

ESRC End of Award Research Report
Reference Number: RES-000-22-1013

Title: Forward to the Past? Interpreting Contemporary and Future Loyalist Violence

Background

Analysis of post-conflict violence generally examines renewed conflict between enemies, the rise of dissidents opposed to peace making initiatives and those who morph into criminal gangs (Keen, 2001; Moran, 2004). In South Africa and Serbia some paramilitaries sought the maintenance of status through 'punishment' violence, revenge or extensive criminality. Dowdney (2005) argues that such violence maintained lost status while Stedman (1997) and Boyce (2002) assert that dissenters aim to 'spoil' what they view as unjust peace accords.

Such analyses are partly valid with regard to post-ceasefire loyalism.¹ Violence has continued and criminal activity has grown. However, the present leadership attached to the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), Red Hand Commandos (RHC), Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) sponsors conflict transformation and reconciliation. They have, for example, excluded members who perpetuated sectarian and racist violence and criminality.

Bruce (1992) in particular has highlighted the identities, personalities and events that have driven loyalist violence. The vacuum created by the peace process and Bruce's (1992: 112) prediction that Irish Republican Army (IRA) demilitarisation would create a 'hollow façade' for loyalists is crucial in interpreting post-conflict outcomes. The pro-state character of loyalism undermined political adjustment and is crucial in exploring a truncated adjustment to peace.

The leadership's commitment to conflict transformation is important but has been paralleled by the use of violence especially against those who have undermined loyalist 'authority'. The utilisation of violence against loyalist opponents is envisaged as a 'necessary' removal of a key impediment to loyalist transition. Such violence highlights the somewhat intangible nature of loyalism and encourages external renditions that present it as an 'idiocy that comes with a fragmented culture that has lost both memory and meaning' (Howe, 2005). Loyalism is also castigated for 'lacking' the capacity to socially transform. As noted by Alison (2004: 453),

'Liberatory' forms (*Irish republicans*) also usually incorporate fairly wide-ranging goals of social transformation as part of their political programmes while state and pro-state nationalisms (*loyalists*) do not.

Thus loyalism is generally represented as:

- Failing to determine a social space with a positive vocabulary regarding the ownership and meaning of its own identity;

¹ Loyalism is here understood as loyalist paramilitarism and the groups associated with it. We acknowledge there are wider definitions of loyalism with regard to the imagined Protestant people of Ulster (Aughey, 1997).

- Having undermined the potential to build social capital;
- Infested with criminals;
- Divided between neo-fascism and socialism.

Such depictions have worth but are counter-balanced by those loyalists who in rejecting the efficacy of violence as a strategy in itself provide a powerful exercise in moral leadership. In challenging negative portrayals of them loyalist leaders argue that:

- Positive presentations of conflict transformation are generally unmentioned by external commentators.
- They have done much to quell elements intent upon a return to conflict;
- Networks have been created that encourage dialogue with former adversaries;
- That they promote the principles of conflict transformation;
- Loyalists are building links with statutory agencies in order to encourage social capital formation;

Positive and negative forms of loyalism have always co-existed and the peace process is allowing 'thinking' loyalism to emerge, if slowly and unevenly (Bruce, 2004). With the exception of Bruce (2004) and McAuley (2004) the role of 'transitional' loyalism is under-explored. In furthering these analyses we consider recent violence and the capacity to shift into progressive and legitimate domains. Such a transition is crucial with regard to ending victimization, encouraging citizenship and demobilising threat. Despite the immediacy of such issues it is obvious that the capacity to shift loyalism forwards has come from within. There has been insufficient external recognition of positive loyalist leadership within public discourse. Transitional attitudes and models are being advanced and their promotion aims to emasculate a loyalism that does not shift forwards but returns to a de-stabilising past.

Objectives

The objectives of this project were as follows:

- To measure the nature of loyalist violence since 1994;
- To examine that violence at the level of sectarianism, feuding and future constitutional change;
- To determine the meaning and rationale of such violence;
- To analyse the form and potential of conflict transformation and the re-definition of loyalism;

- To examine the external attitudes directed at loyalists and how this perpetuates criminalisation and loyalist insecurity.

Methods

Within social science research it has been recognised that ‘gaining access and insight into partially or wholly deviant groups is fraught with difficulties’ (Winlow *et al*, 2001: 537). However, gaining access was not a problem within this study. We have created strong working relationships with loyalists despite critical assessment of them. To some extent paramilitary groups are willing to engage if trust has been established. Key loyalists do not discourage criticism if it is based upon research criteria that underline the benefits and costs and that the results are discussed with the respondent body prior to publication.

Trust is generally established over a long-time frame. Among many loyalists there is recognition that academic research furthers conflict transformation via external dialogue. The trust built in previous projects allowed greater access than previously granted. Our respondents included two prominent members of the RHC, a member of the UVF’s Brigade Staff, a UVF Company Commander, 2 Inner Council members of the UDA/UFF, and 12 volunteers drawn across these organisations. Two members of the LVF were also interviewed as were political representatives from seven local political parties and spokespersons from the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats. The Assistant Chief Constable was interviewed as well as staff from the British-Irish Secretariat, the chair of the Loyalist Commission and members of the community sector.

Analysis emerged through a process of snowball sampling, intermediary agencies and personal contacts. This is a non-probability sample and it is legitimate to question the quality of data arising from this methodological approach. The research did, however, triangulate data on loyalist paramilitary violence through semi-structured interviews with community organisations, and statutory bodies with experience of such violence, feedback from political parties and secondary data sources (newspapers, community-newsheets and police statistics). The nature and types of violence undertaken, the justifications for its use were independently repeated in the accounts of a number of interviewees. An ‘ideal-type’ sampling framework simply is not available to researchers in areas of high sensitivity (Pickering, 2001). Liebling and Stanko (2001: 428) note that ‘telling any story about violence entails a negotiation with norms’. Thus we make normative judgements about the types of information gained.

Low ranking members displayed a localised knowledge compared to elite members who held wider interpretations. Members of the same organisation had dissimilar motivations and attitudes. In overcoming these difficulties the authors undertook interviews across a broad spectrum from ‘foot soldiers’ to leaders. Qualitative work was undertaken with individuals in order to ensure that respondents spoke without hindrance from other members. In previous research, some individuals would not dissent when they were interviewed in the company of others. Younger and more critical voices tended to remain silent. Personal interviewing encouraged diverse opinions and perspectives to be raised via specific quotes and broad themes. The identity of members of illegal organisations is withheld.

The research also incorporated a measurement of violent events both through the collation of deaths data and the mapping of these events in Belfast. Postcodes relating to

site of death, especially in the early 1970s and beyond Belfast, are deficient. There are several indexes regarding politically motivated deaths in Northern Ireland and criticism of them regarding their accuracy. With regard to this the research team undertook the assemblage of their own database via newspaper articles and information provided by respondents and police.

A list of deaths in Northern Ireland from 1966 to 2006 was created. This was presented to interviewees for comment and in several cases the group responsible was altered. The post 1994 data was generally agreed but in several circumstances the status of the victim remained contested. The UVF, for example, contended that two persons noted as Protestant civilians were members of the LVF, although the LVF respondents denied this. In order to create standardisation we accepted the organisational claiming of members. The more area specific data for Belfast was mapped via GIS to aid the examination of spatial distributions. We know of no other such maps within the public domain.

A database of reported loyalist paramilitary 'punishments' was also created. Unlike the available police data, the research team via consultation with respondents were able to attribute responsibility to respective loyalist paramilitary groups.

Results

(i) Loyalist Violence

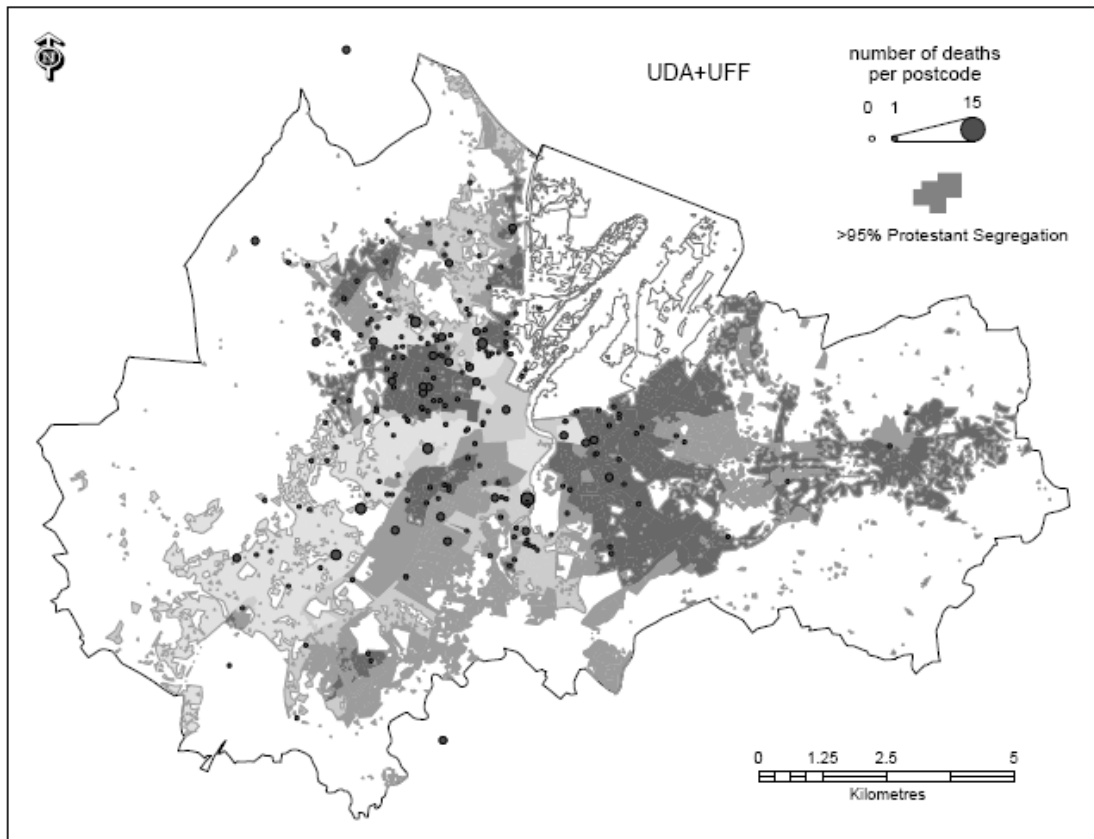
. In developing a frame within which to analyse loyalist violence we develop Rosenbaum and Sederberg's (1976) triple-level typology of vigilantism. These levels are:

- **Crime control:** 'Punishment' attacks on suspected criminals or anti-social 'deviants'.
- **Social group:** Violence that aims to control groups vying for a new social order, for example sectarian attacks upon Catholics.
- **Regime control:** Establishment violence designed to alter the regime's functioning, for example the involvement of loyalist paramilitaries in the Ulster Workers' Council Strike which saw the collapse of the Sunningdale Agreement in 1974.

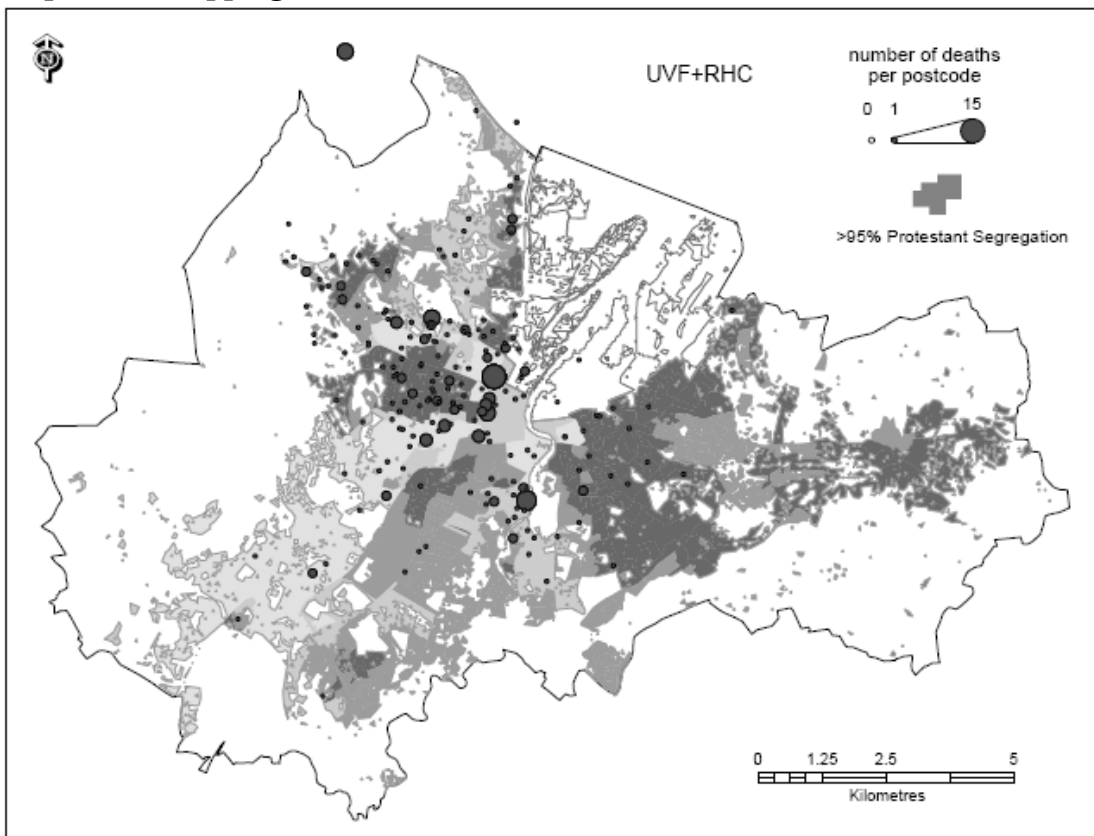
Such 'actor-based' violence remains. Crime control violence is commonly identified but is declining. Social group violence, especially with regard to the activities of the Loyalist Volunteer Force, C Company and Red Hand Defenders (RHD-cover name for C Company), has also been undertaken although this violence has declined. The capacity to undertake regime change violence has dwindled. Key loyalists supported the Belfast Agreement or understood their inability to mobilise against it. The potential of regime change violence still lies in constitutional uncertainty. There is an additional dimension that is crucial in undertaking contemporary loyalist violence and that is internal group control based upon feuding, criminality and dissent.

Loyalists committed 977 deaths in the period between 1966 and the ceasefires of 1994. The majority of victims (74.1%) were civilian Catholics. As shown in Maps 1 and 2.

Map 1: GIS Mapping of Deaths Attributed to the UDA/UFF



Map 2: GIS Mapping of Deaths Attributed to the UVF and RHC



Loyalist violence in Belfast has been undertaken within a narrow arena that is largely confined to the Shankill and the interfaces between it and nationalist/republican places. Other boundary zones between Donegall Pass and the Lower Ormeau and Short Strand and Ballymacarrett are important. Few killings took place beyond these interface zones and within the centre of republican/nationalist communities. As shown in Map 2 UVF bombing produced sites of multiple casualties (indicated by larger dots) most of which were public bars.

A summary description of pre-1994 UVF/RHC violence is as follows:

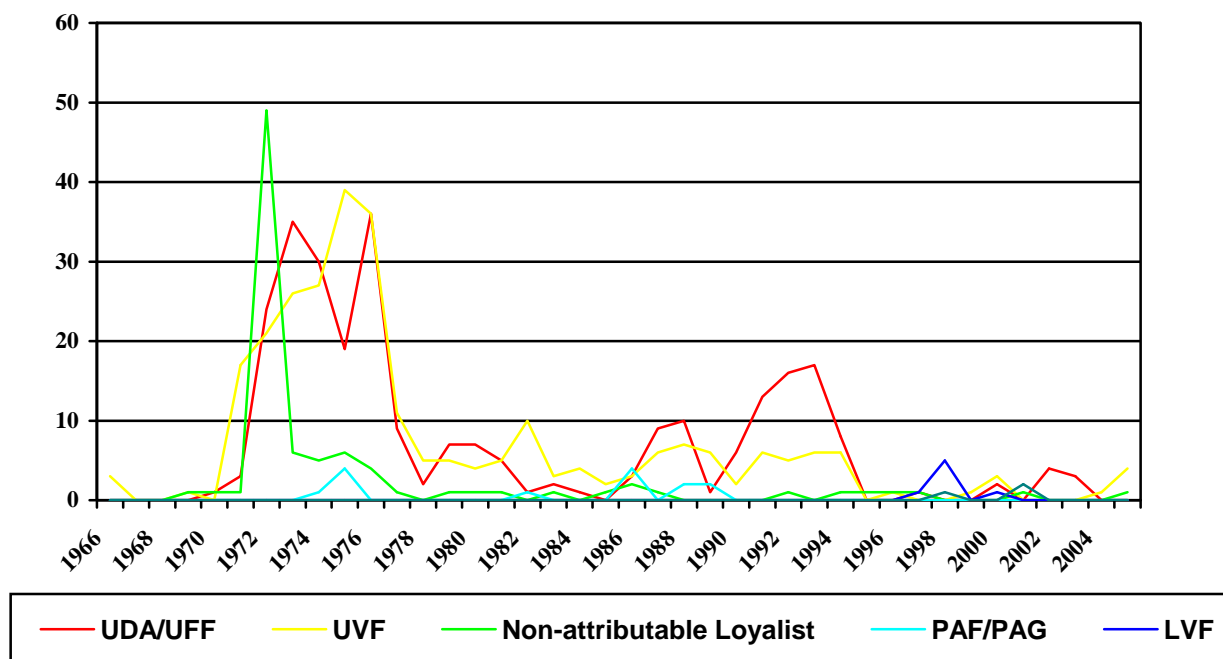
- 534 deaths or 54.6% of all loyalist fatalities;
- Catholic civilians constituted 72.6% of victims;
- 4.3% of all victims were either republican paramilitaries or Sinn Fein members;
- 3.1% were members of the UVF;
- 2.8% of victims were members of UDA/UFF.

Of the 406 murders undertaken by the UDA/UFF a similar pattern emerges:

- The majority of victims were civilian Catholics (71.4%)
- 4.9% were members of the UDA/UFF;
- 1.1% were members of the UVF.

An obvious feature of loyalist violence between 1966 and 1994 was a significant decline in the death rate after the mid 1970s, especially within Belfast (Figure 1).

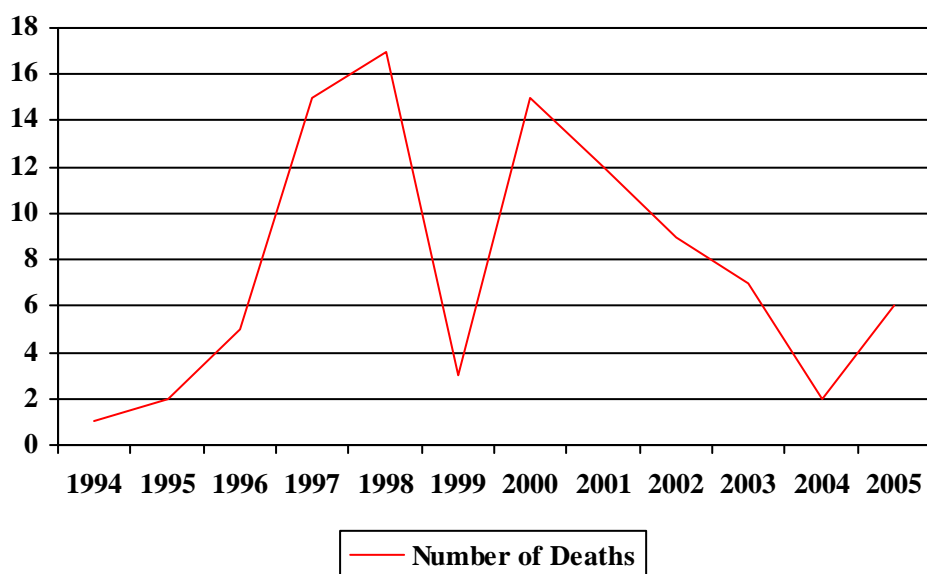
Figure 1: Loyalist Deaths in Belfast since 1966 (By Organisation)



A rise in loyalist violence occurred in the 1980s but this growth did not match previous levels. The rise in violence after 1986 was closely linked to the activities of the UFF's C Company and the Mid-Ulster Brigade of the UVF. The emergence of C Company as dedicated militarists under the leadership of Johnny Adair and the growing military status of the UVF's Mid-Ulster Brigade member, Billy Wright was important with regard to future violence. The formation of the LVF in 1996 was directly linked to the mid-Ulster UVF, under Wright's leadership, perpetuating sectarian murder and being expelled from the organisation by the UVF leadership.

We account for 89 loyalist killings since 1994 as depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Loyalist Deaths in the Post Ceasefire Period



These deaths can be further classified with regards to victim type and organisation responsible as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Post Ceasefire Loyalist Deaths

Victim Type	Group Responsible							Total
	UVF	LVF*	C Company	UDA	Unspecified	RHC	RHD	
Catholic Civilian	4	8	2	5	7		5	31
Protestant Civilian	10	2	2	4	1		1	20
UVF	4	3	1	3			1	12
UDA/UFF	3		1	4			4	12
C Company				1				2
Police					1		1	2
IRA		1						1
RHC		1				1		6
LVF	4	1				1		1
RHD					1			1
PUP			1					1
Total	25	15	7	17	10	2	12	89

*Includes unsanctioned murder whilst LVF members were in UVF.

With regard to social control violence the following:

- The 31 civilian Catholics murdered constituted 34.8% of all deaths. They now constitute the minority of loyalist murders, although remaining as the largest identified group;
- 14 (45.1%) Catholic civilians were murdered by the LVF, C Company and the RHD. An additional 7 (22.5%) were killed by non-organisation based persons;
- 29% of Catholic civilians were murdered by the UVF and UDA/UFF. Only two murders were sanctioned by UFF Brigade members. None of these murders committed by the UVF were sanctioned;
- The PSNI estimate that loyalists were involved in 513 pipe bombing incidents between 2000 and 2005.
- Most of these attacks were directed at Catholic communities. There were 236 attacks in 2001 and 135 in 2002 (72.3% of all attacks).
- Attacks declined to 43 in 2003 and 34 in 2004.
- The PSNI contend that most of these attacks were conducted by C Company, RHD and UFF.

With regard to crime control:

- 20 civilian Protestants were murdered, half by the UVF. Many were punishment attack while some were innocent bystanders or misidentified paramilitaries.
- 489 'punishment' beatings were recorded from the ceasefires of 1994 until the end of March 2006. More than half of these (51%) are attributable to the UDA and 42% to the UVF.
- 'Punishment' shootings in the same period equalled 686 with the UDA responsible for 48% of such attacks and the UVF 47%;
- 'Punishment' violence has declined significantly in the past year as indicated in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3: 'Punishment' Beatings Attributed by Organisation

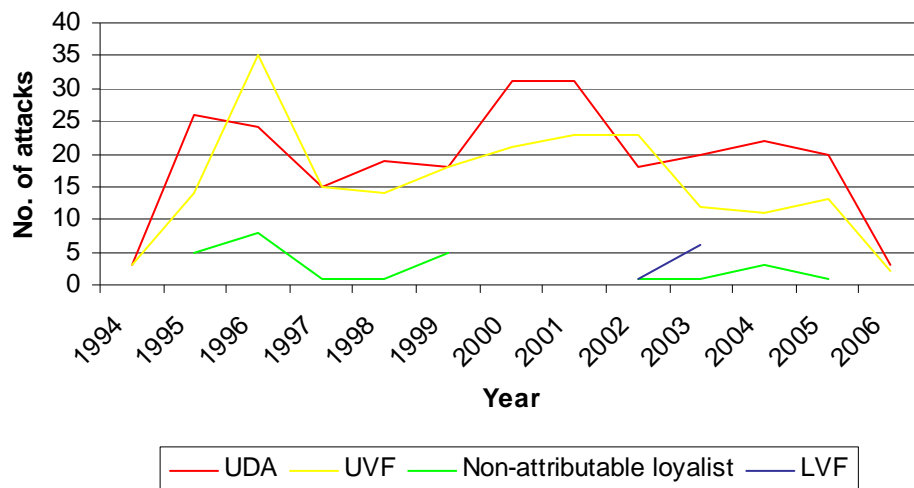
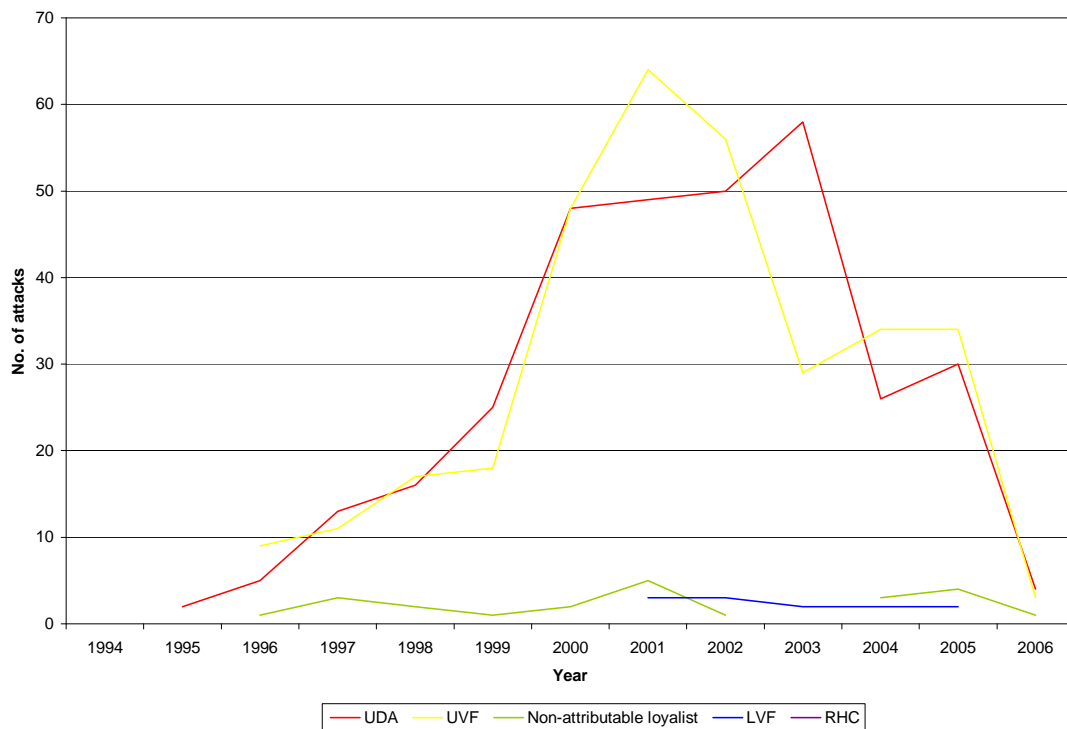


Figure 4: 'Punishment' Shootings Attributed By Organisation

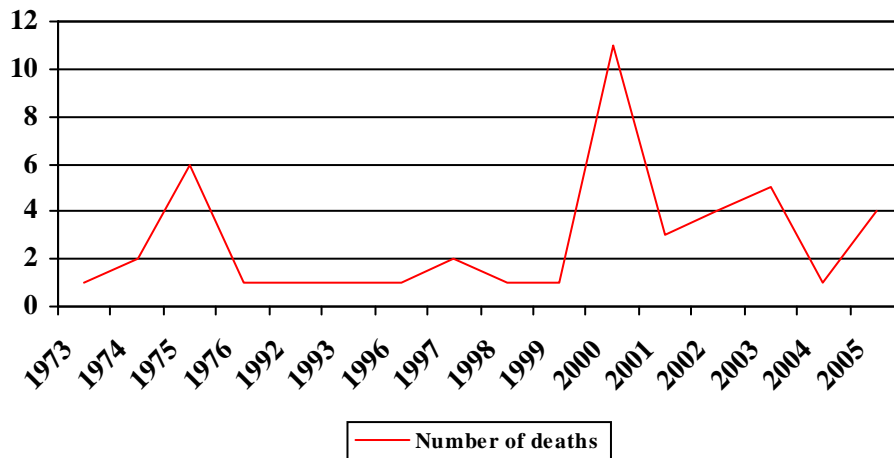


With regard to internal control:

- 35 loyalists were killed by loyalists. This constitutes 39.2% of all victims;
- 20 (57.1%) were killed in internal feuds and punishments;
- 15 (42.8%) were killed in inter-group feuding.

The flow of loyalist feud deaths is illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Loyalist Feud Deaths



An evident peak in internal violence emerged post 1999 as a result of the feud between C Company and the UVF and the UVF and LVF. Feud deaths grew again after 2001 due to conflict between the UFF and C Company and the UVF and North Belfast LVF. Feud deaths in 2005 related to the UVF move to ‘obliterate’ the LVF.

53.9% of loyalist murders were undertaken by or against the LVF, C Company and the RHD. Two key individuals, Billy Wright and Johnny Adair, are central in the explanation of that violence. Bruce (2004) argues there is little in the way of theoretical analysis that can be applied to these persons. They are understood, by other loyalists, as psychotic, self-indulgent and encouraged by ‘shadowy’ figures within the security forces opposed to the peace process.

A member of the LVF argued that their rationale was to take ‘loyalism back to war’ as the peace process ‘aimed to carry us into a United Ireland’. The LVF’s disbandment in 2005, via UVF violence, was partly based upon ideology but due mostly to their challenge to UVF authority. The eventual removal of C Company, by the UFF, was based upon Adair’s desire to control the parent organisation. C Company’s use of ethno-sectarian violence is understood as an opportunistic display of status and ability and not a desire to ‘spoil’ peacemaking initiatives.

Without doubt these persons had gained a status for ruthless violence and through their desire for perpetuated status dis-engaged themselves from wider loyalist discourse. Irrespective of their motivation Kriesberg’s (1982: 32) argument that the basis of conflictual behaviour is ‘an intention to induce the other side to yield what the coercer wishes to obtain’ is instructive. The ‘other’ side with regard to post-conflict violence were increasingly loyalists. As noted by a member of the UFF Inner Council:

What motivated Adair and Wright isn’t important anymore. They’re gone as are others like them. They wanted to keep using violence to further their own aims. We wanted to build peace but we had to fight them to get loyalism back onto the track for peace. Their aims were outta sync with the broader loyalist community’.

Established leaders claim they struggled to steer a course between promoting non-violence and utilising violence towards these groups. Furthermore, the removal of these groups was based upon debilitating the desire of others to join them. As noted the Commanding Office of the RHC:

In other words, if you were having to discipline someone within your own organisation, tactics became different because where you once would have expelled someone, you had to be conscious of what you were doing because these people would have run and jumped onto this other vehicle, so that vehicle had to be destroyed once and for all because the UVF, and there is proof beyond a shadow of a doubt, started five feuds and the last feud, people were adamant and determined, that this would be the feud to end all feuds.

This commentary echoes a definitive argument that the capacity to stop violence became a problem internal to loyalism. In the past, as illustrated by Bruce (1992), the main impediment to 'thinking' loyalism was the IRA. In the post 1994 era the key obstructions were internal. The 'spoilers' came into opposition with 'old friends'. The reaction to them, although illegitimate, signified a desire to expel and to reduce the potential for future violence. Militarists are 'confident' that the removal of such elements will provide a more stable arena within which to pursue conflict transformation.

(ii) The Future of Constitutional Violence

The issue of a united Ireland presented a contested series of responses even among military leaders. Most respondents who held elite positions argued that the principle of consent as outlined in the Belfast Agreement would be upheld. As noted by a senior UVF leader:

Well I spoke earlier about the principle of consent, and there is no sense in being a hypocrite, if people desire otherwise then so be it. If it is the will of the people then so be it. Put it this way – I like steak but if you try to force steak down my throat I will reject it – and this is the beauty of the principle of consent if people vote that way then that's what the people want and it is not forced upon them. If it was forced upon us then I would reject it.

Elite members did not accept that a united Ireland is a foregone conclusion. It was noted that the Irish state had come to disregard the desire for unification and with the British state viewed Northern Ireland as a problem that would be resolved internally.

However, a prominent member of the RHC argued that the position of loyalists was to oppose Irish unification despite the consent principle. As stated:

The same way we responded in 1969. The arms would be picked up again. Even if the people voted for it, you will always get an element that will resist.

All non-elite members who were aged under 30, although numbering only 12 persons, provided a distant view from their respective leaderships. They concluded that the

Belfast Agreement was illusionary and that to accept a united Ireland would be a form of commonly denoted 'enslavement'. As noted by one respondent from the UFF:

We want peace and we will follow our leadership but only up to a point in time. If there is a threat of a united Ireland then a new generation will take to arms.

Such competing perspectives indicate a tension within loyalism and pinpoint a failure to create a unified voice. The necessary role of loyalist leaders with regard to transformation into constitutionalism is not beyond doubt.

(iii) Beyond Violence

Conflict transformation is interpreted within loyalism as a process of contestation within and beyond loyalism. It is understood that conflict is also set within a wide social arena that encompasses suspicion, mistrust and the desire to restrain human rights development. Additional, interpretations of conflict transformation within loyalism include:

- The need to transform via an interpretation of equitable social, cultural and political definitions;
- That identity construction can both facilitate and undermine the deliverance of democratic accountability;
- That conflict can only be resolved when adversaries understand the capacity for transformation and the part that they can play in resolving conflict.

The desire to prevent future occurrences of violent disunity has been divided into two general perspectives. Firstly, a conflict transformation perspective encourages an analysis of the antecedents of conflict as a way out of disagreement. Secondly, seeking out better ways to represent loyalism within a process of capacity building has also emerged. Additional features include:

- Lifting loyalism out of insularity and into a host of civic and inter-community based relationships;
- Developing better relationships with government and statutory agencies;
- Promoting restorative justice schemes;
- Creating alternative community narratives which link loyalism into a post-ceasefire process;
- Challenging the mythic status of violence and in so doing diverting youth attention away from paramilitaries and sectarian violence.

From this perspective, paramilitaries and former paramilitaries involved in community work and restorative justice programmes seek to reduce tensions and/or promote reconciliation. There is a sense of the need to create an intersection between agency and

structure via the shift from a military to negotiator role. In 2004 a strident critic of loyalist violence the Independent International Monitoring Commission (IMC) recognised that community restorative justice programmes operated in an accountable manner. The operation of such schemes is crucial in the delivery of alternative 'policing' methods. Loyalists have also:

- Formed inter-community groups to stop interface violence;
- Provided seminars to youths to promote anti-violent approaches;
- Worked with republicans on shared history and prisoner issues;
- Developed links with statutory agencies in order to draw resources into Protestant communities

Academic and funder-led evaluation of loyalist community engagement has been positive and in particular praises the promotion of values of non-violence, human rights and inclusiveness (Annan, 2004; Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, 2003; Jarman, 2002; McEvoy and Mika, 2002)

An important factor in the promotion of non-violence is the extent to which the military leadership offered is found to be credible among the rank and file. Credibility has been important with regard to dissuading a return to large-scale violence as it provides legitimacy to anti-violence discourse, but operates as a further example of the internalised nature of transition. As a senior UFF member concluded:

Look you see if you went with all the goodwill in the world and said 'Lads the reasons for not going back to war are this and that'. They would listen but not heed you. If I walk in and say 'look I whacked so and so', the same fellahs would listen. We might say the same things but you don't have the stripes like I do.

A fundamental problem for those involved in such interventionist work is the threats that are endured. As noted by a UVF member:

You challenge the drugs dealers in your own ranks and they could just shoot your dead. These are the people who don't give a shit about the peace process. You see if we have a settled society then they will have to go. So it is in their interest to de-stabilise loyalism.

UVF linked persons have been at the forefront of the internal discussions with republicans which led to the production of working papers concerning respective constituencies' attitudes towards truth recovery processes (Eolas, 2003; EPIC, 2005). Outside their own immediate base, loyalist and republican former prisoners have played significant roles in other truth-focused initiatives. Loyalists have campaigned on a vast range of issues on behalf of themselves and Protestant communities. These include:

- Improved social services;
- Facilities and rights;
- The establishment of local job-seeking and social capital schemes;
- Welfare, education, counselling, advisory and advocacy roles;
- The creation of advice centres, family projects, counselling services, children's activities and social activities;

- Campaigning for the rights of former prisoners and their families.

Despite such shifts there remains an antipathy towards loyalism that remains dedicated to their existence: As noted by Fred Cobain (UUP) with regard to the maintenance of paramilitary structures:

I mean the whole *raison d'être* for loyalist paramilitaries has gone and if we are working through a peace process where there is an end to republican paramilitarism, which they are telling us it is, that's what this process is, then there is no *raison d'être* for loyalist paramilitaries.

According to a republican analysis loyalism, despite developing conflict amelioration initiatives, remains as a misguided arm of state collaboration that lacks social and cultural credibility:

They don't have an independent existence in terms of determining what they do and where they go politically but in fact their future is bound up with how the British securocrat system sees the future. Up to this point the British securocrat system has been using loyalists throughout the peace process and before that to achieve their objectives.

However, supportive attitudes are emerging: As contended by Sam Kincaid former Assistant Chief Constable:

So I see for the first time, certainly in my experience in both sides (*UVF/UFF*) a real effort, probably the last time we had anything as determined as this in some sense would maybe go back to '94 to the Combined Loyalist Military Command but even then, I think that was more to do with PR statements, I think there is genuine effort being made by key people within organisations to say well the point of all this has gone.

Note: See attached (1,000 words) summary of research results/non-technical summary for an overview of the project's conclusions.

Activities

Briefings have been provided by the research team to agencies and government bodies including the British-Irish Intergovernmental Secretariat, Belfast Interface Project, Community Relations Council and the Northern Ireland Office. Invited papers have also been presented at conferences, e.g. at the Irish Protestant Identities Conference (Salford University) and the Peace and Place Conference (University of Tromsø). Findings were presented at the ESRC's Devolution and Constitutional Change Programme (University of Ulster). Media interviews with UTV, Radio 4, Radio Ulster and Politics Show (NI).

Future dissemination plans are as follows:

- A one day conference scheduled for the 15 September 2006 entitled Beyond Crisis? Protestant Communities and Identity at the University of Ulster;
- Summary results and a more detailed report will be posted on the Social and Policy Research Institute's website;
- A number of academic publications are out for peer review or in press and a book proposal has been accepted by Pluto Press.

Outputs

Two articles are forthcoming in *Space and Polity*, 2006, Vol. 10(3):

- Peter Shirlow and Carole Gallaher, 'The Geography of Loyalist Paramilitary Feuding in Belfast, Northern Ireland';
- Rachel Monaghan and Suzanne McLaughlin, 'Informal Justice in the City'.

An excel database of media coverage of loyalist 'punishment' activity dating from the ceasefire of 1994 to the end of March 2006 has been created. The location of Troubles-related deaths attributed to loyalist paramilitary groups has also been mapped using GIS. This data is in the process of being lodged with Qualidata.

Future Research Priorities

Given the destabilising impact of violence and the lack of political support gained by loyalist political parties it is obvious that the capacity of conflict transformation has been undermined. Future research should visit the topic of conflict transformation within loyalism and record the activities that have and are evolving. It should also measure impact. Such work would be crucial in examining how pro-state groups emerge from conflict. Additional analysis could record the hurdles and impediments that such groups encounter. Monitoring the capacity of loyalist transformation is also important in order to determine the organisational and discursive desire to return to future conflict.

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Community & Voluntary Questions

1. What contact does your organisation have with loyalists?
2. Loyalist organisations are trying to transform. Does your organisation have a policy in assisting this transformation?
3. Does this differ in dealing with republicans?
4. Do you think government has different policies in dealing with different groups?
5. Do you think Government should mainstream funding for transformation initiatives or should the community and voluntary sector be the gate-keeper?
6. Do you think the community and voluntary sector are more prepared to take risks than government in terms of funding such initiatives?
7. Are loyalist organisations pushing for assistance in transformation initiatives or is government offering?
8. What is your understanding of where loyalism is at present?
9. How do you see the future for loyalism?

NIO Question

1. What sort of contact do you have with loyalists?
2. What is your understanding of where loyalism is at present?
3. Loyalist violence has mainly been internal in recent years – do you see any reason for this trend to continue?
4. Is your organisation assisting/supporting loyalism in any way?
5. Does your organisation have a policy for dealing specifically with loyalists? Does this differ from republicans?
6. What do you see as the future for loyalism?
7. In the context of constitutional uncertainty, how do you believe loyalists would react?

PSNI Questions

1.	Why do you think loyalist violence in recent years has been, in the main, directed at themselves?
2.	Do you see this trend continuing?
3.	What do you believe is behind the feuding?
4.	How do you envisage the future for loyalist paramilitary groups?

Questions for political parties

- How would you define loyalism?
- What is the raison d'être for loyalist paramilitary groups?
- Why are groups still recruiting?
- What do you believe is the rationale for loyalist violence past and present?
- Has the nature of loyalist violence changed over the years and in particular since the ceasefires of 1994?
- How do you think loyalists regard the Belfast Agreement, in particular the principle of consent: the removal of Articles 2 & 3 of the Irish Constitution?
- How do you think loyalists view republicans since the IRA statement of 28th July and their decommissioning?
- How do you think loyalists regard the Irish State in general?
- What do you think the reason/s are behind the recent violence (after the Whiterock parade)?
- Do you think political stability in Northern Ireland would help bring an end to paramilitarism? If not, what would?
- The media reporting of loyalism tends to focus on figures like Jonny Adair and Jim Gray - would you say media reporting is representative of loyalism?
- What are the positive aspects of loyalism?
- If the constitutional position of Northern Ireland within the UK became uncertain - how do you think loyalism would respond?
- What would be your party's response to a united Ireland?
- Is your party doing anything to help change loyalism?

Title: The Geography of Loyalist Paramilitary Feuding in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

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Abstract

This paper examines the nature of paramilitary feuding among Ulster Loyalists. The growth in feuding between loyalist groups has been an evident feature of discord following the 1994 cease-fires. Such feuding is cast as a competition between extensive criminal empires. Such analyses are challenged here. We contend that the meaning of feuding is varied and responsive to those who wish to de-stabilise and those who promote the need for conflict transformation.

A central aspect in the examination of place within Geography has been an increasingly sophisticated analysis of how identity is constituted spatially (Natter and Jones 1997; Pile and Thrift 1995; Graham 2004; Shirlow 2003). As geographers note, identity is bounded not only categorically (us versus them) but spatially (who is in/who is out). Bounding practices are influenced by layers of historical meaning and depend on the creation of territory or “spaces of identity” (Natter and Jones 1997). While all identities rely on delineating difference for their formation, the bounding practices that accompany them vary substantially (Cresswell 1996; Rose 1993). Political identity built on acceptance of difference results in porous, fluid borders while identity projects that view difference as dangerous produce territory where difference is eliminated and borders are enforced against its incursion.

During the Troubles in Northern Ireland, both Republicans and Loyalists were involved in engineering place in order to buttress the identity of their respective resistance communities (Shirlow and Murtagh, 2006). The symbolically coded identification and political control of places such as ‘South Armagh’ and ‘the Shankill’ were crucial to the (re)production respectively of Irish republicanism and Ulster loyalism (Boal 1969; Harnden 1999; McCann 2000; Munck 1985). Ultimately, territorialism in Northern Ireland is a form of resistance for both communities. For Loyalists, territorial resistance is achieved through discourses of suffering, moral righteousness and the right to resist ‘threats’ to continued union with Great Britain (Finlayson 1999; Finlay 2001; Graham and Shirlow 2002). Increasing it has been framed by those who wish to transform loyalist out of conflict and criminality and those who wish to perpetuate criminal greed and sectarian and racist actions.

In this paper we examine Loyalist resistance, and we do so in the context of Loyalist feuding. Since the 1994 ceasefire, Loyalism has witnessed a divide between those who wish to stabilise loyalism and those who have been unable to shift into a non-violent and non-criminal role. The decline in loyalist

violence was undermined by a significant growth in conflict following the 1998, Belfast Agreement (BA). Dis-satisfaction with mainstream loyalist leadership began in earnest in 1997 when Billy Wright leader of the mid-Ulster division of the UVF was stood down by the UVF after undertaking non-sanctioned sectarian murder.

Billy Wright went on to form a new, explicitly sectarian paramilitary group, the Loyalist Volunteer Force. Since then, several feuds have erupted either within or between the province's three largest Loyalist paramilitaries— the Ulster Defense Association/Ulster Freedom Fighters (UDA/UFF)ⁱ, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the Loyalist Volunteer Force, and. In this paper we examine the feud, which occurred in 2000 between the UVF leadership, based on the upper Shankill Road in Belfast, and the C Company of the UDA/UFF, concentrated on the lower end of the Shankill.

At the time C Company was led by Johnny Adair. Although the UDA was officially a party to the peace accord, its loose, confederate structure allowed Adair to tacitly flout the organization's stance regarding criminality and sectarian violence. Tensions began to brew between Adair's C Company and the UVF in the spring of 2000 when Adair started formalizing links with the LVF who had killed a prominent UVF member. A full blown feud erupted later in the summer, when Adair invited an LVF color guard to participate in a C Company parade that marched into UVF territory. The UVF considered the LVF's participation in the parade incendiary and a brawl commenced. It would mark the official start of the four month feud. When it was finally over, in December, seven people were dead, several buildings lay in ruins, and over 500 Loyalists were left homeless.

The 2000 feud has generally been depicted as a territorial clash caused by competition over associated criminal empires (McDowell 2001). When the 2000 feud erupted, for example, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Peter Mandelson described the feud as “nothing more or less than squalid murderous gang warfare” (Henderson 2000). Journalists offered a similar assessment. Writing in the *Guardian*, Jonathan Freedland (2000) opined, “in true Monty Python style, no one can name a doctrinal difference that separates Adair's UFF from the Ulster Volunteer Force which it hates so bloodily.” While there is no denying that paramilitaries are involved in criminality, the feud was also a battle about the legitimacy of transitional loyalism and the anti-transformation actions of C Company. It was a battle fought on highly symbolic terrain in Ulster Loyalism—the Shankill Road, which is viewed as a Protestant

heartland in Northern Ireland. Indeed, the road, which stretches westward from the city centre is one of the most recognizably Protestant and Loyalist places in the province.

We make three arguments in the course of our analysis. First, we use our case study—the feud between the UVF and the UDA C Company—to demonstrate that resistance can be right-wing and regressive. That is, resistance does not have to be counter-hegemonic to be resistance. In so doing, we build on a number of recent studies on both Loyalism (Finlay 2001; Graham 2004; Graham and Shirlow 2002; McAuley 1991, 2004) and right wing movements in the US (Flint 2004; Gallaher 1996, 2003; Kirby 1997; Medlicott 2004). Secondly, it is argued that C Company built its resistance to the shifts in loyalism through a rigid and fundamentalist identity politic in which Loyalists engaged in transformation were deemed ‘pro-fenian’ⁱⁱ traitors. Finally, C Company’s resistance to other loyalists was essentially territorial.

As Bruce argues (2004) Adair driven by meglomania and status sought to take over loyalist territory in an effort to project his own Loyalist power base. Some argue that Adair was anti-peace and others do not. However, there is a unanimous interpretation that he who employ any tactics that would de-stabilise any form of loyalism that challenged him. As noted by a UVF commader:

‘When it was clear that transtional and progressive loyalism was aiming to take loyalism off the stage then you saw the fear in Adair’s eyes. When we said that it was over and the drugs and the crime had to go you saw him full ah fear. You knew then that he would use any means to try and destroy us lot who wanted peace. He started getting more sectarian as he thought if he could get the Provies (Irish Republican Army) back to war and then he could keep his wee criminal empire’.

C Company’s involvement with the Red Hand Defenders (a cover name for the UFF) and their pursuit of a sectarian murder campaign is crucial in determining some of thier actions. However, in the ‘post-conflict’ period C Company’s attention increasingly turned toward other loyalists. The eventual removal of C Company, by the UFF, was based upon Adair’s desire to control the parent organisation. C Company’s use of ethno-sectarian violence is understood as an opportunistic display of status and ability and not merely a desire to ‘spoil’ peacemaking initiatives, although destabilizing the peace process provided status. C Company mobilized a variety of discourses in order to present themselves as different from progressive loyalist elements. Thus when those elements promoted reconciliation and political

direction C Company engaged murals that were evidently sectarian. When the peace process began to produce stability C Company aimed to undermine that constancy as it threatened their status.

Without doubt C Company had gained a status for ruthless violence and through their desire for perpetuated status dis-engaged themselves from wider loyalist discourse. Irrespective of C Company's motivation Kriesberg's (1982: 32) argument that the basis of conflictual behaviour is 'an intention to induce the other side to yield what the coercer wishes to obtain' is instructive. The 'other' side with regard to post-conflict violence were increasingly loyalists. As noted by a member of the UFF Inner Council:

What motivated Adair and Wright isn't important anymore. They're gone as are others like them. They wanted to keep using violence to further their own aims. We wanted to build peace but we had to fight them to get loyalism back onto the track for peace. Their aims were outta sync with the broader loyalist community'.

Our analysis suggests that territorialization is not merely a constant feature of *inter*-community discord but also of *intra*-community friction. The paper begins with a discussion of resistance and place-making in Northern Ireland. The second section provides an overview of the competing notions of Loyalism since the signing of the 1998 Belfast agreement. The emergence of the UFF C Company on the lower Shankill in the mid to late 1990s is documented in the third section. In the final section we demonstrate how competing narratives of Loyalism are territorially produced, and how these contesting visions resulted in a dangerous feud in the summer of 2000 that buttressed a growing trend towards segregation by paramilitary affiliation *within* Loyalist space in Belfast. The information provided is based upon semi-structured interviews with loyalist paramilitaries. All respondents wished to remain anonymous given that they are members of illegal paramilitary organizations.

Reframing Resistance

The postmodern turn in geography during the 1980s was predicated on the assertion that structural and humanist explanations could not adequately explain the unevenness of social space (Bondi 1990; Gregory 1994; Soja 1989). The role of culture and identity were posited as fundamental for understanding an array of socio-spatial processes, including the construction of territory and territorial identities (Pile and Thrift 1995). In particular, scholars began to focus on how individuals and

communities resisted the social and spatial exclusion that resulted from the cultural hegemony of white, western males (Bondi 1990; Rose 1993). In geography, scholars uncovered a variety of spatial resistance strategies. Some studies demonstrate how groups in resistance subvert territorial boundaries imposed by the state (Cresswell 1996). Others examine how groups resist by breaking normative rules in spaces controlled by dominant groups (Geltmaker 1992; Valentine 1995). Still others focus on the ways in which resistance groups create safe spaces in which to nurture resistance identities (Coyle 2004).

Much of the work on resistance has been biased, however, towards promoting an interpretation of groups and communities which advance the articulation of what are deemed to be 'radical' or 'counter-hegemonic' modes of political activity (Brown 1997; Law 1997; Moore 1997). Indeed, those communities which are deemed to promote sexist, racist, violent, homophobic, or religiously convicted discourses have historically been omitted from serious analysis, although the trend is changing (in Geography see Flint 2004; Gallaher 2003; Graham and Shirlow 2002). As Gallaher (1997) notes in earlier work on right wing politics in the US,

...the hegemonic discourses through which the right articulates its identity are rarely analyzed or even discussed, while those on the left, for example, are not only named, but continually deconstructed in order to ensure that the diversity and instability within such positions is not overlooked (p. 261).

Historically, such groups have been ignored in the academy because they are deemed reactionary. The assumption is that defenders of racism, sexism, or an otherwise unequal status quo lack ideology and are impermanent, disorganized, and unlikely to spur wider societal change (as ideologically organized movements presumably do). In early studies on the extreme right in the US, for example, adherents were labeled paranoid and their political efforts insignificant (Hofstadter 1965; Lipset 1963). Scholars have also tended to examine resistance quite narrowly because the postmodern turn in Geography reflected and later contributed to seventies resistance movement such as feminism, black power, and gay rights, which were all progressive movements (albeit not in the traditional vein of class politics). Changing demographics in the academy during the eighties is also relevant, as minorities, women, and openly gay people began to enter the academy. Not surprisingly, they questioned earlier theories that ignored or downplayed social activism by their peers. It is also possible that postmodern scholars, who found class a passé category of analysis, ignored Marxist accounts that did present populist politics as forms of resistance.

While it is clear that left-oriented movements have engaged in complex forms of resistance, the implicit assumption in postmodernist literature has been that resistance is counter-hegemonic. Whilst this paper employs a postmodernist approach by virtue of its focus on Loyalist identity politics, it holds that right wing politics can constitute resistance. In doing so we follow Steve Pile (1997), who argues that “resistance can involve resistance to any kind of change, to progressive and radical politics, and to social transformation” (p. 4). Indeed, to assume otherwise says less about the groups in question than the biases of those making the assumption. As Flint (2003) observes in the context of hate groups in the US, assuming that hate is “archaic” and “reactionary” allows Americans to avoid the fact that the mainstream often nurtures the conditions that breed hate (see also Bauman 2000 on Nazi Germany). Moreover, understanding defenses of the status quo, however odious, are important because such movements often have more political impact than academic analyses suggest. McGirr (2001) argues that the resurgence of the right in the US has recast American politics “in ways comparable only to the upheavals of the New Deal.” Likewise, Hainsworth (2000) argues that the far right in Europe has not only demonstrated electoral success, it has also “influenced the agendas, policies, and discourses of major political parties and governments” (p. 14).

While this review centers on a gap in poststructural literature on resistance, it is important to note that such gaps have not been evident in structuralist accounts of social movements. Indeed, Marxists have long examined populism in the context of resistance. This is certainly the case in the scholarship on Northern Ireland where Marxists and other structuralists have long identified Loyalism as a form of resistance, albeit in the context of labour relations (see Bew, Gibbon and Patterson 1979 and Stewart 1989). As such, this paper acknowledges a debt to this scholarship, and hopes, in a small way, to connect what are generally deemed to be mutually exclusive approaches.

In this paper we argue that the UFF’s C Company engaged in a politics of resistance, and we make two arguments about the nature of the group’s resistance. C Company was opposed to transitional loyalism and it actively sought to derail the assertion of ‘thinking’ loyalism. Its resistance was given from and through an identity politic that situated C Company as the true defenders of Ulster and the province’s Protestant people. Catholics are depicted as inferior to Protestants and complete segregation between the two groups is espoused. The war is viewed as incomplete because Irish Republicanism has yet to be defeated. Not surprisingly, C-Company’s membership has been linked to a number of sectarian

murders (Pat Finucane Centre 2001). C-Company's essentialist and antagonistic casting of difference, however, has also led C-Company to attack pro-peace Loyalists, who are labeled "Lundies,"ⁱⁱⁱ "traitors," and "pro-Fenian." As such, C Company's resistance is as much about internal discipline—against what it regards as a cancer growing within Loyalist ranks—as it is about defeating traditional enemies. C Company may not have wished to derail the peace process but they did wish to control Loyalism's body politics and would mobilise an anti-peace narrative when this was understood as capable of undermining Loyalists opposed to them.

The second argument we make about C-Company is that its resistance is territorial. In particular, we note a growing trend within loyalism towards intra-community segregation along paramilitary lines. The academic literature, however, contains surprisingly little analysis of this trend. The majority of work on spatial segregation in the post conflict era is focused on the intractable nature of inter-communal segregation and its intensification in some areas (Jarman 2002; Shirlow and Myrtagh, 2006).

While inter-community segregation is enduring the case study in this paper demonstrates that intra-community segregation, along paramilitary lines, is also occurring *within* Loyalist places. Indeed, the most violent episodes since 2000 have all been the result of internecine Loyalist feuding. And, the result of these feuds has been the displacement of Loyalist civilians deemed affiliated with the 'wrong' Loyalist paramilitary—the definition of which depends on the paramilitary one is speaking to. This added layer of segregation is troubling. It represents the first time that segregation has occurred within Loyalist communities by paramilitary affiliation. Indeed, while the UDA and the UVF have never had particularly warm relations (see Bruce 1992), there was only one significant internecine Loyalist feud during the whole period of the Troubles, and it occurred early on in the conflict, in 1974. Moreover, while Loyalist turf was divided between the two paramilitaries during the Troubles, it was common for people associated with the UVF to live in UDA territory and visa versa. Intra-community segregation also adds another layer of segregation to an already complexly segregated place, reinforcing and strengthening the fragmentation and disenfranchisement of loyalist enclaves.

Competing Loyalisms

The Unionist side of the conflict in Northern Ireland has never been particularly cohesive and has always been divided along a number of axes, including party affiliation, class background, acceptance of violence to protect the union, and paramilitary affiliation. While these divides continue to exist, since the 1994 ceasefire they have increasingly been subsumed within a larger divide between pro and anti agreement forces (Bruce, 1992).

In 1994 the Combined Loyalist Military Command (CLMC) negotiated a ceasefire in response to the Provisional Irish Republican Army's (PIRA) ceasefire. The CLMC contained leaders from both the UVF, Red Hand Commandos and the UDA. As preparations for the peace agreement progressed, however, Loyalist unity began to fracture. As noted above a key break occurred within the UVF, when the leadership, based on the Shankill Road, stood down members of its mid-Ulster unit. Many observers saw the murders as the division's way of signaling discontent with the leadership's support for the pending agreement. For their part, members of the UVF leadership contend the split was "engineered by certain anti-peace politicians who had tried and failed to get the UVF not to declare a ceasefire" (Mitchell 2000).

Another rupture occurred between paramilitary leaders and rank and file members. Indeed, while the leaders of both the UVF and the UDA supported the peace building, rank and file members in both groups have openly flouted their respective organization's ceasefires. The division has been more pronounced in the UDA, however, than in the UVF in large part because the confederate system of the UDA made it difficult to issue or enforce central mandates from the leadership (Bruce 2004; McCann 2000). According to McCann (2000), support of the 1998 agreement was always nominal within UDA ranks. And, McAuley (2004) has effectively summarized how the absence of status as a social or political force, coupled with a horizontal leadership structure within the UDA, has continually pushed members back to violence.

By early 2000, these divisions had crystallized into two broad camps—pro conflict transformation and those who wished to de-stabilise—and they had begun, as we suggest above, to manifest along institutional lines. Pro-agreement forces were mostly linked to the Progressive Unionist Party, the UVF's political wing. Its proponents began to vocalize the belief that the sectarian nature of violence was futile and undermined potential dialogue and political stability. The move to peace was

influenced by a strand of radical democratic socialism that had come to dominate UVF thinking among prominent members, especially on the Shankill Road. The imprisonment of key UVF personnel from the Shankill area, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, was crucial in a shift from a Protestant fundamentalist rhetoric toward an appreciation of pluralist ideals. Whilst imprisoned, many of these influential UVF men engaged in discussions with the Marxist inspired Official IRA (Irwin 2003; Stevenson 1996). These discussions led to a belief that the conflict was engineered to divide the working class and was manifestly not a conflict over theology. The perpetuation of sectarian hatred within loyalism was identified as counterproductive to working class interests, and perpetrators of sectarian violence were depicted as “insane rabble rousers” (Garland 1999). This pluralist view took hold within the UVF leadership on the Shankill Road, after the release of these figures from prison in the 1980s and early nineties.

Discontented forces, by contrast, began to depict themselves as the ‘champions’ of the Unionist community who actively stood against the ‘tyranny’ of Irish Republicanism. Violence, for them, had been a rational and legitimate response and under no circumstances should the label of sectarianism stain the reputation of those who had committed violent acts. Indeed, C Company advocated unreconstructed loyalist ideas of Protestant superiority and supported ethno-sectarian purity in territorial form. Political and cultural allegiance to the Union was operationalized through ethno-sectarian classification and the regulation of community space. So configured, Loyalist resistance was not only against Catholics, but the “creeping betrayal of the PUP” (interview with member of C company).

C Company, the case study in this paper, has invoked a number of discourses to ground their sometimes violent opposition to the UVF. Primary among them has been an anti-communist discourse. C Company has, for example, publicly condemned the PUP as “atheistic communists” who aimed to impose “socialist ideology over a conservative people” (Interview with C Company member). C Company has also invoked strictly religious discourses to define its cause. Irish Nationalism, ecumenism, republicanism, and Catholicism are depicted as “dark and satanic” forces ranged against Ulster’s Protestant people (Interview with C Company member). It is not surprising that C Company evoked triumphalist rhetoric during the summer marching season. Indeed, fundamentalist Protestantism has long deployed militaristic rhetoric about bringing the battle to God’s enemies, as well as an eventual “divine retribution” against them (Morrow 1997). C Company also invokes discourses of resoluteness. Theirs is a loyalism that will presumably defeat rather than negotiate with Irish Republicanism. Defeat

will surely entail suffering, but victory will ultimately prevail. All of these discourses are also grounded on ‘childlike’ depictions of Ulster’s Protestant people as persecuted, innocent, and in need of protection.

The Emergence of C Company

2nd Battallion C Company (C Company) was one of four UDA/UFF^{iv} ‘Companys’ in West Belfast that existed between 1973 and 2003. Like other paramilitary groups the UFF divides its military units along spatial lines and uses titles and administrative divisions employed by regular armies. C Company was based primarily in the Lower and Mid Shankill areas and the Oldpark/Manor Street community [see Figure 1]. Company’s A and B were based on the Upper Shankill area, whereas D is a placeless unit composed of individuals who once were active in the Shankill area but who now live in various loyalist communities outside of the city.

Since the paramilitary cease-fires of 1994 the UFF and an associated group, the Red Hand Defenders, have been involved in at least 29 murders (British Irish Rights Watch 2005). Twelve of the murders committed were random sectarian attacks upon Catholics. In addition, the UFF has been involved in several hundred pipe bombings of Catholic homes, the burning of Catholic schools and churches and a series of punishment beatings. It is also estimated that the UFF have been responsible for threatening hundreds of people from their homes since 1994.

Of all the UFF companies, C Company has been most associated with the recent violence and sectarianism. Members of C Company^v represented themselves as the loyalists who, in the words of one member, “took the war to the IRA in the 1980s and brought them to the peace table” (Interview with C Company member). It is a spurious claim (see Taylor 1999 for a discussion of the role Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness played in moving the IRA to the peace table), but displays, nonetheless, C Company’s self-presentation as the defender of the loyalist people.

The leaders of C Company at the time of the 2000 feud first came to prominence when as junior members of the UDA they participated in the first National Front rally in Belfast in the early 1980s. Key members, most notably Johnny Adair (known as Mad Dog), were part of a small neo-Nazi gang that spent their time disrupting concerts by SKA bands such as the Specials and the Beat or breaking up anti-

racist events in Belfast. This small group that came to dominate C Company were known to wear T-shirts that bore the slogan 'Hang Nelson Mandela' and from time to time gave Nazi style salutes.

This group's rise into the upper echelons of the UDA in the late 1980s was related to a number of factors. The depletion in UDA leadership ranks due to imprisonment, feuding and retirement was one reason. Cusack and Taylor (1993) also suggest that the organization's leadership was weakened by bad publicity in the press. In a Cook Report exposé on UDA racketeering, for example, the "ostentatious" lifestyle of the leadership was highlighted and led to "near mutiny" among the rank and file, especially in North Belfast (p. 10). Indeed, C Company was linked to only one murder between 1981 and 1986 and was one of the UFF's least active units in Belfast. The key event, however, that catapulted C Company into the top tier of the UDA was the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement, which provided a role for the Irish State in the internal administration of Northern Ireland. It led to a new wave of recruits into loyalist paramilitary groups. As noted by a member of C Company at that time:

The Anglo-Irish Agreement led to a lot of young men asking when we were going to fight back. Most of us were in our 40s and were past all that. We knew that it was time to hand over to a new generation.

This new generation who came to command significant sections of the UFF in the late 1980s and early 1990s became known as the 'young turks' because of their ruthlessness and passion for violence. The 'young turks' pressured their (generally older) leaders to allow them to undertake a new series of violent acts against the Catholic community. Indeed, the resurgence of C Company led to the deaths of 40 Catholics, mostly in North and West Belfast, between 1986 and 1994. As a member of C Company noted,

In the sort of late 1980s we were about to be sold down the river. I was in C Coy and the aul hands (older people) were doing nothing. I knew what to do. Get up of our arses and fight back. It was about letting people in the Shankill know that we were still here and that we were here to defend them and their rights.

As the above comments suggest, new recruits into C Company were keen to promote their organisation as the most ruthless and untouchable group within loyalism. As another member of C Company explained:

We always had the idea that we would be an elite. That we would respond to nobody, not even the black necks (UVF). Our job was to gain control of the Lower Shankill. Take control of every wee blade of grass in the place and make sure we had the power to launch attacks upon the Taigs^{vi}. The UVF were soft. We had rid ourselves of the soft arses in C Company. We were like, open for serious business. You can't have that type of idea in your head unless you control your own back yard. It was like copying the Provies (PIRA). They ran their places with an iron fist. We wanted that type of way of doing things too.

As the above comment suggests, the ‘hard man’ ethos espoused by C Company was grounded on a territorial representation of the Lower Shankill as “home to a true loyalists, who did not fear the IRA” (Interview with C Company supporter). As a member of C Company noted:

We knew we were right when loyalists from all over Ulster came to meet us. People came to shake our hands and pat us on the back. Supporters from all over Northern Ireland, Scotland and England and even America came to the Lower Shankill. We were, as our murals and T shirts said ‘Simply the Best’.

The growth in the activities of C Company sat in stark contradiction to the UVF leadership on the Shankill Road that was pushing its organisation towards a potential cease-fire. As *Observer* journalist Henry McDonald (2000) argues, the 1990s heralded a clear division within the Shankill area between C Company and the UVF leadership:

One organization, the UVF looked for a political way forward reaching out for compromise with Republicans and Nationalists. The other sought to gain hegemony within the Protestant community by becoming more sectarian and belligerent and by painting the UVF as crypto-communists and ‘Fenian’ lovers.

Indeed, an early indication of C Company opposition to the peace process was evident as early as 1994 when several walls in the Shankill had the motif ‘Shove Your Doves’ painted on them.

Defining ‘True’ Loyalism, Marking Loyalist space

The identity politic espoused by anti-agreement Loyalists is often referred to as fundamentalist (Morrow 1997). Indeed, C Company’s opposition to the peace process was rooted in its view that the agreement was tied to the erosion of an essential Protestant cultural heritage. So conceived, Protestantism was to serve, however cynically, as a practical guide for politics. C Company’s notion of Protestantism was both ‘ethnic’ and ‘religious.’ And, as we demonstrate, it was also inherently spatial—designed to ‘cleanse’ Loyalist space of internal opposition.

C Company believed that Protestants were a distinct ‘ethnic’ group, and a superior one at that. As such, the group did not view its ethno-sectarianism as repressive but as a fundamental and true embodiment of Protestantism. Cross-community consensus building and pluralism were viewed as processes designed to bring the “Protestant community to their knees” (Interview with C Company supporter). C Company viewed nationalist involvement in the peace process as motivated by the desire to create an anti-Protestant hegemony. It viewed Loyalist involvement as “Fenian loving” and thus

treasonous. With the accord construed in do or die terms, the lower Shankill became both a territory to protect, and from which to build a loyalist power base. As a C Company member noted, the lower Shankill is:

One of the few places left that are (is) True Blue. No Fenian loving in here. No mixing with all sorts and wearing suits and pretending you care about Prods. This wee square [Lower Shankill] is a beacon to the Prods who know fine well that they are being sold out. Down that river (sic) to Dublin.

We knew we weren't goin' be contaminated by Fenian loving propaganda and betrayal. Our wee square was goin' put it up to them ones who would sell us out. Our wee place was goin' scream out that this was a true Protestant place, and we weren't a'scared [afraid] to say it. This wee square is like the Protestant and Loyalist Mecca'.

As the above commentary suggests, the focus of C Company vigilance is not the traditional enemy—Catholics and Republicans—but internal traitors—so called “Fenian loving” Protestants. Indeed, the need to defend the Shankill against Catholic incursion would likely have little resonance given that the area is, unlike many Loyalist parts of the city, a large single-identity area rather than part of a volatile patchwork of Loyalist and Nationalist estates (Jarmon 2002).

C Company's ethnosectarian view of Protestantism was, however, complemented with invocations to religious themes. Indeed, Catholics were routinely described in interviews as products of “papist evil” (Interview with C company supporter). C Company believed that religion was not merely a symbol to distinguish, asseverate, and ‘legitimate’ rivalry. Instead, they contended that their religious affiliation and its historical conflict with Catholicism remained central to the construction of their identity. Evidently, conflict was not simply about repelling Irish Republicanism but was also concerned with devotion to protestant fundamentalism and a doctrinal war against Catholicism and Papism.^{vii}

C Company's exaggerated and narrow conception of peoplehood fortified group togetherness, on the one hand, and provided a rationale for group action on the other. Given such a contracted discourse it was not surprising that C Company could cast other Loyalist groups as a ‘menace’ on par with the PIRA when they did not assent to their doctrinal interpretation of Loyalism and community devotion. The rigidity of C Company's identity politic led to destructive intra-communal relations and a rigid policing of Loyalist territory to root out Loyalist ‘traitors.’

While the ultimate spatial manifestation of such intra-community discord was the 2000 feud, harbingers of the coming battle were evident on the landscape much earlier. Indeed, from the mid-1990s onwards C Company were engaged in a drive to cover virtually all the gable ends in the Lower Shankill

area with wall murals depicting its interpretation of ‘true’ Loyalism. The new murals aimed to challenge those images presented in other parts of the Shankill, by the UVF, which were designed to create a historiography that both challenged Unionist bourgeois dominance and depictions of violent loyalist militancy. The UVF had, for example, painted a mural dedicated to the Battle of the Somme in an attempt to draw Loyalists away from more contemporary images of violence. The use of the Somme was part of a process of claiming historical artifacts for working people that illustrated events within which Irish Protestants and Catholics had fought together. This attempt to use images in order to challenge key Loyalist themes was combined with other UVF and PUP activities that utilised local history to present a less sectarian understanding of contemporary events.

According to the C Company members who co-ordinated their murals, the aim was to resurrect images that were suggestive of a “proper Protestant history of suffering and resistance” (Interview, C Company member). Religion and the persecution of the Protestant community became central themes within which suffering was tied to themes of resistance to both Republicanism and Catholicism. One mural [Figure 2], for example, depicts the murder of Protestants during an Irish uprising in 1641. Another mural [Figure 3] nearby corroborates the ‘rights’ of Orangemen to march at Drumcree. In both instances ‘persecution’ of Protestants is a central motif. The underlying argument behind these murals is that Protestants are embroiled in fight to the death against the dark forces of Catholicism. Indeed, the message is articulated quite clearly in a mural [Figure 4] dedicated to Oliver Cromwell, which includes his declaration that:

Catholicism is more than a religion it is a political power. Therefore I am led to believe there will be no peace in Ireland until the Catholic Church is crushed.

Our people clearly persecuted and our Protestant churches desecrated. Also our Protestant people slaughtered in their thousands’

Beside the mural of Cromwell is a mural [Figure 5] commemorating William III’s triumph at the Battle of the Boyne. The victory of William and the ensuing Act of Settlement, which aimed to institutionalise Anglicanism as the official religion of the British Isles is placed in such a way so as to invoke the memory of Protestant triumphalism. Indeed, the Williamite victory is depicted as a continuation of Cromwell’s desire to suppress the heathen and provide glory to the ‘faithful’.^{viii}

The most common mural theme, however, is the glorification of the 2nd Battallion C’Coy of the UVF. Most of these murals [Figure 6] depict hooded gunmen with arms at the ready. The image of

preparedness is not paralleled in those UVF murals painted around the same time. By way of contrast, more recent UVF murals in the Shankill only depict UVF men whose guns are pointed downward as if at rest. Within this context C Company depicts themselves as continuing the ‘struggle’ against republicans and the Catholic community. As noted by a C Company member, the central goal of such images was to highlight the group’s assertion that it was the true protector of Loyalism:

‘We are making it clear to the Prods, that we have not given up and that we will not sell them down the river. We are not like the UVF. We are here to fight and to ensure that Ulster remains British. We are the defenders of our community. We trust no one but ourselves.’

The defence of community is also depicted in two murals which operationalise crude, often violent images. One mural [Figure 7] depicts a skeleton dressed in army fatigues carrying an assault rifle. Below his feet lies burned ground and grave markers which depict the names of alleged republicans, two of whom are still living. The grim reaper in the background accompanies this overtly apocalyptic message. Nearby a cartoon style mural [Figure 8] depicts a British bulldog (apparently Johnny Adair) kicking a rat like Gerry Adams, President of Sinn Fein, out of the Lower Shankill and down a sign posted road to Dublin. The background clearly depicts wall murals and buildings that surround the viewer. The localisation of the image only reinforces the notion that C Company is the true protector of the area.

The historical rationale for continued defence is also depicted in a mural [Figure 9] of the siege of Derry in 1689, where the Apprentice Boys of Derry are shown locking the gates of the city to the forces of King James. The siege of Derry is an emotional and strong metaphor of defence and deliverance, which depicts how it is possible through loyalty to defeat the forces ranged against the Protestant people. In this sense C Company depicts itself as the modern day Apprentice Boys in a city within which the growth of the Catholic population is seen as a modern day form of besiegement. Thus, many of the murals painted aim to mobilise images of the past as a metaphor for present struggles and as part of a broader strategy of legitimizing present activities.

Two murals, however, aim to confront the UVF in a more direct manner by commemorating individuals that were murdered at their hands. One of these [Figure 10] commemorates the life of UVF member Jackie Coulter. Below his image the words ‘Murdered by the UVF’ are painted. A mural commemorating Billy Wright [Figure 11], one time leader of the UVF before his murder in the Maze Prison, is also used to depict the struggle within contemporary loyalism over the peace process. The

image of Wright as a 'true' loyalist is a defiant gesture towards the UVF given that he had been stood down by the UVF in 1997 and had gone on to form a rival paramilitary that rejected the peace process.^{ix}

The murals presented by C Company were based upon a complex mosaic of socio-political and cultural ideas that were reduced to an ever-repeating cycle of threat, siege, resistance and deliverance. The siege mentality, which defines the nature of much of C Company's resistance owes much to this conception of the past and therefore the production of a narrative of myths. Myths simplify, dramatise and synthesise the charter for action and the right to be (See Graham 2004 for an extended analysis of the role of the past in Loyalist discourse).

For C Company territorial re-negotiation of conflict, as outlined in the Belfast Agreement, which aimed to create cross-border institutions, power sharing and the enshrinement of Irish nationalist right in the constitution of Northern Ireland were inadmissible. C Company positioned themselves around the supposition that Northern Ireland is a British/Protestant territory, which must, due to historical lineage, be intolerant to any form of consensus building or cross-community linkage. As one C Company respondent noted:

You can't allow the cancer of nationalism or republicanism to exist. There can be no doubt about the fact that this is part of the UK. You cannot have anything but loyalty to that state and the majority who live here. The majority are the only people who can decide the future.

The exclusion of the 'other' through a specific discourse of election and exclusion means that history, time and space are condensed into a distinct abstraction of the past, an assemblage of disjointed events in which faith and defence are mutually inclusive. The overall process is one in which history is not couched in a historical abstraction but is still being played out in the contemporary. As noted by Jarman:

"This past has not ended, but rather continues to structure the feelings, expectations and fears of those acting in the present..." (p. 168).

For C Company the spatialisation of fear, commemoration and suffering was tied to the overall process of enclosing space through the instrument of discursive segregation.

The Shankill Feud: Toward Loyalist Segregation

While a divide over the legitimacy of the peace process underpins the 2000 feud between C Company and the UVF, the animus initially manifested itself as a competition for territory on the Shankill Road. Indeed, one of the C Company's biggest gripes was its inability to expand into new

territories and in so doing increase the organisation's membership and status. Other UFF battalion commanders forbade C Company to recruit from within their respective arenas. The emerging discord between C Company and the Mid and Upper Shankill UVF battalions also diluted the group's capacity to expand. In the period between the cease-fires and the eventual feud, the UVF was actively recruiting young men into their organisation so that they would not become aligned with C Company. As noted by a senior UVF member within the area:

We were on cease-fire and in a way we wanted to stop recruiting so as to bring some sort of normality into young lads lives. When we saw that C Company were trying to recruit from within our area and we had to give up that idea and make sure young men joined us so that we could keep them on the straight and narrow.

It wasn't just that we didn't want young lads becoming drug dealers and the like it was just as important to make sure that they didn't join that sectarian rabble down there'.

C Company were aware of the UVF's tactics. One noted, for example:

The black necks (UVF) are keeping us out of their area, for they know that the wee lads want to join us. 'Cause they know that we are talking sense and that we will lead them into a true loyalist culture. They're afraid of us, and the fact that we are more popular than them. They know that the wee lads know that they are betraying loyalism.

Such a rigidified regulation of space between the two groups reflected the spatialisation of competing loyalist identities. In the summer of 2000 the territorial competition shifted into violence and chaos. And, ironically enough, it happened around a parade.

After the wall murals outlined above were completed, C Company organized a festival to celebrate their completion. The festival, which Adair dubbed a "cultural event" was arranged for August 19th. And, the day began unremarkably, with speeches and a commemoration of the new murals in the Lower Shankill estate where Adair lived. After the speeches, however, things heated up. C Company led participants in a march out of the Lower Shankill and up the road, into UVF territory, and they brought along an LVF contingent with them. Given the tensions between the UVF and the LVF, the move was clearly a provocation on the part of Adair, who had not only supported Wright before his death, but had developed closer ties to the group in the hopes of consolidating drug rackets (Lister and Jordan 2003).

While these links would have made C Company unpopular with the UVF in the best of times, the summer of 2000 was already particularly tense. Indeed, earlier that year, in January, the LVF had shot Richard Jamieson, the commander of the Mid-Ulster UVF. Jamieson was part of a large well-known

and widely liked loyalist family and his murder sent shock waves through the Loyalist paramilitary structure. Inviting the LVF to the area was nothing short of provocative—a fact of which C Company would have been well aware.

As the C Company parade, with its LVF contingent, headed towards the upper Shankill, it made an unannounced stop outside of the Rex Bar, a well-known UVF pub. The LVF contingent unfurled a LVF flag. Not surprisingly, the act was seen as provocative—an attempt to challenge the influence and command of the UVF. As a series of brawls began outside the pub, C Company members opened fire upon those inside. Adair's contingent eventually retreated from the area and returned to the Lower Shankill.

The fight was not over, however. Later that evening members and associates of the PUP and UVF, who lived in the Lower Shankill were intimidated from their homes. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive, the agency responsible for allocating council housing, estimates that 547 people were displaced from their homes. Loyalist community workers estimate the number was much higher, at around 1,300 (McCabe 2001). While such expulsions have long been common in mixed estates, where Republican and Loyalist paramilitary targets families of the other side in an effort to consolidate turf, such a massive expulsion of Loyalists by Loyalists was virtually unheard of before the 2000 feud^x. While the scale of the expulsions is significant in and of itself, the symbolic import of these attacks was equally powerful. Indeed, one of the homes attacked was that of Gusty Spence, an ex-UVF prisoner and probably the most recognizably Loyalist 'face' during the Troubles period. The expulsion of Spence was as noted by a senior UVF member, "a case of kicking Santa Claus out of his grotto."

The UVF responded quickly, and with force. Two days later a UDA commander, Jackie Coulter was shot dead while he sat in his car. His companion, Bobby Mahood was also killed. Although Mahood was a UVF man, he had been opposed to the peace process and to the politics of the PUP.

Over the next three months, the UVF and C Company engaged in a series of tit for tat murders, with five more people losing their lives. The feud also resulted in destruction of property, with the headquarters of both the Ulster Democratic Party and the UFF being firebombed. Loyalist community work also stopped for a time as workers chose to avoid the area. As tensions mounted, a defacto border was also established between the two paramilitaries. For a time, that border, Tennent Street, was largely impermeable.

As we note at the beginning of the paper, the press represented the feuding on the Shankill as a mere dispute over drug dealing empires and the control of criminal realms. While the UVF and C Company are involved in drug dealing, the feud was not about drug turf. At its base, it was a violent eruption over the course of the then nascent peace process. Indeed, as far as the PUP was concerned, the feud was expressly political because C Company targeted their members even though they were not in the UVF. As noted by Billy Mitchell (2000), a prominent member of the PUP:

'If there has been a 'turf war' for the past year it has been a war to exclude the voice of radical progressive politics from the loyalist turf. It has been primarily a one-sided war and it has been waged, not just by paramilitaries, but by so called constitutional politicians and religious fundamentalists as well. The object of the campaign is to demonise, marginalise and eliminate the voice of radical democratic politics within loyalism.

It is also worth noting that no one has accused the PUP members targeted for murder and/or house expulsions of involvement in the drug trade. The link between Adair's desire for status and alleged links with the security forces have also been raised:

I would say the feud with the UDA was brought about by Johnny Adair and his push for the job of Supreme Commander. He was upsetting the UDA and used them to bring the march on to the Shankill Road. Used it to his own advantage and when the UVF did respond the security forces put a cordon around him so we would see him as a puppet of the security services and the feud was manufactured by them. Also during the time of the CLMC when loyalism was united and were of the one purpose, the actions of probably one man and those around him brought the downfall of the vast majority of that. That against the backdrop of a process that was being driven by the government to demonise loyalism to divide and criminalise loyalism. Though it may not be tangible, many people within the UVF and loyalism at large would have felt that many of the actions that could be attributed to division and criminalisation within loyalism can be attributed to people who were directly controlled by the security services and Johnny Adair and the people around him would have been instrumental in that (UVF Brigade Staff member).

In an attempt to control the activities of C Company the UVF patrolled the boundaries the Lower Shankill to ensure that neither supporters nor members of C Company left the area. Some calm was brought to the area when Adair was re-imprisoned for breaking his parole conditions. On his return from jail Adair defiantly spoke of the need for C Company to break out of the confinement of his organisation.

'Them people (the UVF) started the feud. We defended our people. We need to get it into our heads that we weren't wrong, and we need to get out of this wee square (the Lower Shankill) and get out onto that Shankill Road where we belong'.

The violence that took place during the Shankill feud of 2000 led to the appearance of intra-community segregation and for the first time in Northern Ireland's history clear territorial divisions appeared within which territory was defined between co-religionists. This particular form of territorial division adopted symbolic and exclusionary practices that mimicked those used to condemn nationalists during the height of the Troubles. The Shankill was no longer merely interfaced because it was adjacent to the Falls Road, a Republican stronghold, but also because it was segregated between competing loyalist paramilitaries with different notions of legitimacy, morality, and self-worth.

Conclusion

The 1994 ceasefires, and the Belfast agreement four years later, created a fundamental ideological division within Loyalism. On one side is a relatively pluralist (and socialist) attempt to redefine Loyalism in the context of peace. On the other is a politic of retrenchment rooted in a celebration of Protestant superiority and the affirmation of Ulster as a Protestant place. While Loyalism has never been a unified house, its divides have rarely been so trenchant. And, until the mid to late nineties, Loyalist divides were rarely manifested spatially and antagonistically.^{xi} The idea that a loyalist person would be unwelcome in another loyalist place was virtually unheard of during the Troubles. Indeed, even during previous skirmishes between loyalist paramilitaries, only active members would have had to worry about crossing paramilitary boundaries.

The ideological split within loyalism has manifested itself in a number of ways within Loyalist communities. Not surprisingly, one can map this divide in the new murals that have appeared on the landscape since the 1998 Belfast Agreement. In UVF territory, new murals were 'commissioned' that focused on historical events shared across the community divide. The mural commemorating the Battle of the Somme, in which thousands of Catholic and Protestant soldiers died, provides a clear example. In contrast, the new murals that appeared in the lower Shankill, on C Company turf, highlighted sectarian figures in the province's history, such as Oliver Cromwell, and celebrated loyalist icons who were enemies of the rival UVF, including Billy Wright. While murals are public art, they carry with them an important socio-spatial function. Historically, murals have 'draw[n] support' (Rolston, 1994) to the province's two resistance struggles and rigidified the boundaries between them (Boal 1969). Today, they draw support between the competing notions of loyalism and mark the lines between them. The most

striking spatial manifestation of intra-community atavism, however, is the residential segregation that resulted from the violent feud of 2000. As a result of that feud at least 500 people were forced from their homes in the lower Shankill. Many of these people were not members of paramilitary, but an effort to ‘purify’ the space therein leaves little room for such nuances.

While this paper has focused primarily on the atavistic politics of C Company, it is important to highlight the relatively pluralist path that aspects of the UVF are pursuing. Indeed, the legitimacy of the PUP is increasingly articulated around the notion that they, unlike ‘other’ loyalists, are involved in providing a positive, honourable, and anti-sectarian leadership to working class Protestants. The paramilitary trappings of this message notwithstanding, it is an important one, and all the more so because it comes from within the working class communities where loyalism is dominant rather than from a ‘distant’ unionist establishment.

Limitations remain, however. Indeed, by rejecting the ethno-sectarianism of C Company, the UVF and the PUP have crafted their own boundaries to a true loyalism. And, they have shown a willingness to enforce them as rigidly, and bloodily as C Company did during the 2000 feud. Indeed, as this article went to press in the fall of 2005, the UVF and the LVF were embroiled in a bitter and bloody feud. And, while the UVF depicted the 2000 feud as one-sided (i.e. emanating from C Company), early reports suggest that the majority of murders have been conducted by the UVF (McCambridge 2005). Furthermore, the *Belfast Telegraph* quoted a UVF man as suggesting that the feud would end only after the LVF had been “wip[ed] out” (Gordon and McCambridge 2005). While the UVF has implied that the feud is about cleaning up Loyalism, its methods are as extreme, rigid, and territorial than those employed by C Company during the height of the 2000 feud.

By the late 1990s competing discourses within loyalism were aimed at delineating people into discrete groups, to lay before them a stark choice between ‘good’ and ‘bad,’ ‘moral’ and ‘immoral’ brands of loyalism. The result is that membership in a particular paramilitary group (or even support for it) became tied to a subject position in which subjects must promote the integrity and sanctity of their respective organisation—sometimes to the death.

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ⁱ The UDA has also murdered people under the name of the Red Hand Defenders (RHD).

ⁱⁱ Fenian is a derogatory term for a Catholic person.

ⁱⁱⁱ The term Lundy means traitor, and refers to Lieutenant Colonel Robert Lundy, the governor of Derry who surrendered to the Catholic King James' forces after the siege of Derry.

^{iv} The UDA is the parent group of the UFF and is run via a confederate structure controlled by an Inner Council on which 6 'brigadiers' sit. The UDA has rarely had a central leader, and as a result of this there has been little centralised control over the organisation. There are 4 'brigadiers' in Belfast (one each for the North, South, East and West of the city) and two others who cover South Antrim and North Antrim. The UDA also has constituent groups in Scotland and England as well as with far right groups in the USA, Israel and the former Yugoslavia. The UDA was formed in 1971 in order to co-join Protestant vigilante groups that patrolled the interface boundaries between Protestant and Catholic places. They aimed to provide a network that could 'protect' Protestant communities from republican and to a lesser extent state violence. In 1973 the UFF was formed as the military wing of the UDA. There are anywhere between 1000 to 2000+ members of the UFF. The UFF became notorious for a series of attacks upon spatially vulnerable Catholics who lived close to the interfaces between Catholic and Protestant communities.

^v When examining the activities of C Company the press has dedicated, most of their analysis to the personality of Johnny Adair- or 'Mad Dog' as depicted in the press.

^{vi} Taigs is a derogatory name for Catholics.

^{vii} It is worth noting that these discourses are often expedient rather than 'heartfelt.' Few if any members of C Company were practicing Protestants and their morality was questionable given that they were involved in drug dealing and the exploitation of young women as sex workers.

^{viii} It is worth noting that the image of William III, which was the main form of mural painting up to the mid 1970s, has only recently re-appeared in several UFF areas in a manner that suggests that the organization is attempting to claim this heritage as its own.

^{ix} The LVF signed onto the agreement in 1998, but it did so to encourage a no vote. Indeed, the group's press release began by noting, "The soldiers of the LVF have fought against the Irish peace process and the sell-out of our country" (LVF 1998). It is also likely that the group signed onto the peace accord to win the release of its prisoners.

^x Loyalists paramilitaries have been known to expel individual Loyalist families from their turf, but these were usually isolated events. The lower Shankill expulsions in 2000 occurred over a few days and at a scale never before seen.

^{xi} The UVF and the UDA did divide territory for the purposes of racketeering, but these divides would not have affected civilian Loyalists.

Title: Informal Justice in the City

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Abstract

The use of violence by paramilitaries to punish and to discipline members of their own respective communities is an established practice developed throughout the course of the 'Troubles' and continues in the post-conflict period. Paramilitary 'punishments' are primarily an urban phenomenon with the bulk of recorded 'punishments' occurring within the greater Belfast area. This paper drawing upon the authors' own database of such attacks will examine the on-going nature of paramilitary 'punishments' including the 'punishment' process, their frequency and location. Using GIS, the paper will also explore the geographical distribution of 'punishments' in the greater Belfast area.

Introduction

Informal justice and policing mechanisms have developed in both Catholic and Protestant working class communities from the early days of the Troubles albeit for different reasons. In Catholic areas Citizen Defence Committees (CDCs) were established and provide the earliest example of organized activities. Their primary aim was to protect Catholic enclaves from loyalist attacks. To this end they erected and supervised barricades and mounted foot and car patrols (Connolly, 1997; Hillyard, 1985). With the introduction of internment without trial, the Catholic Ex-Servicemen's Association (CEA) supplemented the activities of the CDCs in Belfast and supervised the barricades in places such as Ballymurphy in west Belfast (Hillyard, 1985; The Tatler, 1972). The CEA like the CDC sought to protect Catholic areas from attacks by Protestants. Although unarmed its members had previous military training and numbered some 8,000 at its peak in 1972. The 'punishment' meted out usually took the form of a stern lecture regarding the need for solidarity in the area (McCann, 1993).

Loyalist paramilitaries have also undertaken a policing role in the communities in which they operate since the early 1970s. Indeed, the largest loyalist paramilitary group, the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) established in 1971 following the amalgamation of Protestant vigilante groups/defense associations in Belfast adopted as its motto *Codesta Arma Togae*, meaning law before violence and sought 'to see law restored everywhere, including the no-go areas' of nationalist Belfast (Boulton, 1973). The UDA assumed the role of area defenders against attacks from Catholics and the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA), mounted roadblocks, patrolled the streets and gathered evidence against petty criminals. Similarly, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), a group formed in 1966 also adopted a policing role. For example, it established a special patrol group in the Shankill area of Belfast. If an individual was caught by the patrol they were either warned to stay out of trouble or handed over to the police. Patrols by paramilitaries were not designed to usurp the police but to assist them. Paramilitaries

reserved the right to mete out their own form of justice if the police and courts did not adequately deal with offenders.

Activities liable for ‘punishment’

The informal justice of the paramilitaries in Northern Ireland is in part a response to community pressure for the organizations ‘to do something’ about crime in their areas. For example, in the autumn of 1970, the IRA launched a purge against ‘anti-social’ elements in the Ballymurphy area of west Belfast. Those targeted included alleged local criminals, two of which were shot dead, minor drug abusers, teenage girls suspected of fraternizing with British soldiers and anyone believed to be connected to, or having sympathy with the British state (Cusack and McDonald, 1997). Thus activities liable for ‘punishment’ can be divided into two main categories, ‘normal’ and ‘political’ crime. ‘Normal’ crime would include vandalism, car theft, joyriding, muggings, the selling of alcohol to minors, rape and drug dealing. Offences of a sexual nature attract harsh ‘punishments’ and those punished are usually shot or badly beaten. In one case, an ex-Presbyterian minister given a warning by the police for possession of an illegal homosexual pornographic video, died from injuries sustained from a UVF ‘punishment’ beating. ‘Normal’ crime also encompasses ‘anti-social behavior’. Activities considered ‘anti-social’ by the paramilitaries are diverse in nature and range from youths gathering at street corners, the playing of music too loudly, the verbal abuse of senior citizens, the dumping of trash and fighting with their volunteers or members. As one ‘punishment’ shooting victim explains,

I was never involved in any paramilitaries, no. I had a bit of an argument with one, he lifted his hand to hit me and because I was able to beat him he went and told them that I picked on him and blattered him. The law of the land was “you do not touch our members”. (Interview, March 2000)

In contrast, ‘political’ crime would include informing, misuse of the organization’s name, collaborating or fraternizing with the ‘enemy’. Therefore, the decision by paramilitaries to assume a policing role is also based in part upon a need for the organizations’ to ensure their own security and survival. As Burton notes within nationalist areas, ‘informing is particularly threatening. It attacks the fabric of the community in its capitalization on what cannot be controlled, the public nature of

knowledge...Systematic informing would rip the district apart and smash its tentative organizations laying it open for a Protestant or British Army takeover' (Burton, 1978: 5). Subsequently, individuals suspected of informing or 'touting' have been dealt with by the paramilitaries. For example, the Red Hand Commando (RHC) shot dead Michael Anderson in October 1992, who they allege had been a police informer. A claim denied by the police at Anderson's inquest. In nationalist areas, a variety of 'punishments' have been undertaken against informers including the shaving of hair of female teenager 'touts', kneecappings and exiling (An Phoblacht, 1974a, 1974b and 1975).

Not only do paramilitaries take action against alleged criminals but they also punish their own members for disobeying orders or breaching internal codes. 'Punishments' range from a beating for leaving a gun out of an armory to being shot for 'bringing the movement into disgrace'; this would include self-gain robberies or misusing the organization's name. To this end within the Provisional IRA an internal police force known as the 'Nutting Squad' was established to deal with matters concerning Provisional IRA Volunteers (Collins, 1998). According to a member of the RHC Brigade Staff,

Well most of it ['punishments'] would be internal. A lot of it would be anti-social, drug-related or discipline with the paramilitary ranks...The levels would, if it is a misdemeanour it could be a slap round the head; if it's something serious he could get one in the leg; the very extreme is being shot in the head, which is very unusual. (Interview, November 2005)

For many loyalist groups, drug dealing is seen as an acceptable way to raise funds although the leaders of the main loyalist paramilitaries publicly deny this. Silke (1999a) suggests that the vast majority of internal 'punishments' by loyalist paramilitaries involves money, for example swindling, skimming funds from the group, payment of misappropriate 'cuts' or self-gain robberies, a view confirmed by local media reports (Sullivan, 1999). Within both republican and loyalist paramilitary organizations, members suspected of informing are usually executed. For example, in November 1981 the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) a cover name for the UDA; shot dead Arthur Bettice a UDA member at his home in the Shankill. As a former Provisional IRA Volunteer explains, the 'Nutting Squad' 'are the

ones who put a hood over the heads of informers before “nutting” them with a shot in the head and leaving their bodies at border crossings’ (Collins, 1998: 142).

Some paramilitary members join the organization to avoid being ‘punished’ either by the group they joined or by a rival grouping. One interviewee subjected to a ‘punishment’ beating by one loyalist paramilitary group joined another group as it ‘sort of offered me protection from these other guys’ (Interview, September 1999). Throughout the ‘Troubles’ both republican and loyalist paramilitaries have taken action against other paramilitary groups within their respective communities. In the 1970s, the Provisional IRA launched purges against the Official IRA (OIRA) in some parts of Belfast. The OIRA was formed as a result of the split within the IRA in 1970 when the organization divided into two factions, namely the OIRA and the Provisional IRA (for a detailed account of this split and the reasons for it see Smith, 1997). The Provisional IRA also took action against the Irish People’s Liberation Organization (IPLO) in October 1992. The IPLO had a history of criminal activities including a gang rape of a woman in the Divis flats complex and involvement in the growing drug trade. The Provisional IRA’s action resulted in the execution of one IPLO member and the shooting of a further 20 members with assault rifles in Belfast (An Phoblacht/Republican News, 1992a). The IPLO disbanded shortly after this.

The Provisional IRA is not the only republican paramilitary group to mete out ‘punishments’. The Official IRA also ‘kneecapped’ alleged criminals in the early 1970s, indeed a number of individuals received ‘kneecappings’ from both the Official IRA and the Provisional IRA. The Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) although publicly distancing itself from a law and order role has shot a number of alleged criminals and informers dead. For instance, in April 1984 John George, an alleged criminal, was found shot dead at his home in Twinbrook. The INLA has also taken action against its own members suspected of informing. In June 1991, it executed INLA member Gerard Burns, his body was found at the back of a house in Ballymurphy. The now defunct IPLO also undertook similar ‘punishment’ actions. More recently, the Continuity IRA has moved into the administration of informal justice and claimed responsibility for a “punishment” beating and the exiling of a drug dealer.

Feuds between the rival loyalist paramilitary groups are nothing new as Bruce (1992: 124) notes, 'like any two competing organizations, the UDA and UVF have rarely been on good terms for long'. In the early 1970s disagreements were limited to fist fights but in March 1975 this escalated into a more violent feud in Belfast resulting in bomb attacks against the homes of both UDA and UVF men. The feud of 2000 between the UDA/UFF and the UVF on the Shankill linked to a drugs and turf war spread to other areas of Northern Ireland including Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Coleraine (Bruce, 2004; O'Neill, 2000). Seven men lost their lives in the feud that lasted from July until December 2000 and unlike the 1975 feud, women and children were endangered. Indeed, an 11-year-old girl was shot in the back in Coleraine and more than 281 households in the Shankill area approached the Housing Executive, the regional public housing authority, for assistance after being forcibly evicted from their homes or decided to leave, in fear of intimidation (Springfield Intercommunity Development Project, 2001). British soldiers were re-deployed in the areas affected by the feud. A more recent feud between the UVF and the Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF) has seen the UVF blamed for five murders and 15 attempted murders since May 2004. Indeed the International Monitoring Commission (IMC) suggests that the origins of the feud resided in 'the rivalry and extreme animosity between the two organizations and referred to competition, greed and power as factors in the upsurge of violence during the summer... [the IMC] concluded that the UVF leadership had decided that it was now the time to finish off the LVF' (IMC, 2005: 19). At the end of October 2005, it was reported that the LVF had taken the decision to stand down in response to the Provisional IRA's move to decommission arms in September and is considering the decommissioning of its weapons as well (Thornton, 2005).

Thus, paramilitaries mete out 'punishment' to individuals involved in crime and/or 'anti-social' activities, to members of their own grouping and to members of rival groupings as a result of feuds. In addition the threat of 'punishment' has been used as a method of press-ganging new recruits, especially within loyalist areas (Silke, 1999a).

The 'punishment' procedure

Both republican and loyalist paramilitaries assert that their 'punishments' are a response to community pressure. Incidents can be brought directly to the paramilitary organization or they become aware of an incident themselves. As a UVF Commander in Belfast explains,

We want to see the end of punishment attacks in the same breath there is a community out there who is reliant on the UVF to mete out punishment, because in many cases the PSNI [Police Service of Northern Ireland] aren't responding and in other cases the PSNI are directing people to us knowing they will get more satisfaction. (Interview, November 2005)

This is a view echoed by a 'punishment' shooting victim who stated 'there's people out there doing them, there's people out there want them done, the people's not going to the [police]... They want to see these people either punished or put out of the area' (Interview, December 1999).

Paramilitaries insist that individuals are only punished once an investigation has been undertaken. Initially within the Provisional IRA, a special unit was established for dealing with crime and the republican youth movement, Na Fianna Éireann, undertook early policing activities (Munck, 1988). In 1975, the Provisional IRA declared a cease-fire, which was to last into the following year. It was at this time that informal justice was taken out of the hands of the Provisional IRA field commanders and moved to the control of the emerging Sinn Féin. With the ending of this cease-fire, the 'incident centres' established by Sinn Féin to monitor breaches of the truce, evolved into 'advice centres'. These centres were referred to locally as 'Provo Police Stations'. According to Joe Austin, a Sinn Féin councilor for north Belfast, once a crime or incident of 'anti-social behavior' has been reported to Sinn Féin and the details recorded, an investigation would be launched. Following this investigation, if an offender had been identified, they would be brought before the Civil Administration Officers dealing with the case and allowed to defend themselves, although in practice this did not always happen due to limited resources and demands upon the system. A further decision would then be taken as to whether a warning should be issued or if the case should be passed to the Provisional IRA for them to carry out a 'punishment' (Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, 1992). Sinn Féin's Gerry Kelly has denied the existence of Civil Administrators tasked with informal justice in a Channel 4 News broadcast on the 21 May 2000. If the offenders were not known, then a warning would often be placed in local newsletters, the republican press and sometimes via a leaflet drop in the area. With the adoption by the Provisional IRA of a cellular structure, a Provisional IRA Auxiliary made up of former prisoners, low-calibre members

and new recruits took over responsibility for 'punishments'. Other Provisional IRA members regard them with distaste: 'They're...the dregs of the organization, people who aren't any good at anything else but beating people up' (Silke, 1999b: 62).

In contrast, little is known about specific loyalist informal justice mechanisms. The UVF at least in parts of Belfast has a 'Provost Squad' or 'Provost Section' that deals with the 'punishment' of group members and individuals living in the communities in which they operate. As a member of a UVF Brigade Staff explains,

Investigations are always carried out where punishment may result. The investigation is carried out by an 'Internal Investigation Unit' headed by a command staff officer. If or when punishment is decided, the actual punishment is carried out by what is termed the 'Provost Section'. Each battalion has its own 'Provost Unit'. Decisions aren't taken lightly. (Interview, October 2005)

Over the years, a graduated scale or tariff system consistent with the seriousness of the offence under consideration has developed. This tariff ranges from warnings, threats, curfew, fines or restitution, placarding, tarring and feathering, beatings, shootings, exiling and ultimately death. Paramilitaries can order people out of a local area, city, Northern Ireland or Ireland. The exiling or expulsion of alleged criminals can vary in time from six months to a year and so on. In some cases, people are ordered out indefinitely. Expulsion orders are usually accompanied by both a leeway period of between 24 and 48 hours and an 'or else'. Such orders are attractive to paramilitaries as they remove undesirable elements from the community and are less brutal than other forms of 'punishments'. Males, females, youngsters under 16 and, in some instances, whole families have been exiled.

The 'punishment' ordered in theory would be influenced by mitigating factors such as age, gender, past criminal record and family background particularly those from a strong republican or loyalist tradition. In cases involving children, the parents of those involved would be approached and requested to exercise greater parental control (An Phoblacht, 1971). In some cases those due to be punished are told to turn up at a certain time and place in order to receive their 'punishment'. Failure to do so often

results in a harsher 'punishment'. In practice, however, the level of 'punishment' can be arbitrarily brutal or lenient, depending upon whether the offender was 'connected' in some way to known paramilitaries or influential members of the republican or loyalist movement. As one 'punishment' shooting victim explains, 'There's one rule for one and another rule for another. See if your da[d]'s in the [Provisional I]RA, you're sweet, you get away with everything. See if your uncle's in the RA you get away with so much and then they just beat you. See if you've nobody in the RA you're fucked!' (Interview, September 1999).

Beatings administered vary and can be inflicted by either the Volunteers' own fists and feet and/or the use of an implement. Implements used include baseball bats with and without nails in them, hurley sticks, pickaxe handles, iron bars, hammers and sledgehammers. Those beaten may be tied upright to fence railings thereby leaving them unable to shield themselves. Individuals have also had breezeblocks dropped onto their limbs. Also not all 'punishment' shootings are the same, a gunshot wound to the fleshy part of the thigh heals relatively quickly compared to injuries to the bone which can lead to permanent maiming. The seriousness of the crime will affect the number of times an individual is shot, the calibre of weapon used and the proximity of the wound to the joints (Bell, 1996).

Both republican and loyalist paramilitary organizations' assert that individuals subjected to 'punishments' are both investigated and warned about their behavior prior to the use of physical 'punishments'. Interviews with individuals 'punished' found this not to be the case. As interviewees explain,

They don't go and investigate nothing like. If they hear something or if they just don't like you, they'll do you anyway. That's all anybody expects from them. They don't investigate, no nothing like [that]. (Interview with person under threat of a 'punishment' shooting, September 1999)

Two car loads came and got me and took me away and they stabbed me, left me with thirty-six stitches in the stomach, and told me to come back at seven o'clock [for a

beating]...In fact when they took me away I thought I was just going away to be questioned because I hadn't done anything. (Interview with a 'punishment' beating victim, September 1999)

As already noted, individuals suspected of informing are dealt with the severest with their 'punishment' dependent on the type of information passed to the security forces. Both republican and loyalist paramilitaries have offered time-specific amnesties to those within their respective communities or organization members providing information to the security forces. Provisional IRA Volunteers suspected of informing are investigated and brought before a 'jury of their peers' for interrogation and if found guilty, sentenced accordingly. Provisional IRA statements reported in *An Phoblacht* carry details of such trials:

The Irish Republican Army has accepted responsibility for the execution last Friday, March 5th, of former IRA Volunteer Seamus Morgan...[who] admitted to agreeing to act as an informer...he was court martialled by a jury of his peers – comrades of equal rank – found guilty and executed for treachery. (*An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 1982a)

The Belfast Brigade of the IRA claims responsibility for the execution of Patrick Murray from the Short Strand area...as an IRA Volunteer, [he] was fully aware of his right to be tried by a jury made up of his peers who could not pass a sentence of execution unless the evidence...against him was substantiated and proven...Murray admitted his role as an informer. (*An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 1986)

Similarly, loyalist paramilitaries have executed their own members for informing following investigations. Coverage of UFF actions reported in *New Ulster Defender* are illustrative of this:

Edward 'Ned' McCreery, a former UDA commander was shot dead outside his home...by a lone member of the UFF. In a statement admitting responsibility for the killing the UFF said that he had been executed by its Special Assignment

Section after an investigation [into] his activities. The statement said that McCreery had colluded with both the Special Branch [of the police] and “the enemies of Ulster” (New Ulster Defender, 1992).

Individuals have also been punished as a result of mistaken identity. For example, John Brown a 79-year-old man was mistakenly identified as a pedophile and shot in both knees and ankles. In some cases, the organization involved has publicly apologized to the person concerned. The Provisional IRA has in the past placed apologies in the local republican press including *An Phoblacht/Republican News* and the *Anderstown News* (see for example *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 1982 and *Andersonstown News*, 1992).

As noted already, the type of ‘punishment’ meted out would (in theory) be based in part upon the individual’s age, gender and so on. Republican paramilitaries such as the Republican IRA appear to have been reluctant to shoot women and those found ‘touting’ and/or fraternizing with the ‘enemy’ were often tarred and feathered or had their heads shaved (*An Phoblacht*, 1974a). Burton (1978) suggests that tarring and feathering represents an expulsion ritual in that the punished individual knows that they are to leave the area. It has been suggested that within the nationalist community there existed a reluctance ‘to accept wounding as a legitimate form of punishment for female offenders’ (Morrissey and Pease, 1982: 164). The ‘disappearance’ of Jean McConville by the IRA in December 1972 from her home in Belfast’s Divis flats is contrary to this and may explain why her body was only recovered in August 2003). The Provisional IRA contends that Mrs McConville admitted to being an Army informer, a claim strongly contested by relatives. Interviews with the UVF and RHC suggest that like their republican counterparts there is reluctance to physically punish females within the community and that exiling them is the most severe ‘punishment’ undertaken. According to a RHC Brigade Staff member,

Well, the women ones are very very difficult. You can’t take a woman up an entry and give her a beating or put a bullet in her leg. It’s a lot easier a hard man or someone with that image. In circumstances where women are involved it is usually left to tell them to stop whatever it is they are doing and if they don’t stop then

expulsion is basically one of the only things you could use. (Interview, November 2005)

According to available police statistics, only 2 women have received a ‘punishment’ shooting between 1990 and 2001 with a further 36 having been beaten between 1989-2001. A victim of a ‘punishment’ beating explained that on his housing estate the UDA as a rule do not physically punish females: ‘They don’t beat girls...If you’re a girl you’re all right’ (Interview, January 2000). In contrast to this is the death of Donna Wilson in November 1992, who was attacked by at least six men with baseball bats in her home in south Belfast following a complaint by a neighbor regarding noise from her flat. The neighbour received a two year suspended sentence from Belfast Crown Court for calling in a gang to beat the woman (McKittrick *et al*, 2001).

In the past youngsters under the age of 16 would not usually have received a ‘punishment’ shooting or beating. A sentiment expressed by both loyalist and republican paramilitaries. As an anonymous youth worker explains,

the rule is that the Provos don’t “punish” – that is, don’t shoot or severely beat – kids under sixteen. Some of our younger kids have been “branded” – that is, made to stand against a lamppost, or outside church on a Sunday, with a placard around their necks saying, “I am a hood,” or “I am a joyrider.” It’s the softest option the Provos can take – public shaming. (Quoted in Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, 1992: 47)

Other ‘punishments’ used against those ‘too young to be kneecapped’ include curfewing, tar and feathering, being tied up and publicly painted and the punishing of parents. For example, the Provisional IRA (An Phoblacht/Republican News, 1987) claimed responsibility for the painting and feathering of 16-year-old Francis Finnegan for joy-riding and the shooting of a 39-year-old father for ‘repeatedly ignoring IRA warnings to discipline two of his sons who had been involved in persistent acts of anti-social behavior’ (An Phoblacht/Republican News, 1982: 3).

Despite these alternative ‘punishments’, according to figures cited by Kennedy (2001), republicans have meted out physical ‘punishments’ to 147 youngsters under the age of 17 and loyalists 114 (see Table 1).

Table 1: Loyalist and Republican ‘Punishments’ of Youths between 1990-2000

	Loyalist ‘punishment’ shootings	Loyalist ‘punishment’ beatings	Republican ‘punishment’ shootings	Republican ‘punishment’ beatings
Under 14 years	1	3	0	0
14-17 yr olds	35	75	36	111

Indeed both loyalist and republican paramilitaries appear to have moved into the realm of extending ‘punishment’ beatings and shootings to young persons under the age of 16. For example, the INLA are believed to be behind a ‘punishment’ shooting of a 14-year-old boy in north Belfast and the UVF are suspected of beating two 15-year-olds with hammers and a baton in east Belfast (McCambridge, 2004; Police Service of Northern Ireland, 2004).

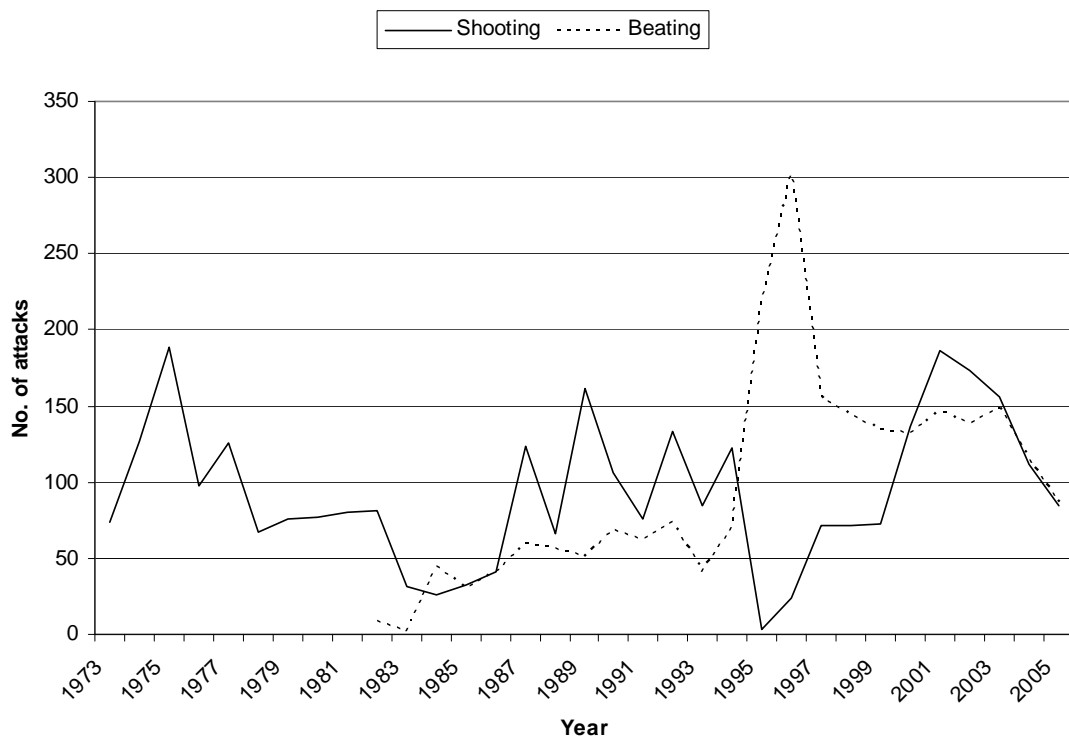
In some instances, those ‘punished’ receive more than one beating through the course of their teenage years as the following case shows:

I was about thirteen or fourteen, I got the first beating...masked men came round but they only hit us a couple of times in the arms and that was it, and then the next time was about fifteen. They just beat us again. It was a wee easy beating, it wasn’t hard, and then the last time was March...I got black eyes and they beat us all about, beat us about the legs and all. And then it happened...again, broke my nose, broke my arm and I was beat with hammers and all, all over my body and I had staples in...my head. (Interview, January 2000)

Frequency of 'punishments'

Police statistics on reported paramilitary 'punishments' have been kept in the case of shootings since 1973 and 1982 for beatings. It should be noted that police statistics represent only the tip of the iceberg in terms of actual numbers of individuals 'punished' as many incidents do not get reported for a variety of reasons including fear of paramilitary reprisal or getting the police involved (Knox and Monaghan, 2002). Between 1973 and 2005 there were 3090 recorded 'punishment' shootings. Republicans were responsible for 1553 (50 per cent) and loyalists 1537 (50 per cent). Although beatings occurred in the 1970s, they were not reported in the republican and loyalist press in the same way as shootings and police statistics are only available from 1982 onwards. Between 1982 and 2005 there were 2328 recorded 'punishment' beatings. Republicans were responsible for 1125 of these (48 per cent) and loyalists 1203 (52 per cent). The overall trends can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Recorded Paramilitary 'Punishments 1973-2005

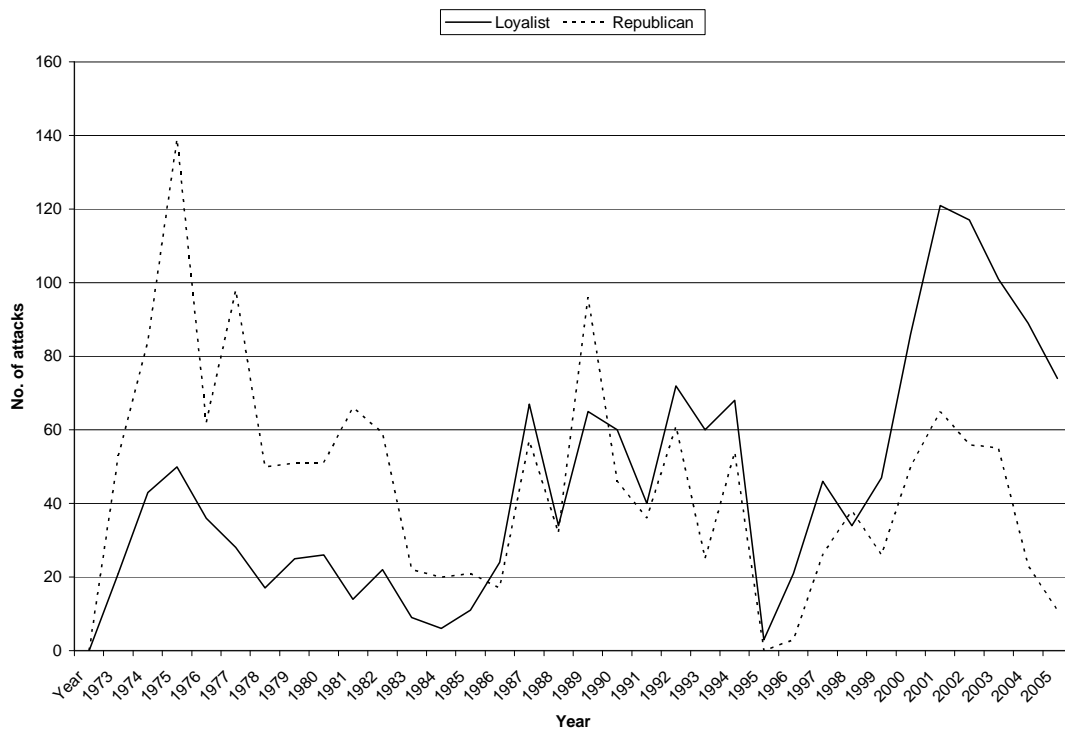


Source: Police Service of Northern Ireland. (2005 figures are provisional and are subject to minor change).

The use of shootings as a 'punishment' peaked in 1975 with 189 being recorded by the police (see Figure 2). Republicans were responsible for 139 of these. While the Provisional IRA is not the only republican paramilitary organization to undertake 'punishments', it is fair to assume that it is probably

responsible for the majority of ‘punishment’ shootings given its size, resources and support and/or control of working class Catholic areas. Silke (1999b) suggests the peak can be attributed to the Provisional IRA cease-fire of 1975. At this time Sinn Féin was attempting to establish itself as a political power in nationalist areas, in addition there were more Provisional IRA Volunteers available to mete out ‘punishments’.

Figure 2: Recorded ‘Punishment’ Shootings by Loyalist and Republican Groups 1973-2005



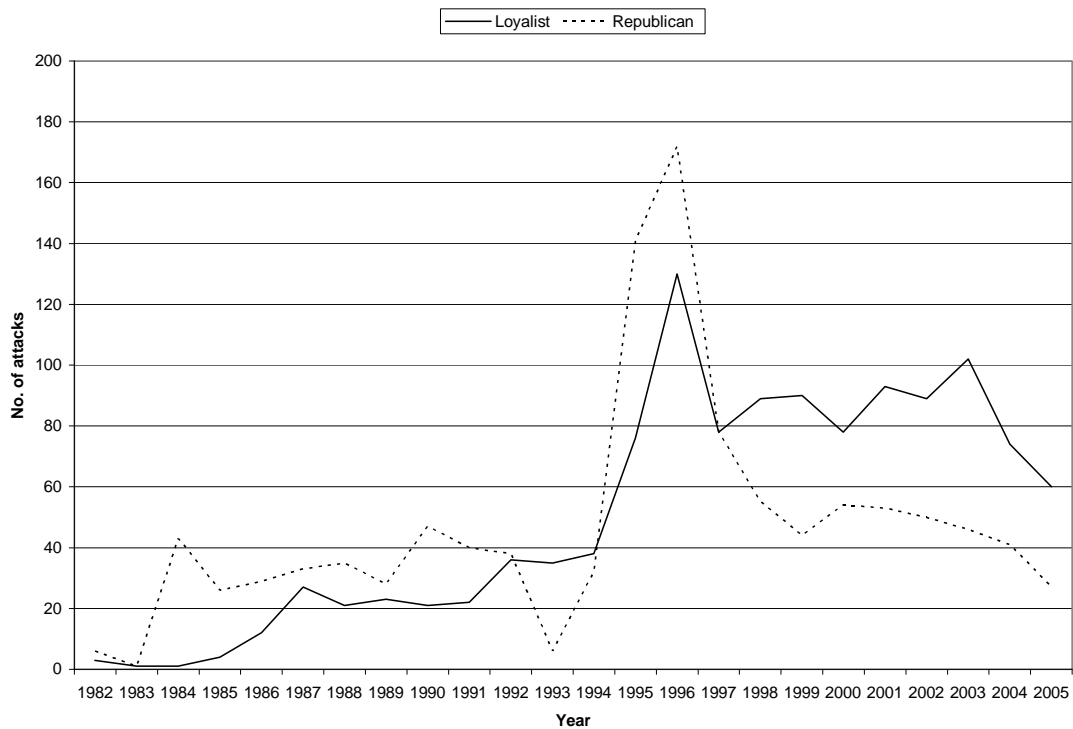
Source: Police Service of Northern Ireland. (2005 figures are provisional and are subject to minor change).

Loyalists have also meted out ‘punishment’ shootings. In 1986 an increase in ‘punishment’ shootings can be observed with loyalists undertaking more shootings than republican paramilitary groups for the first time. The signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in November 1985 is cited as the reason for this as many loyalists felt betrayed by the British state. This agreement established ‘a joint ministerial conference of British and Irish ministers, backed by a permanent secretariat...to monitor political, security, legal and other issues of concern to the Nationalist minority’ (Flackes and Elliot, 1989: 7) A policing vacuum began to develop in working class Protestant areas due to the growing mistrust between the communities and the police. The police had also begun to direct counter-terrorism

measures against loyalist paramilitaries and to enforce bans on loyalist marches. This situation has been exacerbated by community perceptions of the perceived leniency of the formal criminal justice system, the inability of the police to deal with ordinary crime and the recruitment of petty criminals as informers. For example, in 1989 the West Belfast Brigade of the UVF shot a convicted sex offender in the legs and elbows and ordered him to leave the area after he received a lenient sentence from the court.

Like ‘punishment’ shootings a number of changes can be observed in the use of ‘punishment’ beatings (see Figure 3). Republican ‘punishment’ beatings begin to rise in 1984, the same year as a perceived increase in petty crime in nationalist areas evidenced by letters within the republican press calling on the Provisional IRA to ‘punish’ local petty criminals. A 300 per cent rise in the number of loyalist beatings can be seen in 1986, the year following the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Thus, it would appear that ‘punishment’ beatings and shootings are linked not only to changing circumstances in the communities in which paramilitaries operate but also to the wider political context.

Figure 3: Recorded ‘Punishment’ Beatings by Loyalist and Republican Groups 1982-2005



Source: Police Service of Northern Ireland. (2005 figures are provisional and are subject to minor change).

In the initial phase after the cease-fires of 1994 both republican and loyalist paramilitaries resorted to 'punishment' beatings rather than shootings. As Winston (1997: 123) notes this 'change came about as a result of the cease-fire emphasis on removing the gun from the political picture'. Paramilitaries have tried to deflect criticism from their political representatives regarding the maintenance of their cease-fires and thereby preserving their inclusion in the peace process. Under the terms of inclusion in the multi-party talks which culminated in the Belfast Agreement (April 1998), political parties were required to affirm their commitment to six fundamental principles (the Mitchell Principles) of democracy and non-violence. The sixth principle urges that 'punishment' killings and beatings cease and political parties take effective steps to prevent such actions. Indeed, in 1995 the year following the cease-fires there were no reported 'punishment' shootings by republicans and only three by loyalists. Beatings increased by over 300 per cent on the previous year.

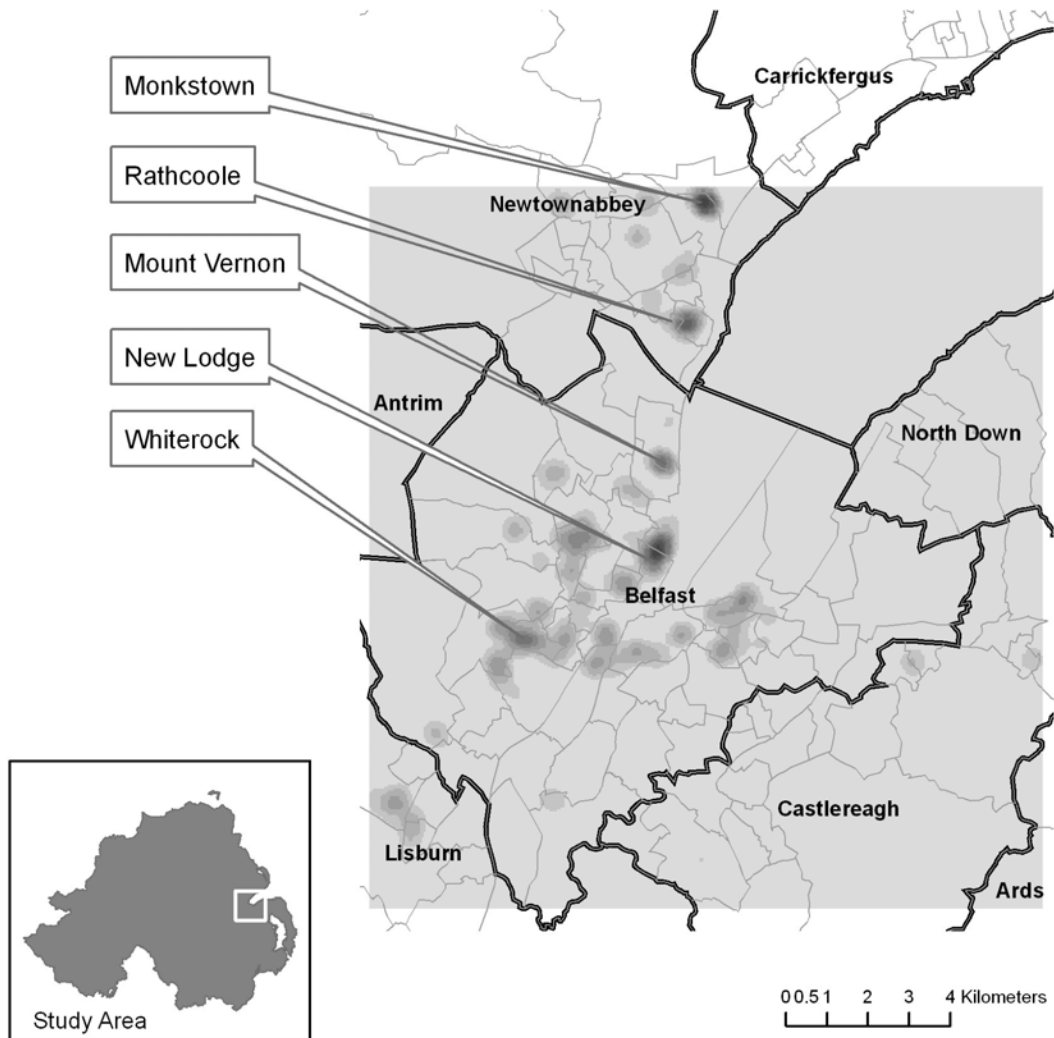
However, an increase in shootings can be observed. In the year 2000, recorded numbers of 'punishment' shootings (136) exceeded the number of beatings (132). This increase can in part be explained by the failure of Northern Ireland Secretaries of State to rule that 'punishment' shootings and indeed beatings constitute a breach of the cease-fires. Interestingly in the year following the signing of the Belfast Agreement up until the end of 2005, the number of loyalist 'punishment' attacks has been greater than the number of republican attacks in each year. Loyalist paramilitaries have accounted for 65 per cent of 'punishment' beatings and 69 per cent of shootings between 1999 and 2005. Since 2003, we can observe a reduction in the number of 'punishments' and last year (2005) the total number was at its lowest since 1994. The Independent Monitoring Commission (2006: 19) noted that since the IRA's statement of 28 July 2005 it has ceased sanctioned 'punishment' attacks although it was aware of at least six unreported assaults mostly resulting from 'personal disputes ...[that] have been without leadership authority or planning, though in the process can carry with them the aura of PIRA threat'.

Distribution of 'punishments' in Belfast

Using the authors' own database of media-reported 'punishments' over a seven-year period since the signing of the Belfast Agreement on the 10 April 1998, we have mapped the location of 700 paramilitary 'punishments', namely shootings and beatings in the greater Belfast area (stretching from Newtownabbey to the north of the city to Poleglass and Twinbrook to the west to Ballybeen and

Tullycarnet to the east and Belvoir to the south), which can be seen in the density map (Figure 4) below.

Figure 4: Density Map of 'Punishment' Attacks in Greater Belfast



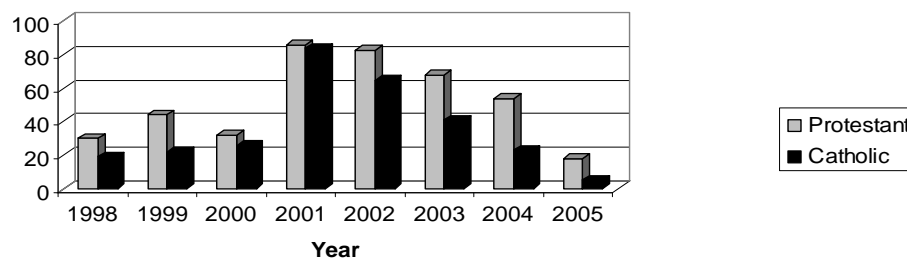
(OSNI Licence Number 50504)

The data was geo-referenced using postcodes and the Central Postcode Directory (CPD) which contains an average x, y coordinate for each postcode unit. Due to the fact that the original data was collated mainly from newspaper reports the quality of the data varied quite widely. In devising the database of incidents this was taken into account and each incident was given an 'accuracy' ranking. Where there was a full postcode it was given an accuracy ranking of 1, if the last letter was missing it

was coded 2, if the last 2 letters were missing it was coded 3 and if missing the last number and 2 letters it was coded 4. Where postcodes were in part or whole missing these were sourced from the address through POINTER®, which is a geo-referenced address database developed by Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland along with the Valuation & Lands Agency (VLA) and Royal Mail in conjunction with local councils. In POINTER®, each property in Northern Ireland has a unique reference number and geo-referenced coordinates.

Paramilitary ‘punishments’ occur throughout the greater Belfast area. A number of hotspots can clearly be identified. To the north of the city, these would include Monkstown, Rathcoole and Mount Vernon. Other hotspots marked are the New Lodge in north Belfast and the Whiterock area in west Belfast. The Census data of 2001 was overlaid onto the map of ‘punishments’; this revealed that ‘punishments’ occur in areas where either Catholics or Protestants dominate (Figure 5). This was done in terms of NISRA output areas, the most spatially detailed level available for analysis. Of the marked hotspot areas Monkstown, Rathcoole and Mount Vernon would be regarded as loyalist working-class housing estates whereas the New Lodge and Whiterock are regarded as republican working-class areas.

Figure 5: ‘Punishments’ per year grouped by dominant religion of the area



In addition to cross-referencing the location of ‘punishments’ by religion, the data was also looked at in terms of deprivation using the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NI MDM) 2005. The NI MDM 2005 is a development by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) of the 2001 Northern Ireland measures of deprivation or more commonly known as the Noble Measures. It is the official measure of spatial deprivation and is the recommended measure to be used by Government. The geographical units of area devised by NISRA are ‘Super Output Areas’ (SOAs) and contain an average of just under 2000 people. There are a total of 890 SOAs in Northern Ireland and

the deprivation score is ranked whereby the area ranked 1 is the most deprived with the area ranked 890 being the least deprived. According to NISRA (2005: 7) NI MDM 2005 'is a measure of multiple deprivation at the small area level'. Although the NI MDM 2005 contains seven domains of deprivation only two domains were applied to the map of 'punishments'. In terms of income deprivation, paramilitary 'punishments' occurred overwhelmingly in areas defined as either deprived (19 per cent of mapped 'punishments') or very deprived (66 per cent) – 57 per cent of the entire study's area population were located in such areas. These areas would be characterised by a high number of people living in families reliant on both out of work benefits such as Income Support and in work support, namely Family Credit. A similar pattern was found in the employment deprivation domain with 87 per cent of 'punishments' occurring in either deprived (17 per cent) or very deprived (70 per cent) areas. This domain measures the involuntary exclusion of the working age population from the world of work.

Conclusions

The informal justice systems established and developed throughout the 'Troubles' in both republican and loyalist working class communities share many of the same characteristics. 'Punishment' beatings and shootings exist for three main reasons: the absence of a legitimate or adequate policing service; the rising levels of petty crime and 'anti-social behavior'; and, the perceived failure of the formal criminal justice system. In republican areas alternative justice and policing measures were developed in contrast to the formal State system as the police have long been regarded as lacking legitimacy. This view is further reinforced by the use of petty criminals as informers by the security forces. The Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin have attempted to fill the policing vacuum, which emerged in nationalist areas by developing their own system of informal justice. In addition, the Provisional IRA and other republican paramilitaries have used 'punishments' to deal with transgressions by their own members or members of rival groups. In contrast, early loyalist paramilitary policing functions were intended to aid the police and to provide internal discipline to the organizations' members. Over the years the relationship between loyalist paramilitaries and the police has changed. The formal justice system is regarded as being weak on criminals and 'punishments' are taken against those alleged to be involved in criminal activities and 'anti-social behavior'. Loyalist paramilitaries also take action against individuals who come into conflict with their members and rivals during feuds. Republican and loyalist systems in

theory operate a tariff or graduated scale of 'punishments'. On deciding on the type of 'punishment' mitigating factors can also be considered in both systems.

Paramilitary 'punishments' occur throughout greater Belfast in areas where one religion is dominant and where there are high levels of deprivation. In these areas the police as already noted are either seen as lacking legitimacy or are perceived as ineffective. Thus the local communities call upon the paramilitaries for help and justice. Despite some 11 year of peace paramilitary 'punishments' continue and are likely to do so in the near future.

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