



## **'Who Fears to Speak': Fear, Mobility, and Ethno-sectarianism in the Two 'Ardoynes'**

*Peter Shirlow, University of Ulster*

Fear is everywhere, that much is obvious. Indeed, what aspect of life, from the most momentous to the most trivial, has *not* become a workstation in the mass production line of fear? (Massumi, 1993: viii)

The perpetuation of ethno-sectarian conflicts reminds us that, despite the onset of globalisation, cultural 'homogenisation' and mass consumption, the links between ethno-sectarian separation and fear remain central to the logic and explanation of violent enactment and cultural polarisation. Without doubt, the potential of localised, nationalist and anti-pluralist doctrines to determine the reproduction of residential segregation using particularistic discourses of 'truth' and the reconstruction of history remains ever present.

Contemporary theorists of residential segregation are concerned with the interpretative nature of habituation and discursive practices. Imrie et al (1996), Robins (1995) and Ellin (1996) have, for example, highlighted the need to ground 'lived experiences' in order to understand the subjective interconnections and emotional forces which drive the urban moralities of segregation. Moralities which are in themselves tied to the structural relations of power, displacement and conflict. Without doubt ideas and physical practices still influence the (re)construction and contestation of territorial belonging (Keith and Pile 1993; Kellerman 1996; Sharp et al 1999; Karanga 2000). A central goal in the exploration of segregation is not merely to determine the nature of contact between spatially separate populations but to also designate how ideas, beliefs and behaviours are reinforced by their social milieu (Fallah 1996).

As argued by Horowitz (1985) and Smith (1991), much work on residential segregation tends to overplay the cataloguing of peoples and ignores the nature of political heterogeneity within ethno-sectarian groups. It is important to note that the violent, cultural and political acts which aid the reproduction of segregation should not be read as being supported by all residents of segregated communities within which inter-communal violence is of concern. The fear of entering areas dominated by the 'other' ethno-sectarian group can be influenced by threats, both imagined and real, that are set against people by members of their 'own' community. In sum, segregation should not be understood as a set of atavistic relationships between places but also within places themselves.

The construction of ethno-sectarian landscapes is influential but does not convert everyone who lives in such places towards accepting homogenous senses of belonging and affiliation. In simple terms, many people who live in highly segregated communities do not subscribe to an uni-dimensional logic that their dreads and fears are sourced merely from elements that exist outside of their 'own' community. However, this does not mean that such persons are completely against the dominant political representations that exist within their own community. Instead it could be argued that highly segregated communities contain diverse populations that either reject, partly reject/accept or accept symbolic representations and discursive hegemonies that are tied to ethno-sectarianised discourses. In addition, it could also be predicted that devotion to and rejection of ethno-sectarian discourses is temporal.

This article draws on quantitative and qualitative data gathered from the Ardoyne district of Belfast. The article opens with a brief overview of the general literature on fear and segregation, then looks at the literature on fear and segregation in Belfast and highlights some of the gaps within this literature. The remainder of the article examines the construction of ethno-sectarian landscapes in the Ardoyne. After providing some

background information on Ardoyne we highlight some findings from our quantitative study of the spatial mobility of Ardoyne residents. The article then draws on qualitative interview data to illustrate the role of fear in the construction and reproduction of ethno-sectarian space in the Ardoyne.

In critiquing the immutability of ethno-sectarian boundaries it is argued that low levels of social interaction between ethno-sectarian communities does not necessarily mean that ethno-sectarian polarisation is as rigid as may be assumed. However, despite analysing intra-community heterogeneity this study indicates that the implied de-territorialisation needed in order to shift Northern Irish society toward more agreed and agreeable forms of political ownership and consensus-building remains distant and geographically rootless.

### ***Fear and the City***

Recent work, dedicated to exploring city environments, has promoted the theme of fear within spatial analyses. Much of this work has looked at the fear of crime, domestic and sexual violence and racially motivated attacks (Smith 1981; Ferraro and LaGrange 1987; Hale 1996; Ditton and Farral 2000). As indicated within such studies the relationship between fear and residential segregation is contingent upon a series of relations such as the environments of everyday life, violence (both imagined and real) and political manipulation (Shirlow and Pain, 2003). The presentation of fear, by certain political entrepreneurs, has been a central element in the construction of ethno-sectarian tradition within a range of urban environments. In some cases socially dominant groups can claim ownership of a communities fears, phobias and traumas in a desire to triumph particular political discourses.

Of particular importance is the inability to publicly challenge the violence that has emanated from within your 'own' community. This can be due to real threats and a general sense that to criticise such activities is to show disloyalty. In more explicit terms, the desire to control narratives of threat and wider propaganda conditioning perspectives has led to feuding within loyalist and republican 'territories'. Feuding in itself indicates that the control of ideas and political practice is a defined political instrument. The assaulting of 'dissidents' and the picketing of the homes of those who criticise political activities within their 'own' community also testifies to the power and authority of political and cultural control. In sum, there are clear disincentives, both violent and non-violent that obviate against the vocalisation of criticisms. The State is also responsible in relation to silencing condemnation of violent acts given its collaboration with paramilitaries and it's 'inability' due to this and other factors to offer protection to those who dissent from community 'norms'. In that manner, it is possible to find reasons why particular opinions, interests and groups can readily be both disenfranchised and censored by elements that exist within their 'own' community and the State.

Fear itself is conditioned by a series of emotional and cultural concerns. Anxiety is an obvious outcome given the history and reproduction of violence within segregated areas. Phobia, insecurity and uncertainty remain due to low levels of social trust and an inability to control the nature and direction of violent acts. Fear and mistrust are linked to understandings of risk, doubt and behavioural responses that are influenced by the assessment of threat. Feeling threatened may not be influenced directly by levels of violence, given that interpretations of risk and threat can be more extreme than contemporary levels of violence would predict. This is partly due to such emotions being tied to narratives of harm, hate and loathing. Atavistic attitudes towards the 'other' community, in particular, are influenced by the representation of knowledge and the collectivisation of memories in a desire to present the 'other' community through discourses of danger, purity and impurity. The varied forms and understandings through which fear is produced, reproduced and explained follows Gold and Revill's notion that



fear 'lies at the intersection of the practical and the reflexive, the natural and the cultural, and the affective and the rational' (2003: 86).

As Gold and Reville (2003) have argued, fear is used to support spatial practices that aim to mark out moral geographies that exclude and exile feared social groups. These spatial practices aim to create purified and homogeneous spaces that aim to provide legitimacy to a series of discursive activities and social group practices. In certain instances, the articulation of group fears is tied to the enclosing of space and the marginalisation of alternative representations and dissenting voices.

Within the Northern Irish context, fear has been influenced by the impact of societal deterioration, especially with regard to growths in social exclusion, fatalism and the re-appearance of violence in the late 1960s. However, work within the Northern Irish arena, which has evaluated the link between religious segregation, victimisation, security-consciousness and ultimately the impact of fear upon mobility, has remained underdeveloped. This underdevelopment of ideas and theories is peculiar given that the establishment of residential segregation has regulated violence, harm and fear via inter-linked and obvious spatial devices. If anything violence has and continues to be stimulate fear through the defence and violation of ethno-sectarian enclaves (Darby and Morris 1974; Boal et al 1991; Nordstrom et al 1992; Douglas and Shirlow 1998).

### ***Residential Segregation in Belfast***

In his seminal work on ethno-sectarian division in Belfast, Fred Boal, provided some insights into how political violence and the politicisation of space determined the nature of religious segregation in Belfast (Boal 1969). His work, and that of others, was significant in that it verified how long-term historical structures and their enduring memory influenced and directed the shaping of segregation within Belfast's contemporary urban system (Burton 1978; Boal 1982; Poole and Doherty 1996 Anderson and Shuttleworth 1998;). However, much of this work did not determine the difference in attitudes between those who supported ethno-sectarian enclaving and those who did not. In addition, the variety of resistances to and for ethno-sectarianism remains under-explored (Shirlow 2001).

An even more glaring omission was the exclusion of the State as a catalyst for segregation and conflict. In most instances, the State was represented as a neutral arbitrator that aimed to dilute the rational of ethno-sectarian practice. This 'oversight' was illogical and led to a reading of the politics of segregation that was concentrated 'on narrow social and physical working class ground'. (Murtagh, 2001: 32). The failure to comprehend the nature of cultural and political fragmentation within communities was most acute among those who examined residential segregation through purely positivist methods (Brett 1986; Compton 1993; Morrill 1991; Williams and Paterson 1995). In general terms, such approaches did not adequately explain the nuances and complexities of how fear and ethno-sectarian separation are both practiced and understood. It is not clear, from much of the work undertaken on residential segregation in Northern Ireland, the extent to which fear and residential segregation are valued in relation to age, gender, social position and political background.

Qualitative analyses, which have examined the manner through which violence and ideological interpretation have created fearfulness, are virtually invisible<sup>1</sup>. Determining and understanding the complexities of fearfulness is important in that it aids appreciation of community diversity and supports a more valid explanation of extensive violence, self-imposed spatial restrictions and the attempt to avoid inter and intra-community

---

<sup>1</sup> With the exception of Darby and Morris (1974) and Feldman (1991) there have been few attempts to study this issue in detail via a qualitative framework.

harassment (Shirlow and Pain 2003). Other factors worthy of note include heterosexual masculinity, acceptance of mobility restrictions and new forms of sectarian hostility such as the Holy Cross dispute (Murtagh 2001). The promotion of qualitative analyses permits a more reasoned, although at times highly complex, understanding of the forces, which condition restricted spatial mobility.

The embedding of ethno-sectarianism has been achieved via the fabrication of discursive formations, which have created a systematic and conceptual framework capable of defining 'truth'. A significant number of those living in ethno-sectarian enclaves have been influenced by processes of ethno-sectarian enclaving, the championing of the 'home' enclave as morally superior and the assembly of symbols and distinct discursive practices. Such processes of spatial demarcation echo Foucault's (Foucault 1979) concern with the field of objects, the subject of knowledge and how 'legitimate' perspectives govern and prescribe processes of inclusion and exclusion. Ethno-sectarian enclaving created and re-established discursive formations based upon the enclosing of ideas, the charging of a particular moral inflection and the achievement of new mechanisms of power. The perpetual search, by some, for spatial enclosure and socio-spatial demarcation is clearly tied to Sack's notion that the creation of ethno-sectarianised spaces produces: 'Boundaries which are virtually impermeable ...[and which] isolate communities, create fear and hate of others, and push in the directions of inequality and in justice' (Sack 1998: 254).

Divisions between illicit and licit discursive morality conditioned many discursive practices through offensive and exclusionary practices. The growth of widespread fear, ethno-sectarian purity and allegiance became understood as both a regulation of community space and a system of ethno-sectarian classification (Jarman 1998). The evidence, presented below, on how sectarianised fears reduces mobility and cross-community contact illustrates how social practice still engenders different imaginings of community and the production of community-based and eclectic forms of political identification, fear and violent enactment.

Up until the recent Balkan conflicts, population movement in Belfast, due to intimidation, was the most significant shift of people attributed to violence within Europe since the conclusion of World War II. The influx of refugees (around 7 500 families in Belfast between 1968 and 2001) into ethno-sectarian enclaves, due to the re-appearance of violent conflict, created sanctuary spaces that functioned as safe and unsafe mental maps (Belfast Interface Project 1999; Morrow 1997). The redefinition of interfaces, arenas which are predominantly socially and economically deprived communities and which separate Catholic and Protestant populations<sup>2</sup> by both physical and mental constructions, are key to understanding the reproduction of ethno-sectarianism in Northern Ireland (Boal and Murray 1977; Burton 1987; Darby 1987; Feldman 1991; Poole and Doherty 1996).

---

<sup>2</sup> The terms Catholic and Protestant are used in this article, although Northern Irish society is far more complex than the stereotypical ethno-sectarian schism between Catholic/Nationalist/Republican and Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist.

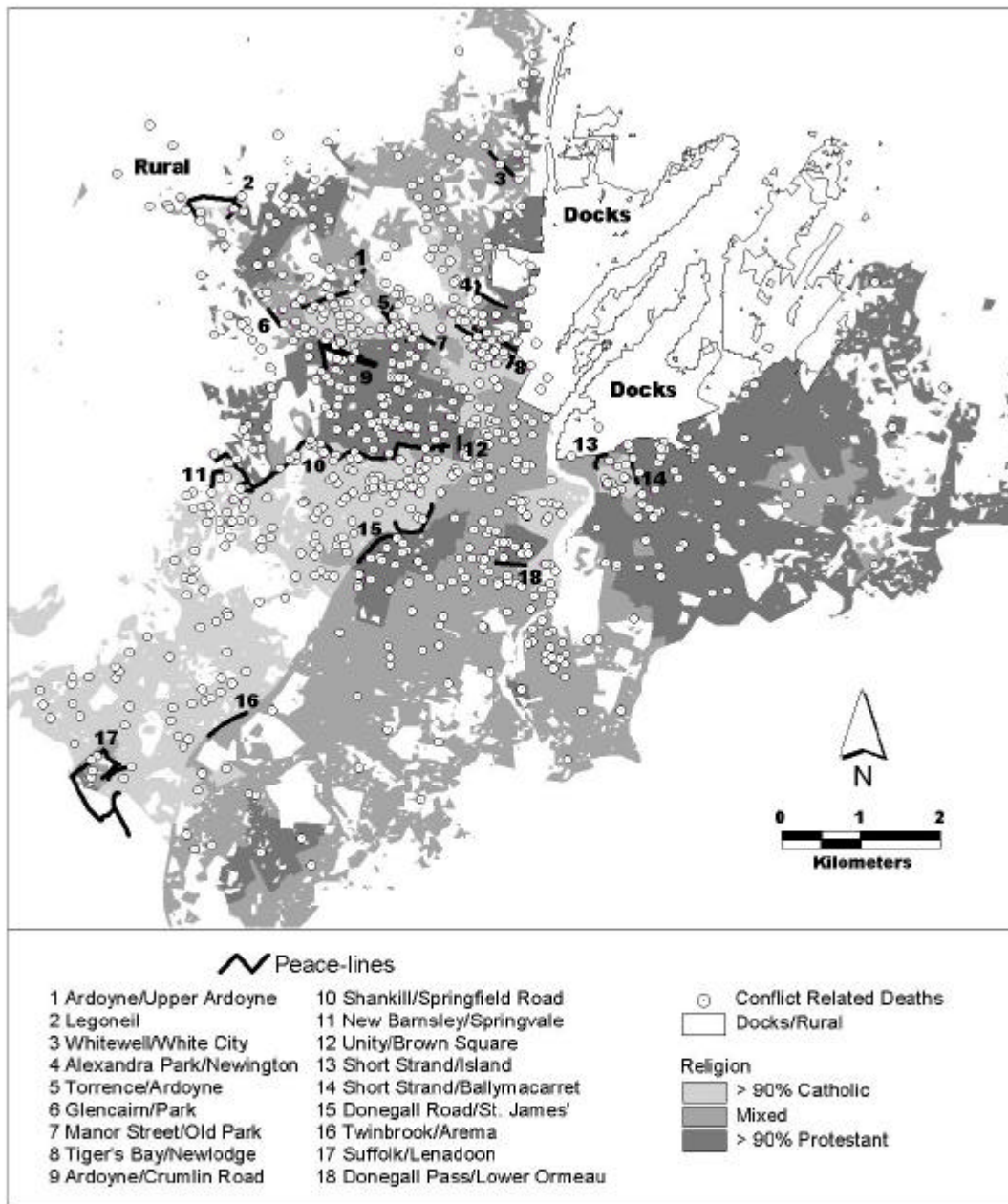


Figure 1: Residential segregation and conflict related deaths in Belfast

The effects of politically motivated violence in Belfast are obvious. Between 1969 and 1999, around 1200 people were killed and over 20 000 injured by paramilitary and State violence. Fear of being a victim of such attacks meant that many people living in conflictual arenas developed a comprehensive knowledge of 'safe' and 'unsafe places'

(Burton 1987). Furthermore, mental maps created a process of consciousness that was intensified through the telling of fear, victimhood, and risk. Between 1969 and 2003, around 20 euphemistically called 'peace-lines' (interfaces) were constructed around those areas within which the most excessive patterns of violence occurred<sup>3</sup>. Interface walls aimed to restrict mobility by sundering the built environment. Such structures had the effect of clearly appointing an 'opposing' community as a menacing spatial formations (Darby 1987; Douglas and Shirlow 1998). As noted by Feldman: 'the wall itself becomes the malevolent face of the people who live on the other side' (1991, 37).

A third of the victims of politically motivated violence, between 1966 and 2001, were murdered within 250 metres of an interface (Figure 1). Around 70% of deaths occurred (but representing only 53% of Belfast's population) within 500 metres (author's calculations). Over 80% of deaths occurred within areas which were either over 90% Catholic or over 90% Protestant. In overall terms death was closely tied to places that were highly segregated, militarised, close to interfaces and socially deprived. Segregation provided a physical demarcation of space that aided the process of targeting Catholic and Protestant communities (Feldman 1991).

A central goal among those political entrepreneurs who supported ethno-sectarian discourses was to destabilise established patterns of inter-community relations.. The enactment of violence and the assault upon pluralist discourses was closely tied to paramilitaries and the State identifying certain communities as a permanent threat (Bruton 1987). Fear was not only constructed around the experience of violence but through the use of urban space in order to de-territorialise inter-community linkage. For those who accepted ethno-sectarian apportionment the belief grew that the ethno-sectarian 'other' was committed to harming them. Thus, reciprocation was founded upon violent acts, which sought, in certain instances, to maximise the losses of 'other' groups. Violence undoubtedly created feelings of mistrust and harm, which manifested themselves, within Belfast's most violent arenas, as a state of constant or intermittent anxiety (Shirlow 2001). The reappearance of violence in the 1960s highlighted the need to develop a reading of threat and risk that was required in order to remain 'safe'. (Downey 2000).

### ***What's in a Name?***

In the Westminster elections of 2001 Sinn Fein polled 83% of votes cast in Ardoyne. In the same election, Unionist and Loyalist political parties received 99% of all votes in Upper Ardoyne. The two areas are divided by one of the first 'peace lines' built in 1971 in North Belfast, which runs along the northern edge of, the ironically named, Alliance Avenue. A quarter of all murders during the contemporary conflict in Northern Ireland, occurred within a mile radius of Alliance Avenue. North Belfast is also somewhat unique in that its geography of ethno-sectarian division is more diverse and acute than in other parts of the city (Fay et al 1999).

In relation to violence since the late 1960s, both communities have been victimised by paramilitary and state violence (Fay et al 1999). Recent work, estimates that at least 60% of adults living in these communities have or are suffering from PTSD (Bradley 2000). It is estimated that around 1 in 18 people, in both communities have had, a direct member of their family killed (sibling/parent/grandparent/partner/aunt/uncle/cousin). This compares to the Northern Ireland ratio of 0.003 in 100 (Bradley 2000). The potency of over 180 deaths within both communities and other dramatically violent events is crucial in understanding why fears and mistrust persist. In each community, the commemoration of suffering and violation is activated through the instrument of telling.

---

<sup>3</sup> The number of 'peace-lines' provides only a limited picture of the extent of physical segregation. In many places walls were not erected between places within which violent acts took place because these places were already divided by railway tracks, the construction of new road systems or slum clearance.



Telling of the 'Collective Self's' suffering at the hands of the 'collective other' is a conventional feature of living in both communities. In general, 'telling' constructs and regulates spatial movement through inferring that the 'collective other' is deviant, violent and irrational. The 'other' in such 'telling' is generally reduced to perpetrator as opposed to victim. In effect, 'telling' not only conditions understandings of safe and unsafe places but also politicises space through the interpretation of violent encounter. In addition, the narrative of 'telling' is so fixed that it can regulate mobility through encouraging avoidance and perpetual ethno-sectarian discord. Moreover, the sign systems that are coordinated by 'telling' are organised around concepts of residential segregation and ordained sectarianised relationships.

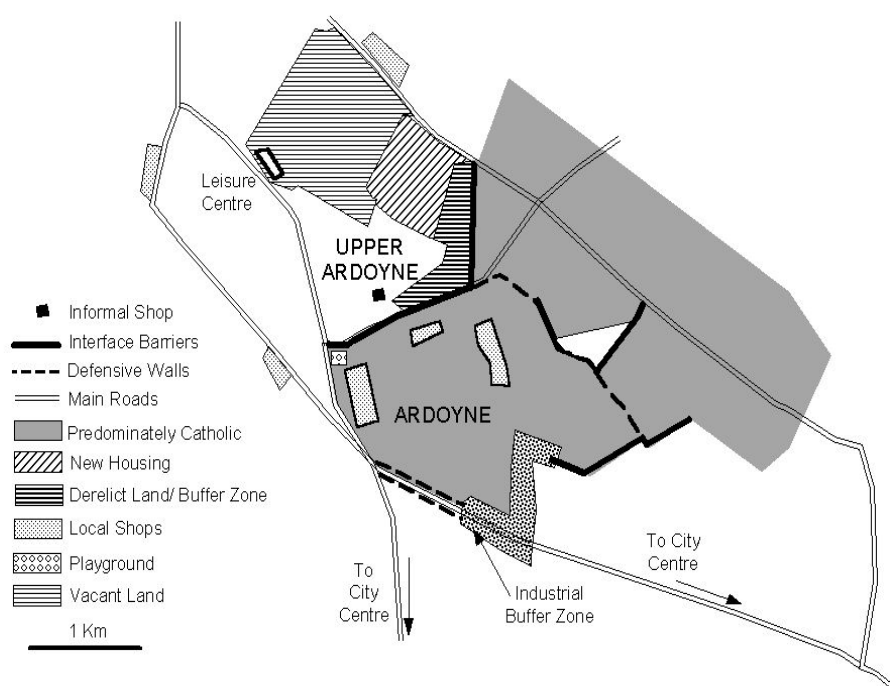


Figure 2: Upper Ardoyne and Ardoyne

The landscape of each area is heavily influenced through the commemoration of suffering. This is achieved not only via the iconography of wall murals but also in the euphemistic naming of places. The Henry Joy McCracken Bar in Ardoyne is known locally as the 'Suicide', a name given after a history of attacks upon the bar by Loyalist paramilitaries. In Upper Ardoyne, the end of the street closest to Ardoyne is called the 'Dark Corner' due to it being a place within which violent attacks upon Protestants have occurred. Telling of violence and the emblematic naming of places serves to verify the nature of fear and victimhood among the majority of residents.

In addition, fear and mistrust creates strong perceptions of socio-cultural besiegement. As indicated below the majority of people living within each community reproduce their social activities through operating within what they deem to be 'safe' and 'unsafe' places. The deliberate failure of most to engage in social practices within the 'other' community is based upon what is recognised as a 'rational' threat.

The level of victimhood within each community can be explained not only in relation to the brutalising effect of violence but also by the need to ensure that victimhood is understood through the presentation of ethno-sectarian contamination. One such relationship is the place name, 'Upper Ardoyne'. As you enter Upper Ardoyne from Ardoyne, graffiti reads 'You are now entering Protestant Ardoyne'. In this instance, the claiming of a part of Ardoyne as Protestant plays upon the nature of defence and ethno-sectarian preservation. Defence in this instance is articulated through challenging the universal use of the appellation Ardoyne to mean a 'Republican/Catholic' neighbourhood. In Ardoyne, the term 'Upper' Ardoyne is not used. Instead this area is known as Glynbryn, after several of the street names in this area. In such instances, imagery and semantics are cast as instruments of ownership.

The confrontation between these two communities, like many other interface zones in Belfast, is conditioned by space claiming through process of residential extension and contraction. In Upper Ardoyne, the decline of the population from approximately 3,000 in 1971 to around 1,500 in 1991 illustrates a process of socio-economic decline, which is read as having emerged as a result of Republican violence and erroneous policymaking against this community. The slow decline of Wheatfield Primary School, in Upper Ardoyne, and the re-stocking of the community with fewer homes provides a sense of cultural dissipation and betrayal. In addition, this area no longer possesses any shopping facilities due to a process of dis-investment, which has paralleled population decline. The socio-economic decline of the community produces a resolve to remain and keep possession of a Protestant/Unionist territory - a case of 'suffering for righteousness sake'. In antithesis to this, the growth in the Ardoyne population from around 4,500 in 1971 to just over 6,400 in 1991 and the inability to accommodate population overspill in Upper Ardoyne, provides a sense that policymakers are accommodating Protestant demands before the needs of Ardoyne residents. For many Ardoyne residents the supposition is promoted that vacant land, in the Upper Ardoyne area, should be used to accommodate population overspill. In this instance, community relationships are not merely conditioned by violence but also via patterns of suspicion, mistrust and low levels of reciprocity, which relate to territorial belonging/ownership. In local terms, the residents of Upper Ardoyne feel besieged by being domiciled close to a growing Irish Republican community. However, for Ardoyne residents, besiegement is influenced by being virtually surrounded by 'Protestant' territory. In each instance, reactive forms of cultural opposition are tied to notions of cultural dissipation, besiegement, threat and intimidation.

### ***Measuring Mobility***

Nearly 40% of 212 respondents, who were surveyed, stated that they had been victims of physical violence since the cease-fires of 1994. Overall, 268 incidents of physical violence were recorded in Upper Ardoyne, with 79% attributed as sectarian attacks by the 'religious other'. Within Ardoyne, 324 attacks were recorded with only 34% denoted as attacks by the 'religious other'. The majority of physical assaults (62%) within the Ardoyne sample were identified as attacks by the security forces. The fact that the nature of violence against each community is dissimilar may well partly account for the higher (93% compared to 61%) levels of perceived residence 'at the interface' within the predominately Protestant Upper Ardoyne area. More importantly, 82% of all respondents stated that they had, since 1994, witnessed 'physical violence by either the religious 'other' or the security/crown forces'. It was discovered that 86% of those surveyed would not, out of choice, enter an area dominated by the 'other' ethno-sectarian group. An additional 6% would not enter such areas due to a desire not to mix with the 'other' religious group. Moreover, 79% would not, even by car, travel though an area dominated by the 'other' ethno-sectarian group at night.

In relation to basic spatial statistics, the survey aimed to measure the impact fear and prejudice has upon consumer and recreational behaviour. Interaction distances between





the two communities were measured as straight lines between the population-weighted centroids of both Ardoyne and Upper Ardoyne and the location of each identified shop, pub, club, and leisure centre. Given the two community's close spatial proximity (0.45 km between the centroids of Ardoyne and Upper Ardoyne), and similar socio-economic profiles, predicted utility maximisation should be very similar in terms of interaction levels. Moreover, the fact that Upper Ardoyne contains no shopping facilities and in contrast, less than 0.5 km away the Ardoyne community contains six large grocers, as well as a range of other outlets, it would be expected that the closest facilities would be relied upon. However, only 20% of those surveyed in Upper Ardoyne would use their closest facilities, all of which are located within Ardoyne. Similarly, only 18% of Ardoyne respondents use the leisure centre in Upper Ardoyne.

Table 1: Spatial distance and consumption in North Belfast

	Relationship	Total distance of all visits (km)		Mean distance per visit (km)		Dist-weighted relationship
	$r^2$	A	UA	A	UA	$r^2$
Daily shopping	0.026	41.5	80.5	0.415	0.805	0.014
Weekly shopping	0.004	141.2	181.8	0.780	0.983	0.043
Pubs/clubs	0.160	43.7	150.9	0.455	2.902	0.014
Leisure centres	0.103	241.1	93.2	10.48	2.824	0.007
Total	0.001	467.5	506.4	1.169	1.369	0.002
Distance only	-	-	-	-	-	0.982

A statistical measurement of dissimilarity in consumer choice can be drawn out by a simple coefficient of determination  $r^2$ . Table 1 lists highly insignificant relationships for all four service and recreational categories. When comparing mean distances to services, Upper Ardoyne respondents travel twice as far for daily shopping necessities, and over six times as far to pubs and social clubs than their Ardoyne counterparts. The main burden placed upon residents of Ardoyne is the ability to locate safe leisure centre facilities. Most (82%) refuse to use the nearest centre, and instead travel to leisure centres in Republican/Nationalist areas such as "West Belfast". Ardoyne respondents who use leisure centres travel over six times further than their Upper Ardoyne counterparts. The contrast in distance travelled to services is a further indication of the reluctance of the two communities to share local facilities. When distance and volume are taken into account, consumer choice between the two communities becomes even more insignificant and lower  $r^2$  values are calculated. These are in stark contrast to the idealised  $r^2$  value of 0.982, which represents distances to all services and facilities regardless of community allegiance.

Not surprisingly, ethno-sectarianism plays a dominant role in influencing where residents shop and use facilities, and how far they are prepared to travel. This is demonstrated by the fact that the great majority of consumer interaction is between origins and destinations of the same religion. The few visits that cross ethno-sectarian boundaries and interfaces can be accredited to the use of large 'neutrally' sited shopping centres. Ethno-sectarianism has dominated consumer decision-making and produced a distorted pattern where residents from one community choose one set of destinations and residents from the other community another, with very little sharing. It is almost as if there are two distinct sets of consumers, both living within a 1-km radius, and where the concept of 'competing destinations' synonymous of 'newer' interaction models (Fotheringham 1986) is virtually confined to distinct ethno-sectarian market boundaries.

In classical discrete choice and interaction models, this is akin to allowing fear and avoidance to act not only as friction but also as barriers on distance. Distance in our North Belfast example is not the strongest factor and does not dictate people's decisions on where to shop and pursue recreation activities.

### **Complex Fears**

The findings above would seem to suggest that fear of being attacked by the 'other' community is central in determining low levels of cross-community contact. However, a subjective reading of such information masks a series of relationships complicated by age, gender and intra-community threat. The interviews conducted after surveying produced a series of complex cultural and demographic positions. Pensioners are those least likely to perceive the 'other' community as a menacing spatial formation. Secondly, a small group of non-pensioners, who constituted 18% of interviewees, are non-sectarian, and like many pensioners do not believe that the 'other' community should be represented as a homogenous cabal intent upon harming them and their community. Thirdly, 62% of interviewees were found to be tenaciously influenced by a highly subjective ethno-sectarian discourse.

Virtually all of the respondents of pensionable age within the Upper Ardoyne community, who are able bodied, use facilities within Ardoyne. Interviews among this group disclose that the majority are not afraid to enter 'alien' territory for four main reasons. Firstly, social relationships, that existed prior to the contemporary conflict, have tended to endure and older people visit Ardoyne in order to maintain such friendships. As noted by one elderly Protestant respondent:

I used to live down there (Ardoyne). My aul (old) friends are down there still. Me and the missus (wife) go down every night for a chat and sometimes even for a wee party. We all get on grand (well). They come up to us and we have the best of craic (fun). We shop down there as well. You go down, do a bit of shopping and meet your mates.

Secondly, pensioners were three times as likely, as the other age groups, to have either Catholic or Protestant relatives within each respective community. This would insinuate that inter-marriages were more numerous prior to the present conflict. Thirdly, older people tended to be repulsed by paramilitary activities, which they contended had destroyed a previous society within which community relations were relatively 'normalised'. As noted by a pensioner from Ardoyne:

Look, I grew up with Protestants here in Ardoyne. I saw the Provies (IRA) bullying those people out. Now they say they didn't do that. But I saw the bullies at it. There were (Protestant) families like the Agnews and Cavendishes who lived here. They were decent people. When my father died they were the ones who helped my mother the most. There wasn't a bad bone in their bodies.

You get young ones now going on about Huns and Jaffa's (derogatory names for Protestants). How do they know what they are like they have never met any (Protestants).

Although, pensioners conceded that their communities had been victimised by sectarian violence it was also contended that their community had also been involved in transgressive sectarian behaviour. A fourth issue which emerged was that of religious conviction and a belief that it is immoral to judge whole communities as abnormal and inauspicious. It is apparent that lived social histories, within which there has been an extensive form of cross-community linkage, are capable of diluting the rationale of sectarian sentiment, and as a result fear of the 'other' community is tempered by more experienced forms of cultural understanding.



Stronger and more sectarian attitudes were located among those, who comprised 86% of all respondents, aged between 18 and 55. No one within this group undertook, by choice, any form of inter-community linkage or visit to areas dominated by the 'other' religious group. Eighty two percent of respondents, within this group, stated that their failure to engage in cross-community activities was due to fear of attack by the 'other' community. There were no observable differences in attitude that could be related to gender. For this group the experience of residential segregation was channelled through a framework of exclusive and sectarian representations and ideological 'tradition'. Sectarianism is viewed not as a repressive relationship but as an articulatory process, which enshrines spatial segregation.

Space, for those who articulate sectarian discourses, is seen to function as an object that hosts historical 'truths' and collective discourses. Community and history, for this group, serve as micro-territorial constructions, which reinforce the way in which geography presents sectarian hostility as a valid politicisation of space. Among those who advance sectarian discourses the materialisation of residential segregation into spatial constructs is imperative in order to functionalise and advance topographic conflict. At every point of conversation, among those who maintain sectarian narratives, it is acknowledged that all social space is coded through a sectarian analysis. Within those interviews, undertaken among those who were most sectarian, it was commonly understood that urban space is fabricated by both ideological and physical separation. However, one of the most pronounced factors that distances the sectarian group from the non-sectarian group was the manner in which they eulogised, through the expression of topophilia, the communities within which they lived. Each member of the sectarian group discussed their community within utopian discourses of integrity, loyalty, kinship and symbolic purity. In comparison, non-sectarians were more likely to denote that 'their' communities contained multiple forms of impurity, contravention and deviant behaviour.

The interviews conducted among the sectarian group produced passionate sectarian narratives and the most pronounced sense that the 'other' community was abnormal, antagonistic and uncompromising. The share of those who had experienced physical harm at the hands of the sectarian 'other' was similar to that amongst pensioners (40% and 38%, respectively). Unlike non-sectarians this group tended to maintain that they could not rationalise why they had been victims of sectarian violence. Members of this group tended to assert, that their community was victimised against and that the perpetrators of such attacks were an odious representations of a complete community. The failure, by the majority of these respondents, to identify that analogous threats are an encumbrance upon the 'other' community means that ethno-sectarian separation is comprehended through a uni-dimensional ethno-sectarian logic.

Fear, within this group, was explained through the framework of reproaching the contrary community. As a result, sectarianised readings were constantly linked to an acknowledgement of spaces of fear and the location of unsafe places. Within such a climate of ethno-sectarian cognition and telling, cross-community contact was discussed through tales of violence and aggression. Violence from within the 'home' community, which had been directed at the 'contrary' community, was articulated as a strategy of defence. As stated by a male respondent aged 31 from Ardoyne:

I got a kicking from two Prod (Protestant) bastards. They are scum, all of them. I don't believe there is one of them that's any good. You see them covered in tattoos, swaggering about. Big fat Orange scumbags.

Similarly for a male resident aged 48 and from Upper Ardoyne the following was concluded:

I would love to burn those bastards out down there (Ardoyne). The soap dodgers (derogatory name for Catholics) breed like rabbits. All you ever hear from them is whinge, whinge, whinge. Why don't they get jobs and live like decent people.

Furthermore, only 38%, of those within this group, had worked in a place dominated by the 'other' religion compared to 84% of pensioners. This and other interview evidence suggested that those who most feared the 'other' community had never fashioned any significant or long lasting inter-community based relationships. Of course given the volume of violence it is evident that fear of the 'other' community has lessened the potential for expressive cross-community contacts. More depressingly, respondents who were motivated by a sectarian consciousness viewed involvement in cross-community schemes as perfidious and as a betrayal of community based loyalty. Many argued that spending money in areas dominated by the 'other' group was duplicitous. In certain cases, buying goods in the 'other' community was directly linked to paramilitaries and violence against the 'home' territory. As stated by a resident from Upper Ardoyne:

If I knew that my neighbour was shopping in Fenianville (Ardoyne) I would take a pounder (a hammer) and knock his head of his shoulders. Those shops down there give money to the RA (PIRA).

Similarly as stated by a respondent in Ardoyne:

One of my neighbours bought a suite of furniture from a place in the Shankill (Protestant area). I told him that I wouldn't be in his house as long as that furniture was there. Like, he was giving money to people who (had) attacked us!

Fourteen percent of respondents aged 18-55 undertook visits on a daily basis to areas within North Belfast dominated by the 'other' ethno-sectarian group. Members within this group felt unthreatened by such visitations. In most instances, individuals within this group argued that they were as likely to be attacked within their own community as they were if they travelled into areas dominated by the 'other' community. For these respondents it was unambiguously stated that fear from violent attack was not merely based upon a sectarianised consciousness. This non-sectarian group shared a similar profile of violent abuse from the 'other' community as those located within the larger sectarian group. However, they were twice as likely than their sectarian counterparts to be victims of physical assaults by members of their 'own' community. Many stated when interviewed that such attacks had occurred due to respondents articulating either anti-sectarian discourses or 'insolently' challenging the activities of paramilitary groups. Without doubt, the ability of this group to undermine the power of community belonging and in so doing challenge the orthodoxy of ethno-sectarianism, through delivering new narratives of cross-community camaraderie, has ensured that they remain, among sectarians, as a distrusted and disliked out-group. This non-sectarian group has the capacity to deliver an alternative process of 'telling' within which kinship and the ideological construction of space is identified as being part of a process of control and ethno-sectarian practice.

The desire of those who promote ethno-sectarianism is to silence cross-community narrative due to the threat they pose to the edifice of community devotion and spatialised cultures of belonging. This non-sectarian group were twice as likely as their sectarian counterparts to work in places dominated by the 'other' religion. This tended to be supported by a sentiment that individuals had a duty to challenge community divisions. All held meaningful friendships with either Catholics or Protestants. Reasons for being less sectarian were eclectic in range. Some stated that their anti-sectarianism was based upon religious conviction. Others stated that an interest in particular types of



music (Ska/Blues/Reggae/Punk) had drawn them into positive relationships with members of the 'other' religious group. Some suggested that sexual relationships had altered sectarian attitudes. For some, self-education and an interest in left-wing ideology were pinpointed as catalysts in the challenge of sectarian animosities. However, non-sectarian respondents were not apolitical. Virtually all from Ardoyne voted for Sinn Fein but in each instance stressed that they were opposed to violence. Similarly, the Protestant respondents all supported unionist/loyalist politics, but as with their Catholic counterparts were against the use of violence. However, the factor that was most commonly mentioned among this non-sectarian group was an acknowledgement that they could no longer discuss their cross-community contacts or anti-sectarian discourses publicly. Each stated that they had been berated when neighbours and family members had found out that they had consorted with members of the 'other' religious group. In certain cases members of the non-sectarian group stated that they knew of instances in which people, who had articulated non-sectarian views, were forced to move out of their homes and who had in extreme cases been murdered.

In virtually all of the interviews, with the non-sectarian group, it was stressed that respondents did not want 'others' in their 'own' community to know that they engaged in a range of cross-community activities. Most stated that they would rather lie to their neighbours than tell them that they had been socialising with members of the 'other' religious group. In terms of politics, the majority of these respondents were critical of the sectarianism within the political parties that they supported but would not discuss this with people they did not trust. Several stated that they would repackage the goods they bought in shops that were obviously purchased in the territory of the 'other' religious group. As explained by a respondent from Upper Ardoyne:

We shop in Curlies (located in Republican West Belfast). It's so cheap there and who is going to know we are Prods (Protestants) if we go there. But we take Tesco bags with us and put the shopping in them before we go home. We make sure that we dump the bags from Curlies in case someone sees them in our bin.

If I walked up that path with Curlies bags I would get my windies (windows) in (broken).

In combining the attitude of pensioners and those who are non-sectarian it is clear that a sizeable minority of respondents hold attitudes at odds with the sectarianised nature of affiliation and habituation. In this sense, such individuals hold a belief that the 'other' group is not as menacing and threatening as is assumed by their respective neighbours. However, given the hostility that is directed towards those who are non-sectarian, by members of their own community, it is evident that no arena exists within which to articulate non-sectarian beliefs. Without doubt paradigms of ethno-sectarian purity and impurity predicate social relations to such an extent, and with such power, that the capacity exists to silence the dialogue capable of challenging ethno-sectarian discourses. This implies that telling, violence and the reproduction of fear is based upon sectarianised relationships which aim to not only reproduce residential segregation but to also suppress any belief system which identifies ethno-sectarian purity as a socially constructed and imagined set of relationships. Without doubt preserving the capacity to control the propaganda of ethno-sectarian belonging is facilitated through spreading the myth that the 'other' community is to be feared. Ensuring that sectarianised places remain will continue to be achieved through endorsing the morality of cultural and political sectarianism.

### **Conclusion**

In many instances the political instability that still exists reflects the limitations of the current 'Peace Process' and the ability of devolution to substantially alter the nature of

conflict. The central goal of the Irish and British States is to be seen to promote 'parity of esteem' and 'mutual consent' via the promotion of political structures which facilitate pluralism. This pluralism aims to remove the realities of economic and cultural sectarianism. However, as evidenced by the information presented in this article, sectarian actions are still in certain arenas more voluminous than constitutional and pluralist words. Despite the cessation of most paramilitary violence we are left with a situation in which the creation of territorial division and rigidified ethno-sectarian communities means that fear and mistrust are still framed by a desire to create communal separation. Without doubt residential segregation still regulates ethno-sectarian animosity through complex spatial devices.

More importantly, the capacity to reconstruct identity and political meaning is obviated by political actors who mobilise fear in order to strengthen uni-dimensional classifications of political belonging. Community based self-representation assumes the form of a mythic reiteration of purity and self-preservation. As such, the potential to create cross-community understandings of fear is, in terms of politics, marginalised by wider ethno-sectarian readings. Moreover, wider senses of powerlessness are responsible for the failure of cross community politics to emerge.

### **References**

- Anderson J. and Shuttleworth I. 1998, 'Sectarian demography, territoriality and political development in Northern Ireland' *Political Geography* 187–208.
- Belfast Interface Project, 1999, *Belfast interface project report*, Belfast: Belfast Interface Project.
- Boal F. 1969. 'Territoriality on the Shankill-Falls divide', Belfast *Irish Geography* Vol. 6: 130–150.
- Boal F. 1982, 'Segregation and mixing: space and residence in Belfast' in Boal F and Douglas N eds. *Integration and division: geographical perspectives on the Northern Ireland problem* London: Academic Press, 249–280.
- Boal F. and Douglas N. 1982, The Northern Ireland Problem in Boal F and Douglas eds *Integration and division: geographical perspectives on the Northern Ireland problem*, London: Academic Press, 1–18.
- Boal F. and Murray R. 1977, A city in conflict *Geographical Magazine*, Vol. 44: 364–371.
- Boal F. Campbell J. and Livingstone D. 1991. 'The Protestant mosaic: a majority of minorities' in Roche P. and Barton J. eds. *The Northern Ireland question: myth and reality* Aldershot: Avebury, 99–129.
- Bradley M. 2000. *Post traumatic stress disorder in North Belfast*, Belfast: North Belfast Trauma Study Team.
- Brett C. 1986. *Housing a divided community*, Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.
- Burton F. 1978. *The politics of legitimacy: struggles in a Belfast community* London: Routledge.
- Compton P. 1993. 'Population censuses in Northern Ireland: 1926-1991' in Dale A. and Marsh C. eds. *The 1991 census user's guide* London: HMSO, 330–351.
- Darby J. 1987. *Intimidation and the control of conflict in Northern Ireland* Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Darby J. and Morris G. 1974. *Intimidation in Housing, Northern Ireland* Community Relations Commission, Belfast.
- Ditton J. and Farral S. eds. 2000. *The fear of crime* Aldershot Ashgate Dartmouth.
- Douglas N. and Shirlow P. 1998. 'People in conflict in place: the case of Northern Ireland'. *Political Geography*, Vol. 17; 125–128.
- Downey O. 2000. *Glory tales of violence*, Belfast: Red Button.
- Ellin N. 1996, *Postmodern urbanism* Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Fallah G. 1996, 'Living together apart: residential segregation in mixed Arab-Jewish cities in Israel'. *Urban Studies*, Vol. 33; 823–857.
- Fay M. Smith M. and Morrissey M. 1999, *The cost of the troubles*, London: Pluto Press.



- Feldman A. 1991, *Formations of violence: the narrative of the body and political terror in Northern Ireland*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ferraro K. and LaGrange R. 1987. 'The measurement of fear and crime', *Sociological Review*, Vol. 57; 70–101.
- Fotheringham A. S. 1986. 'Further discussion on distance-deterrence parameters and the competing destinations model', *Environment and Planning*, Vol. 18; 553–556.
- Foucault M. 1979, *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*, London: Penguin.
- Gold J. and Revill G. 2003, 'Exploring Landscapes of Fear'. *Capital and Class*, Vol. 80; 27–50
- Hale C. 1996. 'Fear of crime: a review of the literature', *International Review of Victimology*, Vol. 4: 79–150.
- Horowitz D. 1985, *Ethno-sectarian groups in conflict*, New York: Berkeley University Press.
- Imrie R., Pinch S. and Boyle M. 1996, 'Identity, citizenship and power in cities', *Urban Studies*, Vol. 33: 1255–1261.
- Jarman N. 1998, *Material conflicts: parades and visual displays in Northern Ireland*, Oxford: Berg.
- Johnston R. J. 1984, *Residential segregation, the state and constitutional conflict in American urban areas*. London: Academic Press.
- Karanga M. 2000. *Race, ethno-sectarianity and multiculturalism: issues in domination, resistance and diversity*. Sankore: University of Sankore Press.
- Kellerman A. 1996. 'Settlement myth and settlement activity: interrelationships in the Zionist land of Israel', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geography*, Vol. 21: 363–378.
- Keith M. and Pile S. 1993. 'Introduction part 2: the place of politics' in Keith M. and Pile S. eds. *Place and the Politics of Identity*. London: Routledge.
- McPeake J. 1998. 'Religion and residential search behaviour in the Belfast urban area', *Urban Studies*, Vol. 13: 527–548.
- Massumi B. 1993. *The Politics of Everyday Fear*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Morrill D. 1991. 'On the measure of geographic segregation', *Geography Research Forum*, Vol. 11: 25–36.
- Morrow D. 1997. 'Suffering for righteousness sake? Fundamentalist Protestantism and Ulster politics', in Shirlow P. and McGovern M. eds. *Who are the People? Protestantism, Unionism and Loyalism in Northern Ireland*. London: Pluto Press; 55–71.
- Murtagh B. 2001. *The Politics of Territory*. London: Palgrave.
- Nordstrom C., Martin J. and Martin J. M. 1992. *The paths of domination, resistance and Terror*. Santa Barbara: University of California Press.
- Poole M. A. and Doherty P. 1996. *Ethno-sectarian residential segregation in Northern Ireland*, University of Ulster at Coleraine: Centre for the Study of Conflict.
- Robins K. 1995. 'Collective emotion and urban culture', in Healey P., Cameron S. and Davoudi S. eds. *The new urban context*. London: John Wiley: 45–62.
- Sack D. 1993. *Place, modernity, and the consumer's world: a relational framework for geographical analysis*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Sack D. 1998. *Homo geographicus: a framework for action, awareness and moral concern*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Sharp J., Routledge P., Philo C. and Paddison R. 1999. 'Entanglements of power: geographies of domination/resistance', in Sharp et al, eds. *Entanglements of power: geographies of domination/resistance (critical geographies)*. London: Routledge: 1–15.
- Shirlow P. 2001. 'The geography of fear in Belfast', *Peace Review*, Vol. 43 12–28.
- Shirlow P. 2003. 'Ethnosectarianism and the Reproduction of Fear in Belfast', *Capital and Class*, Vol. 80: 77–94.
- Shirlow P. and Pain R. 2003. 'The Geographies and Politics of Fear', *Capital and Class*, Vol. 80: 15–26.
- Smith A. 1991. *Nations and nationalism in a global era*. Cambridge: Polity.

- Smith S. J. 1981. 'Negative interaction: crime in the inner city', in Jackson P. and Smith S. J. eds. *Social interaction and ethno-sectarian segregation*. London: Institute of British Geographers: 35–58.
- Stanko E. 1988. 'Hidden violence against women', in Maguire M. and Pointing J. eds. *Victims of crime: a new deal?* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Williams J. and Paterson L. 1995. 'A multilevel model for community segregation', *Journal of Mathematical Sociology*, Vol. 20: 23-40.