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Monday, 30th June 2008

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Bloody Sunday families 'still suffering'

The families of those killed and wounded on Bloody Sunday are still suffering from its effects and none feel they have had 'closure', according to University of Ulster PhD student Karen McGuigan, who graduates next week.

Karen, from Cashelmore Park in Derry, will receive her doctorate at the University of Ulster's summer graduation ceremonies in the Millennium Forum. For her PhD thesis she designed a research programme to assess the degree of psychological distress e

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xperienced by the families of those killed or wounded on Bloody Sunday.

Her own grandfather, Bernard, was among those shot dead on January 30, 1972.

Karen says Bloody Sunday's far reaching effects within her own family prompted her to try to assess the degree of psychological distress on other families of those killed and the wounded.

Karen, who completed her BSc Hons in Psychology with Organisational Science at the Magee campus, started studying for her PhD on a part time basis five years ago.

Her research supervisor was Dr Mark Shevlin, Reader, in the School of Psychology.

"Bloody Sunday offered a unique opportunity for research as the Saville Inquiry was ongoing which allowed the research to be conducted as events unfolded," she says.

She says she hopes to conduct further research among the Bloody Sunday families on the issue of closure when the Saville Inquiry publishes its report, which is expected to be early next year.

Karen explains: "The research examined the transgenerational effects of the event; the psychological and physiological consequences of exposure to trauma; and 'closure'. Participants were assessed at four times across the five years and included immediate family and second-generation family members of those killed on Bloody Sunday as well as a number of those wounded. They were assessed using recognised quantitative measures of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), health and life satisfaction."

Karen says her results showed that a number of the immediate family and wounded met all the criteria for PTSD diagnosis.

"The results also showed the transgenerational effects of Bloody Sunday as second generation family members were found to exhibit PTSD symptoms at times of greater distress. It was also found that there was a relationship between physical and psychological well-being. PTSD symptoms adversely affected health at times of greater distress among the sample.

Effects still felt

"Qualitative interviews with the families found that the effects of Bloody Sunday are still being felt. None of those questioned were able to say they felt a sense of closure at this stage. These findings suggest that the effects of Bloody Sunday have been far reaching, affecting health and life satisfaction and even passing across a generation."

Karen is currently working in a consultancy role with IBEC Retail to investigate workplace stress among retailers in the North West.

The full article contains 463 words and appears in n/a newspaper.

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Doireman1,

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Of Course they are, but so are all families in the Troubles, Some families lost more than one member in these troubles, sometimes these people are overlooked

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Doireman1,

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At the start of this campaign many of the families wouldnt get involved, now they are all on board????

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