

Nevertheless, it is possible to observe empirically integration and segregation within society in the form of the degree of intergroup mixing by measuring to what extent members of different communities live in close proximity to one another. Before we continue let me first clarify how residential integration/segregation is being understood here. Smith (1998) suggests two ways of measuring the extent of residential

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on Garvaghy Road and marchers which have resulted in violent demonstrations and road blocks. In 1996 protesters forced a number of Catholic families from their homes by intimidation, an act which was not prevented by police (see Darby 1997: 103).

[96] The Holy Cross dispute, as it is often called, refers to a series of incidents involving residents of the Protestant Glenbryn area and pupils and their parents of the Catholic Holy Cross Primary School situated 100 metres inside Glenbryn. Following an incident allegedly involving a resident of the Catholic Ardoyne area driving in to a Protestant Glenbryn member who was hanging a Union Jack near the Holy Cross Girls school, a series of violent street protests erupted and Catholic school girls were impeded from attending schools without a police escort (see Leonard 2006; Never 2011).

[97] For an extensive review of the literature on residential segregation see Massey 2012 ; Charles 2003.

integration within a divided society: measuring integration as a social condition and measuring integration as a demographic condition. Integration as a social condition reflects the degree of social mixing and cooperation between groups within a residential area. Understood in this sense, integration involves positive contact between groups, and is measured by the quality of contact (see also Hewstone et al. 2008). However, as Smith (1998) points out, the social view of integration presents problems of measurement. Unless a small-scale case study approach is utilised, it is difficult to measure and characterise the interactions of residents and thus the quality of the contact. Another way of measuring segregation/integration is by viewing it as a demographic condition (Smith 1998). This is defined in terms of the mixing of different groups within urban space. Demographic integration has largely been explored with the use of quantitative methods such as census and survey data research.

Residential areas that are taken as integrated on the basis of demographic conditions are frequently referred to as 'mixed' and I will also employ this terminology. I do so for a number of reasons. First, this is the terminology most frequently used within the housing literature in Northern Ireland. Second, the main methodology employed in this research uses quantitative data in order to explore demographic trends and shifts within a population. Finally, I am concerned in the first instance with analysing demographic integration, rather than social integration.

Several indicators have been used to measure the extent of segregation versus mixing in residential areas. One widely used measure is the dissimilarity index first proposed by Duncan and Duncan (1955) and later employed by Massey and Denton (1989) and Massey (2001) within the United States. The dissimilarity index, used in the context of residential segregation, measures the total difference of spread over spatial units between two population groups, with 1.0 being total segregation and 0 indicating complete integration (Murtagh 2011). Using the dissimilarity index, research in the United States (Massey and Denton 1992; Massey 2001) tracked the impact of the movement of black citizens into urban areas between 1900 and 1960. These studies found that black segregation within urban areas rose to unprecedented heights when compared with other minority groups. For example, by 1960 the dissimilarity index rose to between 0.60 and 0.80 in certain cities.

Figure 5.2. The extent of residential segregation across towns in Northern Ireland, 1971
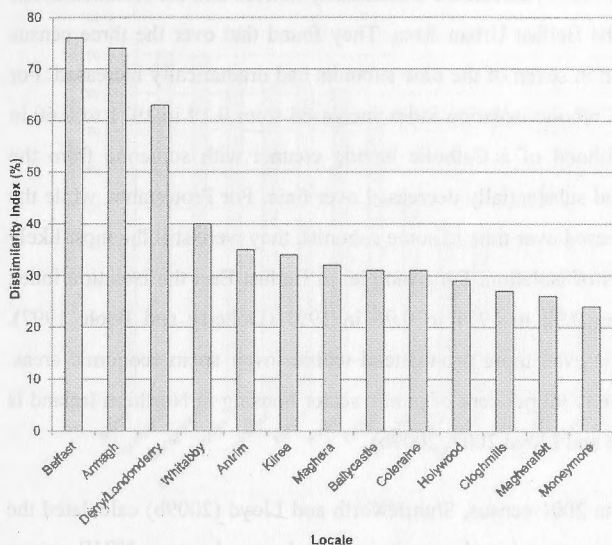
Source: Adapted from Poole (1982: 288).

The dissimilarity index has since been employed in Northern Ireland by Poole (1982) Poole and Doherty (1997) and later by Shuttleworth and Lloyd (2009). Figure 5.2 shows the dissimilarity index of residential segregation in major Northern Ireland towns in 1971. In Belfast, for example, the dissimilarity index was 0.76 meaning that to achieve residential integration of Protestants and Catholics, 76 per cent of either Protestants or Catholics would have had to relocate within the city. Segregation was also found to be very high in both Armagh (0.73) and Derry/Londonderry (0.64). Importantly, these three towns represent the largest towns within Northern Ireland accounting for three-quarters of the total population thereby underlining the significant presence of residential segregation at that time.

Another common measure of segregation, often used in conjunction with the dissimilarity index is the isolation index P*. This is a measure of exposure that calculates the probability that that the next person someone comes into contact with within his or her area of residence will be of the same group (Catholic or Protestant).

The higher the isolation index the greater the implied residential segregation (Doherty and Poole 1997). Using census data from 1971, 1981 and 1991 for the Belfast Urban Area, Doherty and Poole (1997) calculated dissimilarity indices and the isolation index P* for subunits within the Belfast Urban Area. They found that over the three census periods Catholic isolation in seven of the nine subunits had dramatically increased. For example in Lisburn the Catholic isolation index increased from 0.19 in 1971 to 0.60 in 1991. As such the likelihood of a Catholic having contact with someone from the Protestant community had substantially decreased over time. For Protestants, while the isolation index had decreased over time in some subunits, they were still the most likely to experience high levels of isolation. For example, in Belfast East the isolation index for Protestants rose from 0.92 in 1971 to 0.95 in 1991 (Doherty and Poole 1997). Residential segregation is even more pronounced within lower socio-economic areas. For example, approximately 90 per cent of public sector housing in Northern Ireland is segregated (Shuttleworth and Lloyd 2007, 2009b).

Using data from the 2001 census, Shuttleworth and Lloyd (2009b) calculated the extent of residential segregation based on religious background across NIHE estates (shown in Figure 5.3). The dissimilarity index for the major towns of Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, Armagh and mid Ulster reveal slightly higher levels of segregation to those found in Poole's (1982) analysis. These high levels of segregation can, in part, be explained by the high levels of violence experienced in these areas during the conflict and a history of territoriality shaped by sectarianism (Shuttleworth and Lloyd 2009b). For example, an analysis of the period 1969-1993 found that 54.5 per cent of fatal incidents related to the conflict took place within Belfast (Doherty and Poole 1997). For this reason Belfast has been described as the urban encapsulation of a national conflict (see Boal et al. 1976; Boal and Livingstone 1984; Doherty and Poole 2000). Recent figures from the Belfast City Council confirm the extent of segregation. They show 'more than half of the city's population now lives in wards that are either 90 per cent Protestant or 90 per cent Catholic community background' (Belfast City Council 2007).

Figure 5.3. The extent of residential segregation across NIHE housing estates, Northern Ireland, 2001

Y-axis: Dissimilarity Index (%) — 0 to 100

X-axis (Locale): Belfast, Craigavon, Dungannon, Derry/Londonderry, Cookstown, Lisburn, Armagh, Omagh, Fermanagh, Antrim, Castlereagh, Ards, Coleraine, Limavady, Larne
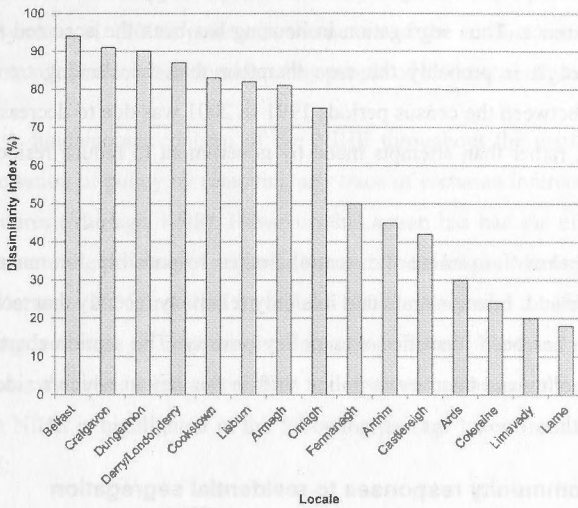
Source: Adapted from Shuttleworth and Lloyd (2009b).

Despite strong evidence indicating the persistent high levels of residential segregation, particular within housing estates, a recent study suggests that the rate of increases in segregation in Northern Ireland may be slowing down. Employing the dissimilarity index, Shuttleworth and Lloyd (2009b) analyse levels of segregation in three census years: 1971, 1991 and 2001. Their study finds that while segregation increased for Northern Ireland as a whole between 1971 (0.56) and 2001 (0.67), it had increased only slightly between 1991 (0.66) to 2001 (0.67). This suggests that the rate of segregation slowed during the 1990s.

While the authors do not elaborate on possible explanations for the slowing trend in segregation, Doherty and Poole (1997) suggest that the main factor in heightened segregation patterns is the level of violence. Using a similar research methodology, they find that segregation increased between 1971 and 1991 and argue that the substantial rises in segregation during the 1970s can be attributed to the particularly high levels of violence extant in the early years of that decade (Doherty and Poole 1997: 533).

Significantly, it was not until 1998 that tackling residential segregation was made a policy priority within government. Before this time, public policy in housing sought to manage the movement of people through a 'colour blind' strategy based not only on need but also on preference. Thus segregation in housing has been the accepted norm throughout the conflict. It is probably the case therefore that the slowing trend in increased segregation between the census periods 1991 to 2001 was due to decreases in the levels of violence, rather than attempts made by government to reduce residential segregation.

In the section below I examine the central bodies responsible for managing housing in Northern Ireland. I demonstrate that it is only relatively recently that tackling residential segregation has been identified as a policy priority. The section charts the evolution of housing policy and uncovers a policy shift in the way in which residential segregation is dealt with.

Government and community responses to residential segregation

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Since the beginning of the contemporary conflict, planning, management and creation of policy for public sector housing in Northern Ireland has been overseen by the NIHE. The creation of the NIHE came in the wake of calls for reforms in the allocation of housing as part of the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland. In 1971 in response to the political turmoil and the continuing breakdown of relations between communities, urban and housing policy were removed from local authority control and powers transferred to the newly established NIHE and Department of Environment for Northern Ireland. The NIHE therefore took over responsibility for the allocation of social housing. Since most of the intimidation of individuals and families that took place within the first years of the contemporary conflict occurred in the public housing sector, the NIHE was most directly involved and affected by the issue (Darby and Morris 1974).

During the conflict, the NIHE provided emergency accommodation and longer-term relocation for individuals and families forced out of their homes by sectarian violence. Through the NIHE's Emergency Housing Service, allocation of housing was

based on need and preference. For example, a NIHE hand out advised applicants 'to list in order of choice the areas within or outside the greater Belfast area in which they would like to be rehoused' (quoted in Darby and Morris 1974: 103). As Murtagh (1998) and Byrne et al. (2006) point out, the nature of the conflict meant that NIHE tenants chose to relocate to areas dominated by people of their own religious background.

A fundamental concern of the NIHE throughout the conflict has been the de-politicisation of policy by removing any trace of sectarian inference from practices and procedures (Murtagh 1998). However, this action has had the effect of removing any reference to the problem of sectarianism and, according to Murtagh (1998) and Shirlow and Murtagh (2006) resulted in 'colour blind' policy and a benign acceptance of the existing patterns of residential segregation across Northern Ireland. Indeed, the influence that residential segregation and division has had on the organisational culture of the NIHE is highlighted in the following passage taken from a recent report by the NIHE:

> In the Housing Executive the organisational culture is affected by being part of what is known as an 'Ethnic Frontier'—a society made up of two different traditions opposed to one another through political antagonism…Throughout the years of conflict in Northern Ireland there was a tendency for organisations to adapt to the divided society and serve both communities separately.[98]

Throughout the 1980s and most of the 1990s the NIHE continued its focus on allocating social housing based on need and preference. This has had the effect of maintaining the earlier trend of high levels of segregation within public sector housing due to tenants' preference to live within their own community.

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[98] Quoted on BRIC website at <http://www.rdc.org.uk/multi/default.asp?itemid=52>.

Since 1998 the NIHE has increasingly come under pressure, through the renewed focus on sharing over separation, to move away from maintaining and managing the status quo within public sector housing. This new focus on mixed religion housing was first outlined in the 1998 Agreement in which it is identified as a priority area for improving community relations:

> An essential aspect of the reconciliation process is the
> promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society and
> includes initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education
> and mixed housing (NIO 1998 Strand 2, Article 13).

More recently, concern over the high levels of residential segregation has been expressed in *A Shared Future* (OFMDFM 2005), which highlights the importance of developing and supporting mixed housing. This emphasis on promoting mixed housing was influenced by a report (Deloitte 2008) commissioned under direct rule in 2002 (but not published until 2008). This report estimated that the costs associated with segregated living could be up to $1.5 billion annually. This, it was argued, was in part due to the duplication, and sometimes multiplication of service delivery for segregated communities (Deloitte 2008).

A Shared Future and the follow-up Triennial Action Plan vested responsibility for tackling the negative consequences of residential segregation and promoting current and future mixed housing areas to the NIHE and the Department for Social Development. Subsequently, tackling residential segregation through the promotion of mixed housing schemes has become a priority area within the NIHE's good relations policy (NIHE 2007). In line with this, the NIHE have committed to promote 'sharing' by developing mixed religion housing schemes. The types of projects carried out by the NIHE and affiliated organizations which aim to increase the shared nature of residential areas across Northern Ireland are outlined below in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1. Shared housing projects

Project	Start date	Description/ objective	Supporting organizations	Cross-community contact work
Social new-build/shared future housing	2006	Locates and designates sites for new build mixed social housing areas	NIHE and local housing associations	Yes
Shared neighbourhood programme	2008	Works with existing mixed communities in social housing areas to secure and protect the 'shared' nature of the area	NIHE, IFI, EU Peace Programme	Yes
Building Relationships in Communities (BRIC)	2010	Build good relations capacity of NIHE; financial assistance to local community groups focus on increasing inclusiveness		Yes

Source: NIHE n.d. (b)

With reference to the typology developed in chapter 4, most of the community relations work carried out by the NIHE and affiliated organizations can be classified as promoting cross-community contact. For example, the social new-build programme is designed to locate sites for social housing which can be turned into areas known as mixed social housing areas. The NIHE has used the 70:30 threshold in their frameworks for promoting the shared future housing scheme. For example, the NIHE mixed community social housing scheme, which was launched on Carran Crescent in County Fermanagh in 2006, signed up to a charter for the community in which no more than 70 per cent of any one religion is permitted (NIHE n.d.(b)).

Another means through which cross-community contact is promoted is through the shared neighbourhood programme, launched in 2008, and funded by the IFI. To date, the IFI has provided £870,000 in funding for the programme (Deloitte 2010). The programme works with existing mixed communities in social housing areas to secure and protect the 'shared' nature of the area and provides grants to community organizations to encourage the concept of sharing among all people who live in the area.

These communities are also supported by what are called 'cohesion advisers' employed by the Community Cohesion Unit. The advisers appear to have a broad remit which includes an active role in establishing networks between residents in shared communities, ensuring the stability of such communities through the development of coordinated intervention response to potential conflict incidents and to actively promote the concept of shared housing in other estates (Wallace Consulting 2011). According to the NIHE, 30 social housing estates across 25 of the 26 council areas, representing 25,000 households and 70,000 people, are now actively involved in the shared neighbourhood programme.[99]

More recently, the NIHE (in partnership with the Rural Development Council, and with assistance from the EU Peace III Programme) has designed an initiative called Building Relationships in Communities (BRIC). BRIC is claimed to 'encourage greater levels of social integration within Northern Ireland's housing sector' and to 'promote sharing within the currently highly segregated social housing market'.[100] According to the BRIC website, funding for the scheme from the EU Peace III Programme has amounted to £3.5 million to date.[101]

While promoting cross-community contact through the development of mixed housing appears to be central to housing policy, it is unclear just how effective these initiatives have been, and what constitutes the long term goal for tackling residential segregation.[102] Indeed, as Shirlow and Murtagh (2006) have commented, the housing

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[99] See <http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/community/community_cohesion/shared_future_housing.htm>.

[100] See <http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/community/community_cohesion/bric.htm>.

[101] See BRIC at <http://www.rdc.org.uk/multi/default.asp?itemid=52>.

[102] To date, there have been only two evaluations carried out on NIHE shared housing initiatives. The first was conducted by the NIHE research unit using a small-scale questionnaire of residents in a NIHE funded shared future housing area in Enniskillen. The overall conclusion reached was that the majority residents involved in the scheme felt positive about shared future housing and wished to continue living in the area (NIHE 2009). However, only 15 respondents completed the questionnaire and thus the small-scale nature of the survey significantly compromises any attempts to generalize the results.

policy landscape appears to be characterised by a series of disjointed initiatives and small-scale projects making it difficult to see a long term unified goal for mixed housing. It also makes it difficult to assess the effects of such efforts in mixed communities and it is unclear how successful such programmes have been.

While information regarding the aims and principles of NIHE programmes are readily accessible, other important information is lacking. For instance, it would be beneficial to know whether programmes have met with resistance from members of the community, whether and what types of issues have arisen in implementing the programmes within particular areas, and what the responses are from residents involved in the programmes with regards to the importance and centrality of an ethos of 'sharing' within the communities.

It is clear that housing policy has come a long way from adapting to divisions within society to being central to the government's community relations agenda. Several initiatives are now underway to encourage greater levels of mixing in residential areas. Yet, the relatively recent appearance of these initiatives as part of a community relations agenda makes it difficult to assess their effectiveness. Despite limited official government policy supporting and promoting mixed communities, a degree of residential mixing has always existed. For example, in their 1974 study of intimidation in housing across Northern Ireland, Darby and Morris (1974: 69) found evidence of religiously mixed areas in towns outside of Belfast that were just as

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The second was an external evaluation of the shared neighbourhood programme conducted by Wallace Consulting (2011). The evaluation was conducted through focus groups and survey questionnaires with residents involved in the shared neighbourhood programme. The evaluation was generally positive in favour of the Shared Neighbourhood Programme finding that the majority of residents surveyed suggested that the Shared Neighbourhood Programme had been beneficial in fostering relations between members of the different communities.

demographically stable as some segregated areas.[103] However, it is only recently that research has begun to focus on the nature of these mixed communities. The section below details recent research into mixed housing in Northern Ireland and explores the socio-economic profiles of mixed areas through the use of survey data.

The nature of residential mixing

Using integration as a demographic condition, it is possible to identify a number of studies in Northern Ireland that have sought to assess the extent and nature of residential mixing. For example, Murtagh and Carmichael (2005) conduct an analysis of the 2001 census data on the number of mixed areas across Northern Ireland defining a mixed area of consisting of a minimum of 30 per cent of households from the relevant minority community. Using this 70:30 threshold, their analysis reveals that of all 582 wards in Northern Ireland, 41 per cent were Protestant segregated, 27 per cent were Catholic segregated and 33 per cent were mixed.

Other research finds that most mixed housing is largely confined to middle class areas (Boal 1982) and that residential integration is mostly seen at the higher end of the housing market (Murtagh 2000). Moreover, outside of the main urban areas and within smaller towns, research has found greater levels of community mixing (Harris 1972; Poole 1982; Poole and Doherty 1996). Indeed, Poole and Doherty (1996: 77) found 'considerable spatial diversity in the incidence of segregation and mixing' between Belfast and the rest of Northern Ireland. This disparity between urban and rural areas was reflected in Harris' (1972) study, which reported a strong sense of common community in rural areas.

Using data from the 2010 NILT survey comparison of the extent of segregation and mixing in urban and rural areas was conducted and results are displayed in Table 5.2. The data reveal that within city areas there is more reported residential segregation

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[103] The study defined mixed areas as consisting of a mix of approximately 50/50 Catholics/Protestants (Darby and Morris 1974).

than mixing, although these differences are relatively small. Within rural areas there is only a slight increase in the rate of mixing as compared to residential segregation.

Table 5.2. Segregated and mixed areas by level of urban density by religion (%), 2010

	Protestants			Catholics		
	Segregated	*Mixed*	*All*	*Segregated*	*Mixed*	*All*
City	30	25	28	30	21*	27
Town	36	38	37	38	42	39
Rural	34	36	35	32	37	34
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
(N)	(333)	(187)	(520)	(250)	(155)	(405)

* Significantly different from segregated at the p<.05 level.

Source: NILT survey 2010.

Despite the high levels of residential segregation in many urban areas, clusters of mixed areas are found within the main towns throughout Northern Ireland. In addition, research has documented residentially mixed areas within some of Northern Ireland's main urban centres. One of the most documented mixed areas is within Belfast in the central area of Ballynafeigh located on the Ormeau Road in South Belfast (see for example; Murtagh and Carmichael 2005; Murtagh 2011). The housing stock of the area consists of both public and private housing. According to Murtagh (2011) the Ballynafeigh area appears to be unique within Belfast in that, since the 1860s, it has been an area that has housed churches of all denominations. In recent years, its central location has attracted significant investment in waterside properties and the area has access to strong public transport connections. This contrasts markedly with highly segregated and marginalised areas in the west and north of the city. Moreover the close proximity of Ballynafeigh to the Queen's University Belfast has attracted a younger student population to the area.

A significant development in the area over the period from 1991 to 2001 has been the changing demography indicated by growth in the proportion of the Catholic

population. Murtagh and Carmichael (2005), for example, found that the Catholic population increased from 42 per cent to 50 per cent over this inter-censal period, while the Protestant population had declined from 30 per cent to 21 per cent. The proportion of private renting in the area had also increased to 22 per cent by 2001. Studies of this subunit have highlighted the connection between economic development, social mobility and increasing private sector ownership in explaining these demographic changes. Murtagh and Carmichael (2005) suggest that these trends reflect the growth in investment properties, attracting young professionals who are disproportionately from a Catholic background. Estimates from the sample survey revealed that in 2005 Catholics represented 43 per cent of the population in the area, Protestants only 19 per cent and mixed religion households 19 per cent. When compared with the Northern Irish population as a whole, in which 12 per cent of households are of mixed religion, Ballynafeigh appears to be an attractive area for mixed households. Thus, Ballynafeigh classifies as a mixed area with less than 70 per cent of any one religion living in the area.

The study also conducted a small-scale survey of residents in the area on their attitudes towards community relations as well as other salient political issues. Data from the survey suggested that residents of Ballynafeigh were more positive about community relations than is generally the case in the rest of Northern Ireland. However, Protestants were less likely to feel that community relations had improved over the last five years. This was, in part, explained by the perceived 'Catholicisation' of Ballynafeigh as younger and more socially mobile Catholics moved in (Murtagh and Carmichael 2005: 46).

Significantly, less than half of both Catholics and Protestants living in Ballynafeigh identified with either of the two main political traditions (nationalist and unionist). Instead respondents were more likely to disagree with the statements 'I think of myself as a nationalist' and 'I think of myself as a unionist' (Murtagh and Carmichael 2005: 81) suggesting that political identity was less salient among this cohort than in other areas around Belfast. The study was not able to assess whether these more moderate attitudes were a result of living in a mixed area or a result of other socio-economic factors such as greater levels of education and social mobility.

As demonstrated earlier, there is some evidence to suggest that residential mixing is largely confined to the middle class (Shirlow and Murtagh 2006). In order to assess the plausibility of this claim I employ the NILT data to examine the relationship between residential location and a number of socio-economic indicators that are commonly used in social class assessment. Analysis of a number of important socio-economic indicators reveals a relationship between higher socio-economic status and living in a mixed area. This is especially the case among Catholics. As Table 5.3 reveals, middle class Catholics are more likely to live in a mixed area as they are significantly more likely to be employed in a non-manual occupation and hold a tertiary level qualification than their segregated counterparts.

Table 5.3 Socio-economic characteristics by residential area, 1989–2010.

	Protestants		Catholics		
	Segregated	*Mixed*	*Segregated*	*Mixed*	*Pop*
Age (mean years)	51.4	52	46.4	47.7*	49.2
Employed (%)	47	49	43	55**	48
Gender (%) (female)	57	54*	59	58	57
Tertiary degree	11	13*	10	16**	12
Non manual (%)	52	56	42	51**	51

* Significantly different from segregated at the p<.05 level.
** Significantly different from segregated at the p<.01 level.

Source: NISA and NILT surveys pooled file, 1989-2010.

For Protestant respondents, however, the data does not reveal a striking difference in the socio-economic profiles of those living in mixed neighbourhoods when compared to their segregated counterparts. Indeed, of the three socio-economic indicators, only tertiary level qualification is found to be of significance among this cohort.

The significant differences in the socio-economic characteristics among Catholic respondents evident in Table 5.3 match a growing trend for the Catholic middle class to be socially mobile and to move into urban areas that were once primarily populated by

the Protestant middle class (Elliott 2002; Shirlow and Murtagh 2006). This rise in social mobility in which the Catholic community has seen improvements in education, fair employment and increased public sector jobs has helped to create what Breen and Devine (1999: 56) have called 'a new Catholic middle-class'. Douglas (1997) argues that the Catholic middle class has evolved through new forms of labour market growth as well as a series of government initiatives including the establishment of a Fair Employment Commission, and anti-discrimination legislation. A series of community relations policies aimed to increase cross-community contact and mutual understanding also seem to have played a role. As in the Ballynafeigh case, as discussed earlier, new investment and employment opportunities have attracted a disproportionately young Catholic population shifting the demographic mix of many urban areas.

The Protestant middle class has also been affected by social mobility. Culturally, they have tended to distance themselves from the Orange Order and Masonic Lodges, which has enabled them to pursue their interests in civil society outside of the confines of their traditional communities (Elliott 2002; Shirlow and Murtagh 2006). Thus, while traditional identities have not disappeared, they may have become less relevant for the middle class that has emerged in the last decade. Moreover, the new opportunities, lifestyles and interests that have emerged as a result of increased social mobility have influenced places of residence, work and entertainment (Murtagh 2008: 7).

This is not to deny the existence of mixed areas among lower socio-economic groups. Indeed, residential mixing is also found within the social housing sector. Murtagh et al. (2006) examined the interesting case of mixed housing within the social housing sector on the Tonagh estate in Lisburn. According to a survey of the 368 occupied dwellings on the estate (N=248) conducted by Murtagh et al. (2006), 37 per cent were Protestant households, 28 per cent were Catholic households and mixed religion households made up 28 per cent. These figures suggest that Tonagh has more than twice the rate of mixed religion households compared with Northern Ireland as a whole. It is noteworthy that in Shuttleworth and Lloyd's (2009a) study of NIHE housing estates, Lisburn scored 0.80 on the dissimilarity index suggesting that the highly mixed nature of the Tonagh estate was very unusual for the area.

This mixed area in Lisburn is significant for a number of reasons. First, it is located within a larger area that is predominantly Protestant. For instance, Old Warren and Lagan Valley (which are physically closest to Tonagh) have a majority Protestant population of 70 per cent and 83 per cent respectively (Murtagh et al. 2006). Second, the social conditions on the Tonagh estate reflect a population with an older age profile, higher rates of unemployment and income support than the rest of the region and Northern Ireland as a whole. Moreover, reports suggest that crime is a major local issue, and out of Northern Ireland's 582 wards, Tonagh ranks 57th for recorded incidents of crime.

Despite the relative deprivation of the area, data collected by the survey suggest that community relations in Tonagh are relatively strong when compared to the rest of Northern Ireland (Murtagh et al. 2006: 31). Indeed, residents on the estate describe the area as 'mixed' and expressed a desire to continue living as a mixed community (Murtagh et al. 2006: 25). Moreover, although Tonagh's crime rate is relatively high compared with the rest of Northern Ireland, experience of sectarianism was not identified as a significant problem among any of the community groups living on the estate (Murtagh et al. 2006: 25–34). Interviews with residents also highlighted the longevity of mixing and the strength of family ties as reasons for stability within Tonagh. These positive community relations were strengthened by cross-community infrastructure on the estate, including an integrated primary school. Significantly, a high proportion of people on the estate chose to remain neutral when asked about the changing nature of community relations in Northern Ireland, and this was especially true of mixed households (61 per cent) (Murtagh et al. 2006: 32). This suggests that there may be a degree of detachment to broader community relations issues on the estate.

Similar findings to those reported for Tonagh emerged from a comparative study of three mixed residential communities conducted by Byrne et al. (2006). Using both quantitative and qualitative techniques the study investigated perceptions and understandings of 'mixing' within Ballynafeigh in Belfast, the Areema social housing estate near Lisburn and the rural community of Rathfriland in County Down. A number of indicators were used to define a mixed community. These were that the area included

a mix of people from both Catholic and Protestant backgrounds; there were mixed relationships; few sectarian incidents occurred; freedom of movement and freedom to express community culture; and a high degree of community participation and 'agents' of integration including shared leisure facilities, shops and community associations (Byrne et al. 2006: 123). Significantly, the study found no evidence to suggest that a person's community background influenced their friendships networks. Rather, length of residency was the key indicator in relation to levels of interactions and the number of cross-community friendships developed (Byrne et al. 2006: 124). Due to the changing demographic nature of Ballynafeigh, as indicated by the study conducted by Murtagh and Carmichael (2005), this finding may have important implications for future community relations in the area as residents move in and out thus shortening the length of time and opportunity for neighbours to get to know one another.

Mixed communities and national identity patterns

Since the first paramilitary ceasefires in 1994 there has been strong economic growth, new patterns of consumption and an attempt to re-imagine city life in Belfast in an effort to present Northern Ireland as place beyond conflict. Even though this process has been ongoing for several years there have been few analyses of what reforms and social shifts have meant with regard to the transformation of interests and identities (Shirlow and Murtagh 2006: 102). Recent research by Hayes and McAllister (2009a) has found that those who endorse a Northern Irish identity are more likely than those who adopt a traditional Irish or British identity to favour living in a mixed neighbourhood. Using data from the 2006 NILT survey they found that 9 out of every 10 Catholic adults who claimed a Northern Irish identity indicated that they would prefer to live in a religiously mixed neighbourhood and 8 out of every 10 Protestants stated the same (Hayes and McAllister 2009a: 395).

Following on from this research, I investigate whether those Catholics and Protestant who do live in mixed neighbourhoods differ from their counterparts in segregated areas in relation to national identity preferences. Specifically, I ask whether individuals who live in a mixed area (and who therefore come into contact with neighbours from a different religious background) are more likely to identify as Northern Irish identity than individuals who live in a segregated area.

To consider this I use a series of bivariate and multivariate analyses to compare the national identity preferences of Catholics and Protestants who have experienced varying levels of intergroup contact in this particular social setting.[104] I also consider whether there is a long term relationship between experience of mixing in residential areas and national identity salience by examining two points in time within the bivariate analysis. I then consider two periods in time for the multivariate analysis and data results are aggregated into two time periods—before the implementation of the Belfast agreement and devolution to the Northern Ireland Assembly (1989 to 1998), and after devolution (1999 to 2010)—in order to consider whether the broader political climate had background effects on national identity patterns.

As noted previously, while mixing is primarily found among the middle class it does also occur among those with a lower socio-economic status. In order to assess whether having experience of intergroup contact with neighbours is related to national identity independent of other important social indicators highlighted earlier in the chapter, a number of important control variables[105] are included in the regression. Table 5.4 presents the breakdown of type of residential area by national identity among self-identified Catholics and Protestants at two points in time (1995 and 2010).

Beginning with Protestants, the data reveal that in 1995 there was no difference between respondents living in either a segregated or a mixed area in terms of the likelihood that they would identify as Northern Irish. Indeed, it is clear that respondents in both types of areas were less likely to identify as Northern Irish than with the Ulster identity. However, this pattern dramatically changed over the following 15 year period. In 2010, the incidence of Protestants within mixed areas identifying as Northern Irish had increased by a full 23 percentage points to 35 per cent and those respondents identifying as Ulster had substantially decreased, with only 1 per cent of respondents living in mixed areas opting for this identity. Moreover, preference for Northern Irish identity among respondents in mixed areas was found to be significantly different from

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[104] The coding for these variables can be found in Appendix 3.

[105] These control variables are outlined in chapter 3.

those in segregated areas (by 12 percentage points) even though Protestants living in segregated areas showed increased preference for Northern Irish identity from 1995.

Turning to an analysis of national identity preferences among Catholic respondents, the data suggest a different pattern. For example, preference for Northern Irish identity among those in mixed areas was evident in 1995 with 27 per cent identifying as Northern Irish as opposed to 17 per cent among their segregated counterparts and this difference is statistically significant using a two-tailed t-test. However, unlike the Protestant respondents, the incidence of those identifying as Northern Irish did not increase dramatically over time. Indeed, the data reveal that in 2010, preference for Northern Irish identity in mixed areas only increased by 2 percentage points. Moreover, there was not as great a difference between the mixed and the segregated samples in terms of their preference for Northern Irish identity. And unlike Protestant respondents, Catholics living within mixed areas were significantly more likely to identify with the other main tradition (British) and significantly less likely to identify as Irish compared to those living in segregated areas.

What appears at first glance to be a somewhat surprising finding is backed up by previous research. As discussed in chapter 2, perceived status differential may have an effect on the outcome of a contact situation. The majority-minority thesis, developed by Tropp and Pettigrew (2005) contends that the impact of contact may vary significantly not only in terms of the contact situation but also in terms of the social status of the groups involved. What might appear as equal status encounter to majority group members may be perceived as a potentially threatening and unequal situation to the minority. Accordingly, for minority status members it may be perceived as a safer option to adopt the majority view. As Catholics have historically formed the minority group within Northern Ireland, one plausible explanation for the increase in British identity among Catholics living in mixed areas when compared to their segregated counterparts is that they perceive of themselves as being in the minority and therefore may feel pressure to conform to the majority view within their area of residence.

Table 5.4. National identity by residential area and religious denomination (%), 1995 and 2010

| | Protestants | | | | | | Catholics | | | | | |
| | 1995 | | | 2010 | | | 1995 | | | 2010 | | |
	Segregated	Mixed	All	Segregated	Mixed	All	Segregated	Mixed	All	Segregated	Mixed	All
British	69	64	68	65	59	63	6	23**	12	4	13**	8
Ulster	13	17	14	9	1**	6	2	1	2	0	2	1
Northern	12	12	12	22	35**	27	17	27**	20	22	29	25
Irish	4	6	4	3	3	3	74	47**	65	68	48**	60
Other	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	8	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(N)	(478)	(179)	(657)	(306)	(160)	(466)	(349)	(167)	(516)	(250)	(155)	(405)
(Chi square 4.959, 4 df, p>.05)			*(Chi square 16.941, 4 df, p<.01)*			*(Chi square 49.173, 4 df, p<.01)*			*(Chi square 23.596, 4 df, p<.01)*		

* Significantly different from segregated at the p<.05 level. ** Significantly different from segregated at the p<.01 level.

Source: NILT survey 1995, 2010.

To test whether these findings are robust against important socio-economic variables, I employ multivariate logistic regression models as shown in Table 5.5. In each model I present the logistic coefficients, the standard errors (in parentheses), and the exponent (B) scores. The third column of each model represents the exponent (B) which predicts the odds of identifying as Northern Irish as opposed to British (for Protestants) or Irish (for Catholics) when a particular variable is considered, holding other important variables constant. Four logistic regression models are presented—two representing responses to the surveys conducted before the devolution of powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1999, and two representing surveys conducted in the 10 years since.

The multivariate analyses largely support the bivariate findings. Among Protestant respondents, for example, the data reveal a significant increase over time in the strength of the relationship between living in a mixed area and identifying as Northern Irish. In the pre-devolution period there appears to be no significant relationship, whereas in the post-devolution period Protestants living in mixed areas were 67 per cent more likely to identity as Northern Irish than their segregated counterparts. Among Catholic respondents, the data reveal a stronger relationship between living in a mixed area and identifying as Northern Irish in both time periods under analysis. Supporting the bivariate analyses, this trend, however, has slightly decreased in the post devolution period, although Catholic respondents who live in a mixed area are still twice as likely to identify as Northern Irish as opposed to those who live in segregated areas. While the results indicate that the trend in the Northern Irish identity may be decreasing among Catholics, they remain more likely to identify as such than their Protestant counterparts.

Table 5.5. The relationship between residential area and national identity, 1989-2010

	Protestants						Catholics					
	Pre-devolution			Post-devolution			Pre-devolution			Post-devolution		
Socio-demographic												
Gender (female)	-.214	(.146)	.807	.075	(.087)	1.078	.229	(.145)	1.257	.440	(.100)	1.553**
Age	-.008	(.005)	.992	-.009	(.003)	.991**	.002	(.004)	1.002	.005	(.003)	1.005
Labour-force active	.184	(.167)	1.202	.063	(.103)	1.065	.322	(.159_	1.380*	.288	(.114)	1.334*
Occupation (non-manual)	.158	(.164)	1.171	-.219	(.217)	.803	-.070	(.166)	.933	-.255	(.252)	.798
Church attendance	.002	(.161)	1.002	.074	(.093)	1.077	-.091	(.267)	.913	.285	(.121)	1.330*
Marital Status (married)	-.319	(.147)	.727*	-.054	(.090)	.948	.122	(.142)	1.129	.239	(.099)	1.270*
Education												
(Tertiary)	.779	(.203)	2.180**	.773	(.120)	2.166**	.325	(.231)	1.384	-.106	(.136)	.900
(Secondary)	-.030	(.180)	.970	.340	(.114)	1.405**	.102	(.176)	1.107	.056	(.127)	1.058
(No Qual)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Residential area												
(Mixed)	.113	(.158)	1.119	.517	(.094)	1.677**	.843	(.144)	2.323*	.760	(.101)	2.139**
(Segregated)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Constant	-1.324	(.356)	.266**	-.890	(.260)	.411**	-1.773	(.301)	.170**	-1.905	.274	.149**
Nagelkerke R square	.049			.062			.067			.060		
(N)	1,627			2,777			1,165			2,315		

*p<.05 **p<.01. -- Omitted category of comparison *Notes:* In each model, column one represents the logistic coefficients; column two represents the standard errors (in parentheses); and column three represents the Exponent B. Dichotomous dependent variable for Protestants is operationalised as 1=Northern Irish 0=British; for Catholics 1=Northern Irish 0= Irish.

Source: NISA and NILT surveys, pooled file, 1989-2010.

In terms of national identity preferences, both sets of analyses show that Catholics living in mixed communities are significantly more likely to see their primary identity as Northern Irish. This result was most pronounced during the first time period (1989–1998) under analysis. Indeed, the data suggest that there has not been any significant increase in the incidence of Catholics identifying as Northern Irish since the implementation of the Agreement.

The data reveal a remarkably different trend in identification among Protestant respondents. Whereas during the first time period examined Protestants living in mixed neighbourhoods were no more likely to identify as Northern Irish than their segregated counterparts, this has dramatically changed in the period since (1999–2010). This is clearly shown in both the bivariate and multivariate analyses. These findings suggest that within this social arena, we are witnessing a levelling off of a preference for Northern Irish identity among Catholics and an increase in this identity among Protestants.

Explaining identity and residential mixing

It is clear that the expression of competing identities remains closely linked to the physical separation of communities in residential areas. The data confirm earlier research regarding the importance of residential segregation for maintaining, and in some instances fuelling, divisive national identities. Alongside the findings here that residential segregation perpetuates expressions of divided identities a number of other well-documented problems that arise from residential segregation are also apparent. For example, persistent residential segregation—by community background, socio-economic status, and other dimensions—has long been associated in direct ways with social inequality, for example by denying minorities and the poor equal access to quality schooling, jobs, and other resources (De Souza Briggs 2002). Analysis of respondents' social characteristics, including level of education, employment status and type of occupation, reveal that those living in segregated areas are less likely to have gained an educational qualification or to be employed. Those who are employed are much more likely to have a manual position. This suggests that many segregated areas

within Northern Ireland experience greater levels of inequality and deprivation than many mixed areas.

Residential segregation is most acute among working class wards and is correlated with social and economic deprivation, marginalization, and sectarianism (see Shirlow and Murtagh 2006). The riots in East Belfast during the 2011 marching season, to provide one example among many, highlight the relative ease with which violence in working class areas can erupt. Outbursts of sectarian violence centred on territory and persistent inequalities highlight the fragility of peace, especially where this coincides with segregation. Indeed, it is within the area of residential segregation that the need for a multi-level approach to resolving conflict can be most easily seen. This is because the contestation of territory, at the heart of the conflict, is borne out within and between segregated areas and these areas serve as bases for demonstrations, political protestations and identity politics. Tackling these overlapping and mutually reinforcing issues is an important challenge for the future of housing policy in Northern Ireland.

Given the continuing presence of high levels of residential segregation, coupled with periods of violence and intergroup riots, it is perhaps surprising to find that mixed religion communities have and continue to exist throughout Northern Ireland. This is even more surprising given that the existence of these communities has, until recently, been sustained with very little official support. Indeed, official government support and promotion of mixed areas has been a relatively recent addition to the community relations agenda. This, it appears, is due to the fact that the allocation of housing at the onset of the contemporary conflict was heavily politicised and associated with discriminatory tactics of the state. Thus, for the duration of the conflict, the focus of the NIHE was on the allocation of housing on the basis of need and preference coupled with a desire to disassociate housing policy from sectarian practices. As such, pushing forward a social integration agenda within housing policy was side-lined and the status quo within social housing—typically segregation—was maintained.

Despite these obstacles I have found that mixed areas represent an important environment in which less divisive forms of identification are being realised. The

findings indicate a significant relationship between living in a mixed area and identifying as Northern Irish. And this relationship was particularly strong among Protestants. This suggests that the opportunities for intergroup contact present in mixed areas may be beneficial for community relations. There are a number of explanations for the importance in mixed areas, which are examined below.

A first explanation is that people who live in mixed areas most likely do so out of choice. Unlike many segregated areas in which only those from the right community may choose to live out of fear and intimidation, mixed areas provide all people with a choice. A conscious decision on the part of the individual to live in such an area (as opposed to a segregated area) may indicate that factors other than communal background are more important when choosing a location to live. For example, locality to work, schools or the city centre may be a driving force in people's decisions to move—and, as I have demonstrated, mixed areas are predominantly found within the urban centres. Likewise, whereas living in a small community may highlight identity and difference, the relative transience of urban life affords people a higher degree of anonymity. Because of this, an individual's community identity may be less important than in smaller or more rural communities (Jarman et al. 2009: 62).

Second, previous research has found that social integration happens within mixed communities and that there is heightened potential for the formation of intergroup friendships in such environments. For example, the importance of friendship and family ties for the stability of mixed communities was also noted in the report of the mixed housing estate in Tonagh (Murtagh et al. 2006). A similar finding was documented in Murtagh and Carmichael's (2005) study of the Ballynafeigh area which found that the rate of mixed religion households was higher than that of Northern Ireland as a whole. Lending further weight to the importance of mixed neighbourhoods as environments which promote positive interaction, Hewstone et al. (2008: 73-4) who conducted extensive analysis of both segregated and mixed neighbourhoods found that people living in mixed areas were more inclined towards intergroup interaction than those living in segregated communities. The report also documented the presence of cross-community friendships between neighbours in mixed areas.

Finally, local infrastructure that supports the mixed nature of an area may be important in providing a sense of belonging and pride in the area. Mixed areas are often supported by strong local community organizations that foster and support cross-community relations. For example, the neighbourhood of Ballynafeigh has been supported for many years by the Ballynafeigh Community Development Association (BCDA). [106] The BCDA offers physical space to facilitate interaction between people from different community backgrounds. These physical spaces provide a neutral venue for a range of community groups to access. Recent statistics indicate a total of 88 active groups using the BCDA offices on the Ormeau Road alone (Murtagh and Carmichael 2005: 34). As well as providing space for community groups to meet, the BCDA also organizes social events and is active in promoting mixed leisure activities.

Mixed areas are also more likely to be connected to integrated schools nearby. For example, within the mixed housing estate in Tonagh the existence of strong cross-community infrastructure, including an integrated primary school, was considered fundamental to the continuing mixed nature of the area. The report also found a sense of pride in the area and a desire to keep Tonagh free from sectarian symbols (Murtagh et al. 2006). Thus, it can be argued that there is real investment of residents' time and energy in mixed environments and a desire to maintain the mixed nature of the community.

Investment in the local area and the establishment of strong community bonds within mixed areas will be essential for their longevity and stability. Evidence suggests that the delicate demographic balance within many mixed areas is under threat as more members of one community move in while members of another move out. This is particularly due to an increase in the private rental sector and the gentrification of particular areas with new middle class developments in the Belfast city area may increase perceptions of exclusion among working class segregated communities (Gaffikin et al. 2008: 177-8). According to Gaffikin et al., some new developments

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[106] For more information on the BCDA visit <www.bdca.net>.

within the Belfast city centre have effectively become gated communities (physically manifest in walls, gates and security doors) helping to generate new layers of division. Murtagh (2008) also noted these new layers of division with increased social mobility among Catholic who are now living in once exclusively Protestant areas coupled with sharper demarcations of territory in working-class areas in Belfast.

In interviews with individual in a highly segregated Protestant area Hughes et al. (2007: 43) found new norms of avoidance of intergroup contact around the Belfast city centre. Here many Protestant respondents indicated that whilst they once would have shopped and socialised in Belfast, they now preferred to travel to Newtownards or Bangor (both of which are majority Protestant towns) due to the perception that Belfast had become more 'green' and therefore less welcoming for Protestants.

Added to this is the relative ease with which particular areas can become spatially segregated, even if the residents of that area do not actively wish it to be so. For example, Fossett and Waren (2005: 1893) argue that residential segregation can occur even when no individual wishes to reside in the type of ethnically homogeneous neighbourhood found in highly segregated cities. They demonstrate how relatively weak preferences for living with like individuals can produce divided spatial networks. This outcome may, in part, explain the difference between the stated preference of people to live in mixed areas and the persistence of high levels of residential segregation in Northern Ireland.[107]

While the findings of this study indicate the merits of community relations work focused on increasing the number of shared residential areas, it should be noted that this study has some important methodological limitations. The major limitation is the issue of causality. Given the cross-sectional nature of the data employed, it is not possible to discern whether increased contact between communities through mixing in residential

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[107] For example, in the 2010 NILT survey 86 per cent of respondents stated that they were in favour of more residential mixing in the area in which they lived.

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areas leads to identity moderation, or whether those who hold more moderate views choose to live in mixed areas. Only by employing longitudinal data can definitive conclusions be reached as to the direction of the relationship between mixing and identity. In the absence of such data, however, inferences can still be drawn as to the importance of such environments for more moderate identities. This study has shown that such environments are indeed important.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the depth of residential segregation in Northern Ireland and the degree to which efforts to promote mixing in residential areas is linked with more moderate forms of identity. I began by outlining the history of residential segregation in Northern Ireland, arguing that this form of segregation has been closely aligned with divisive group identities which manifest in physical, and often intimidating, expressions of territoriality.

I then discussed a range of indicators commonly used to measure the extent of segregation and found that while residential segregation persists and has in fact increased on many social housing estates, recent research finds that overall the rate of segregation may be slowing due to decreases in violence and the advent of the peace process. Coupled with this, is an emerging body of literature that has identified residential areas throughout Northern Ireland which can be described as mixed. An interesting finding has been that mixed areas have existed despite the fact that residential segregation was the accepted norm throughout the conflict. Indeed, it is only since 1998 that official support for the maintenance and development of mixed areas has become a central policy objective for improving community relations. Efforts are now being made to promote shared neighbourhoods as outlined in the government's *A Shared Future* community relations policy. Of course, support for shared neighbourhoods provided by the NIHE focus on shared social housing, meaning that support for mixed areas made up of private ownership is dependent on the existence of strong local community organizations. As this research confirmed, residential mixing is disproportionately confined to the middle classes. It is unclear what the government's

strategy for maintaining the mixed nature of many of these areas with high levels of private ownership will be.

In conclusion, I uncovered evidence to suggest that the support for and promotion of mixed areas are worthwhile policy objectives as they are environments in which more moderate and inclusive identities are expressed. Through analyses of a large pooled sample of survey respondents, I found that both Catholics and Protestants who state that they live in mixed areas are significantly more likely to express a Northern Irish identity than either of the traditional national identities. While it was not possible to ascertain the quality of contact that residents in mixed areas experience, previous research (Hewstone et al. 2008) suggests that quality social interactions do occur in such areas, leading to the formation of more intimate bonds. The challenge for policy makers and practitioners will be to maintain the delicate demographic balance of such areas in an increasingly socially mobile society. Given that official government support for such areas has only recently become central to the community relations agenda, it will be interesting to return to such an analysis of identity patterns within shared communities in the future. In the next chapter, I explore cross-community contact within the education sector.

Chapter 6. Integrated education and national identity

The education system in Northern Ireland reflects the divided nature of the society through the existence of two parallel school sectors. One sector is provided by the state and is frequented mostly by pupils from a Protestant background. The other is operated by the Catholic Church and is populated predominantly by pupils from a Catholic background. Like residential segregation, the development of separate[108] school sectors is representative of the broader political conflict over competing national claims, territorial allegiances and opposing views about the legitimacy of the state (Moxon-Browne 1991; McGarry and O'Leary 1993; Gallagher 2004a). However, since the early 1980s a third school sector has emerged that is designed to educate Catholic and Protestant children together. The schools in this sector are known as integrated schools.[109]

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[108] In this chapter I will use the terms 'separate' and 'separated' to refer to denominational schools within Northern Ireland. There is some debate over the use of the term 'segregated' to refer to denominational schools in Northern Ireland. The terminology of 'segregated' school may suggest that a school is 'segregated' based on force (from either the state or the churches or both), rather than being 'separate' by choice. Whereas under the apartheid system in South Africa, for example, schools were clearly segregated through state mandate, in Northern Ireland denominational schools operate on the basis of choice. Indeed, there is no legal mandate for segregation of Catholic and Protestant pupils in education in Northern Ireland. As such, I will refer to denominational schools in Northern Ireland as separate-religion schools while noting that these schools are usually referred to as segregated schools within the literature and within policy circles.

[109] For detailed accounts of the nature and history of the integrated sector see the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) <www.nicie.org.uk>; Dunn and Morgan 1991; Morgan and Fraser 1999; Hughes and Donnelly 2006.

This integrated sector emerged out of concerns that the separate nature of education in Northern Ireland contributed to division by restricting opportunities for Catholic and Protestant children to engage in cross-community contact. I shall argue that the rationale for the call for integrated schools is similar to the basic argument advanced by contact theorists—that increasing intergroup contact between members of different groups can lead to a reduction of prejudice and to more favourable attitudes towards the out-group (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998).

There is a growing body of research on integrated education in Northern Ireland (see Hansson et al. 2013 for an overview of recent research). This includes examination of impact of integrated education on a range of social attitudes, such as prejudice, tolerance, and trust towards members of the other main community. Only recently, however, has research begun to investigate the relationship between integrated education and expressions of political and national identities (Hayes et al. 2007). This chapter builds on this research by investigating the impact of segregated and integrated education on national identity preferences in Northern Ireland using data from the NISA survey and the NILT surveys over the period 1989 to 2010.

The chapter is structured as follows. I begin by providing an outline of the history of the three education sectors in Northern Ireland. I use government statistics to determine the extent to which segregation persists, concluding that only a minority of the school-aged population attend schools within the integrated sector. I then discuss the emergence of this sector and, in particular, the establishment of two types of integrated schools—planned integrated schools and transformed schools. This sets the stage for an examination of the nature of integrated schools. Data on enrolments by religious background from the Department of Education is utilised to show that a significant religious imbalance among pupils remains in a number of (nominally) integrated schools. The goals of integrated schools are then examined through analysis of relevant policy documents and published accounts from advocates of such schools. I show that there is a degree of ambiguity into the expressed goals of integrated education and that in recent years there has been a policy shift away from the aim of integrating schools per se towards promoting 'sharing' across the education sector. Against this

background, statistical tests of the associations between attending an integrated school on the national identity preferences of Catholic and Protestant respondents are applied and the results are discussed with reference to current practices and implications for the future of the integrated education sector in Northern Ireland.

Education in Northern Ireland

Since 1923, the two main communities in Northern Ireland have been educated separately in a state-sponsored dual education system. Under this system, a majority of pupils from the Protestant tradition have attended state-controlled schools, while maintained schools—financed by the state but operated by the Catholic Church—have mostly attracted pupils from the Catholic tradition. Today, nearly 90 per cent of the school-aged population is educated in this segregated sector, attending either a state-controlled school populated predominantly by Protestants or a school within the maintained sector, operated by the Catholic Church and populated predominantly by Catholics. Ironically, early attempts to limit the influence of religious instruction in schools acted as a catalyst for the development of the dual education system. An initiative by the Minister for Education, Lord Londonderry, called for all schools in Northern Ireland to be non-denominational (Darby 1976).[110] Londonderry argued that the education system should be protected from de-nominalisation, since failure to do so would lead to 'division when union is so essential to the well-being of the province' (quoted in Darby 1976: 126).

Major opposition to Londonderry's position from stakeholders within both the Protestant and Catholic communities culminated in a campaign against these proposals.

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[110] Earlier attempts in Ireland had been made to establish non-denominational education through a national school system in 1831. The purpose was to create a single school system which could provide for separate religious instruction for the different religious groups. However, the system was gradually eroded by campaigns from clergy from both the Protestant and Catholic denomination. By the end of the nineteenth century national schools had become segregated into de facto denominational institutions (see Smith 2001).

For example, in 1924 a number of Protestant organizations formed the United Education Committee, arguing for 'Protestant teachers for Protestant children' (quoted in Darby 1976: 28). The Catholic Church also rejected Londonderry's proposals arguing that the establishment of a non-denominational education system might lead to proselytising (see Dunn and Morgan 1991). In response to these pressures, a new Education Act was passed that created a 'state' system. This system was designed to teach the Protestant faith (Gallagher 2004a: 61). Unsurprisingly, the Catholic Church announced that the proposed schools would be 'impossible' for Catholic children (Darby 1976: 28). Indeed, church opposition to proposals for a unified education system was so widespread that by 1930 the government had established a de facto segregated education system (Richardson 2000; Hayes et al. 2007).[111] Prime Minister James Craig set the tone for the re-structured education system, stating '[y]ou need not have any fears about our education programme for the future…It will be absolutely certain that in no circumstances whatever will Protestant children be in any way interfered with by Roman Catholics, any more than Protestants wish to interfere with Roman Catholic children' (Darby 1976: 28).

These two sectors also include a number of voluntary schools, including controlled grammar schools attended predominantly by Protestants, voluntary grammar schools with Catholic management, and Irish medium schools attended predominantly by Catholics. It is important to note here that there is no legal restriction on the entry of pupils from either community to any of these school types. However, parental choice has followed a tight pattern of school patronage.

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[111] It is important to note that there had also been early support for the concept of a national schools system from within the Catholic Church. In the early nineteenth century Catholic Bishop James Doyle of Kildare wrote in favour of the creation of a unified school system and stated, 'I do not know any measures which would prepare the way for a better feeling in Ireland than uniting children at an early age, and bringing them up in the same school, leading them to commune with one another and to form those little intimacies and friendships which often subsist through life' (Doyle 1830 quoted in Richardson 2000: 93).

The high levels of separate education that exist in Northern Ireland's education system are highlighted in Table 6.1, based on data from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland. It shows the percentage of pupils enrolled in primary, post-primary and grammar schools by their stated religion and the type of school attended for the 2010/11 school year.

Table 6.1. Enrolment figures for primary, secondary and grammar schools by religion and school type (%), 2010–2011

	Protestant	Catholic	Other	All
School Type				
State-controlled	78.4	3.5	66.4	38.7
Catholic-maintained	1.2	90.0	6.0	47.1
Integrated	7.9	4.9	11.5	6.7
Other	12.4	1.5	16.0	7.3
(N)	(113,815)	(154,578)	(34,108)	(302,501)

Note: Integrated schools include both grant maintained and controlled integrated schools. Figures do not include enrolments for nursery schools or special schools. 'Other' schools refer to voluntary schools under other management. 'Other' religion refers to those who stated 'no religion', 'other religion' or 'other Christian'.

Source: Calculated by author from enrolment figures provided by Department of Education 2011.

This provides clear evidence of the persistence of a divided education system. In the 2010/11 school year, 90 per cent of Catholics attended a maintained school and 78 per cent of Protestants attended a state-controlled school. Moreover, only 1 per cent of Protestants attended a maintained school and only 4 per cent of Catholics attended a state-controlled school. Despite the high levels of segregation found within the education sector, Table 6.1 also reveals that a minority of both Catholics (5 per cent) and Protestants (8 per cent) attended a school within the 'integrated' sector. This 'integrated' sector reflects efforts made by select members of the community—parents,

teachers and government officials—who endorse a view that schools should become directly involved in efforts to improve community relations in Northern Ireland. Central to the logic and justification of this position is the belief that a lack of contact between Catholics and Protestants throughout the school years perpetuates division and conflict in Northern Ireland. To date, 61 integrated schools have been established at primary and post-primary level and they provide an education and environment for social experimentation for some 6 per cent of the school age population (see Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) 2008; Department of Education 2011).

Educational reforms

With the renewal and escalation of political violence in the late 1960s and through the 1970s, Northern Ireland's social, economic and institutional structures came under scrutiny in an attempt to understand the causes of the violence. As part of this, the role of the segregated education system was given particular attention[112]. Studies conducted during this period highlighted the lack of knowledge that young people from each community had of one another and of each other's traditions. They also drew attention to how few opportunities there were for cross-community interaction (Rose 1971; Darby et al. 1977). Darby and Dunn (1987) suggested that curriculum differences in segregated schools introduced children to differing and potentially opposing outlooks on the world. For example, religious education and the teaching of history have been heavily influenced by the denomination of the school. Curriculum differences within segregated schools meant that only one history and one tradition was taught in each, leaving little opportunity for pupils to learn about the other community. The potential for separate-religion schools to exacerbate difference between the two main communities was noted by Murray (1995: 222) who argued that, '[c]hildren are socialised into an awareness of difference and distinctiveness' making identities stronger and more exclusive.

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[112] See for example, Murray 1985, 1995; Darby 1976; Dunn 1986; Darby and Dunn 1987.

Echoing Lord Londonderry's original calls for education to bring about union rather than division, advocates challenging the segregated system argued that education could play an influential role in bringing about societal change. It would do so, they alleged, by fostering an understanding of the different traditions and by undermining negative stereotypes within society (Hayes et al. 2007). Concerns driving this demand for change have focused on whether contact between Protestant and Catholic children during the school years could help to reduce tensions by confronting and eliminating prejudice at an early age (Dunn and Morgan 1991, 1999).

Initial attempts to promote integrated education were widely regarded as the unrealistic aspirations of idealists, especially given the immediate situation in which sectarian violence was escalating (Morgan and Fraser 1999). Nevertheless, in the 1970s the pressure group All Children Together attempted to initiate change within the education sector. All Children Together campaigned for legislation to allow existing schools to change their structure in order to attract pupils from both the main communities. In what seemed to confirm the views of many within Northern Ireland, these initial attempts failed, since no schools were willing to take up the challenge.

The failure of All Children Together to bring about change during this period was predictable enough given the social and political context in which it was attempting to operate. The 1970s witnessed a period of political upheaval, escalating levels of violence and the further breakdown of community relations. Following the failure of the power-sharing Northern Ireland Assembly in 1974, attempts at building a moderate centre ground between unionists and nationalists in politics had been all but abandoned. Members of the community also raised concerns that interference with the well-established and functioning education sector might further exacerbate tensions and disrupt an important source of stability for children during this period (Morgan and Fraser 1999). Moreover, as with the earlier attempts by Lord Londonderry to create a unified education system, the Catholic Church voiced strongly its opposition to integrated education.

Despite this opposition, All Children Together pursued its objectives. With the help of donations from charities, foundations and individuals, it opened the first integrated secondary school (Lagan College) in September 1981. The establishment of Lagan College was entirely dependent on private funding. Indeed, the idea of integrated education was so contentious during this period that Lagan College had to rely on private donations until 1984, when the Department of Education took over responsibility for its funding (Hayes et al. 2007).

However, the 1980s witnessed important changes with regard to government strategy in dealing with the conflict in Northern Ireland. The direct rule administration began to focus attention on social and economic initiatives for improving community relations. These initiatives were reflected in administrative change and legislation, including the establishment of the CCRU in 1987, the CRC in 1991, and the *1989 Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order*. Community relations policy during this period was driven by three main goals: the promotion of cross-community contact; the promotion of greater tolerance and cultural pluralism; and a commitment to equality opportunity (Gallagher 2004a: 60). Under the broad theme of community relations, education was thus targeted as an institution through which the government's social policy could be channelled.

In practice, there have been two main approaches to improving community relations through education. The first approach, developed through the Department of Education, has focused on the promotion of EMU (see chapter 4 and below) within existing controlled and maintained schools (Smith and Robinson 1996). The aim of this approach is to educate pupils on community relations issues and encourage 'mutual understanding' between the two main traditions. This approach focuses on modifying the curriculum to facilitate greater understanding and dialogue on issues surrounding community relations, rather than changing the structure of the education system (Richardson 2000).

The first official commitment by the Department of Education to promoting community relations came in 1982 with the publication of the policy circular *The Improvement of Community Relations: the Contribution of Schools* (see O'Connor et al. 2002). This publication formally introduced the idea of using education to improve community relations. When the *1989 Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order* was implemented, it introduced a new Northern Ireland curriculum. This curriculum included the two new themes of EMU and CH (see chapter 4) programmes. EMU and CH are based on four fundamental objectives: to foster respect for self and others and to build relationships; to understand conflict; to appreciate interdependence; and to enhance cultural understanding (Smith and Robinson 1996). Alongside this, the Department of Education established a voluntary Cross Community Contact Scheme between controlled and maintained schools. It was envisaged that EMU and the Cross Community Contact Scheme would complement each other (O'Connor et al. 2002).

While the teaching of EMU and CH were compulsory components of the Northern Ireland curriculum, it is difficult to assess the impact that these schemes have had on the attitudes of children. This is because there is no unified method for teaching the themes set out by EMU and CH. Moreover, teachers may avoid themes deemed to be contentious and that attach to community divisions such as politics and religion. Smith and Robinson (1996), for example, found that many teachers felt insufficiently trained for such work and simply avoided certain subject areas for this reason.

New curriculum developments within the education sector have since replaced EMU and CH with Personal Development and Mutual Understanding and Local and Global Citizenship. [113] According to the latest education policy put forward by the Department of Education (2011), Personal Development and Mutual Understanding is

[113] See the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment and the Northern Ireland Curriculum at <http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/> for further details regarding changes to the curriculum.

designed to promote children's emotional development, their relationships with others, and the development of their moral thinking and values. According to the Department of Education the curriculum theme of Local and Global Citizenship is designed to provide young people with opportunities to investigate and understand the causes of conflict, and to equip them with skills to manage and resolve conflict peacefully (Department of Education 2011b: 12). It remains unclear how these new curriculum developments will influence the teaching of certain contentious themes attached to community relations.

The Cross Community Contact Scheme is now known as the Schools Community Relations Programme, administered by the five Area Education and Library Boards.[114] The Programme's remit is to 'bring together young people from across the community through ongoing, constructive and collaborative activities which lead to greater mutual understanding' (O'Connor et al. 2002: 6). However, a review by O'Connor et al. (2002) commissioned by the Department of Education found a number of weaknesses in the Schools Community Relations Programme. For example, they found inconsistent links between the schools involved. Moreover, while approximately 700 schools have signed up to the Programme, the actual numbers of pupils actively engaged is has remained consistently low. According to the review, only 21 per cent of primary students and 3 per cent of post-primary students were enrolled. The review does not voice a firm opinion regarding whether the Programme has led to 'greater mutual understanding'.

Integrated education

The second approach to improving community relations through education regards the separate education of Catholic and Protestant children as a major obstacle to efforts to improve community relations. It is based on the premise that instead of

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[114] While the Department of Education for Northern Ireland has responsibility over decisions regarding funding allocations and the delivery of the statutory curriculum, much of the administration of the school system is delivered by Northern Ireland's five regional Area Education and Library Boards (see Morgan and Fraser 1999).

educating Catholic and Protestant children separately, all children, irrespective of community affiliation, should be given the opportunity through education to meet, get to know and understand people who are from a different background through attendance at integrated schools. Such an opportunity should undermine negative stereotypes and improve community relations.

While curriculum strategies have proposed promoting cultural awareness among segregated school children, a parallel social movement developed in the 1980s. This movement called for deepening levels of social integration through educating Catholic and Protestant children together. The rationale behind this movement finds its theoretical basis in contact theory (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998). It is based on the idea that conflict and prejudice arise between groups when there is a lack of information about the other group and when there is a lack of opportunity for contact that would facilitate greater understanding between groups. Without significant opportunity for contact, it is argued, it becomes impossible for individuals to realize their similarities and to accept their differences.

Intergroup contact theory, or the contact hypothesis as it was initially formulated, provided the theoretical justification for the desegregation of the school system in the United States[115] (see Allport 1954; Durrheim and Dixon 2005; Hayes et al. 2007) and

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[115] In 1954 the United States Supreme Court decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education* declared racially segregated schools to be unconstitutional as the system produced unequal educational opportunities and outcomes and ultimately contradicted the clauses in the Fourteenth Amendment related to 'equal protection' and 'due process' (Durrheim and Dixon 2005). This decision initiated a shift in the way in which the social role of education was viewed. Schools became regarded as institutions that had the potential to foster improvements in relations between different ethnic and racial groups by diversifying the range of networks available to students through intergroup contact. In relation to intergroup relations it was argued that 'segregation leads to a blockage in the communication and interaction' between groups and that such 'blockages tend to increase mutual suspicion, distrust, and hostility' (*Brown v. Board of Education 1954*, cited in Zirkel and Cantor 2004: 2), while intergroup contact could lead to a reduction in racist attitudes amongst whites and, ultimately, to the promotion of integration and understanding among the wider community (Hayes et al. 2007).

has since been applied in other contexts, including educational initiatives between Palestinian and Israeli children (Donnelly and Hughes 2006), as well as in schools and desegregated neighbourhoods within South Africa (Dixon and Reicher 1997; Durrheim and Dixon 2005).

Proponents of intergroup contact theory argue that under the right conditions, contact between opposing groups can lead to a reduction in prejudice and intergroup bias (Allport 1954). The conditions for successful contact include: equal status between groups in the contact situation; cooperative intergroup interaction; opportunities for personal acquaintance between groups; and the support of authorities within and outside the immediate contact situation. A further condition has since been added which contends that the contact situation should have 'friendship potential' (Pettigrew 1998).

Integrated schools within Northern Ireland may provide an environment in which conditions for positive intergroup contact can be met. First, integrated schools with an equal balance of pupils from both of the main traditions may perceive of themselves as having equal group status within the school. Second, classroom activities may be structured in such a way so as to promote common goals among all pupils. Third, classroom activities may be structured to promote cooperative interaction among all pupils. Fourth, integrated schools may provide the institutional support necessary for intergroup contact and finally, the school environment has 'friendship potential'.

Calls for the need to tackle the separate nature of Northern Ireland's education system and lesson drawing from earlier attempts to desegregate school in the United States have led to the establishment of the integrated schools sector. This sector emphasizes the benefits that sustained intergroup contact can have on improving community relations and draws on intergroup contact theory for theoretical justification. In the two sections below, I demonstrate the different types of integrated schools that exist in Northern Ireland and identify the challenges that these schools face in meeting basic some requirements of integration as well as existing within a broader system dominated by separation.

The first planned integrated school, Lagan College, was created outside of formal state structures through financial donations from charitable organizations (Morgan and Fraser 1999; Smith 2001). It opened in 1981 with a total of 28 pupils in the first year (Morgan and Fraser 1999). Due to its success in surviving the first difficult years, Lagan College provided the impetus for other like-minded groups to follow suit. Morgan and Fraser (1999: 376) call this 'a remarkable achievement and a practical demonstration of parental choice and parental involvement in action'.

Following the establishment of Lagan College, official support for integrated schools came in the form of the *1989 Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order*. This provided an official legislative basis for the support of integrated education and meant that integrated schools could be less dependent on financial contributions from charitable organizations to meet running costs (Smith 2001). Under the order, a statutory duty is given to the Department of Education to 'encourage and facilitate' the development of integrated schools where there is clear parental demand for them (Hansson et al. 2013). In practice, this has resulted in two types of schools. The first are schools that have been established out of parental demand for an integrated school in a particular area. These schools aim to achieve a student intake ratio of 40:40:20 of Catholic, Protestant and Other so as to avoid a majority of one of the two main traditions. These integrated schools are known as planned integrated schools. Under the *1989 Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order* all existing integrated schools were given the choice of receiving grant maintained integrated or controlled integrated status.[116] Most schools that have opened as a consequence of parental demand have chosen 'grant maintained integrated' status.

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[116] The main difference between these two types of integrated schools is found in the structures of the Board of Governors with a closer relationship existing between 'controlled integrated' schools and the Education and Library Board (Gallagher et al. 2003).

Alongside formal support for the establishment of new integrated schools, the *1989 Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order* provided for a second route to integration. Under the Order, existing segregated schools were given the option to 'transform' to officially recognised integrated status. This is the second type of integrated school and consists of already established segregated schools that have been transformed into recognised integrated schools.

While no pre-existing integration is necessary to apply for transformation status, schools wishing to transform are required to demonstrate that they have a reasonable prospect of achieving a minimum of 30 per cent enrolment drawn from the relevant minority tradition.[117] Moreover, the school must achieve a 10 per cent intake of pupils from the minority tradition within the first year before official approval to transform is granted. The process of transformation can be initiated either by written request of at least 20 per cent of parents of pupils at the school, or by a resolution proposed by the school's Board of Governors. Almost all schools that have taken the transformation route have chosen controlled integrated status.

The process of transformation to official integrated status may take place over a number of years. This is due to the need for significant structural changes within the school to reflect a new integrated ethos. For example, the composition of the

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[117] Initially, however, the statutory requirements for transformation as stated in the Order only required schools to 'be likely to be attended by reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils' (cited in McGonigle et al. 2003: 4). No further explanation of what constituted a 'reasonable number' was offered. This caused major concern among advocates of integrated education, who argued that the Order provided a very loose conception of integration that could threaten the continued growth and impact of the integrated sector (McGonigle et al. 2003). In 1997, the Department of Education published *A Framework for Transformation* (1997), which set out revised requirements for schools wishing to transform.

management, staff and enrolments of the school must change in order to meet the requirements set out by the Department of Education. There are also a number of challenges that the schools must address. For example, transforming schools must make practical decisions about issues such as the display of religious and cultural symbols, the celebration of specific dates throughout the year and the recognition of holidays (Smith 2001). Moreover, Hughes and Donnelly (2006: 510-11) found a number of complex issues for schools taking the transformation route to integration. These issues centred on the imposition of 'integrated status' on an existing segregated culture where most of the teachers are drawn from one community and where there may be some opposition to the transformation process.

It is clear that the integrated sector has come a long way since the opening of the first integrated school in 1981. Today, there are 61 integrated schools which represent 7 per cent of the overall school population. Indeed, in light of the fervent opposition to such schools from members of the political community and clergy, the growth of this sector represents a significant achievement in grassroots action. However, as I will argue in the following section, a closer inspection of the structure of integrated schools reveals significant variation between the level of 'integration' within schools. This is evident from the large numerical imbalances between majority/minority groups within many integrated schools. Moreover, there appears to be no unified definition of integration either within the integrated sector, or in official government policy.

Integrated education: a closer inspection

There are two requirements for integrated schools to function effectively. The first is that there should be a balance of pupil numbers between the two main traditions, as well as a balance of staff and in the composition of the board of governors. The second is that the curriculum incorporate elements of both British and Irish culture and traditions, as well as the teaching of local history and interdenominational religious instruction (Dunn and Morgan 1991; Hayes et al. 2007).

However, a survey of government and organization reports reveals a number of intended outcomes envisaged for integrated education, yet no clear indication of how

integration should be implemented. For the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) the 'education together in schools of pupils drawn in approximately equal number from the two major traditions' aims to provide an 'effective education that gives equal recognition to and promotes equal expression of the two major traditions.'[118] Integrated schools should promote 'equality and good relations' and 'a better and shared future.'[119] Elsewhere NICIE expands on the obstacles that segregation imposes on society as it states that a 'segregated system of education perpetuates fear of the "other", perpetuates stereotypes and prevents meaningful dialogue which builds the understanding and respect which are the bedrock of good community relations' (NICIE 2010: n.p.). According to the IFI, which provides financial support for integrated schools, the ethos of an integrated school should encourage the development of 'understanding and mutual respect' (IFI 2010: 5). Outlining arguments for the need for integrated education, the IFI states that segregation prevents 'the development of a shared identity' and has 'created division in recreation, housing, the media, sport and education' (IFI 2010: 5).

The Department of Education defines an integrated school as 'a school which contains a reasonable number of pupils from both the Protestant and the Catholic communities'120 which has 'an overt aim of providing pupils with effective education that gives equal recognition to and promotes expression of the two major traditions' (Department of Education 1998), while *A Shared Future* calls for integrated education to 'consciously prepare their pupils for life in a diverse and inter-cultural world' (OFMDFM 2005: 5). More recently, the Executive's draft community relations strategy—*Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* (OFMDFM 2010: 11, 16)—sets out its commitment to what it calls 'sharing in education' as well as a commitment to

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[118] See NICIE *Statement of Principles* at <http://www.nicie.org/about-us/nicie/statement-of-principles/>.

[119] ibid.

[120] See <http://www.deni.gov.uk>.

integrated education, it provides no definition of integration. In July 2012, Education Minister John O'Dowd announced the creation of a Ministerial Advisory Group on advancing shared education. The Minister stated: 'I am committed to providing all children with an opportunity to experience shared education which I believe has the potential to deliver real educational benefits, to ensure best use of resources and to further community cohesion.'[121]

It is unclear whether the development and promotion of planned integrated schools will continue to receive government support in the future. While Education Minister John O'Dowd announced ongoing commitment to an ethos of sharing, the media brief did not specifically mention integrated schools. Already, the development of such schools has been a source of conflict. According to Dunn and Morgan (1999) this has been due to the rapid expansion of the sector in a relatively short period of time. This has raised concerns regarding the costs associated with maintaining the integrated sector and the potential for state run schools to lose out financially as a result. For example, in 1995 and 1996 approximately one-third of the Department of Education's budget for start-up costs for new schools was allocated to integrated schools, even though these schools represented only around 1.5 per cent of the education sector. Indeed, in the relatively small education system operating in Northern Ireland, the considerable financial investment involved in maintaining the integrated sector has made integrated schools look like the main beneficiaries of government funding (see Morgan and Fraser 1999).[122]

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[121] See CRC website for more information at <http://www.community-relations.org.uk/about-us/news/item/1102/minister-appoints-shared-education-advisory-group/>.

[122] Significantly, the costs associated with maintaining a separate education system in Northern Ireland recently came under attack by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Owen Patterson claiming it 'a criminal waste of money', see 'Schools strategy a criminal waste of money, says Owen Paterson', 6 October 2010, *Belfast Telegraph,* accessed 15th June 2012 at <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/education/schools-strategy-a-criminal-waste-of-public-money-says-owen-paterson-14968401.html>.

Significantly First Minister and Leader of the DUP, Peter Robinson, noted the challenges in this sector due to competition for funds. In a recent interview Robinson states '…The limited number of integrated schools in Northern Ireland do offer a choice but more often than not they join in the competition for funds against the other two main education sectors and in truth will never create the critical mass needed to make a real difference.' [123] And adding yet another challenge to the continuation of the integrated sector was the announcement in June 2010 by the Minister for Education, Catriona Ruane, that there would be a 70 per cent cut to the Ministry's community relations budget (Nolan 2012: 156).

As a result of tensions within the education sector over financial allocations as well as the reality of the considerable financial investment involved in the creation of new schools, government policy has moved towards the transformation route as a more attractive option for maintaining an integrated sector. Thus, in recent years transforming existing segregated schools to official integrated status has become the more financially attractive option for the Department of Education (see Morgan and Fraser 1999; McGonigle et al. 2003). This shift towards transformation is evidenced in the Department of Education's publication *Towards a Culture of Tolerance: Integrating Education* (2007: 11), which explicitly identifies transformation as 'a cost-effective way [of] using existing capital stock'. This move has received criticism, namely from those advocates of integrated education who regard transformation as a dilution of integration and as a way of appearing to support integrated education whilst saving money (see Morgan and Fraser 1999: 375).

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[123] See 'Peter Robinson calls for an end to school segregation', 16 October 2010, *Belfast Telegraph*, accessed 15th June 2012 at <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/education/peter-robinson-calls-for-end-to-school-segregation-14978235.html#ixzz1fn96pvhz>.

Evidence from enrolment data suggests that these suspicions are not unfounded. In practice, transformation has only occurred in controlled schools with predominantly Protestant enrolments. To date, no Catholic maintained school has transformed. Evidence of this is provided in Table 6.2. Using enrolment figures from the Department of Education for the 2010/11 school year, this shows the number of enrolments at grant maintained integrated schools (comprising 4.8 per cent of the total school aged population) and controlled integrated schools (1.9 per cent of the total school aged population) and the distribution of these enrolments by religious affiliation. For the 2010/11 school year 47 per cent of primary students at controlled integrated schools came from a Protestant background with 26 per cent from a Catholic background. At the post-primary level, the disparities are even greater. Of the 2,703 pupils enrolled in controlled integrated schools 66 per cent come from a Protestant background and only 16 per cent come from the Catholic tradition. These figures indicate that enrolments at controlled integrated schools fall far short of the minimum requirement of 30 per cent enrolment of the relevant minority tradition, especially in the post-primary sector.

Table 6.2. Primary and post-primary school enrolments in controlled integrated and grant maintained integrated schools (%), 2010

	Primary			Post-Primary		
	Controlled integrated	Grant maintained	All	Controlled integrated	Grant maintained	All
Protestants	47.3	34.0	39.0	66.1	42.2	47.5
Catholics	26.5	43.1	36.9	16.7	42.5	36.8
Other	26.2	22.9	24.1	17.2	15.3	15.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(3,144)	(5,258)	(8,402)	(2,703)	(9,430)	(12,133)

Note: 'Other' religion refers to those who stated 'no religion', 'other religion' or 'other Christian'.

Source: Calculated by author from data collected from Department of Education Statistics 2011 (Department of Education 2011).

The data in Table 6.2 suggest that there are large imbalances in enrolments from the two main traditions within controlled integrated schools. While official policy may

require schools to meet the minimum enrolment balance, it is clear that this condition has not been met. Moreover, it remains far from clear that the government's claim that 'integrated schools give equal recognition to and promote equal expression of the two main traditions' (OFMDFM 2010: 16) is being met in schools in which there is a large imbalance between Catholics and Protestants.

These findings have important implications for the practical application of intergroup contact theory in such settings. This is because, as the results indicate, controlled integrated schools fail to meet at least one of the conditions for positive intergroup contact, namely the equal status of both groups within the contact situation. Coupled with the lack of a unified definition and aim for integration within schools, the ability of such schools to provide a different kind of education for children in Northern Ireland can be called in to question. Without uniformity the implementation of an ethos of integration may differ greatly depending on the individual nature of the school.

Integrated education and community relations

Despite the concerns raised above, an increase in the number of integrated schools is generally regarded as a sign of an improvement in relations between the two communities. Indeed, integrated education is generally regarded as an important driver of positive social change (Hughes and Donnelly 2003). Within Northern Ireland, a number of important studies have explored various facets of integrated education. Irwin (1991) produced the first major study of the integrated sector that examined the impact of integrated education on the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils. The study found an increase in the number and duration of inter-community friendships (that is friendships between pupils from the Protestant and Catholic community) amongst current and past pupils, suggesting that attendance at an integrated school influenced decisions made later in life. Similar findings were demonstrated in a study of integrated and separate-religion secondary schools (McClenahan et al. 1996).

In another study comparing pupils from post primary integrated and segregated schools, Stringer et al. (2000) established a strong relationship between the type of school a pupil attended and their attitudes towards the division of communities in

Northern Ireland. Pupils who had attended an integrated school were more in favour of societal integration, including mixed marriages, and more opposed to segregation than their segregated counterparts were. In addition to this, school children who attended an integrated school reported having more intergroup contacts outside of the school environment than those who attended a segregated school. The study made causal claims, arguing that that integrated schools promoted intergroup contact which then led to a change in attitudes. In line with this, research conducted by the International Conflict Research Institute found that Northern Ireland Young Life and Times survey respondents who had either attended planned integrated schools or participated in cross-community projects were significantly more likely than their counterparts who did not have these opportunities to favour mixed neighbourhoods, workplaces and schools (Schubotz and Robinson 2006).

More recently, research has sought to investigate the impact of integrated education on political outlooks. Using time-series data from the NILT survey (from 1998 to 2003) and data from the 1998 and 2003 Northern Ireland Election survey, Hayes et al. (2007) addressed the question of whether attendance at an integrated school has a significant effect on the political outlooks of Protestants and Catholics. They measured political outlooks by combining indicators within the survey that gauged respondents' political and national identity preferences as well as their attitudes towards the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. While they found that integrated education was important in shaping identities (Hayes et al. 2007: 471), this was in part contingent on the type of school that respondents attended. Here they identified two types of schools: 'formally' and 'informally' integrated schools. Formally integrated schools refer to those schools with a roughly equal numerical balance of the two main traditions. An informally integrated school refers to those schools that have undertaken the transformation process to integrated status. They also noted that the impact of contact

was dependent on the nature of the contact situation as well as the numerical composition and status positions within the school (Hayes et al. 2007: 476).[124]

The findings from the study revealed that Protestant pupils who attended an integrated school (whether formally or informally integrated) were less likely to follow traditional identity patterns (namely to identify as British and unionist) and to identify instead on more neutral grounds (namely as Northern Irish). Moreover, those who had attended an integrated school were less likely to support the constitutional link with Britain than those who received a segregated education (Hayes et al. 2007: 473). Significantly, however, almost no Protestants within the integrated sector supported a united Ireland as their constitutional position. Instead, a number of respondents chose to remain undecided.

Conversely, for Catholic pupils the findings of the study suggested that attendance at an informally integrated school when compared to a segregated school was the significant factor in breaking the traditional mould. Catholics who attended an informally integrated school were significantly less likely to opt for both an Irish and a nationalist identity, preferring instead to identify as Northern Irish. However, unlike their Protestant counterparts, Catholic pupils who had attended an informally integrated school were more likely to cross the divide on the constitutional issue and favour maintaining the union with Britain. The suggestion here was that the apparent willingness for Catholic pupils to cross the traditional divide can be explained by the

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[124] While the terms 'formally integrated' and 'informally integrated' or 'mixed' refer to different types of integrated schools, it should be noted that there are limitations in using this terminology as it implies that there are significant demographic differences within the different types of schools. As I have demonstrated, however, this is often not the case. Indeed, I found large imbalances in enrolments from the two main traditions within 'formally' integrated schools. Acknowledging the ambiguity surrounding these terms (which I discuss in detail later in the chapter), I will use these terms as it is commonplace within both the academic literature and among policy practitioners to refer to these schools in this way, and these terms have also been incorporated into the measures for integrated education within the NISA and NILT surveys.

group status position of Catholics within informally integrated schools (Hayes et al. 2007).

These are important findings, since they suggest that the type of contact that takes place can make a significant difference to the social outcomes that such contact is likely to engender. As demonstrated earlier, the informally integrated sector consists of those schools transforming to integrated status, and up to this point all of these schools have come from the Protestant tradition. There is a large numerical imbalance in these schools, with those from the Catholic tradition decidedly in the minority. Hayes et al. (2007: 464, 474) argue that this minority position influences Catholics' perceived status position and thus their experience of intergroup contact. Catholics in this situation are more likely to adopt the political outlook of the majority group. This suggests that pupils' contact experiences may greatly differ depending on whether they constitute the majority or minority group within the school. These findings have important implications, since they bear on the effectiveness of integrated schools in bringing about the societal change through intergroup contact.

While a substantial body of research has probed the impact of integrated education on attitudes towards and perceptions of the out-group, as well as the relationship between intergroup contact within the school environment and friendship patterns, the relationship between intergroup contact within the school environment and national identity patterns has received more limited attention. The lack of inquiry in this area is a significant omission from research into the effects of contact initiatives in divided societies. As noted in Hayes et al. (2007), it is competing claims over territory expressed through identity labels that form a very significant factor in dividing the two communities within Northern Ireland. Thus, self-identification as either 'British' or 'Irish' has strong resonance with the majority of people in Northern Ireland.

The only study to investigate whether a relationship exists (between varying levels of integration and national and political identities) is that conducted by Hayes et al. (2007). Their findings are important since they suggest that individuals who attended an integrated school were less sectarian in their political outlooks. However, their

findings also suggested that the type of contact, and specifically the numerical balance of the school, was important in predicting respondents' political outlooks.

In the following section, I continue this line of enquiry by examining the profiles of students who attended either a mixed or formally integrated school in Northern Ireland. Using NISA and NILT survey data, I analyse and compare the socio-economic profiles of students who attended integrated and separate-religion schools. I then explore the relationship between different levels of intergroup contact within schools and the national identity preferences of pupils through bivariate and multivariate analyses.

Identity and intergroup contact in schools

There has been some suggestion that the majority of pupils who attend integrated schools come from middle class homes. If this is the case, then it could be expected that students who attend mixed or integrated schools will already be predisposed to more liberal values and ideas expressed within the family home. They may also have had more opportunity for travel and thus more opportunity to meet people from a range of backgrounds. To test whether those who attend integrated schools are indeed more likely to come from a middle class background, I examine a number of important socio-economic indicators and cross these with the type of school respondents attended. Table 6.3 examines the socio-economic profiles of those respondents who attended either an integrated or separate-religion school between 1989 and 1995. From 1998 onwards the NILT survey disaggregated integrated into 'formally integrated' and 'mixed'. [125] Therefore Table 6.4 examines the social profiles of those respondents who attended either a formally integrated, mixed or separate religion school between 1998 and 2010.

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[125] See Appendix 2 Table 2D and Table 2E for specific wording of questions in the NISA and NILT surveys.

Table 6.3. Socio-economic characteristics by school type, Northern Ireland, 1989–1995

	Protestants		Catholics		
	Integrated	*Separate-religion*	*Integrated*	*Separate-religion*	*Pop mean*
Age (mean years)	48.7	50.7	47.5	44.7	48.2
Gender (female) (%)	59	57	59	59	58
Tertiary degree (%)	4*	7	5	4	6
Employed (%)	49	46	42	43	45
Non manual (%)	55	53	49*	44	50

* Significantly different from integrated at the p<.05 level.

Source: NISA surveys 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995

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Analysis of the results in Table 6.3 only partially support the claim that integrated education primarily attracts those from a middle class background. There appears to be little difference in the social profiles of Catholics and Protestants who attended either an integrated or separate-religion school. Indeed, there were no significant differences found between the two sectors with regards to employment status or occupation.

Table 6.4. Socio-economic characteristics by school type, Northern Ireland, 2005–2010

	Protestants			Catholics			
	Formally integrated	Fairly mixed	Separate-religion	Formally integrated	Fairly mixed	Separate-religion	Pop mean
Age (mean years)	40.5**	49.2	52.1	38.3**	47.1	47.0	49.5
Gender (female)(%)	66*	59aa	57	67*	60	59	58
Tertiary degree (%)	8	16aa	12	17	12	14	13
Employed (%)	46	50aa	45	46	47	46	46
Non manual (%)	61	59aa	53	51	49	46	51

aa Significantly different from separate-religion at the p<.01 level.
* Significantly different from separate-religion at the p<.05 level.
** Significantly different from separate-religion at the p<.01 level.

Source: NILT surveys 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010

Analysis of Table 6.4 reveals few statistically significant differences in socio-economic characteristics between those who attended formally integrated schools and those who attended separate-religion schools. For Catholics, there does not appear to be much of a difference in the social profiles of those who attended an integrated school compared to their counterparts who attended separate-religion schools. This is not a surprising finding given the tendency for more Catholics (who have to date been in the demographic minority) than Protestants to attend a school with a Protestant majority. However, those who attended a formally integrated school are more likely to be female and hold a tertiary level degree. Among Protestants, however, the data indicate that those who attended an integrated school were more likely to go on to hold tertiary level degrees and to be employed in white-collar jobs. And the social profiles of Protestant respondents who stated to have attended a mixed school differ significantly with those that reported having attended a separate-religion school. These results suggest that, among Protestants at least, socio-economic position does matter. This is not a particularly surprising finding given that many Protestants elite grammar schools in Northern Ireland are, at least officially, of mixed status. Given these findings, it is important to control for the potential influence of these variables on identity preferences in the main analyses to come.

Accordingly, I examine the relationship between different levels of intergroup contact within schools and the national identity preferences of pupils, utilizing survey data from the NISA and NILT surveys over a 22 year period. This analysis explores whether there are differences in the national identity preferences between Catholic or Protestant respondents who attended an integrated school against those who attended a segregated school. Only individuals who state that they come from either a Catholic or Protestant background are included in the analysis. The central hypothesis is that individuals who attended an integrated school (and thus experienced intergroup contact within school) will be more likely to hold a cross-community identity than individuals who attended a state controlled or Catholic maintained school (and thus having limited or no intergroup contact within school).

This hypothesis is first tested using a series of bivariate analyses. The analysis compares national identity preferences of Protestants and Catholics who attended either an integrated or a segregated school at two points in time. I establish the overall strength of any relationship between type of school attended and through chi-square tests. The second part of the analysis involves four logistic regression models that estimate the degree to which there are differences between the type of school attended and preference for the Northern Irish identity holding a range of important socio-economic and socio-demographic variables constant. Here I compare differences between Catholics and Protestants.

Turning first to the bivariate analysis, Table 6.5 presents the breakdown in school type by national identity among self-identified Catholics and Protestants at two points in time—1995 and 2010. The results show only partial support for a relationship between integrated education and particular identity choices. Focusing first on Protestant respondents, the results suggest that in 1995 patterns of national identity were relatively stable and did not vary according to school attended. Protestants who attended a segregated school were just as likely to identify as Northern Irish as those who claimed to have attended an integrated school. However, a different picture emerges in the NILT 2010 survey. Here, less than 60 per cent of Protestants who stated that they attended either a mixed or formally integrated school identified as British. The most significant differences, however, are seen among those who identified as Northern Irish. In 2010, those who attended either a formally integrated or mixed school were over three times more likely to identify as Northern Irish than equivalent respondents in the 1995 survey. Moreover, 25 per cent of students at separate-religion schools identified as Northern Irish compared to 41 per cent at mixed schools. This is a significant difference, as indicated by the t-test results. More than one in three Protestants who attended a formally integrated school also identified as Northern Irish. Almost no Protestants at either a mixed, formally integrated or segregated school identified with the out-group Irish national identity.

Table 6.5. National identity by school type and religious denomination (%), 1995 and 2010

	Protestants							Catholics						
	1995			2010				1995			2010			
	Mixed	Separate-religion	All	Formally integrated	Mixed	Separate-religion	All	Mixed	Separate-religion	All	Formally integrated	Mixed	Separate-religion	All
British	67	67	67	58	56	63	62	18**	11	12	6	12	7	8
Ulster	13	14	14	0	3	7	6	3	1	1	0	2	0	1
Nth	12	13	13	37	41**	25	27	19	21	21	25	25	25	25
Irish	6	4	4	5	0	4	3	57	66	65	62	55	59	59
Other	1	2	2	0	0	2	1	0*	3	1	6	5	8	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(N)	(112)	(596)	(708)	(19)	(59)	(436)	(514)	(77)	(460)	(537)	(16)	(40)	(379)	(435)
	(Chi square 2.052, 4 df, p>.05)			(Chi square 11.652, 8 df, p>.05)				(Chi square 9.004, 4 df, p>.05)			(Chi square 4.167, 8 df, p>.05).			

* Significantly different from separate-religion at the p<.05 level. ** Significantly different from separate-religion at the p<.01 level.

Source: NISA and NILT surveys, pooled file, 1989-2010.

A different picture emerges when we analyse the effects of school type on national identity among Catholic respondents. Catholics were more likely to identify as Northern Irish than Protestants in 1995 (although this preference was not influenced by the type of school attended). And, unlike Protestants, Catholics who attended a mixed school were more inclined to identify with the out-group identity, in this case the British identity. There was a decline in the number of pupils who attended a mixed school identifying as Irish. This difference was found to be statistically significant when comparing attendance at mixed and separate-religion schools in 1995.

The multivariate analyses displayed in Table. 6.6 highlight the relationship between attendance at an integrated school and national identity preferences, holding a range of socio-economic variables constant. Here I present four logistic regression models. Two of these represent responses to the surveys conducted before the devolution of powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1999. The other two analyses are models representing surveys conducted in the 10 years since devolution. In each model I present the logistic coefficients, the standard errors (in parentheses), and the exponent (B) scores. The third column of each model represents the exponent (B) which predicts the odds of identifying as Northern Irish as opposed to British (for Protestants) or Irish (for Catholics) when a particular variable is considered, holding other important variables constant. For every unit increase in an independent variable the odds of identifying as Northern Irish either decrease or increase.

The models support the finding of the bivariate analysis presented in Table 6.5 that shows that a shift in national identity preferences has occurred over time. After a range of socio-economic indicators are controlled for in the regression models, the likelihood of Protestants who attended an integrated school identifying as Northern Irish has increased over time. Since devolution, Protestants who attended an integrated school were almost 30 per cent more likely to identify as Northern Irish than their segregated counterparts.

Table 6.6. The relationship between school type and national identity, 1989-2010

	Protestant						Catholic					
	Pre-devolution			Post-devolution			Pre-devolution			Post-devolution		
Socio-demographic controls												
Gender (female)	-.217	(.145)	.805	.064	(.087)	1.066	.205	(.143)	1.228	.453	(.099)	1.574**
Age	-.008	(.005)	.992	-.009	(.003)	.991**	.003	(.004)	1.003	.007	(.003)	1.007*
Labour-force active	.185	(.167)	1.203	.065	(.102)	1.068	.438	(.155)	1.550**	.368	(.113)	1.445**
Occupation (non-manual)	.166	(.164)	1.181	-.215	(.216)	.806	-.020	(.163)	.980	-.219	(.250)	.803
Church attendance	.010	(.162)	1.010	.046	(.093)	1.047	-.077	(.264)	.926	.301	(.120)	1.352*
Marital status (married)	-.312	(.148)	.732*	-.049	(.089)	.952	.134	(.140)	1.144	.261	(.098)	1.298**
Education												
(Tertiary)	.773	(.203)	2.167**	.781	(.120)	2.184**	.407	(.227)	1.503	-.040	(.135)	.961
(Secondary)	-.056	(.181)	.945	.331	(.114)	1.393**	.090	(.174)	1.095	.054	(.126)	1.056
(No qual)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
School Type												
(Formally integrated)				.101	(.274)	1.106				.191	(.286)	1.210
(Mixed)	.200	(.169)	1.222	.245	(.130)	1.277*	.329	(.176)	1.390*	.483	(.155)	1.622**
(Segregated)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Constant	-1.323	(.354)	.266**	-.758	(.258)	.468**	-1.648	(.297)	.192**	-1.859	(.272)	.156**
Nagelkerke R square	.050			.049			.030			.031		
(N)	(1625)			(2777)			(1165)			(2342)		

*p<.05 **p<.01. -- Omitted category of comparison

Notes: In each model, column one represents the logistic coefficients; column two represents the standard errors (in parentheses); and column three represents the Exponent B. Dichotomous dependent variable for Protestants is operationalised as 1=Northern Irish 0=British; for Catholics 1=Northern Irish 0= Irish. *Source*: NISA and NILT surveys pooled file, 1989–2010.

Support for a shift in national identity patterns over time among Catholics is also evident with those attending a mixed school over 60 per cent more likely to identify as Northern Irish. The multivariate analyses reveal that attendance at mixed schools, rather than at formally integrated schools, is most strongly associated with the formation of less divisive identities.

The results from the multivariate analysis support the hypothesis that individuals who attended an integrated school (and thus experienced intergroup contact within school) are more likely to identify with the cross-community identity (the Northern Irish identity) than individuals who attended a segregated school; this is especially true of Catholic respondents. However, both the bivariate and multivariate analyses reveal that attendance at a formally integrated school is not a significant predictor of moderation in identity.

Explaining identity in the education sector

Perhaps surprisingly, the overall results of the data do not suggest a strong relationship between attending a formally integrated school and a moderation in national identity preferences. It is surprising because the integrated education sector is, at least theoretically, an environment best suited to provide the conditions necessary for positive intergroup contact to occur. That is, the school classroom provides a safe and supportive environment in which individuals from different community backgrounds can come together to learn and play cooperatively. Moreover, schools provide an important environment in which friendships may be formed. There are several potential explanations for the weakness of the relationship between school integration and moderations in national identity.

From a practical perspective, one explanation for the weakness of the results may be the nature of the indicators used in the survey to measure the two types of integrated schools. For example, the indicators are not able to ascertain how respondents evaluated the numerical balance of the school they attended. And they cannot indicate whether

this evaluation fits accurately with the respondents' ideas of what constitutes a 'formally integrated' as compared to a 'fairly mixed' school.

This point is highlighted by comparing response rates from the NILT data with government statistics from the Department of Education on enrolment numbers in integrated schools. By doing so we can assess how accurate respondents were in their perceptions of the type of school that they attended. As demonstrated earlier, controlled integrated schools—schools that have transformed to official integrated status and contain large numerical imbalances between the two main religions—only account for 1.9 per cent of all schools in Northern Ireland. Grant maintained integrated schools, referring to those schools that are planned integrated, account for 4.8 per cent of all schools. Comparison of these with responses to the question 'Was this a formally integrated school or was it a school that was just fairly mixed?' (emphasis in original) from the 2010 NILT survey suggests that perceptions of what numerically constitutes as integrated school may differ. Table 6.7 shows the proportion of Northern Ireland adults who reported that they attended either a formally integrated, fairly mixed or segregated school. As we can see, 3.7 per cent of respondents claim to have attended a 'formally integrated' school while 10.4 per cent claim to have attended a 'fairly mixed' school.

Table 6.7. School type by religious denomination (%)

	Protestant	Catholic	Total
Formally integrated	3.7	3.7	3.7
Fairly mixed	11.4	9.2	10.4
Separate-religion	84.9	87.2	85.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(516)	(436)	(952)

Source: NILT survey 2010.

This disparity between survey response rates and the actual number of controlled and grant maintained integrated schools suggests that we cannot assume that respondents equate 'fairly mixed' with transformed controlled integrated schools and 'formally integrated' with grant maintained integrated schools. It could be that respondents feel more comfortable with stating that their school was just 'fairly mixed' because they were unaware of the exact numerical balance within the school. Furthermore, 'fairly mixed' could be literally interpreted as pertaining to a school with a 'fair mix' of Catholics and Protestants, which does not suggest that the school had a large numerical imbalance between the two main traditions. Because of this ambiguity, it is not possible to use these measures with confidence in analysing differences between the two types of integrated schools. Moreover, the very small number (N) in the individual surveys (for example in 2010 N=35) for those respondents claiming to have attended a 'formally integrated' school produces very high standard errors and may explain the lack of statistically significant results. These measures must therefore be analysed with these qualifications in mind.

A second explanation is revealed through a closer inspection of the nature of integrated schools in Northern Ireland. Qualitative studies suggest that an integrated ethos may be undermined by a lack of uniformity in implementing integration (if at all) within this sector (see Montgomery et al. 2003). Unfortunately it is not possible to identify the processes involved within integrated schools that may influence a person's identity using survey measures. However, while the survey data is unable to capture the types of methods used to promote integration within schools, qualitative accounts from teachers at integrated schools indicate that a variety of approaches are being used to promote integration between pupils from the two main traditions. Here I draw on previous research (Johnson 2001; Hughes and Donnelly 2006; Montgomery et al. 2003) that has sought to understand the practice of integration through interviews with teachers and principals of integrated schools.

One important finding in all three of these studies was the very different approaches to integration found within the integrated sector. These differences were found between planned integrated schools and transforming schools where the unequal

enrolment numbers between the two traditions is most apparent. For the transforming schools, the study conducted by Johnson (2001) found that the particular history behind the decision to undergo transformation as well as the area in which the school was located influenced how smooth the transformation proceeded. Issues relating to the changeover from a separate-religion to an integrated administration could stall the transition and, in many of the schools evaluated, staff cohesion was described as a 'work in progress'. Hughes and Donnelly (2006) also raise this issue, arguing that the process of transformation was often met with resistance from a small group of parents and teachers who favoured retaining the status quo.

A qualitative study carried out by Montgomery et al. (2003) which sought to investigate how integration was implemented within integrated schools, had similar findings. It found no unified model of integration across the integrated sector and, as a consequence, 'integration' was implemented to varying degrees within schools. The study found three broad models used: passive—do nothing because it will happen naturally; reactive—do something if the need arises; and pro-active—after consultation with staff, agree on a policy and establish appropriate structures for promoting integration within the school (Montgomery et al. 2003: 31). Geographical location and the demographic makeup of schools were also significant in explaining different approaches to integration. For example, the study found that transforming schools located in highly segregated areas tended to play down certain themes related to integration, especially when this coincided with a larger imbalance of pupils from the two main traditions.

These qualitative accounts suggest that the integrated education sector may still have a way to go before an 'integrated' ethos becomes the accepted norm and all the conditions for positive intergroup contact can be met. However, given the current policy focus on 'sharing' across all schools (as well as the apparent preference for the transformation route to integration over the creation of planned integrated schools), it may be the case that an equal balance of Catholic and Protestant students within integrated schools is taken out of the current definition of what constitutes an 'integrated' school as stated by the Department of Education. Indeed as the findings of a

recent report commissioned by the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) conclude, 'for policy implementation to be effective a much clearer distinction between 'integrated', 'mixed', and 'shared' schooling needs to be drawn' (Hansson et al. 2013: 66-67).

Adding to these concerns is the question of the extent to which government will continue to support the creation of more integrated schools. For example, in interviews with politicians on a range of community relation issues, Foley and Robinson (2004: 21) found a degree of scepticism over what role integrated schools could play within a society which contained two distinct religious traditions. For example, the issue of the potential threat to community culture that integrated education may pose was raised in an interview with a SDLP MLA. With regards to the protection of religious instruction within schools, the MLA stated that there needed to be 'a much greater debate around the whole idea of integrated education' (Foley and Robinson 2004: 21). Scepticism over the utility of integrated schools was also noted by UUP leader David Trimble who, in a debate on community relations policy, expressed doubts that the integrated education sector should continue to be supported by the state when the education system is already characterised by fragmentation (Foley and Robinson 2004: 21).

It is unlikely that the integrated sector will continue to flourish if it is not met with the necessary institutional backing. As Oberschall and Kendall-Palmer (2005) argue, in the absence of institutional support at the political level, greater social integration is not likely to occur. For example, parents not only want quality education for their children, but also an environment in which their children are treated equally, are free from peer harassment and are taught from a curriculum that is unbiased towards their group. Oberschall and Kendall-Palmer (2005: 87) contend that as long as these needs can be met within separate-religion schools, parents are most likely to favour such schooling even if they are predisposed to the idea of integrated education.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined what types of people attend integrated schools. More specifically, I looked into whether those who have attended integrated or mixed schools are more likely to hold more moderate identities than those who have

experienced separate-religion education. Given that the Agreement contains a specific pledge 'to facilitate and encourage integrated education' for the creation of 'a culture of tolerance at every level of society' (NIO 1998), and support for integration has been evident in opinion poll surveys that find that the majority of the people of Northern Ireland favour more integration in the education sector and the establishment of more integrated schools, this is a significant line of inquiry.

The findings from the data analysis do suggest a moderate relationship between attending an integrated school (that is a mixed school) and identifying as Northern Irish for both Catholics and Protestants. And this relationship exists despite the large imbalances of pupils from the two main traditions present within the integrated schools. This suggests that it may be the perception of mixing, rather than the actual balance of Protestant/Catholic students that is important.

The extent to which integrated schools can make a difference to broader community relations is limited by a number of factors. First, the integrated sector represents just 6 per cent of all schools in Northern Ireland. And while the integrative movement gained momentum throughout the 1980s and 1990s, recent government policy suggests that the focus has shifted from promoting integrated schools per se towards promoting cooperation and contact between separate-religion schools. This means that the future of the integrated sector is uncertain.

The research in this chapter was also limited by the small number of cases as well as the ambiguity surrounding the definition of the measures 'fairly mixed' and 'formally integrated' used in the surveys. Future research would benefit from the development of measures which ask respondents to specify the type of school they attended. Of course, given the nature of this line of inquiry, the measures are only able to capture perceptions of past, rather than present, intergroup contact. As a consequence of this, whatever measures are used will always be limited in their explanatory ability because it is not possible to discern whether past intergroup contact has been compromised, influenced or reinforced by subsequent life experiences.

The following chapter explores the extent of cross-community contact that occurs within social networks in Northern Ireland. These networks consist of friends, family or more intimate partnerships.

Chapter 7. Social networks and identity

The separation of communities in Northern Ireland persists not only within education and housing but also among relationships between individuals and groups of people. That is, Catholics and Protestants mostly mix socially with members from their own community and typically marry within their own community. This social separation between Catholics and Protestants intensified during the contemporary conflict because people who mixed across the traditional divide were often the subject of intimidation and violence (Barritt and Carter 1972; Harris 1972; Darby 1986; Whyte 1990; Lloyd and Robinson 2011). Consequently, fear of intimidation and the desire for security led the majority of people to socialize exclusively within their own communities.

A substantial period of time has now passed since the signing of the 1998 Agreement that officially brought the contemporary conflict to an end and an even longer period of time has passed since government policy first sought to bridge the divide between communities by promoting an agenda aimed at increasing the opportunities for cross-community contact between members of the Catholic and Protestant communities. Recently, a number of studies have found that cross-community friendships and more intimate forms of relations exist and are continuing to emerge and that these relationships have had positive effects on attitudes towards a range of social and political issues (Paolini et al. 2004; Hewstone et al. 2006; Hewstone et al. 2008). This chapter builds on this research by exploring and comparing three arenas for social mixing: within friendship networks, within families, and as a consequence of marriage ties. It examines the manner in which these agents of socialization may influence identity patterns among Catholics and Protestants. This is the first study to systematically examine and compare these types of social networks and how they relate to individual national identity preferences.

The chapter is organised into five sections. The first outlines the high levels of social separation that exist in these three arenas within Northern Ireland. The second

draws on the broad theoretical literature on social networks to distinguish between three types of networks: homogenous social networks pertaining to closed friendship and family ties, endogamous social networks in the case of marriage within one's own community, and mixed social networks corresponding to the formation of friendship, kinship and marriage ties across the traditional divide. The third section explores the nature of friendship networks in Northern Ireland. I examine whether individuals with certain socio-economic characteristics are more likely or not to have mixed friendship networks. I then turn to an investigation of the relationship between the types of friendship networks respondents' possess and their national identity preferences. The fourth section examines intermarriage in Northern Ireland to determine whether particular socio-economic factors are associated with marrying outside of one's group. Then through bivariate and multivariate analyses the relationships between mixed marriages, endogamous marriages and respondents' national identity preferences are established. In the fifth and final section these techniques are applied to kinship networks.

Social networks in Northern Ireland

The social separation of communities in Northern Ireland is maintained and reproduced through the persistence of homogenous social networks. More often than not, members of the Catholic and Protestant communities have socially separate circles of friends and family that are drawn from within their respective communities. There is also a high degree of intra-community marriage. It is in these aspects of social relations that the divide between the two main communities is most striking. As shown in Figure 7.1, in 1989, 68 per cent of Catholics and Protestants had homogenous friendship networks, 86 per cent had homogenous kinship ties, and 94 per cent of those who were married stated that their partner was from the same religion. Polynomial trend-lines that correct for missing survey years indicate that homogeneity in friendship and family networks, as well as within marriage ties, has remained relatively stable over time.

Figure 7.1. Trends in homogenous social networks (%), 1989–2010
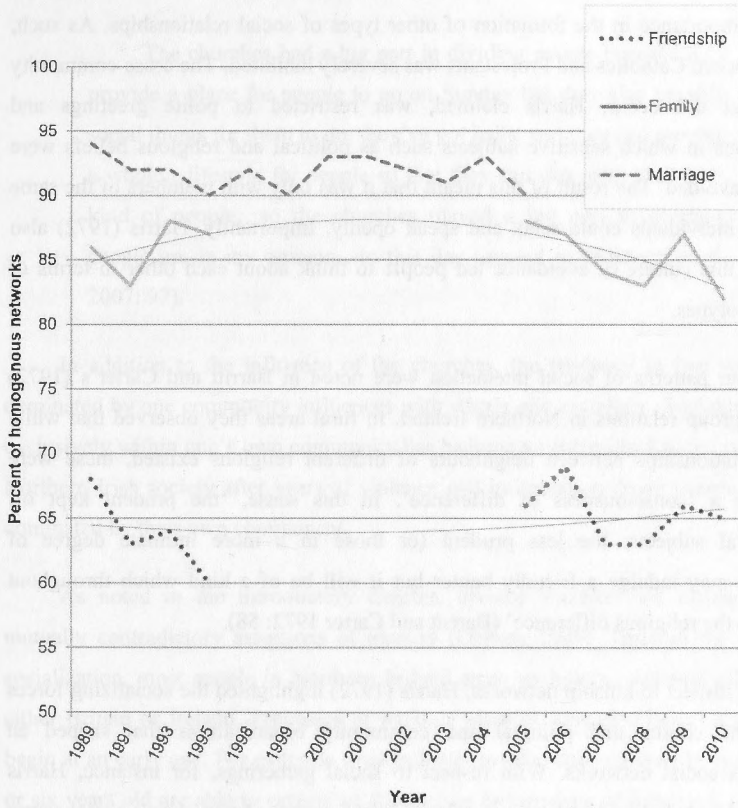
Notes: Polynomial trend lines are applied to correct for missing survey years for friendship networks and family ties.

Source: NISA and NILT surveys, pooled file, 1989–2010.

Earlier studies have documented the existence of social separation in Northern Ireland. For example, a seminal study of two rural areas in Northern Ireland found that the separation of Catholics and Protestant networks was most marked in the case of kinship and was separated into two distinct systems 'maintained by the almost universal

refusal to recognise kinship across the division' (Harris 1972: 143). This separation was found to have consequences for social engagement as kinship was considered to be of particular importance in the formation of other types of social relationships. As such, contact between Catholics and Protestants was severely inhibited. The cross-community contact that did occur, Harris claimed, was restricted to polite greetings and conversations in which sensitive subjects such as political and religious beliefs were studiously avoided. The result of this meant that it was only with members of the same 'side' that individuals could relax and speak openly. Importantly, Harris (1972) also found that this culture of avoidance led people to think about each other in terms of group stereotypes.

Similar patterns of social interaction were noted in Barritt and Carter's (1972) studies of group relations in Northern Ireland. In rural areas they observed that while friendly relationships between neighbours of different religions existed, these were marked by a 'consciousness of difference'. In this sense, 'the prudent kept off controversial subjects; the less prudent (or those in a more intimate degree of friendship) may indulge a friendly banter but it will be of a kind which throughout remembers the religious difference' (Barritt and Carter 1972: 58).

With respect to kinship networks, Harris (1972) highlighted the socializing forces of both the church and political and community organizations that shaped an individual's social networks. With respect to social gatherings, for instance, Harris found that the Catholic Church often performed the function of providing a social centre for members of the community. Membership in politically oriented groups such as the Orange Order has also provided important social networks. Women had their most important non-kin ties with other members of their churches with whom they were brought into contact through actual church services. Men were commonly also brought into contact with their fellow co-religionists through politically oriented groups (Harris 1972: 133).

The importance of the role of churches as socializing agents was also noted by Muldoon et al. (2007). In their qualitative analysis of religious and national identity in

Northern Ireland, churches were seen as generating and perpetuating religious segregation. In the words of one interviewee:

> The churches had a big part in dividing people because they provide a place for people to go on Sunday but they also provide social things for them to do, they've got halls, and they can provide a whole...lifestyle for people so that they can stay with their own kind of people...so the churches played a big part in dividing people up, in my opinion...to this day (quoted in Muldoon et al. 2007: 97).

In addition to the influence of the churches, the tendency to live within areas dominated by one community influences with whom one socializes. Socializing almost exclusively within one's own community has become an entrenched social norm across Northern Irish society after years of violence and intimidation drove people into areas dominated by their own community.

As noted in the introductory chapter, divided societies are characterised by mutually contradictory assertions of identity (Dryzek 2006). Through the process of socialization, most people in Northern Ireland grow up holding national allegiance to either Britain or Ireland. Processes of national identity formation have been found to begin at an early age. For example, studies have revealed that children as young as five or six years old are able to categorize themselves as members of a national group. This process of national enculturation generates a sense of personal affiliation and belonging which in turn impacts on how the child views and expresses attitudes towards members of other national groups (Tajfel et al. 1970; Barrett 2007).

These processes of identification and categorization occur within the social networks that an individual is raised in. As Kalmijn (1998: 400–401) notes, children are typically brought up with a sense of group identification. This may take the form of an awareness of a common history, or a sense of being different from others. How strongly younger generations identify themselves with the group depends to a great extent on the

homogeneity of the networks in which they are embedded. Within the context of Northern Ireland, the dual education system is regarded as entrenching division within society through restricting individual opportunity to form diverse social networks at an early age (see Dunn 1986; Fraser and Fitzduff 1986) as well as through providing Catholic and Protestant children with different versions of history and national belonging (Gallagher 2003, 2004a).

When adolescents live in neighbourhoods that are homogenous with respect to the social and cultural characteristics of their parents, they are more likely to develop a sense of belonging to that group. Within segregated neighbourhoods in Northern Ireland, understandings of the nation are visually demonstrated through the use of elaborate mural paintings, kerbstone paintings and flag flying. Through the use of symbolic markers of territory and commemorative mural paintings self-perpetuating understandings of national identity are reinforced through collective remembering (McAuley 2004: 542). In this sense, the individual's social framework—the neighbourhood—helps to entrench a sense of identity through a complex interaction between the materials available and the different versions of history visually and orally presented within the confines of the neighbourhood (McBride 2001: 13).

Comparisons between groups have also been found to occur at an early age. Connolly and Maginn (1999) show that some children, from the age of about three, are able to develop an understanding of the categories of the other through a perception of differences between the Protestant and Catholic communities. Although possibly not using the terms Protestant and Catholic, young children are able to apply negative characteristics to members of the other group. More recently, Connolly et al. (2002) found that by the age of six, 90 per cent of children surveyed were aware of the community divide in Northern Ireland and one-third of those surveyed were able to identify with one of the two main communities.[126] Moreover, according to Devine and

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[126] The researchers conducted a survey of a representative sample of 352 children aged 3–6 drawn from across Northern Ireland. The children were shown a range of objects and photographs representing common events and symbols associated with the Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern

Schubotz (2004), a survey of 16-year-olds in Northern Ireland found that the majority of participants (60 per cent) said that their national identity was important to them. If an individual lives in a segregated Protestant/Unionist neighbourhood, for example, attends a state controlled school, and has homogenous social networks based on the prevailing community background, then they are is likely to have been brought up with a particular understanding of history, community and identity that is congruent with the prevailing attitudes and beliefs of the wider Protestant/Unionist community.

Social network theory

There is an enormous diversity and intensity of social networks in societies across the world and these networks operate at many levels (for a review of the diversity of social networks studied in the social science literature see Scott 1988, 2000). They exist, for example, in organizations between colleagues, trade union members, voluntary or community organizations, traders and farmers. With the advent of online communications, they now also exist virtually through online social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Linkedin, and Twitter (see Lewis et al. 2008; Subrahmanyam et al. 2008). At the personal level, social networks exist between friends and families and in more intimate relations such as between marriage partners (see Laumann 1973; McPherson et al. 2001). It is this latter cluster of social networks that form the focus of this chapter.

'Homophily' is a term used to describe the extent to which people within a social network are similar across a range of characteristics. It derives from the idea that contact between similar people (measured by class, ethnicity or other socio-demographic indicators) occurs at a higher rate than among people who are dissimilar using these same measures.[127] Homophily influences the structure of a wider range of

Ireland. The children were asked to explain what they knew about the different events and symbols and their responses were then coded and statistically analysed (Connolly et al. 2002).

[127] For a detailed review of the literature see McPherson et al. 2001.

network ties including marriage, friendship, information transfer, work and other types of relationships. It limits people's social worlds and, as a result, their personal networks are homogeneous with regards to a range of social, demographic, behavioural and intrapersonal characteristics (McPherson et al. 2001). Thus, while homophily characterizes and structures network systems, homogeneity characterizes personal networks (McPherson et al. 2001: 429).

Homogeneous personal networks, include, but are not exclusive to, networks among friends, kin, and work colleagues (McPherson et al. 2001). For example, studies have found strong levels of homogeneity among different ethnic and religious groups with regards to bonds of marriage (Kalmijn 1998), close relations (Marsden 1987) and schoolmate friendships (Shrum et al. 1988). Marsden's (1987) study of social networks in the United States, in particular the nature of close relations between people, found that in a national sample only 8 per cent of adults with networks of two or more people claimed to 'discuss important matters' with a person of another ethnic group.

Why is homogeneity such an enduring feature of social networks within societies? For one thing, homogeneity in social networks is important for the survival of the group. Thus, the probability that members of groups hold equivalent beliefs tends to increase as the homogeneity or density of their social network increases (Bienenstock et al. 1990: 171). Conversely, heterogeneity is a measure of the diversity of a social network as it refers to the distribution of people among different groups (Blau 1977; Bienenstock et al. 1990). In Blau's (1977) seminal work, *Heterogeneity and Inequality,* he explains that heterogeneity fosters intergroup relations because it increases the chances for contact between members of different groups (Blau (1977: 90). In this way, the greater the levels of heterogeneity the greater the chances for social contact involving members of different groups.

This argument that heterogeneity fosters intergroup relations is similar to the basic premise advanced by contact theory (Allport 1954; Brown and Hewstone 2005; Pettigrew 1998). Recall that the fundamental premise of contact theory is that conflict and prejudice arise between groups where there is a lack of positive interaction and

information between groups and where there is a lack of opportunity for contact that would facilitate the acquisition of such information. Without significant opportunity for contact, it is argued, it becomes impossible for individuals to realize their similarities and to accept their differences. As such, intergroup contact has the potential to increase learning about the out-group (Pettigrew 1998) and recent studies have found that out-group contact can result in more diverse social networks (Dovidio et al. 2003). Accordingly, Blau's (1977) theory is concerned with opportunities for promoting social mixing defined as intergroup contact.

The fact that patterns of networks are so significantly affected by the relative size of groups in the pool of potential contact is one of the central insights of Blau's work. However, while Blau (1977) highlights opportunity for contact as fundamental for the formation of heterogeneous social networks, the structure of society may render it unlikely that contact between groups will occur on a frequent and positive basis. Within divided societies there are a number of factors that reinforce salient group distinctions and that may compromise the influence of heterogeneity of social relations. For example, the spatial segregation of groups limits the influence of heterogeneity because 'we are more likely to have contact with those who are closer to us in geographic location than those who are distant' (McPherson et al. 2001: 429). Previous research has found that the spatial allocation of housing and the degree to which it is segregated inversely correlates with intermarriage (Peach 1980). As one would expect, the opportunities for individuals from different groups to meet are small if homogenous groups live, work and socialize in different areas.

Analysis of social networks thus assumes a particular importance in the context of divided societies. This is because the social networks to which individuals belong have the capacity to influence a variety of political and social behaviours as they expose people to information and stimuli that they may not possess individually (Mcclurg 2003). Within the social science literature, there is much support for the contention that social networks act as important agents of socialization that influence a range of attitudes and behaviours of an individual (see for example Converse 1969; Lyons and Alexander 2000; Putnam 2000; Blais et al. 2004). For example, research has

emphasised the role of the family as an important agent of socialization and, in particular, the importance of the socio-economic status of the parents (Dawson and Prewitt 1969; Jennings and Niemi 1974) as well as parental civic engagement, political knowledge and political participation (Meirick and Wackman 2004; McIntosh et al. 2007).

With regard to political participation, voting is found to be strongly correlated between friends, family members and co-workers (Beck et al. 2002) as well as candidate preferences (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1991). Thus, if an individual's social networks are homogenous with respect to important socializing agents, such as family and friends, it can be expected that a range of social and political attitudes and behaviours will be significantly influenced by the prevailing values and attitudes of the group.

Similarly, if an individual's social networks are heterogeneous with respect to important socializing agents, it may be expected that the individual will not be as influenced by the views of one viewpoint over another. This is because mixed social networks may weaken the salience of group attitudes by allowing a range of different views to be heard. Recent studies have found that the attitudinal composition of an individual's social network can affect the strength of their attitudes. For example, in a controlled participant study, Visser and Mirabile (2004) found that individuals embedded in networks comprised of like-minded others were more resistant to attitude change than those with attitudinally-mixed social networks. This is because people who are surrounded by significant others who share a particular attitude may be socially rewarded for expressing views that reinforce this attitude, and may be socially sanctioned for expressing divergent views. By increasing heterogeneity, and thus by making intergroup relations more common, intragroup pressures that inhibit social interaction between groups may lessen and social mixing may become more acceptable and decrease the strength of divisive attitudes (Blau 1977: 81).

This is precisely what community relations initiatives in Northern Ireland have sought to achieve by increasing opportunities for members of the Catholic and

Protestant communities to come into contact with each other. Such opportunities may be found within the small but growing integrated education sector, within mixed residential areas, and at shared shopping and leisure facilities. While there is strong evidence to suggest that social networks often remain homogenous, data also reveal that a minority of Catholics and Protestants choose to form friendship, kinship and marriage ties with members of the traditional out-group community. While it is not possible, nor desirable, to force people to become friends or to form more intimate relations and family ties, greater opportunities for cross-community contact found in the areas mentioned above and a new era of peace in the province may signal increasing opportunities for, and social acceptance of, social mixing.

Analysing social networks in Northern Ireland

In the empirical analyses that follow, these mixed social networks are examined. In particular, the question is asked whether having a mixed social network influences the way in which people perceive of their national identity? That is, do individuals who cross the traditional boundary and come to form friendships and other intimate relations with members of the other main community identify differently than those whose social networks are firmly embedded within their own community? This question is considered using two pooled datasets—the NISA/NILT for the period 1989–2010 and the NILT for the period 1998–2005. These provide a number of relevant measures. For example, to establish the extent of out-group friendship, the NISA and NILT surveys ask, 'how many of your personal friends are the same religion as you?' The response categories include 'All/Most', 'Half', 'Less than half', 'None'. Since only 1 per cent of respondents indicate having no friends of the same religion, the measure is coded into a simple binary—those with all or most of their friends from the same religion (corresponding to homogenous friendship networks) and those with half or less than

half of their friends from the same religion (corresponding to mixed friendship networks).[128]

Before considering the survey results, it is important to discuss a number of difficulties in analysing social networks using survey data. First, as mentioned earlier, social networks vary in density and diversity. Thus, a social network of friends may consist of several close friends who an individual has known for a long time, has spent a considerable amount of time with, and has confided in on important and sensitive matters. It may also include a number of people who consider each other friends but who are not nearly as closely connected to one another. It can even include acquaintances known only to the individual because they are connected in some way to the wider friendship network. As such, the density of network ties varies from strong to weak, ranging from those with whom the individual is most close to, to those with whom the individual is familiar but only through common connection to other friends. Thus, the descriptor 'friend' is ambiguous, as the measurement of just who qualifies as a friend depends upon a variety of criteria employed by the respondent (Peach 1980).

A second caveat concerns the degree to which the characteristics of friends within a homogenous group are important outside of this particular group. For example, each of the members of this particular network may also have friends with whom the particular characteristics of another group to which they belong are not important. Thus, they may each have friendship networks that cut across ethnic, racial and gender lines linking these individuals together along some other set of shared characteristics. This makes it harder to assess the density or diversity of an individual's network. Similarly, in the case of kinship ties, in most instances it is fair to assume that members of our

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[128] Alternative coding was applied to see whether this made a difference to the analyses. For example, I coded each of these categories separately and found that the response rates for the category 'All/Most' and 'None' were too small to have any significant utility. I then grouped these two categories with 'Half' and 'Less than half' respectively which gave me a larger number of responses to work with, without significantly changing the results.

immediate family—parents and siblings—represent our closest kinship ties, while other family members such as aunts, uncles and cousins are ordinarily more removed. If this is the case we are more likely to share certain influential characteristics—such as socio-economic status—with our closest kin rather than with other kin who may have married into other socio-economic circles, may live overseas or have different occupational and educational levels. To this extent, we could say that kinship networks vary in levels of intensity and diversity according to the scope of analysis and available data. Yet we are unable to gauge these levels because the current measures do not distinguish between different types of kin.

Finally, the measures used in this study are not able to reflect the complexity of the networks under analysis. For example, the measures cannot tell us the exact number of out-group friends or family that a respondent has, nor about the frequency of the quality of those connections.[129] Moreover, there is reason to suppose that respondents may overstate their actual intergroup contact and degree of closeness to avoid the perception of prejudice by reporting 'some' friends of the out-group or even to associate having a personal friend with being friendly toward that group)—the so-called favourable perception bias (De Souza Briggs 2007: 272).

While these are significant limitations, the measures still hold considerable utility for the purposes of the current investigation. Using the same measures across successive surveys makes it possible to identify trends within the general population. These trends concern the degree to which people from both Catholic and Protestant communities claim to have mixed social networks. As I demonstrate, the measures under analysis reveal significant differences in both socio-economic characteristics as well as in identity preferences depending on whether a respondent belongs to homogenous or mixed networks. These results justify the use of such measures as well as their

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[129] A scale devised to measure friendship quality has been utilised in qualitative surveys in Northern Ireland. See Stringer et al. 2009.

continued use in further research, and they suggest that there is value in developing finer grained measures to obtain greater clarity on these effects.

Friendship networks

The occurrence and nature of mixed friendships has received a considerable amount of attention in the scholarly literature on the Northern Ireland conflict (see Paolini et al. 2004; Stringer et al. 2009; Tam et al. 2009; Tausch et al. 2011) Moreover, research concerning normative influences on contact (see De Tezanos-Pinto et al. 2010; Turner et al. 2008) reveals the importance of diverse social networks for improving attitudes through having greater numbers or proportions of cross-group friendships. It has also been shown that having friends who can be classified as belonging to the other main community has a range of positive effects for community relations and that friendship and other more intimate relations represent the most important type of intergroup contact for reducing prejudice and negative stereotypes about the out-group (Pettigrew 1997; Tropp and Pettigrew 2005; Pettigrew and Tropp 2006).

Mixed friendship networks are found to engender greater levels of trust among Catholics and Protestants and even to lead to forgiveness among those who have had direct exposure to violence (Hewstone et al. 2006). It has been suggested that knowing someone who has an out-group friend can also lead to more positive feelings towards the out-group. This is the so-called extended contact hypothesis (Wright et al 1997). Exploring this hypothesis, Paolini et al. (2004) found across two cross-sectional studies that extended contact among Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland was associated with more positive out-group attitudes and that it reduced intergroup anxiety and greater perceived out-group variability. Other research shows that having the opportunity to meet with members of the out-group in cross-community schemes increases the likelihood of having friends from other religious and community backgrounds (Schubotz and McCartan 2009). Thus, even weak ties between social groups may have the effect of linking different groups who would otherwise be insulated from one another (Granovetter 1973, 1982).

To date, however, there has been little investigation of the relationship between mixed friendship networks and national identity preferences in Northern Ireland. As shown in previous empirical chapters, having the opportunity for contact with neighbours and school peers is significantly related to less divisive forms of identification. We could expect, therefore, that having a diverse friendship network in which an individual comes into frequent and voluntary contact with those from a different community background would increase the likelihood of identifying with neutral Northern Irish identity. To begin, then, I first investigate what types of people are more likely to have diverse friendship networks. This helps to highlight in what sections of society more diverse social networks may be found. Furthermore, by identifying important socio-economic characteristics related to social mixing it is possible to control for the effect of these on national identity in the multivariate analyses to follow.

Socio-economic characteristics and friendship networks

Individuals with greater social mobility are more likely to have the opportunity to meet people from other backgrounds, ethnicities and nationalities through work, travel and more diverse networks. This is borne out by NILT survey data as shown in Table 7.1. For both Catholic and Protestant respondents, those with mixed friendship networks scored higher on only one measure related to increased social mobility. For example, those with mixed networks are more likely to be employed, suggesting that the workplace provides opportunities for cross-community contact leading to the formation of cross-community friendships. Somewhat surprisingly, however, there does not appear to be any significant difference with regards to higher levels of education and heterogeneity. While it might be expected that those who attend university are more likely to meet people from a different background than those who left school early, this does not appear to make a difference here.

Table 7.1. Socio-economic characteristics by friendship network, 1989–2010

	Protestants		Catholics		
	Homo-genous	Mixed	Homo-genous	Mixed	Pop mean
Age (mean years)	52.1	49.8**	45.4	47.8**	49.2
Employed (%)	46	53**	45	53**	48
Gender (female) (%)	56	58	59	60	57
Tertiary degree (%)	11	12	12	13	12
Non manual (%)	54	54	44	47	51

* Significantly different from homogenous at the p<.05 level.
** Significantly different from homogenous at the p<.01 level.

Source: NISA and NILT surveys pooled file, 1989–2010.

The results in Table 7.2 provide a time perspective on these relationships by linking friendship network types to national identity preferences at two points in time (1995 and 2010). For Protestants, the results reveal no significant difference in 1995 in the levels of majority British identity between individuals with homogenous and mixed friendship networks. They also show only slight gaps in identification with Ulster and Northern Irish categories. However, 15 years later, there is an increase in those with mixed friendship networks discarding traditional British identity in favour of Northern Irish identity by 17 per cent. While the proportion of respondents with homogenous friendship groups who identify as Northern Irish has increased, this remains significantly lower (by 9 per cent) when compared to those with mixed religion networks.

The relationship between friendship networks and national identity is much more pronounced among Catholic respondents. For example, those with mixed friendship networks were almost twice as likely to identify as Northern Irish than those with friendship networks consisting of co-religionists. Quite strikingly, the degree of

Catholic identity as Irish significantly decreases (by 25 percentage points in 1995 and 18 percentage points in 2010) the more out-group friends one has. Indeed, in 2010 only 48 per cent of Catholics with mixed friendship networks identified as Irish, while over one in three identified as Northern Irish. Unlike their Protestant counterparts, Catholic respondents with a mixed friendship network are more likely to identify as British. Two-tailed t-tests confirm the significance of these observations.

Table 7.2. Friendship network by national identity and religious denomination (%), 1995 and 2010

| | Protestant | | | | | | Catholic | | | | | |
| | 1995 | | | 2010 | | | 1995 | | | 2010 | | |
	Homo-genous	Mixed	All	Homo-genous	Mixed	All	Homo-genous	Mixed	All	Homo-genous	Mixed	All
British	69	63	67	65	56*	62	7	17**	12	5	11*	7
Ulster	16	10*	14	7	4	6	1	2	1	0	1	1
Nth Irish	11	16	13	24	33*	27	16	28**	21	19	35**	25
Irish	3	7*	4	2	5	3	75	50**	65	66	48**	59
Other	1	3	2	1	2	1	0	1	1	9	5	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(N)	(445)	(260)	(705)	(339)	(170)	(509)	(307)	(228)	(535)	(276)	(157)	(433)

(Chi-square 18.853, 4 df, p<.01) — Protestant 1995
(Chi-square 9.934, 4 df, p<.05) — Protestant 2010
(Chi square 36.707, 4 df, p<.01) — Catholic 1995
(Chi square 22.821, 4 df, p<.01) — Catholic 2010

*Significantly different from homogenous at the p<.05 level.

**Significantly different from homogeneous at the p<.01 level.

Source: NISA and NILT surveys pooled file, 1989-2010.

The multivariate analyses displayed in Table 7.3 largely confirm the bivariate findings. The third column of each model shown represents the exponent (B) highlighting the odds of identifying as Northern Irish as opposed to British (for Protestants) or Irish (for Catholics) when a particular variable is considered, net of all other predictor variables. After controlling for a range of relevant socio-demographic variables, the relationship between having mixed friendship networks and identifying as Northern Irish remains significant. This is most pronounced among Catholic respondents and the strength of the relationship has increased in the post-devolution period. While Catholic respondents with mixed friendship networks in the pre-devolution period were almost twice as likely to identity as Northern Irish as to identify as Irish, they are now almost three times more likely to do so. For Protestant respondents, the analyses reveal a weaker relationship which has increased only slightly over time. In the post-devolution period, Protestant respondents with a mixed friendship network are 37 per cent more likely to identify as Northern Irish than British.

Table 7.3. The relationship between friendship networks and national identity, 1989–2010

Socio-demographic controls	Protestants						Catholics					
	Pre-devolution			Post-devolution			Pre-devolution			Post-devolution		
Gender (female)	-.229	(.146)	.795	.060	(.087)	1.062	.196	(.144)	1.217	.435	(.102)	1.545**
Age	-.007	(.005)	.993	-.009	(.003)	.991**	.002	(.004)	1.002	.003	(.003)	1.003
Labour-force active	.168	(.168)	1.183	.061	(.103)	1.063	.328	(.158)	1.389*	.255	(.115)	1.290*
Occupation (non-manual)	.193	(.164)	1.213	-.199	(.217)	.819	-.008	(.164)	.992	-.117	(.257)	.889
Church attendance	.009	(.163)	1.009	.033	(.093)	1.034	-.102	(.267)	.903	.263	(.123)	1.301*
Marital status (married)	-.320	(.148)	.726*	-.031	(.090)	.970	.103	(.141)	1.108	.277	(.100)	1.319**
Education												
(Tertiary)	.784	(.204)	2.191**	.787	(.120)	2.198**	.365	(.229)	1.440	-.105	(.138)	.900
(Secondary)	-.036	(.180)	.965	.349	(.114)	1.417**	.083	(.175)	1.087	.015	(.129)	1.015
(No qual)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Friendship network												
(Mixed)	.296	(.143)	1.345*	.321	(.090)	1.378	.661	(.137)	1.937**	1.006	(.097)	2.735**
(Homogenous)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Constant	-1.425	(.357)	.240**	-.852	(.259)	.427**	-1.729	(.303)	.177**	-1.974	(.278)	.139**
Nagelkerke R square	.053			.054			.054			.091		
(N)	(1,619)			(2,675)			(1,162)			(2,304)		

*p<.05 **p<.01. -- Omitted category of comparison

Notes: In each model, column one represents the logistic coefficients; column two represents the standard errors (in parentheses); and column three represents the Exponent B. Dichotomous dependent variable for Protestants is operationalised as 1=Northern Irish 0=British; for Catholics 1=Northern Irish 0= Irish.

Source: NISA and NILT surveys pooled file, 1989-2010.

As the data show, a mixed friendship network is a strong predictor of Northern Irish identity. This is especially the case among Catholic respondents who were three times more likely to identify as such than their segregated counterparts. This relationship was not nearly as strong for Protestants suggesting that different processes are involved in the negotiation of identities within friendship networks for Catholics and Protestants. A number of explanations for this divergence are advanced.

First, as discussed in relation to integrated schools in chapter 5, the impact of contact may vary significantly according to the social status of different groups (see Tropp and Pettigrew 2005; see also Stephan and Stephan 1985; Mac Ginty and du Toit 2007). In other words, while members of one group may regard the contact situation as one of equal group status, it may appear as potentially threatening and unequal to those who regard themselves as being from a group with less social status. In support of this idea, Tropp and Pettigrew (2005) found that the effects of intergroup contact on reducing prejudice were greater among majority members and much weaker among members of lower status groups.

While it is not possible to ascertain the exact numerical make-up of friendship networks or the quality of interactions within them using existing data, there is research suggesting a higher degree of anxiety experienced by Protestants in intergroup contact situations (Craig and Cairns 1999; Mac Ginty and du Toit 2007; Hayes and McAllister 2009a). For example, in a survey of attitudes of university and higher education college students, Craig and Cairns (1999) found Protestant respondents to have higher levels of anxiety regarding intergroup situations and more negative views about the other community as a whole. Likewise, Mac Ginty and du Toit (2007: 26–27) find that the relative group status of Protestants has changed in post-Agreement Northern Ireland due to feelings of cultural insecurity and perceived advances made by the other major

cultural tradition.[130] And in a study using NISA and NILT survey data Hayes and McAllister (2009a) found that Protestants were less optimistic about the future of community relations. Importantly, these studies were carried out in the post-Agreement era during a period of heightened anxiety among the Protestant community over the implications of the Agreement which was seen as unfairly benefiting the Catholic/nationalist community (see Hayes et al. 2005; McAuley and Tonge 2007).[131]

In contrast, it could be that Catholics are more likely to have lower levels of anxiety in contact situations. Blau's (1977) seminal work on patterns of networks is particularly illuminating here. This suggests that patterns of networks are significantly affected by the relative size of groups in the pool of potential contacts such that members of the smaller group will have more out-group friends than members of the larger group. Historically, of course, the Catholic community has been the minority community in Northern Ireland (Darby 1986; Ruane and Todd 1996). For many Catholics then, the normalization of contact with members of the out-group (for example at work, within the neighbourhood and through social networks) may have had the effect of reducing anxiety in intergroup encounters.

Marriage ties

Marriage is the most intimate of social ties. Marriage choices are not only affected by the extent of group membership, but also by the distribution of populations according to social environments since this determines the options that individuals have for establishing social relations (Blau et al. 1982; Blau et al. 1984). In societies with two or more distinct groupings, high levels of endogamy suggest clear and strong group

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[130] Mac Ginty and du Toit (2007: 25) take cultural tradition to refer to either of the two main politico-religious (Catholic-nationalist-republican) and (Protestant-unionist-loyalist) groups.

[131] The broader implications of Protestant disillusionment with the Agreement, and how this has impacted on relative group status and community identity, will be discussed in greater detail in the concluding chapter.

boundaries with little to no mixing between groups. Horowitz (2001b: 49) argues that endogamy gives concreteness to conceptions of group boundaries leading to less porous boundaries and the strengthening of in-group ties. Conversely, if two subgroups that did not previously practice intermarriage begin to do so, this suggests that they are beginning to perceive of the boundary between them as insignificant (Horowitz 2001b: 49). Thus, intermarriage between groups represents the weakening of social boundaries and is therefore considered to be one of the most definitive measures of the breakdown of social and cultural barriers (Kalmijn and Flap 2001). From a practical perspective, mixed marriage represents a blurring of group boundaries in current and future generations. Furthermore, such marriages appear to serve as a symbolic contradiction to negative stereotypes as well as a source of positive familial contact between groups (Wigfall-Williams and Robinson 2001: 1).

Throughout the contemporary conflict, Northern Ireland has been characterised by high levels of endogamy due to the fear of violence and intimidation and the resulting polarisation of communities (Harris 1972; Moxon-Browne 1991). The early sociological literature in Northern Ireland showed that interreligious marriage in Northern Ireland was both unusual and socially unacceptable (Barritt and Carter 1972; Harris 1972). Indeed, in some cases, mixed religion partnerships were targeted with intimidation, violence and even death (Leonard 2009; Lloyd and Robinson 2011). Fear of intimidation and violence had the effect of preventing many cross-community friendships from forming. Endogamy has thus served as an important factor in maintaining social boundaries between communities (Harris 1972; Whyte 1986, 1990). Some commentators have argued that the sharp distinction between British and Irish national identities in Northern Ireland might have become less salient had it not been for high rates of endogamy (Moxon-Browne 1983).

While endogamous marriage patterns are prevalent, mixed marriages in Northern Ireland have and continue to exist. Indeed, due to the existence of mixed-marriages during the conflict a support group known as the Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association was established in 1974. Originally established as a support body for mixed-marriage couples, Association has now expanded its role to include the lobbying

of politicians and government bodies to recognise the importance of mixed marriage for the process of reconciliation. The Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association explains the defining features of a mixed marriage in the context of Northern Ireland:

> 'Mixed marriage' strictly means a marriage contracted between a Christian and a non-Christian, but it has come to mean, particularly in Ireland, a marriage contracted between a Roman Catholic and another Christian from the Protestant denomination...In Ireland today, and particularly in Northern Ireland, mixed marriage is not just a marriage between two people who belong to different churches, but a marriage between people from different communities between whom tensions have existed for several hundred years. [132]

For the purposes of this research, I use the term mixed marriage pertaining to marriages between Catholics and Protestants noting that other terms such as intermarriage and cross-community marriage are also used (see Robinson 1992; Leonard 2009).

While the rate of mixed marriages is not officially recorded, data from the 2001 census is able to estimate the extent of such partnerships. Analysis of the module 'community background of spouse' displayed in Table 7.4 reveals the extent of intermarriage (Catholic females and Protestant males) in 2001. The data show that 12.4 per cent of Catholic and Protestant couples indicated that their partner was from the other main community background. [133] Of these partnerships, Catholic females had a higher rate of intermarriage (8.6 per cent) than Protestant females (3.8 per cent). And Catholic females had a slightly lower rate of endogamy (90.5 per cent) than Protestant

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[132] See the Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association at <http://www.nimma.org.uk/about/what.htm>.

[133] The community background measure includes respondents' stated religion or religion brought up in.

females (94.9 per cent). Significantly, only 1 per cent of Protestant females and less than 1 per cent of Catholic females stated that their spouse was of no religion.

Table 7.4. Community background of spouse by gender of spouse (%), 2001

	Male spouse				
	Catholic	*Protestant*	*Other religion*	*No religion*	*Total*
Female spouse					
Catholic	90.5	8.6	0.2	0.7	100.0
Protestant	3.8	94.9	0.2	1.0	100.0
Other religion	8.2	15.8	72.0	4.0	100.0
No religion	10.3	29.1	1.4	59.1	100.0

Source: NISRA 2001 census.

The data in Table 7.4 suggest that while for the most part partnerships in Northern Ireland remain highly endogamous approximately 1 in 10 people from either of the two main communities form intimate partnerships across the divide. While this is a relatively small proportion it is none the less sufficiently large to justify further enquiry into whether there is a relationship between exogamy and identity patterns. And as Leonard (2009: 100) has argued, since religion continues to function as the primary basis of party politics in Northern Ireland, cross-community marriages are imbued with political significance. Since the incidence of exogamy is regarded as one of the definitive measures in the blurring of group boundaries for current and future generations, then investigation of such partnerships is warranted.

Socio-economic characteristics and mixed marriage

As with mixed friendship networks, it is important to identify socio-economic characteristics that may be related to the likelihood that an individual will marry outside of their own community. As indicated in Table 7.5, there are statistically significant differences in the socio-economic profiles of respondents who are in mixed marriages

compared to those in endogamous marriages. Among Catholics, those in mixed marriages are significantly more likely to be younger, to have lived outside of Northern Ireland, to be employed and in a non-manual occupation, and to have a tertiary level degree. Similar patterns are found among Protestants, although within this group it is the rate of those having lived outside of Northern Ireland that is most pronounced.

The 1998–2005 dataset includes a variable that asks respondents whether they have lived outside Northern Ireland for more than six months. This is an important variable to include because having lived outside of Northern Ireland indicates that the respondent has had significant opportunity for contact with people from a variety of backgrounds. And among Catholics and Protestants who have lived outside of Northern Ireland, one in three reported to be in a mixed marriage. These findings suggest that having spent time elsewhere in Britain or in another country is an important predictor of mixed marriage outcomes.

Table 7.5. Socio-economic characteristics by marriage type, 1998–2005

	Protestants		Catholics		
	Endo-gamous	Mixed marriage	Endo-gamous	Mixed marriage	Pop mean
Age (mean years)	51.3	45.0*	48.0	41.7**	48.4
Employed (%)	54	64**	56	67**	50
Non-manual (%)	56	56	47	59**	51
Tertiary degree (%)	13	17	12	22**	12
Lived outside N.I. (%)	18	33**	22	29**	23

** Significantly different from endogamous marriage at the p<.01 level.

Source: NILT surveys pooled file 1998–2005.

The findings here also support previous research by Lloyd and Robinson (2011) who find that mixed-marriage couples differ in terms of socio-demographic characteristics to those who marry within their own community. Using a similar

methodology employed in this study, Lloyd and Robinson (2011: 2141) found that respondents in mixed religion partnerships had higher incomes and better educational qualifications than those of their counterparts living in same religion partnerships. Lloyd and Robinson (2011: 2143) also found that those in mixed religion partnerships were much more likely to have lived outside Northern Ireland than those who were not.

These results in Table 7.5 add weight to general findings on social mobility and intermarriage. For example, previous research reveals significant correlations between higher educational attainment and exogamy (Kalmijn 1998: 413) and to be less likely to be unemployed (Lloyd and Robison 2011). Indeed, in a study conducted on the incidence of mixed marriage in the Republic of Ireland, O'Leary (2001: 648) found that those sections of the population who are most exposed to modernization—that is those living in an urban area, coming from a non-farming background, and attaining a higher education—are more likely to marry outside their own religious group. These tendencies may partly be due to the greater opportunities for interaction with people from different backgrounds that arise from tertiary study, travel and occupational diversity. Furthermore, highly educated people may be more individualistic and less attached to their family and community of origin (Kalmijn 1998). And studies on intermarriage have found that ascribed characteristics such as ethnicity can be expected to become less important in marriage choices when achieved characteristics such as educational attainment become more important (Gündüz-Hoşgör and Smits 2002: 421).

Does having a partner from a different religion influence the way in which individuals identify? Specifically, is being in a mixed marriage significantly related to identifying outside of one's traditional identity group in favour of more neutral forms of identification? NILT survey data suggest that this is indeed the case (Table 7.6). For Protestants in an endogamous relationship, 73 per cent self-identified as British and the proportion was lower for those in a mixed marriage at 62 per cent. A similar direction and scale of shift is evident among Protestant couples indicating a Northern Irish identity (24 per cent in mixed marriages compared to 16 per cent in endogamous marriages).

The relationship between marriage type and national identity is much more pronounced among Catholics. There was a dramatic difference in the proportion of Catholics in mixed religion partnerships who self-identified as Irish (36 per cent) compared to those in endogamous partnerships (65 per cent)—a reduction of nearly 30 percentage points. Furthermore, for Catholics in mixed partnerships, 32 per cent self-identified as Northern Irish in contrast to 24 per cent in endogamous relationships. The most significant results, however, can be seen in the rate of Catholics self-identifying as British. Consistent with earlier findings in this study, Catholics who experience intergroup contact are more likely than those with little intergroup experience to identify as British. Indeed, 28 per cent of Catholics living in mixed religion partnerships self-identified as British whilst only 8 per cent in endogamous partnerships did so. These findings also highlight the differences between Protestants and Catholics since very few Protestants in either a mixed or endogamous partnership were willing to identify with the majority out-group Irish identity.

Table 7.6. Marriage type by national identity and religious denomination (%), 1998–2005

	Protestants			Catholics		
	Endogamous marriage	*Mixed marriage*	*All*	*Endogamous marriage*	*Mixed marriage*	*All*
British	73	62**	72	8	28**	10
Ulster	7	5	7	1	0	1
Nth Irish	16	24**	17	24	32*	25
Irish	2	4	3	65	36**	63
Other	1	4*	2	1	4	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
(N)	(3,159)	(277)	(3,436)	(2,312)	(218)	(2,530)
(Chi square 33.791, 4 df, p<.01)				*(Chi square 112.614, 4 df, p<.01)*		

* Significantly different from same religion at the p<.05 level.
** Significantly different from same religion at the p<.01 level.

Source: NILT surveys pooled file, 1998-2005.

Logistic regression analyses, displayed in Table 7.7 confirm the bivariate results and reveal that the effect of mixed marriage on identity is significant. This result is confirmed after controlling for the extensive range of socio-demographic and socio-economic variables that were found to be significantly related to marriage type.

Table 7.7. The relationship between mixed marriage and national identity, 1998–2005

	Protestants			**Catholics**		
Socio-demographic controls						
Gender (female)	.185	(.106)	1.203	.239	(.109)	1.270*
Age	-.016	(.045)	.984	.050	(.044)	1.051
Labour-force active	.249	(.130)	1.282*	.171	(.127)	1.186
Occupation (non-manual)	.148	(.111)	1.160	.033	(.114)	1.034
Church attendance	-.146	(.107)	.864	-.107	(.144)	.899
Lived outside N.I.	-.043	(.130)	.957	-.551	(.133)	.577**
Education						
(Tertiary)	.970	(.153)	2.637**	.539	(.170)	1.714**
(Secondary)	.241	(.124)	1.273*	.549	(.125)	1.731**
(No qual)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Marriage type						
(Mixed marriage)	.440	(.171)	1.552**	.563	(.201)	1.757**
(Endogamous)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Constant	-1.977	(.291)	.139**	-1.384	(.278)	.250**
Nagelkerke R square	.051			.056		
(N)	(2,664)			(1,926)		

*p<.05 **p<.01. -- Omitted category of comparison *Notes*: In each model, column one represents the logistic coefficients; column two represents the standard errors (in parentheses); and column three represents the Exponent B. Dichotomous dependent variable for Protestants is operationalised as 1=Northern Irish 0=British; for Catholics 1=Northern Irish 0= Irish.

Source: NILT survey pooled file, 1998-2005.

Beginning with Protestants, the exponent (B) presented in the third column of each model shows that the odds of identifying as Northern Irish as opposed to British

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increases by more than 50 per cent for those in mixed marriages. For Catholics, the effect was stronger—Catholics in a mixed marriage are over 70 per cent more likely to identify as Northern Irish as opposed to Irish than those in an endogamous marriage.

The data from the bivariate and multivariate analyses suggest that being in a mixed marriage is a strong predictor of more neutral forms of identification. This is particularly evident among Catholic respondents. However, the data also reveal that Catholics in mixed marriages are more willing to adopt the traditional national identity of their spouse, namely a British identity, and the bivariate analyses reveal this to be the most significant shift in identity. Do these trends extend to the broader family unit? This is considered below with an analysis of national identity among homogenous and mixed kinship networks.

Kinship networks

The family plays an important role in the formation of attitudes and identity and it can have a strong influence on the types of social networks an individual belongs to (Harris 1972; Erickson 1988; Bienenstock et al. 1990). The role of the family, and in particular the role of parents as socializing agents, is found to be of particular importance in Northern Ireland. For example, half of the respondents in the Young Life and Times survey in Northern Ireland indicated that their families were central to their views of the other religious community (Devine and Schubotz 2004). A study into the effects of social contact on political attitudes conducted by McAllister (1983) found that an important influence on political behaviour—the likelihood that a Protestant respondent will identify as Irish and a Catholic respondent will identify as British—was having relatives by marriage that belonged to the opposite religion. The importance of kinship ties in maintaining the community divide was first discussed in-depth by Harris (1972: 143–146), who found that, in the area she studied, close relationships only occurred among family and extended family. And as most people married within their own community the majority of people belonged to homogenous kinship networks, therefore decreasing the likelihood to get to know people from the other community. Harris (1972) argued that because of this, prejudice and misinformation could flourish.

As a consequence of homogenous kinship ties, contact between members of the Catholic and Protestant communities was found to be severely restricted to polite greetings and superficial contact. Yet, as previously shown, intermarriage in Northern Ireland does occur and the data suggest that having a partner from a different religious background may influence perceptions of identity. Individuals connected through intermarriage may be more likely to overturn negative feelings or prejudice towards the out-group as the social networks created out of the intermarriage widen to include members of both groups. Thus, we might assume that these effects may extend to other family members, such that having kin from different religious backgrounds could also be a predictor of more neutral forms of identification.

We are now in a position to examine relationships between different types of kinship ties and a range of socio-economic characteristics found to be associated with mixed marriage and mixed friendship networks. Table 7.8 reveals no significant difference in levels of education, employment or occupation between those with mixed kinship ties compared to those within homogenous kinship ties.

Table 7.8. Socio-economic characteristics by kinship ties, 1989–2010

| | Protestants | | Catholics | | |
	Homogeneous	Mixed	Homogenous	Mixed	Pop mean
Age (mean years)	51.5	50.6	46.2	47.3	49.2
Employed (%)	49	46	49	47	49
Gender (female) (%)	56	58	57	66**	57
Tertiary degree (%)	12	12	13	12	12
Non-manual (%)	54	52	45	46	51

** Significantly different from segregated at the p<.01 level *Source:* NISA and NILT surveys pooled file, 1989–2010.

There are at least two explanations for the relatively minor differences in socio-economic status of both groups. First, unlike friends and marriage partners, individuals do not choose their relatives. While it is more likely that members of close kinship

networks, such as parents and siblings, will be of a similar socio-economic status, this may not necessarily extend to other kin such as those related by marriage. Indeed, as McPherson et al. (2001: 427) argue, kinship ties tend to introduce educational and class heterogeneity into confiding and support networks due to generational differences in educational achievement. Second, we might also expect greater variability of identity in mixed kinship ties because such ties are stronger than other forms of social ties. Indeed, precisely because family ties are not voluntary and because of their strong affective bonds and slow decay, they may allow for much greater value, attitudinal, and behavioural variability than would be common in more voluntary, easier to dissolve ties such as school and workplace ties (McPherson et al. 2001: 431).

The data in Table 7.9 show the percentage distribution of national identity preferences by type of kinship network for Catholic and Protestant respondents. It shows only small differences in the rate of those with both homogeneous and mixed kinship ties identifying as Northern Irish at both points in time. However, among Protestants, having mixed kinship ties increases the likelihood of identifying as Northern Irish by 9 percentage points in 1995. There is also a slight increase in the Northern Irish identity over time, most visible among Protestant respondents. Once again, for Protestants, having a mixed religion network did not increase the likelihood of identifying as Irish. The results are different for Catholic respondents. While there was almost no difference with regard to identifying as Northern Irish in either survey year, there was a dramatic decrease of 17 percentage points in the proportion of Catholics with mixed kin identifying as Irish in 1995 and a much higher proportion of the same group indicating British identity. T-tests confirm the significance of these results. This dramatic variation in identity preferences suggests a strong influence on Catholic community members of having family from a Protestant background, similar to the effect found in the mixed marriage analysis.

Table 7.9. Kinship network type by national identity and religious denomination (%), 1995 and 2010

| | Protestant | | | | | | Catholic | | | | | |
| | 1995 | | | 2010 | | | 1995 | | | 2010 | | |
	Homo-genous	Mixed	All	Homo-genous	Mixed	All	Homo-genous	Mixed	All	Homo-genous	Mixed	All
British	68	57	67	63	58	62	9	24**	12	7	9	8
Ulster	14	12	14	7	0**	6	2	1	1	1	1	1
Nth	12	21*	13	26	33	27	21	22	21	25	27	25
Irish	4	7	4	2	7*	3	67	50**	65	60	59	59
Other	2	3	2	1	1	1	0	2	1	8	4	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(N)	(640)	(68)	(708)	(421)	(93)	(514)	(445)	(91)	(536)	(358)	(75)	(433)
	(Chi-square 6.126, 4 df, p>.05)			*(Chi-square 15.064, 4 df, p<.01)*			*(Chi square 20.942, 4 df, p <.01)*			*(Chi-square 2.238, 4 df, p>.05)*		

* Significantly different from same religion at the p<.05 level. ** Significantly different from same religion at the p<.01 level.

Source: NISA survey 1995 and NILT survey 2010.

By 2010, however, the data reveal a significant decline in the number of Catholics with mixed kinship networks identifying as British from 24 per cent in 1995 to only 9 per cent in 2010. Moreover, having relatives from the other main community appears to make no difference to identifying as Irish with two-thirds in both categories identifying as such. One possible explanation for the relative stability of the traditional Irish identity in 2010 is the increased acceptance of expressions of Irishness following formal acknowledgement of this identity in the Belfast Agreement. There is now some suggestion (Mitchell 2003; Todd 2005; Muldoon et al. 2007) that with the advent of peace in Northern Ireland, expressing an Irish national identity is becoming more commonplace as people perceive this identity with less negative connotations. As such, among an individual's family circle those from a Catholic background may feel less pressured to adopt the traditional identity of their Protestant relatives.

The multivariate analysis in Table 7.10 presents a more in-depth account of the relationship between kinship type and national identity. The data reveal some significant associations between these variables that were not immediately apparent in the bivariate results. The first model indicates a strong relationship among Protestant respondents who have a mixed kinship network and a preference for Northern Irish identity. Here, those with a mixed network were 73 per cent more likely than their segregated counterparts to identify as Northern Irish as opposed to British. The strength of the association has not increased in the post-devolution period as shown in the second model. Among Catholics, however, there is an increase in the probability of identifying as Northern Irish if a respondent has family from the other main community. According to the fourth model, in the post-devolution period Catholic respondents are almost twice as likely to identify as Northern Irish as opposed to Irish than those with family from the same religious community.

Table 7.10. The relationship between kinship networks and national identity, 1989–2010

| Socio-demographic controls | Protestant | | | | | | Catholic | | | | | |
	Pre-devolution			Post-devolution			Pre-devolution			Post-devolution		
Gender (female)	-.225	(.146)	.799	.061	(.087)	1.063	.196	(.143)	1.217	.419	(.100)	1.521**
Age	-.007	(.005)	(.993)	-.009	(.003)	.991**	.004	(.004)	1.004	.007	(.003)	1.007*
Labour-force active	.212	(.168)	1.236	.067	(.102)	1.070	.433	(.156)	1.542**	.358	(.113)	1.431**
Occupation (non-manual)	.171	(.164)	1.187	-.228	(.218)	.796	-.001	(.164)	.999	-.207	(.253)	.813
Church attendance	-.034	(.163)	.967	.017	(.093)	1.017	-.089	(.265)	.915	.288	(.121)	1.334*
Marital Status (married)	-.336	(.148)	.714*	-.048	(.089)	.953	.133	(.140)	1.143	.248	(.099)	1.281*
Education												
(Tertiary)	.775	(.204)	2.170**	.803	(.120)	2.233**	.420	(.227)	1.522	-.058	(.136)	.944
(Secondary)	-.031	(.181)	.970	.355	(.114)	1.427**	.128	(.174)	1.136	.084	(.126)	1.088
(No qual)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Kinship network												
(Mixed)	.548	(.199)	1.730**	.438	(.124)	1.550**	.388	(.178)	1.473*	.624	(.121)	1.867**
(Homogenous)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Constant	-1.390	(.359)	.249**	-.781	(.258)	.458**	-1.718	(.301)	.179**	-1.883	(.274)	.152**
Nagelkerke R square	.055			.053			.032			.042		
(N)	(1,625)			(2,775)			(1,162)			(2,305)		

*p<.05 **p<.01. *Notes:* In each model, column one represents the logistic coefficients; column two represents the standard errors (in parentheses); and column three represents the Exponent B. Dichotomous dependent variable for Protestants is operationalised as 1=Northern Irish 0=British; for Catholics 1=Northern Irish 0= Irish.
Source: NISA and NILT surveys pooled file, 1989–2010.

The bivariate analyses suggested only small increases in the number of respondents identifying as Northern Irish. They also revealed that an increased number of Catholic respondents identify as British if they have family members from the Protestant community. Yet this relationship was not evident in the 2010 survey.

At a first glance it could be assumed that due to the strength of bonds between family members, there is less pressure to conform or change identity patterns. However, a closer inspection of the relationship between mixed kinship and national identity patterns through multivariate analyses reveals distinct differences in the national identity preferences of those with homogenous versus those with heterogeneous kinship ties. Indeed, there is a significant positive relationship between having mixed kinship ties and identifying with the more moderate and cross-communal Northern Irish identity. And this was found to be important for both Catholic and Protestant respondents.

Explaining social networks and identity patterns

Social relations in Northern Ireland have been characterised by high levels of homogeneity. These patterns have persisted, and homogeneity remains the norm long after the signing of the 1998 Agreement. However, there is emerging evidence that more mixing in social networks may be occurring aided by an increase in the number of integrated schools, mixed neighbourhoods and shared shopping and leisure facilities. These environments may provide individuals with the opportunity to meet and form relationships across the traditional divide.

If friendship and more intimate relations are found to be particularly influential in moderating attitudes, then we could expect that such forms of intergroup contact will also be related to moderations in identity. As the results demonstrate, those with mixed social ties in all three types of networks are significantly more likely to moderate their national identities than those with homogenous social ties. However, there is some variation in the strength of these relationships across the three areas under analysis. For example, the data show that for Catholics, the most important predictor of identifying as

Northern Irish is having a mixed friendship network. Indeed, this was by far the strongest predictor of all three areas analysed. This may be because, being the minority group within Northern Ireland, Catholics have typically had more contact with out-group members and thus more opportunities to form friendships across the traditional divide. As Blau (1977: 21) has pointed out, since each cross-group friendship must involve a member from each group then smaller groups must have more cross-group friendships on a per capita basis. For Protestants, having a mixed friendship network was the weakest predictor of identifying as Northern Irish across all three areas examined. This may be because, being the traditional majority group Protestants typically have less out-group friends and feel more secure about their communal identity when entering into intergroup contact.

The data also show that having relatives from the other main religion is important for predicting more moderate forms of identity. While this was not as evident in the bivariate analyses, multivariate analyses confirmed this observation for both Catholic and Protestant respondents. Similarly, among those who indicated they were in a mixed marriage the strength of the relationship with the Northern Irish identity was seen in both the bivariate and multivariate results. These findings suggest that mixed social networks are important for creating environments in which more moderate forms of identification can be realised. Indeed those with diverse social networks are less divided on the issue of national allegiance and have moderated their attitudes towards the centrality of the nation state to their sense of identity.

It is important to note the significant trend among those Catholics involved in a mixed marriage or with relatives from the other main community identifying as British. Indeed, the more intimate ties including marriage and kinship ties have a strong influence on Catholic's choice to identify as British. This suggests that when mixed social contacts are intimate it is members from the Catholic background who are more willing to take on the majority national identity of their spouse or relative. This trend was also evident among those living in mixed neighbourhoods and among some Catholics who had attended mixed schools.

Within Northern Ireland research has found that mixed marriage couples face particular challenges when deciding where to live (Wigfall-Williams and Robinson 2001). Social class and economic status play a major part in determining housing choice as couples who can afford to buy a home have more choice than those dependent on public housing. As the majority of public housing estates in Northern Ireland are segregated this means that the mixed marriage couples will be more susceptible to scrutiny by the community they are entering.

Significantly, it is within the realm of social relations that government policy has the least influence. Indeed it is neither possible nor desirable to force people to become friends, marry or form other personal connections. While the Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association exists as a support and advocacy group for mixed marriage, its role is not to increase the rate of mixed marriages. This can only happen organically over time. However, there are a number of environments which can be promoted to increase the likelihood that members of the Catholics and Protestant communities will meet, get to know each other and form social relations. This is through the promotion of mixed housing, integrated education and shared leisure and shopping facilities. At the same time, the creation of such environments will provide those who have already chosen to look beyond gross divisions and form meaningful cross-community connections with safe and supportive environments. As demonstrated in previous chapters, efforts to increase contact between communities has been a central policy platform of successive governments, both during direct rule and since devolution. Given the strength of the relationships between mixed social networks and moderate identities the continued support and promotion of such environments should remain central to government efforts to improve community relations.

While the research presented in this chapter has found important links between having mixed social networks and a preference to distance oneself from traditional identities, a number of important methodological limitations leave several questions unanswered. For instance, it is not possible to discern the nature and quality of contact within heterogeneous social networks. It may be that those within mixed religion partnerships, for example, are less inclined to seek out support from within their

community, or from extended family, for fear of becoming victims of prejudice and are thus more likely to associate with those with whom they share salient characteristics. Relatedly, we are once again faced with the question of causality. Given the nature of the data employed, we are unable to uncover the direction of the relationship between having diverse social networks and identifying as Northern Irish. While this remains an obstacle that is only likely to be overcome through the collection of time-series data, recent research by Hewstone et al. (2008) using a longitudinal research design have found that contact can be effective in reducing prejudice towards the other community, particularly when the contact takes place among friends and through family members. A similar conclusion into the direction of the relationship between contact and prejudice reduction was also reached by Tropp and Pettigrew (2005) who, through a meta-analytic study of research into effects of intergroup contact, found that contact, and especially contact among friends, can significantly affect attitudes and reduce prejudice (see Tropp and Pettigrew 2005: 951).

Conclusion

In this chapter I sought to uncover whether the existence of mixed social networks among friends, family and intimate partnerships represent important arenas in which cross-community identities are expressed. I found that while for the most part social networks remain highly separated by community background, approximately one in ten people state they have a partner of a different religion, two in ten state they have a mixed religion family, and three in ten state they have a mixed religion friendship network. This suggests that despite some major obstacles, including the high levels of residential segregation and the norm of separate-religion education, people from the Protestant and Catholic communities do form relationships across this divide.

I argued that investigating these relationships and how they are associated with identity preferences is an important line of inquiry because a substantial body of literature has found that mixed social networks have the potential to weaken group boundaries (Kalmijn and Flap 2001; Lloyd and Robinson 2011), reduce prejudice (Pettigrew 1997; Tropp and Pettigrew 2005; Pettigrew and Tropp 2006) and are

associated with positive out-group attitudes (Paolini et al. 2004; Turner et al. 2008). Indeed, intergroup contact among friends has been found to be the most important predictor of decreases in prejudice and increases in positive attitudes towards the out-group (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006; Tausch et al. 2011). The findings in this chapter support this previous research, and in particular the importance of mixed friendship networks for identity moderation. Indeed, more than any other predictor variable analysed in this study, it is those with mixed friendship groups who are most likely to identify as Northern Irish and not as British or Irish. This social network was found to be of particular importance among Catholics and I argued that the relative group status and heightened levels of intergroup anxiety (Craig and Cairns 1999; Mac Ginty and du Toit 2007) experienced by Protestants in earlier research could offer plausible explanations for the differences in the strength of the associations between Catholics and Protestants.

With regards to mixed marriage, significant associations were uncovered which reveal the importance of such partnerships for the realization of a middle ground position in Northern Irish politics. Yet, while the association between mixed marriage and Northern Irish identity was found to be stronger among Catholics, the bivariate analysis also revealed that Catholics in mixed marriage are also more likely to identify as British. While almost no Protestants claim an Irish identity, previous research (Coakley 2002; Hayes and McAllister 2009a) employing the NISA and NILT survey data reveal a relatively stable minority of Catholics (around 10 per cent) identify as British. As Coakley (2007) has found using the European Values Survey, unlike Protestants who have a strong tendency to identify as British citizens, half of Catholics see themselves as joint British-Irish citizens rather than simply as Irish. Thus, given the tendency among Catholics to claim a dual-allegiance, the British identity may override the Irish identity for those in mixed marriages. Finally, the data also show that having relatives from the other main religion is important for predicting more moderate forms of identity. While this was not as evident in the bivariate analyses, multivariate analyses confirmed this observation for both Catholic and Protestant respondents.

Chapter 1 of this study pointed out that identity is much more complex that the simple Catholic/Irish Protestant/British dichotomy—as the results presented in this chapter, and throughout the study have consistently shown. In the concluding chapter, I deepen the analysis of identity patterns further by investigating other important predictors of Northern Irish identity that have surfaced from the multivariate analyses. I then place the main findings in the context of existing knowledge, theory and policy practice and discuss the implications of the findings within the broader context of peace-building in Northern Ireland.

Chapter 8: Evaluating the Evidence

Division between identity groups is often expressed through high levels of physical and social separation. In chapter 1 I argued that persistent segregation entrenches and reinforces group identity. This in turn makes it very difficult for these groups to find a common ground that could serve as a bridge across the divide. Northern Ireland is a divided society characterised by distinct social cleavages with a high degree of overlap in religious, political and national identification. Scholars have suggested that these mutually reinforcing cleavages and persistent social separation have left little room for a society-wide loyalty to form (see McGarry and O'Leary 1995a). Yet almost two decades have passed since that assertion was made and a consensus has grown that identity patterns are much more complex than a simple Protestant/unionist/British and Catholic/nationalist/Irish dichotomy.

Indeed social survey evidence points to the emergence of an identity to which some members of both Catholic and Protestant communities ascribe. This is the Northern Irish identity. I have argued that this identity is best understood as a shared public identity that may transcend ethnic divisions. The potential for a shared public identity to gain strength in Northern Ireland has recently been the subject of a small but growing debate within the social science literature (see Dixon 1997a, 2012; Farry 2009; Nagle and Clancy 2010, 2012a, 2012b; Nagle 2012). Some have argued that there is little evidence that points to the emergence of a shared identity that supersedes ethnic divisions (Nagle 2012), and that 'the construction of a shared...public identity is an unrealistic aim for ethno-nationally divided societies, at least for the short-to-medium term' (Nagle and Clancy 2012a: 80). Yet, others argue that 'as identities have been shaped by various influences in the past, they can be reshaped in the future' (Farry 2009: 171). Such changes in identity may be brought about by integrationist policies that aim to increase cross-community engagement (Dixon 2012).

As I discussed at length in earlier chapters, there have been some efforts to reduce division between the two main communities in Northern Ireland through the

development of a range of community relations initiatives that provide opportunities for engagement across the traditional Catholic/Protestant divide. These initiatives constitute an important component, in both government and voluntary sector strategies, of attempts to address the conflict and division in Northern Ireland at the grass-roots.

Accordingly, I have sought to determine if there is an evidential basis for the claim that increased mixing between groups is associated with a decrease in competing national identities and with the emergence of a shared public identity. I have argued that one plausible way to establish whether or not these associations exist is to examine the national identity preferences of NISA and NILT survey respondents who have experienced varying levels of intergroup contact. Following this line of inquiry I explored several social arenas in which intergroup contact is found to occur. These were mixed residential areas, integrated schools, and among friends and family with mixed social networks. My central finding has been that there is a significant degree of association between intergroup mixing and a decrease in the salience of competing national identities. That is, those who engage in intergroup contact are more likely to preference a shared Northern Irish identity over either a British or Irish identity.

In this final chapter, I bring together the main findings from the study and present supplementary data analysis that helps to draw out some of the implications of the research for the future of community relations in Northern Ireland. I close by suggesting the kinds of further research that could help to further illuminate the relationships between intergroup contact and the formation of shared public identities.

A final analysis

Before synthesising the empirical results presented in the main body of the thesis, I will consider one important question that I have not yet addressed. Do relationships between intergroup contact in particular social arenas and identity preferences become more or less significant when all social arenas are controlled for? In other words, are there cross-over effects between the independent variables that could diminish the significance of any one variable? It could be argued, for example, that those who live in a mixed residential area will be more likely to attend an integrated school and also have

mixed friendship networks, making it difficult to discern the individual effects of particular types of social mixing on identity preferences. To tackle this issue, in the final multivariate analyses, all arenas of social mixing are considered in four separate logistic regression models. The purpose of this is to measure the association of each of these arenas of social mixing with identity preferences net of all other predictor variables. If there are indeed cross-over effects, then we would expect the strength of the association between individual independent variables and the dependent variable to decrease. If, however, the associations remain relatively stable, then we can infer that the independent variable is robustly associated with particular identity preferences.

Table 8.1 shows the four models estimated separately- two for Protestants and two for Catholics. Following the same method used in previous chapters, the pre-devolution and post-devolution periods are compared. The independent variables included in each of these models are those used in chapters five, six and seven and include living in a mixed residential area, attending an integrated or mixed school, having mixed friendship networks and having mixed kinship networks.[134]

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[134] I was unable to include the variable for mixed marriage in the analyses because the measure is not present in the NISA/NILT 1989-2010 pooled file.

Table 8.1 The relationship between intergroup contact and national identity, 1989-2010

| | Protestant | | | | | | Catholic | | | | | |
	Pre-devolution			Post-devolution			Pre-devolution			Post-devolution		
Socio-demographic controls												
Gender (female)	-.230	(.147)	.794	.063	(.088)	1.066	.219	(.146)	1.245	.424	(.103)	1.529**
Age	-.006	(.005)	.994	-.009	(.003)	.991**	.001	(.005)	1.001	.002	(.003)	1.002
Labour-force active	.194	(.169)	1.214	.067	(.103)	1.069	.285	.161	1.330	.234	(.116)	1.264*
Occupation (non-manual)	.206	(.165)	1.229	-.239	(.218)	.788	-.054	(.167)	.948	-.144	(.259)	.866
Church attendance	-.001	(.164)	.999	.051	(.094)	1.053	-.145	(.271)	.865	.240	(.125)	1.271*
Marital Status (married)	-.326	(.149)	.722*	-.047	(.090)	.954	.083	(.143)	1.087	.258	(.101)	1.294**
Education												
(Tertiary)	.773	(.205)	2.166**	.781	(.121)	2.184**	.288	(.232)	1.334	-.146	(.139)	.846
(Secondary)	-.058	(.182)	.944	.341	(.115)	1.407**	.069	(.178)	1.072	.011	(.130)	1.011
Residential area												
(Mixed)	-.034	(.166)	.967	.432	(.098)	1.540**	.675	(.153)	1.963**	.451	(.109)	1.570**
School type												
(Formally Integrated)				-.006	(.281)	.994				-.062	(.294)	.940
(Mixed)	.202	(.171)	1.224	.174	(.133)	1.190	.208	(.181)	1.232	.307	(.161)	1.359*
Kinship network												
(Mixed religion)	.487	(.210)	1.627*	.260	(.132)	1.297*	.115	(.187)	1.122	.226	(.131)	1.254
Friendship network												
(Mixed religion)	.206	(.154)	1.229	.141	(.099)	1.152	.425	(.150)	1.530**	.787	(.108)	2.197**
Constant	-1.511	(.364)	.221**	-.970	(.262)	.379**	-1.836	(.306)	.159**	-2.022	(.281)	.132**
Nagelkerke R square	.060			.067			.081			.105		
(N)	(1,629)			(2,803)			(1,165)			(2,342)		

*p<.05 **p<.01. -- Omitted category of comparison

Notes: In each model, column one represents the logistic coefficients; column two represents the standard errors (in parentheses); and column three represents the Exponent B. Dichotomous dependent variable for Protestants is operationalised as 1=Northern Irish 0=British; for Catholics 1=Northern Irish 0= Irish. *Source*: NISA and NILT surveys, pooled file 1989-2010.

The data in Table 8.1 reveal moderate cross-over effects between independent variables. By comparing the results from Table 8.1 with results from the earlier analyses, we are able to see where these cross-over effects are taking place. Comparison of the differences in the predictive strength of the independent variables is shown in Table 8.2 which presents the exponent (B) score for all of the logistic coefficients in the regression models. Recall that the exponent (B) indicates the change in the predicted odds of the dependent variable for every unit increase in the independent variable net of other predictors in the model. Thus, if the exponent (B) score exceeds 1 then the odds of an outcome increase; if the figure is less than 1, any unit increase in the independent variable leads to a drop in the odds of an outcome occurring. As evident in Table 8.2 all save one independent variable (kinship ties) remains a robust predictor of identity preferences among Catholics. And for Protestants, cross-over effects have reduced the strength of the association between the variables friendship network and integrated education.

Table 8.2 Summary of logistic regression results (Exponent B Scores)

	Protestants				Catholics			
	Pre-devolution	Cross-over effects	Post-devolution	Cross-over effects	Pre-devolution	Cross-over effects	Post-devolution	Cross-over effects
Social arena								
Residential area	1.119**	.967	1.677**	1.540**	2.323**	1.963**	2.139**	1.570**
Education (mixed)	1.222**	1.224	1.277**	1.190	1.390**	1.232	1.622	1.359*
(formally integrated)			1.106**	.994			1.210**	.940
Friendship networks	1.345**	1.229	1.378**	1.152	1.937**	1.530**	2.735**	2.197**
Kinship ties	1.730**	1.627**	1.550**	1.297*	1.473**	1.122	1.867**	1.254
Mixed marriage	1.552**				1.757**			

Source: NISA and NILT surveys, pooled file, 1989-2010.

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These findings are unsurprising. Indeed, we would expect some cross-over effect given that those who experience intergroup contact in one social arena are more predisposed to experience such contact in another. For example, cross-community friendships are known to form through contact within integrated schools (Irwin 1991; McClenahan et al. 1996) and some mixed residential areas have links to local integrated schools (Murtagh et al. 2006).[135]

Yet while there is evidence of moderate cross-over effects, this was not sufficient to override the significance of intergroup contact as a predictor of identity preference. For example, living in a mixed area remains significant for both Catholic and Protestant respondents who are 50 per cent more likely to identify as Northern Irish than as either Irish or British respectively. Separating the results for each groups reveals that Catholics with mixed friendship networks remain two times more likely to identify as Northern Irish than Irish and are 30 per cent more likely to do so if they attended a mixed school. And Protestants with mixed kinship ties remains two times more likely to identify Northern Irish identity than British. These results indicate that individual social arenas are important environments for the expression of a shared identity. In the section below I summarise the key research findings from the thesis, offer explanations for the importance of particular social arenas and present supplementary data analysis to draw out some of the conclusions.

Key research findings

My basic research task has been to identify where and why a Northern Irish identity is present among Protestants and Catholics. I developed a theoretical framework for this inquiry from debates concerning the best way to address intergroup

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[135] As discussed in chapter 3, a test for multicollinearity was conducted using a correlation matrix of all independent variables for each logistic regression model reported. This was done to ensure that none of the independent variables are too highly correlated. Multicollinearity was not found to be a problem in any of the regression models.

conflict in divided societies. There I drew a distinction between what I called institutional and civil society approaches.

I argued that institutional approaches consider intergroup conflict to be based on structural problems. They propose that settlement be achieved through elite level institutional engineering. They therefore seek to manage conflict by reforming the social system through the enactment of laws and constitutionally embedded provisions. Advocates of institutional approaches generally regard group identity as fixed and which needs to be worked around. The primary challenge, on this account, is to design institutions that can contain conflict between identity groups and channel group claims through the governance structure and social institution. Here, I focussed in particular on consociational power-sharing as one institutional approach that has heavily influenced the development of governance structures and the social system more generally in Northern Ireland (Lijphart 1975, 1996; O'Leary 1999; McGarry and O'Leary 2004, 2009).

Civil society approaches, by contrast, propose that societal transformation may be achieved through identifying and tackling systemic sectarianism and inequality and by improving relationships between divided communities. They emphasise the value of conflict transformation through civil society, arguing that such engagement serves to address the causes and consequences of division (see Dixon 1997a, 2012; Taylor 2001, 2009; O'Flynn 2007, 2009; Wilson 2009; Luskin et al. forthcoming). Advocates of civil society approaches generally regard group identity as something that can be transformed over time through a focus on relationship building between communities or through initiatives that promote social mixing between communities.

While institutional approaches necessarily provide a platform from which peace settlements may be negotiated at the elite level, conflict between communities at the grass-roots level also needs to be addressed in order for peace to be sustainable. Although there may be disagreement between institutional and civil society approaches over conceptions of identity and the relative weight that should be given to actively

preserving communal identities, both of these approaches have been employed in tandem in Northern Ireland since the mid-1980s.

Much of the community relations work which can be described as cross-community is predicated on the assumption that increasing cross-community contact will reduce prejudice, tackle negative stereotypes and increase mutual awareness and understanding of the other community. I have demonstrated that these assumptions are based on intergroup contact theory, which has a long history of empirical and theoretical application in Northern Ireland (see Trew 1986; Pettigrew 1998; Hewstone et al. 2005; Niens and Cairns 2005; Donnelly and Hughes 2006; Hayes et al. 2007; Hughes et al. 2007; Hewstone et al. 2008).

Contact and community relations policy

Against this theoretical background, my first research question sought to investigate how problems associated with the separation of communities have been addressed and to what extent community relations initiatives have sought to promote contact between Protestant and Catholic communities. As noted, it is clear that the creation of greater cross-community contact between members of the Catholic and Protestant community with the aim of establishing a 'shared society' has been a well-resourced policy objective. For example, I calculated that in 2010 a total of £136 million was allocated for relevant community relations and related programmes across government departments representing approximately 1.5 per cent of total Northern Ireland government expenditure. Moreover, since 1995, financial aid to Northern Ireland through the EU peace programmes has amounted to over of €1.9 billion with the aim of creating space for intergroup contact and encouraging greater levels of cross-community integration (SEUPB 2011). Incorporating all major donors and their financial contributions for peace-building activities since 1987, Northern Ireland and the six border counties have received a total of almost £2.5 billion with an average of almost £100 million a year for a wide range of peace-building activities (Nolan 2012).

A central concern of much of this community relations work has been on promoting cross-community contact. While not all financial aid has supported this, all

of the major donors have contributed funds to promote contact work between the Catholic and Protestant communities. The frequency with which contact work is mentioned as part of a community relations agenda highlights the centrality of intergroup contact to conceptions of peace-building in Northern Ireland.

Identity patterns and intergroup contact

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 therefore explored cross-community contact in a number of social arenas. I asked whether individuals (from either a Catholic or Protestant background) who have intergroup contact within these social arenas differ from the rest of the adult population in relation to their national identity preferences and whether any such difference has varied over time. I operationalised national identity using a survey item that asked people to choose (out of five options) the group to which the felt they most belonged. This revealed that divisive identities are decreasing in salience and a preference for Northern Irish identity is growing among cohorts that have experienced contact. That is, those Protestants and Catholics who engage in cross-community contact are significantly more likely to identity first and foremost as Northern Irish rather than as British or Irish. The strength of these relationships, however, was found to vary against the type of social arena analysed.

My findings revealed important differences between Catholic and Protestant respondents depending on the type of social arena in which the Northern Irish identity is most likely to be expressed. In all but one of the social arenas examined, the likelihood of someone identifying as Northern Irish was stronger among Catholic respondents compared to their Protestant counterparts. For example, net of all other variables, Catholic respondents are most likely to identify as Northern Irish if they professed to have a mixed friendship network. This was found to be the case in both time periods analysed—before devolution and after devolution— and the significance of this relationship increased dramatically in the post-devolution era. Indeed, those with mixed friendship networks were more than twice as likely to identify as Northern Irish as opposed to Irish.

The findings add weight to the so-called 'direct cross-group friendship hypothesis' (Pettigrew 1997, 1998), which suggests that a reduction in group prejudice may be achieved by promoting direct friendship between members of competing groups. In line with this, research has found that even knowing in-group members who have out-group friends through indirect cross-group friendships (Wright et al. 1997) or extended contact (Turner et al. 2008; Christ et al. 2010) can be important for improving attitudes towards the out-group. Granovetter's (1973, 1982) influential thesis on the strength of weak ties, discussed in chapter 7, offers a similar explanation. This theory of weak ties is similar to the theoretical argument of the extended contact effect put forward by Turner et al. (2008) and Christ et al. (2010). Granovetter (1973) argues that weak social ties have bridging functions whereby information is transmitted to a greater number of people (with diverse social networks) when passed through weak ties rather than strong ones (1973: 1366). In this way, knowing someone who has a friend from the out-group may be sufficient to disconfirm negative stereotypes.

As discussed in chapter 7, mixed friendship networks were found to be a strong predictor of identity preferences among Catholic respondents. I argued that a plausible explanation for this is that, historically, the Catholic community has been the minority community in Northern Ireland (Darby 1986; Ruane and Todd 1996). Following Blau (1977), I noted that patterns of networks are significantly affected by the relative size of groups in the pool of potential contacts such that members of the smaller group will have more out-group friends than members of the larger group. For many Catholics then, the normalisation of contact with members of the out-group (for example at work, within the neighbourhood and through social networks) may have increased opportunities for intergroup friendships to form and decreased the likelihood of their experiencing anxiety in contact situations.

There is research that indicates that having the opportunity to meet with members of the out-group in cross-community schemes increases the likelihood of having friends from other religious and community backgrounds (Schubotz and McCartan 2009). Thus, even weak ties between social groups can have the effect of linking different groups who would otherwise be insulated from one another (Grannovetter 1982).

While having mixed friendship networks was found to be an important predictor of national identity among members of the Catholic community, this was not the case for Protestants. Rather, the results point to a different set of social arenas linked to expressions of a Northern Irish identity. Living in a mixed neighbourhood as compared to a segregated one was found to be important with those Protestants being 50 per cent more likely to identify as Northern Irish as opposed to British. Added to this, the data revealed that Protestant respondents who have family from a different community background were significantly more likely to identify as Northern Irish than as British, although the strength of this relationship appears to have declined in the post-devolution period.

Of all social arenas analysed, only mixed residential areas were found to be a significant predictor of Northern Irish identity for both Catholic and Protestant respondents. The strength of this variable as a predictor of choosing Northern Irish identity decreased for Protestants, however, once cross-over effects were controlled for. In chapter 5 I advanced a number of explanations for the importance of mixed areas. The first of these proposed that people who live in mixed areas most likely do so out of choice. A conscious decision on the part of the individual to live in such an area (as opposed to a segregated area) may indicate that factors other than communal background are more important when choosing a location to live. Second, previous research suggests that mixed areas have heightened potential for the formation of intergroup friendships (Murtagh and Carmichael 2005; Hewstone et al. 2008). Finally, I argued that mixed areas are often supported by strong local community organizations that foster and support cross-community relations and are more likely to have links with integrated schools.

A surprising finding from the analyses is that integrated education has the weakest relationship with the Northern Irish identity for both Catholics and Protestants when compared to other social arenas. However, as shown in chapter 5, integrating children within schools has been arguably the most contentious area of social policy. For example, the integrated movement has met with fervent opposition by members of the Catholic Church who regard the education of Catholic children within Catholic schools

as paramount to the preservation of their community's culture (Darby 1976; Hannsson et al. 2013). Similarly, political representatives of the two main communities have, until very recently, been lukewarm (at best) in their support for such schools (Hannsson et al. 2013).

Another explanation for the weakness of the relationship between identity moderation and integrated schooling is the limitations of the current measure for integrated education within the surveys. For example, the measure can only capture past intergroup contact rather than current intergroup contact in contrast to other survey measures. Therefore, it is harder to discern the possible effects of intergroup contact within integrated schools, since many other factors could have subsequently influenced respondent answers. Moreover, as discussed in chapter 6, we do not know how respondents perceived of the numerical balance of their school and whether they understand 'fairly mixed' as referring to an integrated school or to a school which was in the process of attracting students from the other main religion. Furthermore, the current measures do not allow us to assess the quality of contact (e.g. whether the experience of contact was positive or meaningful.) Unlike the categories 'among friends', 'family' and more intimate partnerships, we cannot assume that the contact an individual experienced at school was either meaningful or positive. Finally it may be that, at present, there are simply not enough people within the population who have attended an integrated school, such that the sample size within the survey is too small to produce meaningful, let alone statistically significant, results.

As discussed in detail in chapter 3, the major limitation of this study is the issue of causality. Given the cross-sectional nature of the data employed, it was not possible to produce evidence that increased contact between communities causally contributes to identity change, or whether those who hold more moderate views are more predisposed to mixing across the traditional divide. This remains a significant limitation that only the development and analysis of longitudinal data can resolve.

This matter aside for the moment, it is clear from the analysis that several socio-economic indicators are associated with tendencies to identify as Northern Irish. For example, tertiary education is found to be strongly associated with Northern Irish identity. This is particularly the case among Protestants. In some ways, this may simply be a proxy for other influences on identity, such as opportunities for diverse forms of work, travel and social mixing. Attendance at a university and travel away from home are likely to increase the probability of mixing with people from diverse backgrounds with diverse experiences. In many instances, such contact will present a challenge to negative stereotypes of the 'other' that individuals may previously have held. As Hewstone et al. (2005: 22) suggest, higher educational levels tend to be associated with 'less virulent out-group attitudes'.

This education effect on moderate identities is particularly strong among Protestants and it is noteworthy, therefore, that they are more likely to attend university overseas or within England than in Northern Ireland.[136] This may well influence the way that Protestants from Northern Ireland perceive of their identity as people of and from 'Northern Ireland', reflecting a sense of regionalism. The relationship between level of education and strength of attachment to traditional national identities has been noted in previous studies. For example, using the European Values Survey, Fahey et al. (2005: 67) found that both Catholics and Protestants with no educational qualifications are more supportive of the dominant communal identity, Irish and British respectively.

The survey data also show that there are gender differences in relation to identity patterns. Women are significantly more likely to identify as Northern Irish than men are. In contrast to the education variable, this was most striking among Catholic

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[136] See 'Just one-third of Northern Ireland students are Protestant', *BBC News Northern Ireland*, 17 October 2009. Accessed 10 July 2010 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-15341820>.

respondents. This finding lends support to the research of Fahey et al. (2005: 67) who, through analyses of data from the European Values Survey 1999-2000, found that men were significantly more likely to claim an Irish identity. It also supports earlier research showing that the more traditional political parties that align with traditional identities, notably Sinn Fein, attract disproportionately more male than female supporters (see McAllister 2004).

An interesting finding evident throughout the analysis was that the probability of identifying as Northern Irish shifted over time, and that it differed for Catholics and Protestants. Successive multivariate analyses revealed that Northern Irish identity increased in the post-devolution era among Protestants, but decreased during this period among Catholics. One plausible explanation for this divergence relates to the specific context of the post-devolution era and the influence of socio-political conditions on particular cohorts within the population.

Recent events within Northern Ireland suggest that extremism is resurgent among Catholic and Protestant youth. For example, the recent announcement by Belfast City Council to reduce the number of days on which the Union Flag will be flown from city hall has sparked violent protests from loyalists who perceive the restrictions to be an attack on their Britishness. Many of those involved in the violence have been disaffected youth, the majority of which are young men and teenagers.[137] Moreover, the emergence of a number of dissident republican groups reforming under the banner of the IRA has been strongly associated with younger age groups. As Horgan and Morrison (2011: 654) have found, an older more experienced leadership is recruiting younger, inexperienced individuals. Other research also suggests that the young are increasingly more likely to favour traditional communal parties over more moderate ones (Duffy and Evans 1997; McAuley 2004; Tilley and Evans 2011) and to be more

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[137] See 'Belfast union flag dispute is lightning rod for loyalist disaffection.' *The Guardian*, 6 January 2013. Accessed 5 February 2013 at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/jan/06/belfast-union-flag-dispute-loyalist>.

prejudiced towards people of a different religious background (Hayes and McAllister 1999b). In addition, studies have provided evidence that religious and national identities, especially among younger cohorts, can be shaped by personal experiences of conflict (see Muldoon et al. 2007).

Within the social science literature, there is much support for the contention that socio-political conditions in the formative years leave a lasting impression and affect future political behaviour and attitudes (see for example Converse 1969; Lyons and Alexander 2000; Putnam 2000; Blais et al. 2004; Franklin 2004). Furthermore, newly enfranchised individuals are known to be particularly susceptible to recruitment by new parties (Franklin 2004). This so-called 'generational effect' (Hayes and McAllister 1999b) emphasizes the importance of critical historical events that leave an imprint on the views, attitudes and behaviour of those experiencing them that they then carry forward in time. Obviously, younger cohorts carry these attitudes the longest. As Hayes and McAllister (1999b) explain, such defining events have more of an impact on the young because they are less equipped to resist their influence, given their inexperience, than older generations are. Citing Mannheim (1954), they explain that generational effects are most likely to occur during periods of rapid social and cultural change (Hayes and McAllister 1999b). In Northern Ireland, the legacy of the conflict, and the processes of socialization on attitudes and identities of the young have received a great deal of attention in the social science literature.[138] As McCauley (2004: 543) notes, for many in Northern Ireland 'political socialization is restricted almost exclusively to a reproduction of the values of one's respective political community.'

In a recent contribution to this literature, Tilley and Evans (2011) explore the influence of formative experiences on political generations and voting behaviour in Northern Ireland. They argue that the radical shift away from the more moderate and historically dominant parties within both communal blocs (namely the UUP and SDLP)

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[138] See Cairns and Cairns 1995; Connolly and Maginn 1999; Hayes and McAllister 1999b, 2005; Hughes and Donnelly 2002; Gallagher 2004b; Muldoon 2004; Trew 2004.

towards the more traditional DUP and Sinn Fein can be explained by the changing political context in which younger cohorts have been socialised. In effect, the generations that came of age during the period in which the DUP and Sinn Fein became viable and popular parties are more likely to vote for these parties than older cohorts, and through generational replacement support for these parties will increase over time (Tilley and Evans 2011).

Given these strong cohort links to political affiliation, the question arises as to whether they are also reflected in identity preferences. If there is indeed a relationship between socio-political conditions and identity patterns, then this could offer a plausible explanation for the shifting patterns in identity for Catholics and Protestants in the post-devolution period.

One methodological challenge that confronts any attempt to answer this concerns how to differentiate generational effects from lifecycle effects. That is, do people become more prone to hold particular identities as they grow older (indicating a lifecycle effect) or are members of new generations more likely to hold particular identities than those of previous generations at the same age (indicating a generational effect)? However, by comparing identity preferences of different age cohorts at different points in time we are able to distinguish between life cycle and generation effects (see Blais et al. 2001 for a discussion on distinguishing between generational and life cycle effects). Furthermore, given the weight of empirical evidence that points to generational differences in attitudes and behaviour, the assumption is that any change in identity preference is less likely to be caused by age than by generational differences.

To group respondents into generations, I followed Tilley and Evans' (2011: 590) classification of 'political generations' as those who entered the electorate (assumed to be at age 18) during a significant period in political history. [139] This produced six

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[139] Hayes and McAllister (1999b) explain the different between a cohort and a political generation. A period in which there were no major critical events identifies a 'cohort' rather than a 'political generation'.

cohorts within the data based on six important periods in contemporary Northern Ireland (as shown in Table 8.3.)

Generation 1 (the oldest generation) came of age before the contemporary conflict began (pre 1965). Generation 2 reflects the civil rights movement and the escalation of violence in Northern Ireland (1966-1971). Generation 3 emerges around the time of the first attempt at power sharing known as the Sunningdale Agreement and the events of Bloody Sunday (1972-1982). Generation 4 came of age around the time of the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the Brook-Mayhew talks (1983-1993). Generation 5 represents the end of the peace process and the signing of the 1998 Agreement (1994-1999) while Generation 6 (the youngest Generation) arises from the last period of Direct Rule during which time the government's *A Shared Future* community relations strategy was developed (from 2000 onwards).

Table 8.3 Political Generations in Northern Ireland

Political generation	Age in 2010	Major political events
Pre 1965	63 +	Post-war reconstruction, IRA border campaign
1966-1971	57-62	Civil rights campaign, violence escalates
1972-1982	46-56	Failure of Sunningdale Agreement, hunger strikes, Bloody Sunday
1983-1993	35-45	Anglo-Irish Agreement, New Ireland Forum, Brooke-Mayhew talks
1994-1999	29-34	Peace process, 1998 Agreement, Omagh bomb
2000-2010	18-28	Devolution and power-sharing, return to direct rule, re-instalment of power-sharing, emphasis on 'sharing' in government policy

Source   NISA and NILT surveys, pooled sample, 1989 -2010.

Figures 8.1 and 8.2 chart trends in Northern Irish identity for each political generation. What is most striking when comparing these is the contrast in directional shifts of Protestants and Catholics identifying as Northern Irish. For Protestants the data reveal a rising trend in favour of Northern Irish identity among all generations although this is most marked in the two youngest generations (that came of age during and after the signing of the 1998 Agreement.)

Figure 8.1 Trends in Northern Irish identity among Protestant generations over time
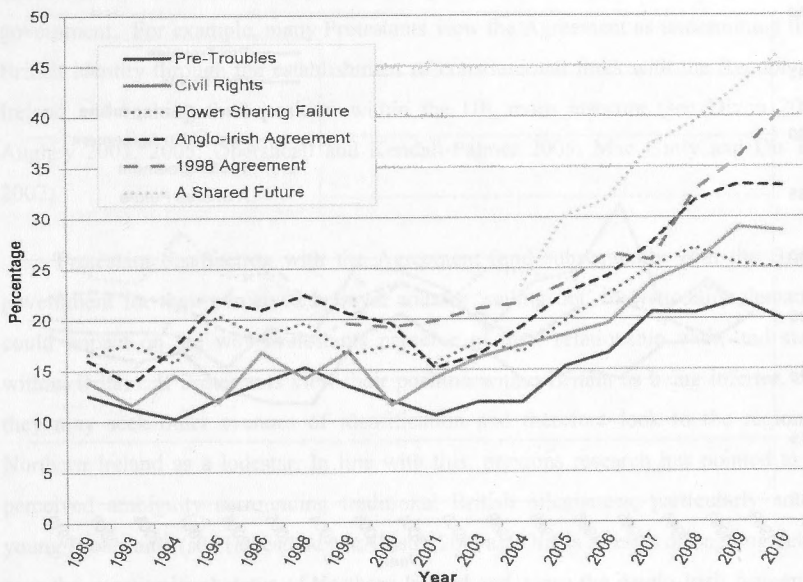
Source: NISA and NILT surveys, pooled sample, 1989 -2010.

By contrast, Figure 8.2 clearly shows a downward trend for the two youngest Catholic generations (generation 5 and generation 6). Here, the data show that identification as Northern Irish has dropped from 30 per cent in 2005 to just below 20 per cent in 2010. Indeed, only the generation 3 curve (those who came of age around the time of the Sunningdale Agreement) indicates an increased preference for Northern Irish identity over time.
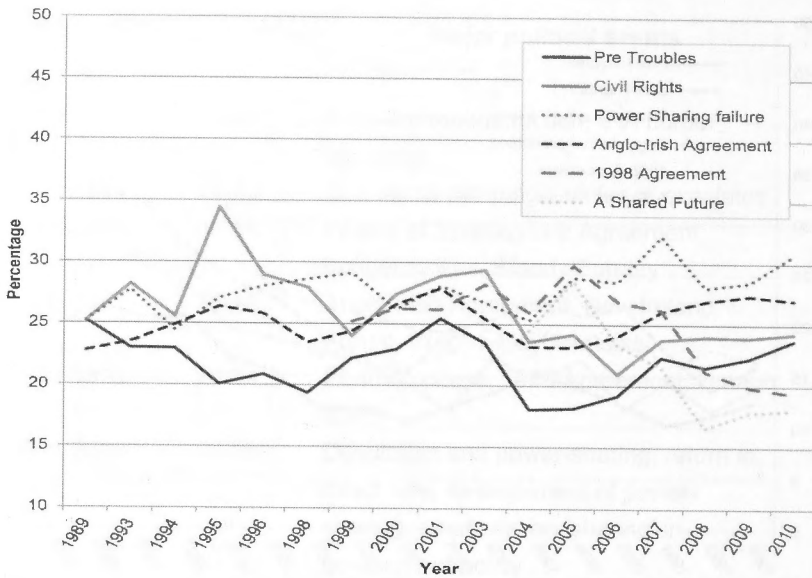
Figure 8.2 Trends in Northern Irish identity among Catholic generations over time

Source: NISA and NILT surveys, pooled sample, 1989-2010.

These trends are consistent with the data analyses conducted in chapters five, six and seven which revealed that, overall, the likelihood of identifying as Northern Irish has increased over time for Protestants, but decreased for Catholics. Further endorsement of these findings is provided by Devine and Schubotz (2004) who found that younger Protestants were more likely than Catholics to prefer a Northern Irish identity while Hayes and McAllister (2009a) observe that among Protestants, it is the younger and better educated who identify as such.

One possible explanation for the different trajectories in identity preferences between young Catholics and Protestants especially, is the way in which post-Agreement institutional arrangements have been interpreted by the two communities. As discussed in chapter 4, recent literature suggests there has been a disparity in Protestant and Catholic attitudes towards the Agreement (see for example Hayes and

McAllister 1999, 2004; Hayes, McAllister and Dowds 2005; Mac Ginty and Du Toit 2007). This has been apparent through the growing sense of disaffection and alienation within the Protestant community in its interpretation of the pluralist arrangements of government. For example, many Protestants view the Agreement as undermining their British identity through the establishment of constitutional links with the Republic of Ireland and making their position within the UK more insecure (see Dixon 2001; Aughey 2001, 2005; Obershcall and Kendall-Palmer 2005; Mac Ginty and Du Toit 2007).

Protestant disaffection with the Agreement (and subsequently with the British government for their perceived betrayal and for 'selling out' to Nationalist demands) could impact on the way Protestants perceive of their relationship with, and status within, Britain. If Protestants view their position within Britain as being inferior, then they may seek other avenues of identification and therefore look to the region of Northern Ireland as a lodestar. In line with this, previous research has pointed to the perceived ambiguity surrounding traditional British allegiances, particularly among young Protestants (see Hayes and McAllister 2009a). This is a result of ongoing debate over the constitutional status of Northern Ireland and, since the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 and the Agreement in 1998, the role of the Republic of Ireland in Northern Ireland affairs.

Conversely, the consolidation of Irish identity among the younger Catholic generations could reflect a greater sense of ease in expressing this identity in the post-Agreement era. For example, several recent studies (Mitchell 2003; Muldoon et al. 2007) have indicated a renewed sense of confidence among Catholics in expressing their Irishness. This is likely due to the strong egalitarian emphasis within the Agreement which, argues Todd (2005) newly certified Irish identity.

The data presented here show that reproduction of divided national identities is apparent among younger Catholic cohorts. This finding may have important implications for the trajectory of change in Northern Ireland. It is consistent with other research that has found that the reproduction of divided political identities has continued

among young voters, not least because of the high percentage of separate schools and levels of residential segregation. This suggests that, as children and adolescents, young people have less social contact with members of other groups than adults (see McAuley 2004; Tilley and Evans 2011).

Yet, as the data also show, this pattern of division among the young is not evident among Protestant cohorts who came of age after the signing of the 1998 Agreement. They have displayed an increasing propensity to identify not as British, but as Northern Irish. This is an encouraging sign. As Coakley (2008: 780) foreshadowed, 'We might expect the advent of peace…to have a significant impact on attitudes, especially among younger voters.' Indeed, it may be that what we are seeing here is a tendency among younger Protestants to re-align their conception of belonging, first and foremost, to the region of Northern Ireland.

Implications of the research for theory and practice

The impact of community relations initiatives on a wide range of social indicators has received substantial attention in the social scientific literature. I have sought to contribute to this literature by determining whether the emergence of a shared public identity, namely the Northern Irish identity, can be plausibly associated with policies that aim to promote contact between members of Protestant and Catholic communities.

It is clear that there are no lack of agencies and programmes aimed at improving community relations in Northern Ireland and that much of the effort has aimed to increase the amount of intergroup contact between people of the two main communities. I have argued that fundamental assumptions of intergroup contact theory underpin much of this cross-community contact work, and while intergroup contact theory was not intended as a panacea (see Allport 1954: 261; Hewstone 2003), this is the way practitioners have tended to interpret it (Cairns and Hewstone 2000: 225). The contact approach to community relations has received significant criticism (see Hughes and Donnelly 2002; McVeigh 2002) from the perspective of those who regard the contact agenda as being 'symptom driven'—diverting attention away from tackling persistent socio-economic inequalities within society. It is true that a holistic approach to building

a stable society is necessary, and this will require much more than the contact approach can offer on its own. However, this is not to suggest that such an approach is unwarranted or undesirable. Indeed, as Frazer and Fitzduff (1995: 9) noted in their report *Improving Community Relations*, '[w]hile it is not inevitable that people who live and work closely and interdependently together will respect and understand one another, it is often true that segregated communities facilitate fears and suspicions.'

This is a view held among scholars and practitioners from other divided societies such as South Africa (Gibson 2004; Gibson and Classen 2010) and the United States (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1975; Cook 1978; Zirkel and Cantor 2004; Holme, Wells, and Revilla 2005). For example, within the United States since the early 1950s arguments in favour of an end to the racial segregation of schools were based not only on the argument that such segregation leads to socio-economic inequality, but that increasing interracial contact would ultimately lead to further integration and mutual understanding among the wider community (see Allport 1954; *Brown vs Board of Education* 1954; Pettigrew 1975; Cook 1978). Later survey-based research in the United States has found support for this argument (Zirkel and Cantor 2004; Holme, Wells, and Revilla 2005). These studies show that attending a desegregated school reduced fear of intergroup encounters and increased students' ability to operate effectively in interracial settings.

Within South Africa, research conducted by Gibson and Classen (2010) found that interracial contact, and in particular intimate contact in the form of friendships, was a significant predictor in reduced prejudicial attitudes. Importantly, all of the studies mentioned here do not regard intergroup contact as for the sole means of resolving intergroup conflict. Rather, intergroup contact can be thought of as one of many measures for improving intergroup relations, one that has a solid evidential basis and a long history in cross-national social scientific research.

The overall conclusion of my research thus points in favour of an approach that seeks to promote contact between members of the Catholic and Protestant communities. That is, through analysis of time-series data stretching over a 21 year period the evidence suggests that increasing numbers of people engaged in cross-community

contact are demonstrating that identities other than British and Irish national identities are important to them when defining themselves in a public way. The growth of a shared public identity may have important implications for the future of community relations as well as for the institutional arrangements of government. For example national identity has historically assumed importance in Northern Ireland and has, more recently, been acknowledged as such under the terms of the Agreement in 1998 (NIO 1998: Annex A 1(vi)). The 'two traditions' model is influenced by the view underlying the Agreement that Northern Ireland is divided into two distinct and irreconcilable communities: one Protestant/unionist/British and the other Catholic/nationalist/Irish. The growth in the salience of an alternative identity, the Northern Irish identity, suggests the possibility of someday moving beyond this model. Indeed, if the Northern Irish identity continues to gain salience, then acknowledgement of this identity, as a viable public identity, within social institutions and the structures of government may be promoted.

Yet, changes in society are unlikely to be sustainable without the engagement and leadership of politicians at the institutional level. In recent years Sinn Fein and the DUP have triumphed in electoral terms. These two traditional parties now dominate the political scene, and are seen to be more able to meet the demands of their respective communities than their more moderate counterparts (McAllister 2004; Tilley and Evans 2011). Indeed as I argued in chapter 2, although they share power, political leaders from both parties continue to engage in bonding rhetoric, playing up perceived differences between groups, and thus further exacerbating intergroup competition.

Indeed, while the Northern Irish identity is popular among those who transcend group boundaries, this is certainly not the only determinant of identity patterns. Rather, the degree to which such policy initiatives can have an impact is not independent of the broader political context. This was evident by the finding that the political process has influenced patterns of identity. Here, the impact of the Agreement on identity change also appeared to be significant, albeit with different effects for Catholics and Protestants. For Protestant respondents, identification as Northern Irish has increased in the post-devolution era while for Catholic respondents identifying as Northern Irish as

opposed to Irish has decreased in the ten years since the implementation of the Agreement. These trends suggest that political developments do have some bearing on identity, especially among the youngest cohorts (Protestants becoming more moderate in their stance and Catholics moving towards the traditional Irish identity.)

To counter this potential polarisation among the young, continuing efforts need to be made to provide momentum for a strong community relations agenda. My research suggests that a strong community relations agenda is a worthwhile venture. This is because cross-community contact, promoted within such an agenda, is associated with less divisive identities and conceptions of place. While many policymakers understandably approach peace-building as a structural process, it is also a psychological process that requires members of society to change the way in which they conceive of their relation to one another. In particular, members of these societies need to move beyond conceiving of themselves as members of groups that stand in essential opposition to other groups.

While for the most part leadership in the peace process in Northern Ireland has been viewed as primarily political, at other times political change has lagged behind the choices being made in society and change has required the leadership of others within the community (Morrow 2005). For instance, for many years now successive surveys have found that an overwhelming majority of people in Northern Ireland are in favour of integrated education (ARK 1989-2010). However, this sector still only accounts for a very small minority of the school-aged population. The continued support of, and advocacy by, non-government actors such as the NICIE and the CRC, to name just two, will be of fundamental importance to the continued engagement of those wishing to move beyond the two traditions model.

Directions for future research

This study has contributed to a growing body of survey-based analysis of identity patterns in Northern Ireland. Its focus has been on measuring the relationship between varying levels of intergroup contact and national identity preferences using statistical modelling of a range of social indicators from the NISA and NILT surveys. The use of

quality extensive time-series data made it possible to establish statistically significant inferences which could then be transferred to general statements about the broader Northern Irish population. Due to the large sample size and time series nature of the survey data, it has been possible to establish society-wide relationships between national identity and cross-community contact that would not have been apparent using more focused qualitative methods.

However, while I have been able to establish significant relationships between intergroup contact and a range of social indicators, the causal processes underlying them remain unclear. There are a number of reasons for this. For one, the data used are cross-sectional, thus limiting our ability to infer causality. To complement the present analysis and to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the nature of statistical relationships, future research might apply methodologies that more adequately capture the direction of causality between measures. This can only be achieved through a more qualitative approach (involving in-depth interviews with participants involved in contact schemes) and, in the long-term, through the development of a longitudinal survey to track and measure patterns of identity among the same individuals over a number of years. Second, it is possible that those who engage in intergroup contact are predisposed to this type of contact in the first place. At present, there are no measures available that can determine this.

Future research might also consider the development of more sophisticated measures for capturing the complexity of identity that encompasses the meaning of identities for the individuals who are being surveyed. Indeed, there is an inescapable ambiguity in the meaning of particular social identities because they are measured as the degree to which a person identifies with various social groups. And there are a several, albeit related, ways in which a 'Northern Irish' identity might be interpreted that are not captured by the current measures. For some, identifying as Northern Irish may be a rejection of the 'two traditions' model and an attempt to find a neutral position. For others it may represent a passive or a-political position to the status quo (Ruane 1999). And again, to identify as Northern Irish may reflect genuine sentiments of belonging first and foremost to the region of Northern Ireland. Future research would therefore

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examine more closely what it means to identify as Northern Irish among the cohorts identified in this study.

Another important question to be explored is whether the trend in popularity of the Northern Irish identity is likely to continue among future generations. Research has found that exposure to violence is not only correlated with sectarian sentiments (Hayes and McAllister 2005) but also that personal experiences of conflict have also influenced the strength of religious and national identities (see Muldoon et al. 2007). Recent events in Northern Ireland provide a sobering reminder of how easily conflict can erupt into violence. Efforts to improve community relations through cross-community contact schemes may be undermined by outbreaks in violence. Given the apparent shift towards more traditional forms of identity among younger generations of Catholics, future research should continue to monitor this trend and attempt to uncover the reasons for it.

To conclude, major social change cannot occur without real structural change. As Hamber and Kelly (2005) have argued, although increasing intergroup contact is an essential component of improving community relations it is not the sole remedy for building positive relationships between communities. This will only be possible through the establishment of appropriate structures, political support, and a political environment that encourages such relationship building. While the relationship between cross-community engagement and the breaking down of traditional barriers remains disputed, a decrease in the prominence of national identities seems at least a step in the direction towards a more inclusive and shared society—even if this decrease is only found within some sections of society.

My research finds some merit in approaches that promote peace through cross-community engagement and social mixing. The results show that, for the most part, it is within the integrated sector that divisive identities are being challenged and more moderate expressions of identity are being realised. Insofar as the number of people who identify as Northern Irish increases, this may help to break down territorial allegiances and create space for the development of a shared sense of belonging in a territory that is historically contested.

Appendix 1. Data sources

Northern Ireland Loyalty Survey (1968) The Survey was conducted between March and August 1968. The loyalty survey is based on a random sample of the adult population in Northern Ireland. The survey used questionnaire design and was based on a series of face-to-face interviews with 1,291 respondents aged 20 years and over. The survey was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The principal investigator of the survey was Richard Rose and the data are available from the United Kingdom Data Archive (UKDA) at the University of Essex <http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/>.

Northern Ireland Attitude Survey (1978). The Survey was conducted between July and October 1978. Funded by the Nuffield Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Committee for Social Science Research in Ireland and the Economic and the Social Research Institute, it used a questionnaire design based on a random, representative sample of the adult population in Northern Ireland. The survey involved personal interviews of 1,277 respondents aged 18 years and over. The principal investigators of the survey were Edward Moxon-Browne in Northern Ireland and Earl E. David and Richard Sinnott in the Republic of Ireland. The data from the survey are available from the UKDA at the University of Essex <http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/>.

Northern Ireland Social Attitudes (NISA) Survey (1989-1996). The Survey was funded by the Nuffield Foundation and the Northern Ireland CCRU. The NISA surveys were based on a random sample of the adult population (aged 18 years and over). The surveys have been carried out annually between 1989 and 1996 except in the years when a general election was held, such as in 1992. The NISA Survey was run in conjunction with the British Social Attitudes (BSA) survey and provided cross-sectional data on social attitudes in Northern Ireland allowing for easy comparison with the rest of Britain. Data is available from the UKDA <http://www.data-archive.co.uk>.

Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) Survey (1998-2010). The NILT Survey was launched in October 1998 and follows on from the NISA Survey. The surveys are based on a nationally representative sample of the Northern Ireland population using based on a random sample of the adult population (aged 18 years and over). Following the implementation of devolution in Northern Ireland, the new NILT survey now has a more specific focus on Northern Ireland. Nonetheless, every year includes a substantial component that is directly comparable to the earlier NISA surveys. The survey is run on a modular format with two modules repeated every year (political attitudes and community relations) as well as a number of background questions. Other modules included in the remainder of the survey vary annually. The data is available for download from the Northern Ireland Social and Political Archive (ARK) at <http://www.ark.ac.uk>.

Table 1A Northern Ireland Data Sources

Survey	Field-work	Sample size	Average response rate %	Available at
Loyalty survey	1968, Mar–Aug	1,291	87	UKDA, no. 1040
Attitudes survey	1978, Jul–Oct	1,277	64	UKDA, no. 1347
NISA survey	1989, Mar–Apr	866	68	UKDA, no. 2792
NISA survey	1990, Feb–Apr	896	68	UKDA, no. 2841
NISA survey	1991, Feb–Apr	906	68	UKDA, no. 2953
NISA survey	1993, Feb–Apr	842	68	UKDA, no. 3440
NISA survey	1994, Mar–Aug	1,519	68	UKDA, no. 3590
NISA survey	1995, May–Aug	1,510	68	UKDA, no. 3797
NISA survey	1996, May–Jul	786	68	UKDA, no. 4130
NILT survey	1998, Oct–Dec	1,800	68	ARK
NILT survey	1999, Oct–Jan 2000	2,200	63	ARK
NILT survey	2000, Oct-Dec	1,800	63	ARK
NILT survey	2001, Oct-Dec	1,800	63	ARK
NILT survey	2002, Oct-Jan 2003	1,800	63	ARK
NILT survey	2003, Oct-Feb 2003	1,800	63	ARK
NILT survey	2004, Oct-Feb 2005	1,800	63	ARK
NILT survey	2005, Oct-Jan 2006	1,200	63	ARK
NILT survey	2006, Oct-March 2007	1,230	63	ARK
NILT survey	2007, Oct-Jan 2008	1,179	63	ARK
NILT survey	2008, Oct-Feb 2009	1,215	63	ARK
NILT survey	2009, Oct-Dec	1,228	63	ARK
NILT survey	2010, Oct-Dec	1,205	63	ARK
Pooled NISA and NILT surveys 1989-2010		31,417	n/a	ARK

Appendix 2. Modules and survey questions

Table 2A Module: Community relations

Variable NINATID recoded NATIONAL IDENTITY

Which of these best describes the way you think of yourself?	
British	(1)
Irish	(2)
Ulster	(3)
Northern Irish	(4)
Other	(5)
Don't know	(8)

(asked in NISA and NILT surveys 1989 to 2010)

Table 2B Module: Background

Variable (RELIGION)

Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion? If yes, which?

No religion	(1)
Catholic	(2)
Church of Ireland/Anglican/Episcopal	(3)
Baptist	(4)
Methodist	(5)
Presbyterian	(6)
Free Presbyterian	(7)
Brethren	(8)
Reform Church (URC)/Congregational	(9)
Pentecostal	(10)
Church of Scotland	(11)
Elim Pentecostal	(12)
Reformed Presbyterian	(13)
Non-subscribing Presbyterian	(14)
Salvation Army	(15)
Church of Nazarene	(16)
Jehovah's Witness	(17)
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day	(18)
Other Protestant - please say which	(19)
Other Christian - please say which	(20)
Hindu	(21)
Jewish	(22)
Islam/Muslim	(23)
Sikh	(24)
Buddhist	(25)
Other	(26)
Don't know	(98)

(asked in NISA and NILT surveys 1989 to 2010)

Table 2C Module: Community relations

Variable SRELNGH recoded RESIDENTIAL AREA

What about your neighbours? About how many are the
same religion as you?

All	(1)
Most	(2)
Half	(3)
Less than half	(4)
None	(5)
Don't have a religion	(6)
Not Protestant or Catholic	(7)
Don't know	(8)

(asked in NISA surveys 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995 and NILT surveys 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010)

Table 2D Module: Community relations

Variable SLFMXSCH recoded TYPE OF EDUCATION (A)

Did you ever attend a mixed or integrated school in Northern
Ireland, that is, a school with fairly large numbers of <u>both</u>
Catholic <u>and</u> Protestant children?

Yes	(1)
No	(2)
(Don't know)	(8)

(asked in NISA/NILT surveys 1989 to 2010)

Table 2E Module: Community relations

Variable FORMINT recoded TYPE OF EDUCATION (B)

Was this a <u>formally</u> integrated school or was it a school that was just fairly mixed?	
Formally integrated school	(1)
School that was just fairly mixed	(2)
(Don't know)	(8)

(asked in NILT surveys 1998 to 2010)

Table 2F Module: Community relations

Variable SRELFRND recoded FRIENDSHIP NETWORK

About how many of your friends would you say are the same religion as you?	
All	(1)
Most	(2)
Half	(3)
Less than half	(4)
None	(5)
(Don't have a religion)	(6)
(Not Protestant or Catholic)	(7)

(asked in NISA surveys 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995 and NILT surveys 2000, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010)

Table 2G Module: Community relations

Variable SRELREL recoded KINSHIP

What about your relatives, including relatives by marriage?
About how many are the same religion as you?

All	(1)
Most	(2)
Half	(3)
Less than half	(4)
None	(5)
(Don't have a religion)	(6)
(Not Protestant or Catholic)	(7)

(asked in NISA surveys 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995 and NILT surveys 2000, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010)

Table 2H Module: Background

Variable RELIGSAM recoded MARRIAGE

Is your husband/wife/partner the same religion as

Yes, same religion	(1)
	(2)
No religion at all	(3)

(asked in NILT surveys 1998 to 2005)

Appendix 3. Coding

Table 3A Coding of dependent and independent variables

Variable	Coding
National identity	
(Catholics)	Catholic respondents identifying as Northern Irish coded as 1. Catholic respondents identifying as Irish coded as 0.
(Protestants)	Protestant respondents identifying as Northern Irish coded as 1. Protestant respondents identifying as British coded as 0.
Residential area	Respondents with half/ less than half of same religion neighbours defined as 'mixed' and coded as 1. Respondents with all or most of same religion neighbours defined as 'segregated' and coded as 0.
Type of Education	
(mixed)	Respondents who attended a mixed or integrated school coded as 1. Those who stated to have not attended a mixed or integrated school coded as 0.
(formally integrated)	Respondents who stated to have attended a formally integrated school coded as 1. Those who stated to have attended a fairly mixed school coded as 0.
Kinship ties	Respondents with half/ less than half of same religion kin defined as 'mixed kinship' and coded as 1. Respondents with all or most of same religion kin defined as 'homogenous' and coded as 0.
Friendship network	Respondents with half/ less than half of same religion friends defined as 'mixed friendship and coded as 1. Respondents with all or most of same religion friends defined as 'homogenous' and coded as 0.
Mixed marriage	Respondents who stated that their husband/wife/partner is not the same religion defined as 'mixed' and coded as 1. Respondents who stated that their husband/wife/partner is the same religion defined as 'endogamous' and coded as 0.

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