

**Deepening Dialogue in Silent Spaces: Ireland's pedagogy of peace.**

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## ABSTRACT

### Deepening Dialogue in Silent Spaces: Irelands pedagogy of peace

Margaret Nugent

Ireland has emerged from an era of protracted conflict, which claimed almost 4,000 lives and left a legacy of thousands of victims. It is difficult for people who lived through this era to speak openly with each other about what went wrong. This thesis acknowledges the presence of deep-rooted societal silence that accompanies violent conflict and explores the role of silence in post conflict communities. It describes the significance of education in enabling dialogue to deepen between communities of 'others'. It describes the transitional processes impacting on the lead up to the most recent peace agreement, the Good Friday Agreement (1998). This thesis is an analysis of the dialogical process involved in it's negotiation. It illuminates post peace building challenges for the community education sector. This research provides insights for community educators into ways to negotiate silence and to transcend difference through dialogue. The Agreement (GFA) promised parity of esteem to nationalist and unionist communities. Fifteen years after the GFA was signed and endorsed by both communities, the spiral of violence spins out of control during contentious commemorative parades. This thesis examines the complexities of conflict transformation as experienced by protagonists. It describes a philosophy of education that emerged within communities as a response to the challenges they faced. This philosophy of education is Ireland's pedagogy of peace. As we face into an epoch of truth recovery and dealing with the past the role of community education in imagining a philosophy of unity is critical.

## GLOSSARY

<b>Articles 2 and 3</b>	Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution were changed by referendum (see appendix)
<b>An Garda Síochána</b>	An Irish word, meaning Guardians of the Peace. The police service of the Republic of Ireland.
<b>Border dwellers</b>	Persons residing each side of the 450km geographical border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Border dwellers cross and negotiate the border at many times in their daily lives for a variety of reasons that includes business, employment, farming, education, and socialising.
<b>Coiste na nLarchimí</b>	An umbrella body that coordinates a network of community groups whose role is to support former combatants and political prisoners and their families.
<b>Combatant:</b>	All members of the armed forces of a party to a conflict are combatants.
<b>Irish Nationalism</b>	An ideology that asserts that the Irish are a nation. Since the partition of Ireland, the term generally refers to support for a united Ireland.
<b>Irish republicanism</b>	An ideology based on the belief that all of Ireland should be an independent republic.
<b>Loyalist</b>	Describes a person who remains loyal to the British Government. The term refers to people who oppose greater independence for Ireland from Britain.
<b>MI5</b>	A British intelligence agency working to protect the UK's national security against threats such as terrorism and espionage.
<b>Orange Order:</b>	A Protestant fraternal organisation based in, Belfast, Northern Ireland. The Institution also has a significant presence in lowland Scotland and lodges throughout the Commonwealth and United States.

<b>PEACE I:</b>	The Programme for Peace and Reconciliation: European Union Structural Funds Programme aimed at reinforcing progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promoting reconciliation. (1995-1999).
<b>PEACE II:</b>	As above (2000-2006)
<b>PEACE III:</b>	As above (2007-2013)
<b>Pobal:</b>	An Irish word meaning people. Pobal, formerly known as Area Development Management is the body responsible for the administration of (among other programs) PEACE funds.
<b>Political prisoners</b>	Politically motivated prisoners who have been convicted of conflict-related offences.
<b>Prisoners of War (PoW):</b>	As above.
<b>Irish Special Branch</b>	A branch of <b>An Garda Síochána</b> . The Special Branch acquires and develops intelligence to help protect the public from national security threats, especially terrorism.
<b>The ‘other side’</b>	An accepted terminology to describe those who are different in terms of religion, culture, ethnicity and identity in the north of Ireland.
<b>The conflict</b>	An accepted term for the most recent conflict in Ireland. The term is interchangeable with the Troubles.
<b>The Good Friday Agreement, (GFA)</b>	Also known as <i>The Belfast Agreement</i> also known as <i>The Stormont Agreement</i> , also known as <i>The Northern Ireland Agreement</i> is a peace agreement that was signed between Britain, Ireland, and Northern Ireland on April 10 <sup>th</sup> 1998.
<b>The Troubles</b>	An accepted term for the conflict in Ireland that began in 1969 and ended with the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization: an agency of the United Nations that promotes education and communication and the arts.
<b>Unionism</b>	Refers to an ideology that favours the continuation of some form of political union between the islands of Ireland and Great Britain.

ACRONYMS:

<b>CPA:</b>	Combat Poverty Agency.
<b>CFNI:</b>	Community Foundation of Northern Ireland.
<b>CFRC:</b>	Cavan Family Resource Centre.
<b>EU:</b>	European Union.
<b>HET:</b>	Historical Enquiries Team
<b>IRA:</b>	Irish Republican Army.
<b>JIVT:</b>	Justice for Innocent Victims of Terrorism
<b>OSCE:</b>	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.
<b>PSNI:</b>	Police Service of Northern Ireland. (Post Agreement)
<b>RUC:</b>	Royal Ulster Constabulary. (Pre Agreement)
<b>SEUPB:</b>	The Special European Union Programmes Body. (SEUPB)
<b>UDA:</b>	Ulster Defence Association.
<b>UDR:</b>	Ulster Defence Regiment.
<b>UVF:</b>	Ulster Volunteer Force.

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# CHAPTER 1: A TALE OF TWO TRIBES.

## 1.0 PREFACE

It is the fifteenth anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) and my daughter turns fifteen today. I remember the day she was born, Good Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April 1998 a day of hope, a day of peace, the tentative steps towards deconstruction of borders, the wonder and awe, have we entered a new era? ‘all the seasons, all the hopes, all the emotions in one day’ claimed the Irish Times (10/4/1998 p13). It rang with promises of political agreement. The weekend of her christening, August 15<sup>th</sup> 1998 the priest rushed off to Omagh, some terrible tragedy had occurred, nobody knew what. It was later revealed that 31 people died, including a pregnant woman carrying twins. 170 people were injured. Ferriter (2005) quoted poet John Montague ‘history creaks on its bloody hinge and the unspeakable is done again’ (p658). Ferriter noted ‘the reaction was significant in that it was one of the few occasions, if not the only one, where the bulk of a divided population seemed to share grief equally’ (p658).

We can’t go back, it’s inconceivable, but truth recovery is a poisonous chalice for all actors in the process of sustaining peace. As I write, the security gates that have surrounded the historic walls of Derry City since the Troubles began are being dismantled with angle grinders. This is a symbolic act of freedom and liberation from tyranny for many, but not for all. At the request of the community, a fenced Protestant enclave will remain. They are not ready. 15 years after the Good Friday Agreement, 5,000 military personnel enter the north of Ireland to engage in security and surveillance operations in advance of the G8 summit. Their presence is noted on the streets. Over 90 Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) officers have been injured during the summer of 2013 whilst policing the loyalist and Orange Order parades. The Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report (2013) states a rather poignant fact:

There is no occasion in Northern Ireland when the people stand together to sing one song or salute one flag, or experience themselves as one people with a single shared identity. The past year has provided a number of opportunities where the absence of such an “imagined community” became very obvious. (Nolan, 2013, p173)

This thesis examines the tentative steps being taken within communities in an attempt to imagine such a space.

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research topic and its aims. It explains how it will be addressed through the research question and design. It provides an overview of the structure of the thesis and introduces the concepts that are explored. Concepts such as silence and dialogue are developed. The intention of this thesis is to critique the role of silence in communicative contexts. This chapter describes the context of the conflict in Ireland. It suggests the causes of and impacts upon communities in conflict. It raises some of the paradoxes that exist within the discourse. It considers the response of the academy to the challenge of societal conflict. It describes epistemology and its relationship to meaning making, a central facet in understanding divisions. This thesis explores the prevailing silence in post conflict Ireland and asks what role does it play?

The research questions ask:

- What role does silence play in post conflict communities?
- What roles can community education play in enabling dialogue?

The research has a number of aims, outlined below:

- To better understand how communities transition from conflict to peace.
- To explore the importance of the experiences of communities in conflict and post-conflict contexts in education.
- To garner insights about enabling conflict transformation for the community education sector.
- To explore the meaning of empowerment for people who consider themselves to be oppressed.

The thesis aspires to describe the processes that assisted in developing dialogue between former adversaries. The research hopes to identify insights into ways that community educators can shape and support dialogue in response to conflict episodes. It is a quest to understand what makes ordinary people take extraordinary decisions. Professor of International Relations at St Andrews, Louise Richardson, rails against the depiction of terrorists as one dimensional, and suggests the adoption of a nuanced interpretation of terrorism:

Terrorists are not monsters they are disaffected individuals; they are not one-dimensional they are people who adhere to an ideology. They are a community surrounded by a group of like-minded individuals. Terrorists are as normal as the rest of us. Nationalists, Marxist, Leninists they are humans like the rest of us, normal, not psychopaths. (Richardson, Radio 1, 22/3/13)

## 1.2 THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis is structured in the following way: In *chapter two* the personal narrative of the researcher is explored. This chapter introduces the concept of the border dweller. It raises the proposal that border dwellers have particular ways' of knowing. It explores the role of identity, and suggests how it can contribute to division in communities in conflict. It suggests how ontology is coupled with identity and ideology. It describes the causes and types of silence that exist within post conflict communities and offers insights into how silence can contribute to understanding. It considers the relationship between knowledge and meaning. In developing the conceptual framework for the research topic, it draws on transformation and critical theorists to explore the frames of references that underpin ideology. The conceptual challenges, sensitising concepts, epistemological stance, and the ontological position of the researcher are outlined. This chapter opens up the discourse that has been silenced through decades of conflict. This chapter explains why the research question is relevant to me as a border dweller and what experience I bring to the exploration of the field. Through this process and in this space we can begin to imagine, organise and affect social change. In this chapter the fundamental role of the imagination in organising for social change and personal transformation is acknowledged.

*In chapter three* the literature review explores past and contemporary academic writings defining peace education. It describes the peace and reconciliation process as it applies in Ireland and identifies the theory that underpins it. It describes silence as a critical component of communication. It elaborates upon silence as a pedagogical tool. The lens of conflict transformation is looked through. As a precursor to examining conflict transformation, it is acknowledged that dealing with the past is a critical component. There is an evolving landscape of concepts relating to peace education and conflict transformation. The pedagogy and practice of peace education has been developing in different contexts throughout the world since the 1970's with the emergence of liberation theology and radical critical theory. Peace studies attempts to combine the knowledge of peace with the skills needed for practice. This literature review explores a conceptual framework of peace education. The concepts endemic to peace education are

multifarious so for the sake of coherence the review focused on key concepts - the concept of dialogue and the concept of silence.

*Chapter four* of the thesis provides an overview of the research design methodology and indicates the parameters of the study. This chapter builds upon the literature review and the secondary research accumulated throughout the research process. This section of the thesis explains the approaches taken in the research design and provides an overview of the steps taken throughout the process. It describes the research ethics that applied to the research process. It also identifies the methods used to explore the research questions. It describes the context within which the research occurred. It offers insights into the rationale for the use of decisions in relation to how and why the research is conducted, and the changes that were made along the way. It explains the coding and analysis of the qualitative data. It provides links to the analytical process. It lists the thematic categories that emerged from the coding process through the use of a qualitative data analysis computer software package MAXqda. This chapter explains how the epistemological stance and ontological position through which the data is investigated impacts on the decisions made in the research design.

*Chapter five*, the findings chapter of the thesis presents the themes that emerged in the research. The findings are presented in a chronological order although this is not necessarily how they were described. The data is presented in this way in order to portray a logical sequence to the story of conflict and peace. This section begins by describing a story of armed conflict that moves and changes from conflict to negotiation. It develops the participants' responses to the factors that influenced the transition from conflict to peace. It proceeds to present the respondents' thoughts on education and the significance to the peace building process. It presents findings on the influence of dialogue, how dialogue is developed, and the key factors that need to be in place for dialogue to occur. The respondents' explain their ideas on how they view 'others' and what their responses are to difference. The findings chapter provides insights into censorship of ideology, stigma, and gender.

*Chapter six*, the analysis of findings interprets the evidence presented in the data through the lens of the literature reviewed in Chapter Three. It locates critical and radical theory within the findings. The analysis supports the recognition of a Freirean ideology within the transformational process from conflict to peace. It acknowledges

Mezirow's (1991) Theory of Transformative Learning within the data. The main themes that emerged in conjunction with the theoretical perspectives employed suggest the development of a number of constructs. The constructs are foundational to the research question and aims. They inform the development of a pedagogy of peace. The constructs are as follows: The construct of silence as a societal response to conflict; the construct of dialogue as one means to deconstruct the silence; the acknowledgement of truth being multifaceted and the complexity of dealing with the past in post-conflict communities. Lederach's (1995, 1997, 2003, 2005) approach to conflict transformation, and Bar-On's (1998) understanding of the 'other' expounds the inevitability and cyclical nature of what might seem like random acts of violence. The analysis of data offers insights from the perspective of a human rights approach to peace building. A feminist imaginative pedagogy assists in the collation and interpretation of the data.

*Chapter seven*, the concluding chapter weaves together the meanings that are inferred throughout the research process. It focuses on the research title: Deepening Dialogue in Silent Spaces: Ireland's Pedagogy of Peace. It draws meaning from the responses made throughout the research process to the research questions and aims. It indicates policy and practice implications that relate to the research questions: what is the role of silence in post-conflict communities and what roles can community education play in enabling dialogue? This chapter distills the implications of the findings for educators' and for policy making. It begins by highlighting new knowledge that emerges in the research data and in the themes that were generated. It identifies the limitations of the research. It proceeds to outline the implications of that new knowledge for the community education sector. It suggests ways that educational systems and structures can benefit from this new knowledge by designing and engaging with a pedagogy of peace.

### 1.3 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SILENCE IN POST CONFLICT COMMUNITIES

Brookfield (1995) noted that 'silence is socially and politically sculptured' (p24). He referred to Marcuse's concept of repressive tolerance to illustrate how passive acceptance of entrenched and established attitudes and ideas is often repressive, not liberating. Brookfield (2009) asserted 'repressive tolerance is extended to policies, conditions and modes of behaviour which should not be tolerated' (p212). To counteract this false consciousness he suggested that the role of an educator is to clear a space for multiple voices previously silenced by dominant ideologies. Sometimes this doesn't

seem urgent enough or radical enough, in a post-colonial, post-conflict border reality. Freire (1996) suggested the 'culture of silence' could be deconstructed in order to expose the multiple forms of silencing that have contributed to oppressive institutional and cultural practices.

A culture of silence has been a dominant feature of life during the Troubles, which has persisted into the post conflict era. For the best of reasons people refrain from political discussion. Whatever you say, say nothing as the lines of the song goes. Paramilitary organisations, republicans, and loyalists rigorously enforced a code of silence amongst border communities during the Troubles. Moloney (2010) described the unwritten laws of paramilitary Omertá, or code of silence. Paramilitaries were trained in counterintelligence methods, the focus of which was the practice of silence and the suppression of emotions. The Irish government enforced codes of silence regarding military activity in support of the implementation of partition in Ireland. The British government devised silent practices of intelligence gathering and collusion with unionists and loyalists to support British rule on the island. Brookfield (2009) observed 'what counts as truth is predefined by these institutions so that avenues of opposition are closed off' (p213). Within this context, pockets of silent spaces have been constructed. Garvin cited in Ferriter (2005) noted that in divided communities people tended to talk past each other 'an eerie symbol of this is provided by the fact that Catholic and Protestant deaf children are actually taught different sign languages. In Ireland not even a dialogue of the deaf can occur' (p649). But it wasn't always like this; there were times when neighbours just got along. Williams (2006) on looking back, perceiving simpler times, observed 'from here it seemed that a light, a silence, a feeling not ordinarily accessible, had flowed round and enclosed this familiar ground' (p362).

The silence alluded to manifests as silences in communication. Silence hinders connections being made between people living in post-conflict environments. Silence can also provide safety, if there is safety in suppression. Silence in this context suggests a need for encounters that tap into the discourse that is muted. Such encounters can develop where trust is built; in fact trust is the most vital component in that encounter. But the practice of silence also enables understanding. Silences occur at borders, and at interfaces. Shirlow and Murtagh (2006) suggested that peace lines and interfaces have become 'monuments to our inability to talk to each other without violent outcomes' (p57). Within this multiplicity of public silences, Brookfield (2009) guarded against

teachers adapting a one-dimensional understanding of silence in educational settings:

As Ellsworth (1992) points out it is mistaken for critical teachers always to assume that silence represents voicelessness or loss of voice. This view betrays deep and unacceptable gender race and class biases and neglects the possibility that silence is often a politically sophisticated, deliberate choice. (Brookfield, 2009, p328)

Fitzduff (1999) reminds us of the risks associated with breaking the silence between communities of enemies ‘the price for such talking in some communities is often high-ranging from cynical questions to accusations of betrayal, or death’(p186). She described further how this affected communication ‘even when major crises occur, discussion about such issues is carefully limited, while absences from work are carefully noted’ (p186).

This research seeks to illuminate the role of silence and dialogue as a continuum of human communication. It queries the emergence of dialogue from the depths of silence. It describes interactions within and between communities who have distinctly oppositional identities and ideologies.

#### 1.4 CONTEXTUALISING THE CONFLICT

The conflict in the north of Ireland originated in the seventeenth century when the British Government planted Scottish settlers in Ulster. More recently a conflict has raged in the north of Ireland for over 40 years. Described in many contexts as ‘the Troubles’, its impact has also been felt deeply by communities in the north and in the southern border counties. There are two separate and distinct communities in conflict. Wright (1987) cited in Coulter (1999) suggested ‘Northern Ireland is the site of an enduring ethno-national dispute’ (p3). Coulter admitted that ‘the seeming inability of Protestants and Catholics to ‘get along’ with one another invariably and understandably perplexes outsiders’ (p3). The key protagonists in the conflict emerge from two very distinct sides. Collins, Henry, and Tonge (2004) provided a simplified description of each group. They set the historical context in a second level history textbook used in the south ‘in 1910 the people in Ireland were divided in their attitude to the United Kingdom’ (p124). They offered the following explanation:

Nationalists: Most Irish Catholics were Nationalists. There were about 3 million of them. They were a majority in all parts of Ireland except the northeast. Nationalists wanted Ireland to have its own parliament and elect a government to run Irish affairs. Catholics felt that the British, who were mostly Protestant



discriminated against them in jobs. Nationalists felt they could manage the Irish economy better than the British had. (Collins, Henry, and Tonge, 2004, p125)

They described the different identities:

Most Irish Protestants were Unionists. There were about 1 million of them and they were scattered around Ireland. Unionists wanted Ireland to stay in the United Kingdom. Unionists feared that the Catholics, who outnumbered them, might persecute them if Ireland had its own parliament. (Collins, Henry, and Tonge, 2004, p125)

The British government passed the Government of Ireland Act in 1920. The Act partitioned (divided) Ireland into two parts. One part, with 26 counties was for nationalists and the remaining 6 counties went to the unionists and became Northern Ireland. Collins, Henry, and Tonge (2004) elaborated:

Unionists welcomed partition because it left Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom. The British king was still their king and the London parliament decided on things like trade, war, and most taxes. Unionists had a parliament of their own in Belfast to run local affairs like education and health. Because they comprised two-thirds of the population, they would always win elections to the Belfast Parliament. This protected them against the Catholic nationalists. (Collins, Henry, and Tonge, 2004, p183)

They offered reasons why northern nationalists opposed the Government of Ireland Act:

The remaining 500,000 people in Northern Ireland were Catholic nationalists. When Northern Ireland was set up they felt betrayed. They did not want to be trapped within Northern Ireland where they would always be out-voted by the unionist party.

(Collins, Henry & Tonge 2004, p183)

The context of this thesis is set within communities located on the border that partitions the south of Ireland from its northern hinterland where variations of the contrasting ideologies described by Collins currently exist. Within these contrasting ideologies there are and were various factions and complexities within both groupings. One interpretation suggests that at the core of this conflict is the preservation of identities that are perceived to be under threat. However there is also a greater correlation between social class, poverty, and disadvantage that underpins the protracted conflict. Coulter (1999) stated 'the interplay between those hierarchies associated with class and ethnicity respectively proves to be especially crucial in determining how life in the province is ordered and experienced' (p11). Coulter (1999) noted 'the apparently "sectarian" enmities that infect Northern Ireland owe their origins largely to the rather

more temporal matters that attend the distribution of life chances’ (p4). Violent conflict occurred between the nationalist/republican community and the unionist/loyalist community, some of who were resourced by the British government, from the period of the civil rights marches of the late sixties until a peace agreement was reached in 1998. The following table presents the stark impact of the troubles, in terms of number of people killed and injured.

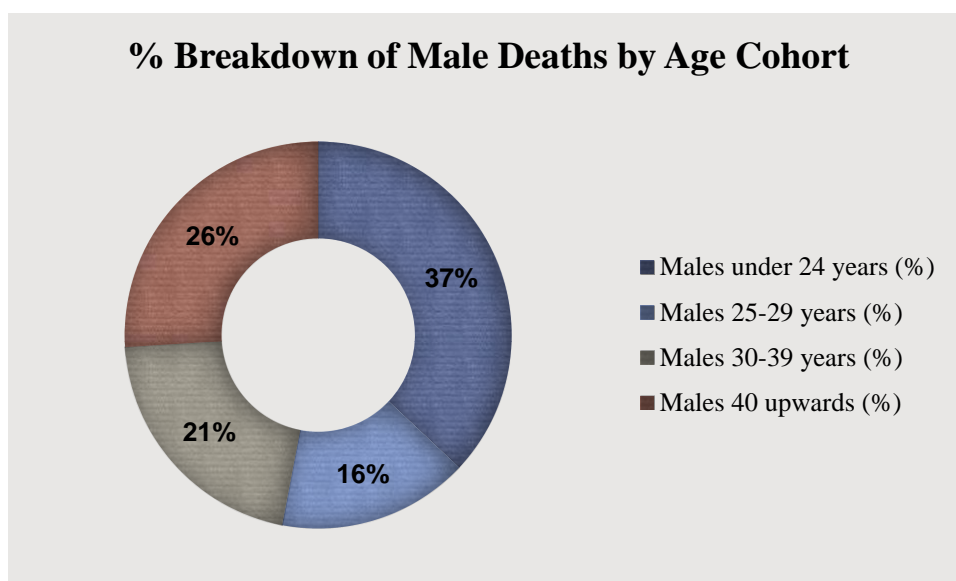
**TABLE 1. NUMBERS OF PEOPLE KILLED AND INJURED IN NORTHERN IRELAND. (1969-1998)**

<b>Number of people killed</b> in troubles-related incidents in Northern Ireland (1969 –1998)	3,585
<b>Gender Breakdown</b> of deaths:	
• Males	3,262 (91%)
• Females	323 (9%)
Minimum number of <b>people injured</b> in troubles-related incidents in Northern Ireland (1969 – 1998) (Source:	40,000
Number of <b>people suffering from a major disability</b> as a result of the Troubles (1969-1998)	Unknown

(Source: Smyth, M. (1999) The Cost of the Troubles Study. Belfast: INCORE.)

The following illustration overleaf shows the percentage breakdown of male deaths by age cohort.

Figure 1 Percentage of male deaths by Age Cohort



The Peace Agreement (GFA) promised parity of esteem to all. But decades of intergroup violence have left deep scars. An entrenched silence persists around contentious issues. Fifteen years after the Good Friday Agreement the silence in the mainstream is palpable. This research explores the role of silence in post-conflict communities. It probes for insights into how community education can work effectively within a post-conflict environment that acknowledges the presence of silence. It aims to uncover ways to encourage positive process dialogue between two sides in conflict. In exploring this topic, key factors that help with the transition from an era of conflict to an era of post- conflict and peace building emerge. In moving from a period of conflict to a period of relative peace, the significance of education to that transition is explored. This topic is explored by inviting groups of stakeholders to engage in dialogue addressing issues of community education, silence, and dialogue. A conceptual framework is considered that underpins the complexities that shape access to truth and knowledge.

By contextualising this research within a specific local and historic reality, this research aims to highlight how a society, a community, has been affected by conflict, how it is coping in a post-conflict environment and how it intends to move towards a vision of an interdependent and fair society. Professor Breen-Smyth has written and researched political violence including its impact on civilian populations and is one of the initiators of a critical approach to terrorism studies. She has written extensively on the complexities involved in the violent deaths that occurred during the period of the

Troubles. She explored the complexity of the killing below, stating that it does not simply take place across the sectarian divide:

Republican paramilitaries have killed 24.7 percent of the total number of Catholics killed. Loyalist paramilitaries have killed 19.5 percent of all Protestants killed. Both sides have been significantly involved in killing people in their own community. All of the security forces have been involved in killing, and the legality and circumstances of some of these killings has been contested. All branches of the security forces have killed more Catholics than Protestants. (Smyth, 1999, p8)

She expands upon the complexities that in 1999 were very much apparent:

It seems very clear from the work of the *Cost of the Troubles Study* that the history of the Troubles is not known as people claim. There are parts of the history that reside in little communities that have not been heard. We cannot assume that people know it. There has been silence everywhere. We are sometimes still scared to say what we know in case we offend people who are close to us, in case we offend our own communities, in case we offend those who mean well. (Smyth, 1999, p10)

The intervening years since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement (1998-2013) have seen dialogue emerge as a response to the silence she reveals above. The intellectual puzzle is to reconcile the various truths that exist within this culture of silence. This is puzzling because according to Palmer (2007) ‘the determination of “truth” in the messy reality of human behavior is subject to uncertainty’ (p2). Indeed as we begin to explore a process that is embedded in conflict transformation, known as ‘truth recovery’ we can feel the uncertainty and understand that messy reality. But the nettle must be grasped, as a precursor to engaging in conflict transformation it is acknowledged that dealing with the past is a critical component.

In this regard Smyth (1999) has explored the affiliation of victims that occurred in the following table:

**TABLE 2. AFFILIATION OF VICTIMS**

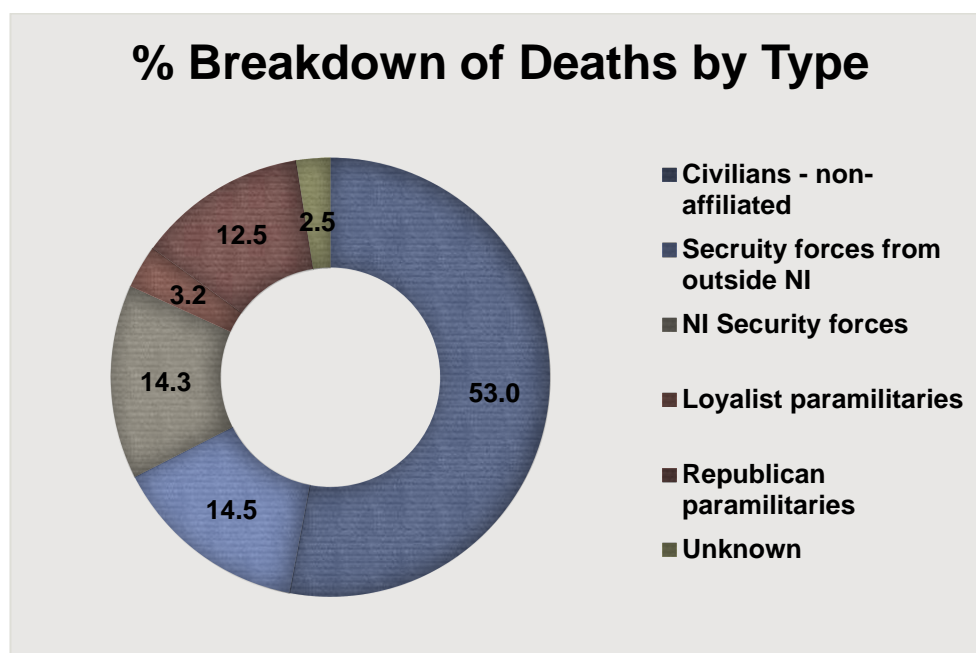
<b>Political Status</b>	<b>Number of deaths</b>	<b>Valid percentage</b>
<b>Republican paramilitaries</b>	359	10.0
<b>Loyalist paramilitaries</b>	117	3.2
<b>Ex Republican paramilitaries</b>	4	0.1
<b>Ex Loyalist paramilitaries</b>	2	0.1
<b>Security (NI)</b>	536	14.9
<b>Security (NNI)</b>	593	16.5
<b>Civilian</b>	1925	53.5
<b>Unknown</b>	65	1.8
<b>Total</b>	3601	100

Smyth noted that:

Combatants directly involved in the armed conflict do not constitute the largest number or percentage of those killed. Civilians, or people who have not been in any armed organisation whatsoever, as well as the security forces, are the people who make up the largest proportion of the fatal victims. (Smyth, 1999, p34)

This reality is depicted in figure 2 below, which illustrates the percentage breakdown of deaths by type.

Figure 2. Percentage Breakdown of Deaths by Type.



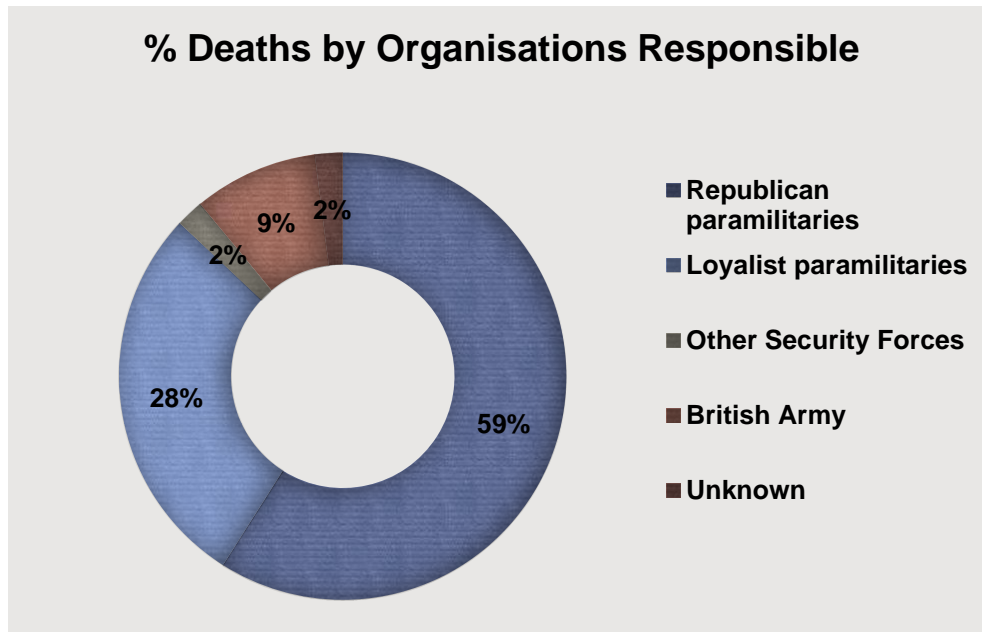
Smyth (1999) elaborated upon the data further in the following table of organisations responsible for deaths below.

TABLE 3. ORGANISATIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR DEATHS.

Organisation Responsible	Frequency	Valid percentage
Republican Paramilitaries	2001	55.7
Loyalist Paramilitaries	983	27.4
British Army	318	8.9
UDR	11	0.3
RUC	53	1.5
Civilian	11	0.3
Unknown	216	6.0
Total	3593	100

Figure 3 below extrapolates the data contained in Smyth's (1999) *Cost of the Troubles Study* and presents a visual representation of the percentage deaths by the organisations who were responsible:

Figure 3. Percentage Deaths by Organisations Responsible.



The tables, figures and percentages illustrated in this chapter, portray a picture of the messy reality of war. It is clear from such data that there are victims on all sides, and perpetrators on all sides. According to Jamieson, Shirlow and Grounds (2010) approximately 15,000 republican and 10,000 loyalist combatants were imprisoned in Northern Ireland during the period 1969 to 1998.

This thesis provides an insight into the lessons we can learn from former combatants who are now committed peace-builders in their own communities. It asks what educators need to know in order to deal with regimes of silence that governs their experiences. It is an exploration of how peace grows in divided societies. This research questions the critical role of silence in communicative contexts. It queries the experiences in education of former combatants over the past fifteen years, since the last significant peace agreement between Ireland and Britain. The research maps educational responses to the post-conflict era in the context of the SEUPB'S<sup>1</sup> Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. Finally this research explores the long-term impact of peace education and asks what processes community education needs to have in place if we are now entering a post peace-building era. The originality of this research, as I see it, is in its association with education, and what we can learn from republican combatants and former prisoners who are currently engaged in educational practice considered

<sup>1</sup> Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB)

transformative in communities formerly divided by conflict. Contemporary research with former prisoners of a political nature tends to emphasise the analysis of the implications of criminalisation and discrimination, the implications for political prisoners of their imprisonment, and the consequences of post-traumatic stress in the aftermath of a violent past. This thesis seeks to build upon that research and to move the discourse towards understanding the role of education in empowering those who viewed themselves as oppressed. It seeks to explore the transformation of republican combatants from being perceived as terrorists towards being acknowledged as peace-builders, community educators, and activists. The road to transformation is explored within the context of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. It is an important time to explore what we can learn about conflict transformation from former political prisoners and combatants. According to Jamieson, Shirlow and Grounds (2010) ‘they are the “conflict generation” and they are getting older’ (p10).

This thesis addresses the role of dialogue and silence as communicative contexts that are crucial within education that aims to sustain a peaceful environment. The role of education in building and sustaining peace is observed. The research objectives are as follows:

- By engaging border dwellers, community practitioners, facilitators, and stakeholders who are active in education for peace initiatives and peace-building activity, it is anticipated that a conceptualisation and pedagogy of peace will evolve.
- The purpose of the research is to inquire into processes and methods used by practitioners who are engaged in peace-building activity with community groups.
- The research question relates to the role of community education in supporting and sustaining peace.
- This inquiry is aligned with research into the experiences of community groups who are engaging in dialogue, and with a non-combatant practitioner of conflict transformation.
- The research participants include those who are working with community and voluntary groups that are engaged in peace-building activity. Participants are approached through a coordinating network funded through the SEUPB, the Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. (2007-2013). Participants are also



drawn from those engaged in education, dialogue for peace, and dealing with the legacy of silence and conflict.

The context of the research relates to peace-building activity in a post-conflict environment. It aspires to conceptualise peace education in Ireland and the role of community education in it. An important component of the research relates to discourses of power, muted discourse and power relations that exist within post-conflict communities.

### 1.5 THE PARADOXICAL ROLE OF MILITARY PEACEKEEPING

In describing the context for this thesis, an overview of the current European policy on international peacekeeping activities is outlined and the relationship with Ireland is noted. Ireland, in 2013, has reached a plateau in relation to how it relates to peace and conflict in our country. In the era of the Centenary of the 1916 Rising, a transformed society, in the mainstream, has emerged. Ireland's commitment to international peace is notable through its role in the United Nations since 1955. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) works for 'stability, prosperity and democracy in 56 States through political dialogue about shared values and through practical work that makes a lasting difference.' ([www.osce.org](http://www.osce.org)). Ireland, in 2011, was a member of the troika, together with Kazakhstan and Lithuania, who were responsible for chairing the organisation. Ireland continues to play a role in international peacekeeping activities. The foundation of the Irish State's approach to international peace and security is set out in Article 29.1 of the constitution in which 'Ireland affirms its devotion to the ideal of peace and friendly co-operation amongst nations founded on international justice and morality.' Irish Defence Force personnel have served in countries all over the world, including: Central America, Russia, the former Yugoslavia, Cambodia, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Namibia, Western Sahara, Liberia and East Timor. This extensive Irish participation in peacekeeping is regarded in very positive terms both by the government and the Defence Force. In September 1993 the government restated the roles of the Defence Force and defined one of them as being: 'To participate in United Nations missions in the cause of international peace.' However, the role of the Irish Defence Force and An Garda Síochána (Irish Police Force) peacekeeping activities in Ireland, in particular along the border has, at best, been highly contested. That fact aside, there is little question over the motivation and commitments of the financial

resources needed by both the European Union and National Exchequer to encourage peace building in Ireland.

#### 1.6 THE PEACE DIVIDEND

Despite the role that Partition has played in the educational, economic, and cultural deficits, the border counties of Ireland have significantly benefited financially from the largest peace dividend Europe has ever seen. Two billion euro has been donated through the mechanism of the Special EU Programmes Body since 1995. Strategic plans for peace and reconciliation have been developed through this programme. In the Irish discourse on peace education, the programme for peace and reconciliation (SEUPB) has been managing peace funds, activities, and educational endeavours in the six border counties and the north of Ireland since the Irish Republican Army (IRA) ceasefire of 1994, and subsequent loyalist ceasefires and peace agreements. The ‘peace dividend’ as it is known, relates to an injection of two billion euro, by the EU and exchequer funds, since 1995. The EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland (2007-2013) (hereafter the PEACE III Programme) is a distinctive European Union Structural Funds Programme aimed at reinforcing progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promoting reconciliation. Under the first programme for peace and reconciliation (Peace I, 1995-1999) €667m was committed by the EU and Irish Exchequer. The PEACE II Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland (2000-2004) was allocated a total of €995m, an additional €160m was allocated for the 2005 and 2006 period. Peace III (2007-2013) has been allocated €225million.

A summary of EU and national funding contributions for PEACE I, II and III is included in Table 4 overleaf:

**TABLE 4 SUMMARY OF FUNDING CONTRIBUTIONS, PEACE I, II, and PEACE III**

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Funding period</b>	<b>EU Contribution (€m)</b>	<b>National Contribution (€m)</b>	<b>Total (€m)</b>
<b>PEACE I</b>	1995–1999	500	167	667
<b>PEACE II</b>	2000-2004	531	304	835
<b>PEACE II Extension</b>	2005–2006	78	82	160
<b>PEACE III</b>	2007–2013	225	108	333
<b>TOTAL</b>	1995-2013	1,334	661	€1,995 (Million)

The SEUPB’s main role is to manage cross-border European Union Structural Funds programmes in Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland, and parts of Western Scotland. It achieves this through implementation of the operational Peace Programmes I, II, and III. The overall aim of the Peace III operational programme is ‘to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region’ (p4). Despite the significant work that is being achieved by subsequent programmes for peace, critiques of the programme suggest that it has generated remarkably little academic analysis from the perspectives of peace and conflict studies, and conflict transformation. According to Buchanan (2008) ‘one of the major weaknesses of the peace programme is that there has been no comprehensive evaluation of their performance from the outset’ (p388).

The challenge of a comprehensive evaluation may contribute to an inability of education systems in Ireland to articulate the concept of pedagogy for peace. But this difficulty is experienced elsewhere. UNESCO, the United Nations educational, scientific, and cultural organisation mainstreamed a culture of peace through a number of initiatives in the last decade. Oberg (2006) describes an inadequacy of the European

model being its inability to articulate its intention. ‘The EU is often described as a project for peace, but without making clear what is meant by the word ‘peace’. She suggests that the constitution of the EU does not: ‘contain any norm or provision that the EU should primarily endeavour to resolve conflicts by peaceful means, nor that the EU should work for the abolition of war as a social institution’ (p21). Oberg (2006) through further analysis of the EU constitution continues to note that, ‘Article 2, on the Union’s values, lists a string of values such as freedom, democracy, human rights and equality but not peace’ (p21). Despite that dilemma, communities in post-conflict environments are responding to the challenge in innovative and imaginative ways.

### 1.7 GRASSROOTS RESPONSE

The following section of this chapter outlines and illustrates the supportive terrain within which peace activists, practitioners, agencies, and academics operate. An overview of current structures and agencies responsible for peace and reconciliation work in Ireland is presented in the chapter on methodology. PEACE III is the current round of finance (2007-2013) that is managed and implemented in each of the six southern border counties in Ireland and the north of Ireland through the Special European Unions Programmes Body (SEUPB). To meet the aims of the SEUPB, each of the southern border counties has developed a peace and reconciliation partnership. This partnership in County Cavan, a border county where I reside, is comprised of county council members, members representing the vocational education committee (VEC) Health Service Health Service Executive (HSE) County Enterprise Board, (CEB) Breffni Integrated, (Leader and partnership amalgamated) SIPTU, (Union) Cavan chamber of commerce and a number of community and voluntary representatives.

The County Cavan Peace Partnership is responsible for the implementation of the Peace III objectives in County Cavan. They plan to achieve their current objectives through The County Cavan Peace and Reconciliation Phase II Action Plan (2011-2013) which outlines how the Cavan Peace Partnership plan to continue to address reconciliation in County Cavan and how they intend to contribute to a lasting peace in the county. The aim of the plan is to ‘build positive relations at a local and indeed at a cross border level through challenging attitudes to sectarianism and racism; to increase levels of interaction and engagement between different communities, groups and areas; to support conflict resolution and mediation at a local level within the county and ultimately to promote reconciliation within the county and the wider region’ (p7).

The County Cavan Peace and Reconciliation Phase II Action Plan has four strategic priorities:

- Building Communities in Co. Cavan;
  - Build Good Relations among our Young People;
  - Provide Enhanced Access to Reconciliation Supports at a local level;
  - Support the Building of a Shared Vision and Integrated Communities.
- (County Cavan Peace Partnership, 2011, p7)

The peace partnerships collaborate with grassroots agencies, organisations and stakeholders to achieve the spending targets and to respond to the needs of the target groups on the ground.

## 1.8 THE ROLE OF ACADEMIA

Academic institutions have a role to play in connecting the theory on peace building with a practical application in terms of responses. Academic institutions contribute research and education in the broad field of peace building in the south of Ireland. It is unclear at present as to the actual extent of collaboration and linkages that exist between these institutions. McCann and Davey (2005) asserted that ‘there is general agreement across the fields that common purpose could be strengthened by common practice.’ They further emphasised ‘this is the greatest challenge facing peace education’ (p10). The following list depicts some of the academic institutes in the south of Ireland that contribute research and education in the field of peace building.

- National University of Ireland (NUI) Maynooth Edward M Kennedy Centre for Mediation and Conflict Intervention

The Edward M Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention builds capacity for constructive approaches to conflict at all levels in society by: Providing rigorous taught programmes; conducting and disseminating pertinent research and creating opportunities for dialogue in specialist fields of interest.

([www.kennedyinstitute.nuim.ie](http://www.kennedyinstitute.nuim.ie))

➤ University College Dublin (UCD) School of Social Justice

The aim of the UCD School of Social Justice is to promote social justice both locally and globally, using interdisciplinary, feminist, and egalitarian approaches to learning.

Postgraduate programmes include Equality Studies and Women's Studies; Undergraduate modules include the UCD Horizons Programme, Outreach, and Continuing Professional Development programmes in Equality Studies and Women's Studies, and a dynamic, interdisciplinary research programme. UCD's Egalitarian World Initiative is a network of over 100 scholars from across the university who are working on social justice issues. The interdisciplinary programmes cover a wide range of equality, feminist, human rights, and global justice issues. Graduates can be found working in every sector. They include government ministers, community activists, home carers, educators, artists, health care professionals, farmers, police, civil servants, and journalists. ([www.ucd.ie/socialjustice](http://www.ucd.ie/socialjustice))

➤ NUI Galway Irish Centre for Human Rights

The Irish Centre for Human Rights is a university-based institution for the study and promotion of human rights and humanitarian law. Since its establishment in January 2000, the Centre has developed the field of human rights teaching, research, and advocacy. The institution runs masters programmes, undergraduate programme, and aims to build a thriving community of doctoral researchers.

([www.nuigalway.ie/human\\_rights/](http://www.nuigalway.ie/human_rights/))

➤ Trinity College Dublin Irish School of Ecumenics

The Irish School of Ecumenics, Trinity College Dublin, is located in Dublin and Belfast. It is committed to the study and promotion of dialogue, peace, and reconciliation in Ireland and around the world. It is recognised for its interdisciplinary approach to taught programmes and research, drawing on the fields of politics, sociology, ethics, theology, and religion. ([www.tcd.ie/ise](http://www.tcd.ie/ise))

Two clear factors emerge in McCann and Davey (2005) as vital in strengthening the academies' contribution to a pedagogy of peace. Those factors include coalescence amongst academic stakeholders in the field of peace building, and the academies location within communities. The success of the role of the academy is noted when they are not only located but embedded within communities. Both factors are imperative to support pedagogy of peace. Through coalescence of structures and roles and embedding academia in communities, a peace pedagogy can emerge as a response to the challenge of conflict in society. McGill and Morgan (2001) claimed that community education is still underdeveloped throughout Ireland and called for better communication between colleges and communities. Fear and Avila (2005) critique the traditional outreach approach of formal education, whereby the higher education institution holds the expertise and resources that the community requires and in order to make itself more amenable to the local community the institution agrees to sell its wares in a more customer friendly site. Instead they propose a model of engagement that is about putting the academies resources and expertise at the disposal of communities; working alongside community activists and change-makers to develop collective intelligence. The promise of knowledge that is located within the academy raises the question: How do institutions know things, and how do they think they know things?

*What is epistemology?*

Ryan (2006) defined the concept:

Epistemology is a study of how people or systems of people know things and how they think they know things. It is thus concerned with the nature of knowledge, what constitutes valid knowledge, what can be known and who can be a knower. (Ryan, 2006, p15)

Epistemology is the study of how knowledge is possible. Ryan (2006) outlines the dominant systems that are used to direct and validate the acquisition of knowledge through various research approaches. She explains that the positivist, positivist-empiricist and the modernist traditions are approaches to epistemology which lead to ways of knowing based upon 'scientific and empirical knowledge that is rational' (p14). Ryan (2006) further suggests that:

The positivist tradition believes that full understanding can be reached based upon experiment and observation. Concepts and knowledge are held to be the

product of straightforward experience, interpreted through rational deduction. (Ryan, 2006, p14)

On the other hand she noted 'post positivism leads to ways of knowing based upon meaning and the creation of new knowledge' (p13). Ryan also notes that 'knowledge cannot be divorced from ontology (being) and personal experience' (p16). She asserts that 'investigating your own epistemologies and understanding how they affect you as a researcher is an essential part of the post-positivist approach' (p18). Parker (1992) cited in Burr (1995) notes that 'social constructionism radically questions the idea of the objective fact' (p14). Ryan (2006) defines social constructionism as 'adopting a learning role rather than a testing role, disrupting the predictability of manufactured responses' (p18).

*From where does knowledge arise or develop?*

There are a number of ways in which knowledge can develop and there are different types of knowledge claims. Knowledge is constructed through scientific observation which leads to the recognition of patterns and insights into the studied phenomena. Knowledge is constructed according to Freire (1996) through 'praxis, human activity is theory and practice: it is reflection and action, it is transformation of the world' (p106). Mezirow (2000) cited in Fleming and Murphy (2006) asserted that adult learning 'is available through system, civil society, and public sphere, and can be contested through communicative rational discourse, where its validity hinges on the strength of argumentation' (p52). Adult education is a site where knowledge can arise and develop. It can also be a site of struggle, a struggle for women, the working class and a struggle for those whose political and sexual affiliations are not mainstream. Many feminist writers, hooks (1994) and Gilligan (1977) in particular, explore the role of 'voice' in the liberation of the suppressed, and the subordinated. Women carry the heavy burdens, of oppression, of conflict and combat. Connolly (2003) listening to the voices, suggests that 'a central function of community education has been the provision of a forum for listening to the voices of otherwise silenced people' (p9). According to Rossiter (2002) the emergence of 'narrative and stories as a fundamental structure of human meaning making, in constructivist methodology, is where learners connect new knowledge with lived experience and weave it into existing narratives of meaning' (p2). Freire (1996) coming from a radical liberatory approach knew that knowledge is never neutral but interpreted within ones' epistemological and ontological worldview. The



ideas, assumptions, and beliefs you hold are combined to provide your epistemological base. Harrison, Reeve, Hanson and Clarke's (2002) feminist deconstructive critique of Freire's work exposes the 'highly gendered nature of Freire's binary thinking in which the term masculinity is always privileged, and women are continually positioned as inferior' (p72). The methodological approaches I have employed in this research are qualitative in nature, using post positivist investigation with social constructivist underpinnings. The aim of this methodological approach is to become absorbed with the research participants in the social construction of a multiplicity of truths. The conceptual framework I used is based upon the critical social theorist, Paulo Freire.

### 1.9 CONCEPTUAL CHALLENGES

This section of the chapter acknowledges that the concepts contained within the research questions are not clearly defined, and can be culturally specific. Each concept: the concept of peace, the concept of conflict and its transformation and the concept of reconciliation are related to the context within which they occur.

This study poses an additional problem to be addressed. Peace education is elusive, according to Bar Tal (2002) 'because it is about attempting to develop a particular state of mind, rather than transmitting a body of knowledge' (p34). It is difficult to evaluate the achievements of peace education, because 'its objectives pertain mainly to the internalisation of values, attitudes, skills and patterns of behaviours' (p34). This positions the research into the realms of the concept of 'truth' and epistemology. Bar Tal elaborates upon the problems involved in defining peace education: 'peace education is elusive; it is equivocal, openly defined, conditional, disputable and controvertible' (p34). He describes the interchange that exists between politics and economics where conflict occurs:

First the elusiveness of peace education is related to the social political and economic implications of the objectives. The objectives suggest an agenda for social change. They concern the existing norms, ideologies, structures, and institutions in society and they often propose alternatives to them. Peace education is thus a societal program that concerns society; its objectives are relevant to society's ideas about its wellbeing. (Bar Tal, 2002, p34)

The conceptual challenge is to draw together working definitions of peace building, peacemaking reconciliation, and conflict transformation. But not just to identify and define such concepts, the challenge is to adapt the concepts to a local context, in order to garner agreement on their meaning. The conceptual challenge is also concerned with

the paradoxes of peace education. One of the paradox's that exists is to acknowledge the bitter and divided past, whilst at the same time moving towards an interdependent and fair future. This research attempts to confront the paradoxes that exist within the field. Lederach (1997) noted that:

Reconciliation can be seen as dealing with specific paradoxes. First, in an overall sense, reconciliation promotes an encounter between the open expression of the painful past and on the other hand reconciliation is about the search for the articulation of a long-term, interdependent future. (Lederach, 1997, p20)

This chapter asserts the position that the special objectives of peace education need to be clearly defined. Hamber and Kelly (2004) set out to develop a working model of reconciliation, as they believed that the term "reconciliation" is not well developed in Ireland and that 'no agreed definition exists, despite its increasingly common usage in a range of diverse contexts' (p1). Terms that have developed within the broader discourse include, peace building, peacemaking, and conflict transformation. This research elaborates upon the five strands of reconciliation developed by Hamber and Kelly, and generally promoted by the programme for peace and reconciliation. The five strands developed by Hamber and Kelly (2004) are outlined as: 'developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society; acknowledging and dealing with the past; building positive relationship; significant cultural and attitudinal change; and substantial social, economic and political change' (p4).

## 1.10 SUMMARY

This chapter describes the rationale for the thesis title and the aims of the research process. It introduces the various components of the thesis title and the main research aims and arenas of enquiry. It outlines the structure of the thesis. It provides a brief overview of the conflict in Ireland and identifies the dominant groups that are involved. It identifies the interventions of the GFA/ Belfast Agreement and the SEUPB Programme for Peace and Reconciliation since 1998. It addresses the impact of an extended period without major violence in communities to the present day. It explores the systems and structures of peace and reconciliation based knowledge, and relate them to the wider theoretical study of knowledge. It presents the initial stages of the attempt to understand how conflict can be managed in communities. In conclusion Chapter one illustrates the key components that have influenced the Troubles in Ireland, within a recent timeframe, and suggests the conceptual challenges that are inherent in the exploration of the research topic.

## CHAPTER 2: TRANSCENDING CONTESTED BORDERS

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter two, the conceptual framework for the thesis is explored. In this section the conceptual challenges faced by the epistemological stance and the ontological position of the researcher, myself, are outlined. This thesis attempts to open up the discourse that has been silenced through decades of conflict. Others have done this Smyth, (1999) Shirlow and Murtagh (2006) Rolston (2011) Jamieson, Shirlow and Grounds (2010) McKeown (1998) McWilliams (1995, 2010) McMinn (2000, 2003) and others.

This chapter addresses how the research topic and question are embedded within the personal experiences of border dwellers. It raises the proposal that border dwellers have particular ways of knowing. It explores the role of identity, and suggests how it can contribute to division in communities in conflict. It suggests how ontology is coupled with identity and ideology. It describes the causes, types and functions of silence and offers insights into how silence can contribute to understanding. It considers the relationship between knowledge and meaning. Through this process and in this space we can begin to imagine, organise and affect social change. In this chapter the fundamental role of the imagination in organising for social change and personal transformation is acknowledged.

### 2.1 THE BORDER: GEOGRAPHICAL AND CONCEPTUAL IMPLICATIONS.

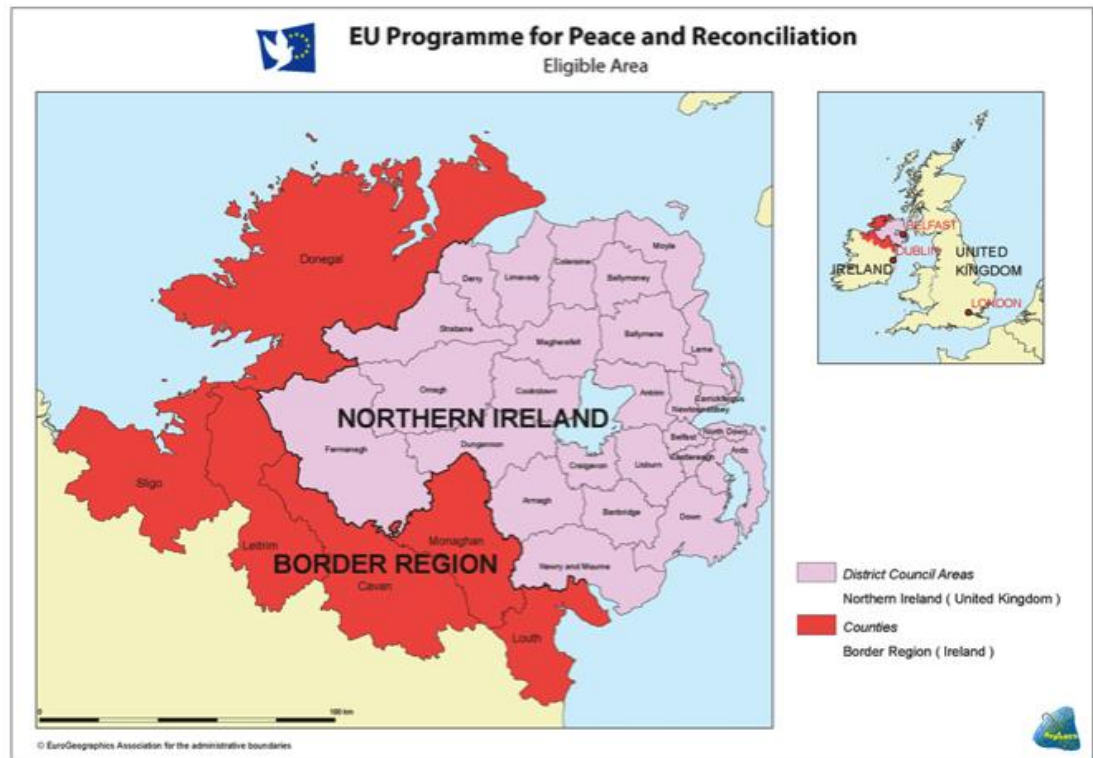
The geographical border that partitions Ireland north and south is approximately 450 kilometers long, depending on how its meandering course is measured. It was set down in 1921 by the then governments of Ireland, Britain, and Northern Ireland. Harvey, Kelly, McGearty and Murray (2005) noted that ‘the border in Ireland is a tale of unintended, unforeseen and undocumented consequences’ (p12). Despite its profound effect upon the lives of border dwellers the authors acknowledged that ‘the border has been the subject of remarkably little analysis or discussion’ (p12). They acknowledged that ‘analysis of the border was hampered by the non availability of statistics, lack of comparability (with data north and south of the border) and an absence of information’ (p13). The absence of information is understandable, the partition of Ireland has always been contested and the promises by governments to redraw the boundaries had been

shelved but not forgotten. According to Harvey et al The Boundary Commission was set up in 1921 'to determine the boundary between the Free State in accordance with the wishes of its inhabitants, as far as may be compatible with economic and geographic conditions' (p14). However 'a deal was quickly reached between the three governments whereby the Boundary Commission report was suppressed' (p15). The deliberate suppression of the report of the Boundary Commission and its subsequent release in 1969, impacted upon the renewal of conflict around this unsettled border. It could be argued that a policy of deliberate suppression of information pertaining to this contested border continues to this day. Suppression of information creates silent spaces in the discourse. Harvey et al noted 'partition disappeared from the national public, academic and political discourse. However its consequences had by no means disappeared for the communities living along the borderline' (p16). Todd (2006) outlined a typology of attitudes to the geographic border that partitions the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland ranging from the belief that:

The border is an alien intrusion to be contested, resisted and transgressed; to the perspective that it reflects natural limits of thought and interaction; towards an alternative perspective which asserts that the border is but one of a plural set of institutional limits, to be bypassed rather than resisted. (Todd, 2006, p3)

Barnett Donaghy (2003) suggested that the border area's history of conflict endowed it with 'a highly developed discourse about inequality' (p5). Rourke and Shiels (1998) mapped out educational disadvantage in the border counties, finding it to be the most extensive concentration of its kind in the State. They suggested that the border has made the region peripheral to the national education and training system, leaving it with a lack of high level skills. In 1999 the idea of the border corridor was introduced. This identified the zones immediately close to the border as communities where deprivation was accentuated.

Figure 4 Map of the Border Region



(Source: SEUPB (2007) PEACE III EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation 2007-2013: Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland Operational Programme)

The map above shows the border region of the six southern border counties in red. County Sligo, although it does not directly touch the border is included as an eligible area within the Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. The map also depicts in mauve the northern border counties of Derry, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Armagh and Down. County Antrim is the only county in the north of Ireland whose landmass does not border the south of Ireland. According to the Border Regional Authority, the border region derives its name from its location in relation to Northern Ireland. It is the necklace of six counties of Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan, and Sligo along the southern side of the Border. Border dwellers in the southern border region comprise a total population in excess of 514,800 persons (Census 2011). The European Commission noted that ‘back to back’ development, i.e. development up to the border but not beyond it, had been pursued by both governments. This policy has contributed to a complete lack of cooperation between both jurisdictions that resulted in poor welfare service delivery and economic development in places where the border has destructed normal social and economic development.

## 2.2 BORDER DWELLER: A DISTINCT IDENTITY

The concept of identity has played an important role in formulating division and developing attitudes towards those considered to be from the 'other side'. The other side is an accepted term in the border region and the north of Ireland to describe not only those who live on the other side of the geographical border, but to describe those who are different in terms of their religious and political preferences. Therefore it is important that my own identity forms part of this research project. In framing this research, I began to think about what it is that I experience and what I have come to know as a border dweller living throughout changing eras of conflict, post-conflict, and peace building. I am an Irish nationalist by inclination and background and a practitioner of education with communities who are divided by borders and boundaries, divided by ideology, divided by structural systems and in many cases divided by 'voluntary apartheid'. Baumann (2009) describes this as:

The post-conflict society can be characterized as a situation consisting of and based on a chosen "voluntary apartheid". As a theory, voluntary apartheid includes all relevant endogenous factors governing the post war society's communal divisions. (Baumann, 2009, p112)

Roche (2009) refers to such divisions as "bounded contentment" (p27). My role as an independent consultant working primarily in the field of adult and community education and research in the border region since 1998 is central to how this thesis is framed. During that time I have experienced in educational settings an all pervasive silence, it hangs in the air, it moulds the context, it shuts down imaginative responses. In writing and researching this thesis, I aim to reconnoiter how practitioners work and deal with similar challenges.

The border area, north and south has suffered from more than thirty years of conflict. Faced with conflict, suppression and inequality, silence develops as an endemic response. I moved to a small rural village of one hundred inhabitants on the border in the early nineties, it was a revelation to me, the extent of military presence, the barricades erected by British troops to prevent access through by-roads and across fields, the constant surveillance. Road closures and cratering had a profound effect in fracturing relationships between neighbours in small communities. Harvey, Kelly, McGearty and Murray (2005) noted that:

The border counties were for thirty years the most militarised part of Europe, west of the Berlin wall and the Iron curtain. Militarisation led to a climate of tension, fear, and silence. Travel and socialising, especially at night were sharply curbed. (Harvey, Kelly, McGearty & Murray, 2005, p150)

Border dwellers developed particular ways of knowing and acting that helped them to resist this intrusion into their daily life. One method of resistance was to engage in the practice of silence when confronted and questioned by military each time a crossing of the border was made, a limited amount of information was provided in response to questions. Border dwellers developed a means of communication that responded to questioning without revealing too much. It was a skill that was fine-tuned over the years of intensive surveillance. Border dwellers were programmed through constant surveillance to act and work within limiting schemas, programmed to say nothing and keep saying it. But it had a psychological effect. The learning included how to suppress anger in response to such intrusion, learning how not to raise suspicion by acting and communicating in ever limiting ways. Border dwellers learned how to keep their heads down, to avoid confrontation. They learned too that they were detached from the mainstream. They had little acknowledgement of their predicament in government policy, or media. In fact they were regarded as bandits, smugglers and troublemakers. The Irish military and Garda Síochaná were sent in to border towns and villages, to support British surveillance, to ensure that they did not disrupt official partitionist policy. Border dwellers learned to distrust successive governments because of their policies of suppression. They learned that truth is multifaceted. Border dwellers continue to carry around the border as a mindset, even when the physical border has been removed. They are aware of what Fleming (2009) referred to as “electronic panoptic” (p117), surveillance that is invisible but exists nevertheless. Foucault’s (1972) theory of self-regulation and analysis of power illustrates why this might be so, border dwellers regulate their own behaviour in response to decades of surveillance. Such is the persistence and domination of the geographical border in this part of the country, then even when it is physically removed, its legacy prevails.

Giroux’s (2005) theory of border pedagogy is embedded within critical theory and recognises the powerful potential for meaning making when colliding paradigms present themselves. Giroux noted ‘as pedagogical practice, border pedagogy underscores the need to challenge and resist existing boundaries of knowledge and

create new ones' (p21). It posits teachers as transformative intellectuals who have the potential to develop counter hegemonic pedagogies.

Borders can also be experienced as an enhancement of community, border dwellers have a way of communicating that ensures understanding or that ensures that they know when to say nothing, they know when they are in the presence of the 'other side'. There are codes and semantics that are applied in the language to identify positionings, religious, political and ideological. Borders are frontiers which implies innovation and pioneering, although they exclude and disconnect they also enclose and encircle people. Borders exist at an interface, where differences meet. Border dwellers live at the periphery of society, and as such have many insights into a self determined way of being. They can negotiate multiple systems and structures, be it different monetary systems, educational systems, health systems, and social systems. But Williams's (2006) reminds us not to categorise, but to learn from the particulars the deep inadequacies of generalisation and acknowledge the inaccuracies and dangers of idealisation. Williams (1973) contended that 'it is not only the reality of the rural community it is the observers position in and towards it; a position which is part of the community being known' (P165).

I work with single identity groups, that are either republican or unionist identity, and with mainstream adult education groups who express no overt positioning in relation to geographically and politically contested arenas. I have found that silence about one's position is a survival technique in the classroom or group situation and in the community. It is a survival technique I have used myself over the years in my professional life. Expressing a political preference tends to influence professional and career opportunities. The suppression of information pertaining to official policy ensures the development of a muted discourse in the mainstream. In between the silence and the dialogue a discourse developed that discriminated and stigmatised those who expressed opposition to partition. Republicans or nationalists had no place or role to play as employees in government or state services. Amongst the many roles of government employees is the role they perform to implement systems and policies that are partitionist in nature and application. Ferriter (2005) noted 'the evolving priority of the Irish government was to contain and control republican sentiment and ensure it did not unsettle politics in the south, or put more crudely to maintain a partitionist mindset' (p641). In this thesis I take a stance as an Irish nationalist with republican leanings, and



in that stance the semantics I use are grounded in that ontological position. I realise that this is a contentious stance: nationalism can be understood as fascism and republicanism can be associated with the pursuit of violence to achieve political ends, or as in the American political context as conservative. I am not taking a stance as a fascist or a conservative nor do I believe in the pursuit of violence for political aims. I offer this nationalist perspective as a position that sees Ireland as philosophically united and I am willing to sacrifice this ideology through the process of engaging with the research data. Macardle (1968) describes the complexity within the historical notion of the republic:

Whether the Irish republic ever existed has been disputed not only by jurists, and not only with words. For the Irish people the republic was for a few tense years, a living reality that dominated every aspect of their lives. Its existence was a fact of history, if not of logic or of law. Its existence was of a kind very baffling to its enemies, for the republic was an invisible within a visible, an intangible within a tangible state. (Macardle, 1968, p29)

Macardle claimed that in 1919 'Ireland became a nation of combatants' (p290). She elaborated:

A quality of Gaelic character came in to play - a character inbred in the race by centuries of unequal conflict; danger seemed the natural element of the republicans, conspiracy a game of skill and death in the cause of freedom the secret dream of the young. (Macardle, 1968, p290)

Moloney cited in Ferriter (2005) suggested:

The fall of Stormont (as far back as 1972) opened up a fault line within nationalism that would never really close. Moderate nationalist opinion now sought a political deal and reform, while the IRA fought on for revolution and the elusive republic. (Ferriter, 2005, p629)

James Joyce said 'a nation is the same people living in the same place'. In my reality I would hope that Ireland could reach a maturity that would value its republican ideals. Nationalist semantics do not recognise Northern Ireland, do not see it as an entity set apart from the rest of the nation, but existing to the north of the country. Hereafter in this thesis when alluding to geographic spaces I locate them in the north or south of the country. This is in contrast to the dominant discourse of Northern Ireland and The Republic of Ireland. I don't do this to offend but to be open. Edna O' Brien (O'Brien, Radio 1, 8/5/12) spoke about being open in places where silence normally resides. She stated that 'there exists confusion between openness and betrayal'. I can relate to this idea and link it to the risks associated with speaking out whilst living through the Troubles or conflict. For many years some border communities, and some families

within those communities lived in fear of invasion. This invasion frequented their lives in many ways and was implemented by the state forces, the military or Gardaí. Ferriter (2005) noted ‘the increasing intensity of military conflict in the 1970’s ensured that the attitude of police and judiciary became an even more overtly political issue’ (p632). Many homes were searched for guns, ammunition or combatants. Sometimes the searching was seen as a means of enforcing intimidation and control. This culture permeated the border region and the north of Ireland. Ferriter explained how historically this culture developed, as well as the frequency with which it occurred:

The conditions of the republican and loyalist ghettos became bleaker as the conflict intensified. These were the areas where most of the 2,100 people in jails at the end of 1977 came from and where most of the one-quarter of a million house searches between 1973 and 1977 were carried out. (Ferriter, 2005, p630)

Gardaí and RUC branded people in this process as ‘known activists’ or ‘supporters’ of known activists, their homes identified as ‘safe houses’ to the wider community. Invasion of homes was supplemented by border checks by the Irish army, An Garda Síochána, by the Royal Ulster Constabulary, (RUC) Ulster Defence Army (UDA) and by British army personnel. When going about their daily business, social and economic, border dwellers were questioned and searched constantly. Nobody seemed to mind; a sense of ambiguity grew throughout the country, Ferriter (2005) explained the development of ‘quiescent ambivalence’ (p634). It emerged as a way of coping with the mounting atrocities. It was up there on the border, a place alien to mainstream, a place perceived as lawless and the peacemakers (the army) were sent in to maintain control. In response to such ‘constructive ambiguity’ a destructive clarity morphed. Organic groups emerged to deconstruct this uncertainty, they came from families and communities; they were ‘insiders’ responding to the threat of invasion posed by ‘outsiders’. They fought the state forces of intimidation, and ‘insider’ groups that came from the ‘other side’. The censorship grew. There is much written about the conflict in the north of Ireland, and its impact on survivors, victims and combatants. There is not as much written for wider consumption on how affected we were by living with silence on the border. Harvey, Kelly, McGearty and Murray (2005) noted that ‘despite its centrality in the island’s political development since 1922, little has been written about the precise impact of the border’ (p147). Rourke and Shiels (1998) made the following point ‘the work that has taken place has tended to focus on the economic consequences of the conflict rather than on the social, psychological, and emotional impact’ (p13).

At times I have found myself working with groups, on the threshold of an emerging dialogue concerning that affectation, only for a shallower depth of conversation to emerge. To open a hornet's nest is a dangerous thing to do, and so to seek to live in harmony it appears best to keep the lid on it. Its not safe to delve in. Why not just stay on safe topics whilst ignoring the elephant in the room. Those who might venture in, will say 'it never affected me or my family' thus in effect closing down the topic as soon as it is opened. Fitzduff (1999) noted 'many of us vary, from day to day, and from incident to incident about what we feel and think and our lack of any consistent and clear perspective is sometimes perplexing to us' (p15). She elaborated 'some of us have totally opted out of any attempt to intervene...remaining silent when contentious issues arose in a conversation and hoping someone somewhere would take care of the situation and resolve it satisfactorily' (p15). McWilliams raised a similar point and reminded us that:

Denial has also played a potent role as a way of coping with situations over which people felt they had no control and can take the form of refusing to take part in discussions on anything remotely connected to the violence. Over the years, many women have tried to protect and shield their families from what was going on around them and they may need to talk now about those things that were suppressed as their only way of coping. (McWilliams, 1995, p14)

I am a border dweller since 1991; the impact of seeing the changes in the milieu during the past twenty-three years determines my subjectivity in addressing the issues raised in this research. Fitzduff (1999) observed 'it is tempting to try and get on with whatever life you have and to ignore as far as possible the daily signs of an unfinished war' (p202). She elaborated 'maybe because the weight of our knowledge of history has locked us into feelings of helplessness and despair' (p15). People are guarded about what they expose, they speak in distant terms, they elude to thoughts or events, but rarely directly stating what they know. Constructive ambiguity seeps into the discourse as a way of coping, the conflict became known as the Troubles. Political affiliations have been constructed primarily by life on the border, in the interface, where politics are raw manifestations. Border dweller's know things, they know about the function of silence, whether it is used in order to remain safe or to avoid the label of traitor, to detach from political problems over which they have no control and to maintain a sense of community relations within communities where families of 'others' coexist. Border dwellers know about Basil Bernstein's (2003) restricted and elaborated language codes, they use codes in a conscious way. They are conscious of restricting the language they

use when they are in the presence of ‘others’ and they elaborate upon the language they use when they are in the presence of what they determine to be the same side. They use codes to determine which side, political and religious, they occupy. By implementing codes of language they effectively create a process of alienation. Ambivalence towards border communities and the Troubles located there, is socially constructed in mainstream society. Because of this experience of social and political detachment from wider society, border dwellers understand exclusion, isolation and the notion of difference. Their truths are not mainstream.

### 2.3 CAUSES AND TYPES OF SILENCE

The types of silence that emerge in border areas are silences that relate to the risk of exposing an ideology that is different to mainstream political views. Living in a context in which a republican/nationalist ideology is physically suppressed by the extended presence and operations of military personnel from three jurisdictions creates an overtly and explicit political context. The silences are caused by fear, and related to the extent of the risk associated with ones’ ideology being considered dissident, non-conformist and by extension radical. It is the risk of living with enforced hegemony that at any moment can result in imprisonment.

There are several types of silence; Omertá is the code of silence enforced by the Irish Republican Army on its volunteers and the families and communities from which they came. The penalties of breaking this code were extreme. It brought with it the offence of betrayal, the labeling of people as ‘tout’, ‘grass’ or informer. The fear of being punished along with the risk of being ostracised from family and community ensured that this code operated effectively. The circle of silence grew, families were reminded to say nothing and keep saying it. Through this process intergenerational silencing prevailed.

There is also the silence of those who have been killed, removed, displaced or injured during the conflict. There is the silence caused by the guilt of those who remained or survived. There is the silence caused by witnessing conflict related atrocities, experienced as post-traumatic stress disorder, sometimes without state support or access to services. Psychologists are silenced and governed by the Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Act 2005. This act prevents people from speaking about conflict related offences in therapeutic settings. It creates barriers to trust and confidence.

There are further silences enforced by national government through law and through the allocation of resources. The silence of the media through Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act (1960) prevented broadcasting of any member of Sinn Fein, political party or members of the IRA. The silence caused by sociologists by what they chose to focus upon and by what government funded sociologists to focus upon. The silence of academics, the lack of presence of the academy in the region and lack of attention to the hegemony enforced there.

There is also the grassroots silencing of conscientious objectors. Communities became subdued in this process. An example of this is the silencing of civil societies role in post-conflict cross border cooperation despite Article 19 of the Good Friday Agreement, which proposed the establishment of the North-South Civic Forum and despite the fact that community development groups have a strong track record in integrated cross border work. There is the silencing of mainstream society; the development of ambivalence towards an unknown set of circumstances and causes and by implications the detachment of right thinking people towards a world of violence. This ambivalence whilst it creates the illusion of normality also creates and compounds further divisions.

#### 2.4 SILENCE AS UNDERSTANDING

But silence is not always a negative thing it can also be experienced as empowering. Silence can be an act of understanding that reaches beyond what mere words can express. Vygotsky (1987) cited by Wegerif (2008) stated that ‘as people get closer to inter subjective understanding in a dialogue, their need for explicit articulation becomes less, words and phrases become abbreviated, and they retreat towards the silence of a single consciousness’ (p350). Vygotsky (1987) cited by Cheyne and Tarulli (1999) referred to ‘inner speech as a unique form of internal collaboration with oneself’ (p15). According to Knapp, Enninger and Knapp-Potthoff (1987) ‘the practice of presumably unintentional silence may originate from long-term acculturation and embodies semiotic experiences’ (p289).

Recently I had an opportunity to participate in and reflect upon a silent encounter of a mass of people in the Centre of Enniskillen town in County Fermanagh. Enniskillen is a pleasant market town. It has become synonymous with it’s bomb in 1987. It is now a peaceful town and for the most part economically thriving, with people of all religious

and political persuasions living in co-existence. The silence I refer to occurred spontaneously, and lasted for moments, it was neither contrived nor planned, it wasn't strategised nor will it be evaluated. There will be no reports written up about its occurrence. However it had a deep resonance, a lasting impact and a learning outcome for those of us who were caught up in the moment. I will set the scene. It occurred at the centre of the town at the interface between the Catholic Church of St. Michael's, and the Church of Ireland that stands directly opposite it. A mass of people had gathered outside of the Catholic Church at the entrance. The crowd was awaiting an opportunity to enter the busy Church to attend an afternoon recital as part of the Samuel Beckett Happy Days festival. At the same time a happy bridal party had emerged. The bride and groom were greeting their guests on a bright sunny day. The bride was radiant and the groom was handsome, the bridal party was celebratory, chattering and frivolous. The ambiance was congenial. Onlookers seemed satisfied that they could enter the Church for the recital when the bridal party had dispersed. I stood with my two teenage daughters admiring the event.

Across the street and in close proximity, the Church of Ireland Church was thronged with people. Suddenly amidst the bliss of the wedding party, a lone piper emerged playing a lonely recital of *Amazing Grace*. A funeral was taking place. The mourners began to emerge from the Protestant Church, carrying the coffin. Sadness, grief and suffering was carved onto the faces of the family. Suddenly a hush descended upon the crowd, the tempo of laughter and gaiety subsided; the bride and groom stood steadfast. Silence erupted and filled the air. The lonesome piper slowly passed, people bowed their heads towards the passing entourage.

Humanity was shared in those moments, understood and respected. Without any formal rules of engagement, the correct response was 'known'. Sometimes silence is the only response, the humane cure, there are no words that could have suggested or imbued a deeper empathy. The cortege passed, the silence slowly drifted into oblivion in the same way that it began. The crowd dispersed, some to a wedding, some to a funeral and some to a rendition of Haydn's *Ariadne auf Naxos*. I knew that I had encountered a significantly powerful moment in time between two tribes. This incident might be construed as the polite silence of civilised company rather than 'a retreat towards the silence of a single consciousness' except in the knowing, the meaning that subjectively emerged. The moment was transformed by silence.

## 2.5 THE ROLE OF ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION.

I have discovered in my practice that the role of education in the context of societal and politically constructed silence is to acknowledge the causes and types of silence for communities in post conflict contexts. The role of adult and community education is to provide a space where we can recognise the multiple forms of silencing. The educators' role is to recognise that in border communities and beyond students experience both repressive and empowering silences and to recognise that classrooms are microcosms of the social reality of post-conflict contexts. There may be combatants, victims, survivors, military personnel and families of those all participating together in community education settings. The role of the educator is to acknowledge such diversity among the learners and to manage the experience so that it is a creative and constructive process and a positive encounter.

The role of community education is to transgress the boundaries between conformity and dissent, to mediate between difference and divisions and to navigate a chart through troubled waters. It is to collaborate with groups in order to design a way forward. This role could be described as navigating between Scylla and Charybdis. Scylla and Charybdis are two sea monsters of Greek mythology, occupying opposite sides of the Strait of Messina. Consultative groups on the border and in the north of Ireland have provided such guidance and in doing this have engaged the imagination and creativity needed to navigate a course.

The role of education is to overcome alienation, to provide a space where linkages can be created and to cultivate connections between people. In bringing people together education also needs to develop a language appropriate to the new era, a language that moves beyond identifying the codes and semantics that alert students to difference. It needs to create a language of unity. The role of education is to raise the heads up beyond the parapet, to empower by providing spaces that are safe. Education has a role to play in encouraging organic intellectuals and grassroots leaders to emerge. There are things that education can do in post-conflict contexts that incorporate all of the knowing that living through conflict entails. The role of education is to explore those stories and experiences that arise through this process. It is to value the knowing that exists. The role of education is to discern when silence is a good silence, when it draws people together and acts as a mark of respect, when it plays a fundamental role in the preservation of a community and to know when silence is oppressive.

## 2.6 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND MEANING

According to Mason cited in May (2002) epistemology is the philosophical study of knowledge, and ontology is the philosophical study of being, existence or reality. Freire (1996) suggested that it is through ones' epistemological base and ontological vocation that knowledge becomes known and has subjective meaning. Freire and Macedo (1987) provided insights into how the traditions and cultures of the oppressed are often the object of 'a massive assault and attempt by the dominant culture to delegitimize and disorganise the knowledge and traditions such groups use to define themselves and their view of the world' (p.13). The partition of Ireland played a role in the educational, economic, and cultural deficits that are found along the border between Ireland north and south. McGill and Morgan's (2001) study of adult educational disadvantage in Ireland highlighted the facts that 59 percent of adults in Northern Ireland have no qualifications, whilst in the south of Ireland 65 percent of the working population have only primary or lower secondary education. Moreland (2007) suggested that 'given the high levels of social and economic disadvantage in the border regions, it is likely that these areas also contain high levels of adults with few or no qualifications' (p171). But border dwellers were learning all of the time. They were getting an education into the ways of conflict and contestation. They learned how to react when they were being intimidated. Violence, loss and grief are part of the narrative of this learning. They learned about power on many levels, state and paramilitary enforced power. They learned about powerlessness. Through the post conflict era border dwellers and their community organisations have become increasingly professional in the redevelopment of their fragmented communities, through mobilisation of resources and interdependency. Community organisations in the border region made effective use of the peace funds to rebuild fractured community infrastructure and to address educational deficiencies. Whilst recognising the deficiencies of formal educational qualification that exist for many adults in the region an acknowledgement of the types of knowledge that developed in post conflict contexts is critical. This type of knowledge is valuable and the learning gained could be shared within mainstream community development and educational practices. But there are things that are unknown or that they are blinded to by the context they live in. Silverman (2000) stated 'all research is contaminated to some extent by the values of the researcher, only through those values



do certain problems get identified' (p200). Bell (1992) cited in Bolton (2005) describes an analogy that illustrates an important conceptual point:

The world is perceived through the glass walls leading us to imagine we are free of bias and preconception. Only when we try to get up and move to another mental space do we bump into walls, and become aware of their existence. (Bolton, 2005, p38)

O' Donnell (1977) is cited by Fitzduff (1999) with reference to Northern Ireland's two main religio/politico groups to explain that they normally have relatively fixed stereotypes about one another:

Studies have shown that Catholics saw Protestant as Power-holders, bigoted, Loyalist, and murderers. Protestants saw Catholics as priest-ridden, breeding like rabbits, superstitious. Both groups saw themselves as fine, decent people, but saw each other as bitter and brainwashed. (Fitzduff, 1999, p67)

According to Hope and Timmel (1999):

Our attitudes describe the spectacles through which we view the world. They help us to make sense of the world. (Hope and Timmell, 1999, p132)

Similarly Gadamer (1975) cited in Hogan (2010) suggests that 'it is not so much our judgments as it is our prejudices that constitute our being' and he elaborates that prejudices aren't always negative, but 'prejudices are biases of our openness to the world' (p100). Gadamer cited in Hogan (2010) described prejudice as:

A judgment that is given before all the elements that determine a situation have been fully examined, such judgments have to be made all the time as people are rarely if ever in situations where all elements that determine a situation are consciously available for final examination. (Hogan, 2010, p101)

Mason (1996) elaborated:

It is inappropriate to see social interaction as bias that can potentially be eradicated. It is better to try to understand the complexities of the interaction.

(Mason, 1996, p40)

She advised 'it is important not to underestimate the reflexive challenge posed by analysing your own role within the research process' (p41). In so doing she suggested that 'this casts qualitative researchers in a very active role, not as the followers or even creators of research blueprints, but as practitioners who think and act in ways that are situated and contextual but also strategic' (p165).

## 2.7 ARTS BASED METHODOLOGIES

I noted earlier that I take a stance as an Irish nationalist. This stance is philosophically problematic. Greene (1973) noted that ‘to identify oneself with a one-dimensional view is always to deny a part of one’s humanity’ (p9). Greene emphasised the importance of:

In a multifarious culture, no single schema or category can be sufficient for organizing the flux of reality. Abstractions-racist, blue collar, capitalist, dissenter, politician-inevitably obscure the existence of particular persons with their ambivalences, their hopes, their fears. (Greene, 1973, p9)

She suggested it takes ‘a fourfold vision derived from feeling, sensation and intuition as well as mind to encompass ones’ experience adequately and humanely’ (p9). Greene (1995) suggested that ‘the extent to which we grasp anothers’ world depends on our existing ability to make use of our imagination’ (p4). Gilligan cited in Connolly and Ryan (1999) outlined a feminist imaginative method and identified six steps or movements that included: an opening circle; naming of presuppositions; womens experience: critical and imaginative social analysis; theoretical reflection; and praxis. (p208-210). She asserted the challenge to break from:

Destructive imposed imagery and to claim a self image that reflects one’s own worth is an ongoing struggle. It requires that breaking oppressive silence and naming your own subjectivity is done in harmony with claiming the type of creative silence and stillness experienced in the opening circle. (Connolly and Ryan, 1999, p209)

Gilligan (1999) elaborated on the processes involved in the opening circle, ‘within this opening space we seek to nourish the poetic imagination often a poem is read, music is listened to or an image is observed in silence’ (p208). The naming of presuppositions gives space to name our bias, in naming the word, we can identify ‘blocks to receptiveness to new learning, or it could simply be a space to bring to consciousness prior, positive understandings of an issue’ (p209). In naming their position participants may also understand and deconstruct that position, through a process of dis-positioning. Dis-positioning is a process according to McCarthy (2010) that has been taken to mean an ability to be multi-sided in accepting all positions while not attaching to any one position:

It has also been referred to as an ‘ambivalent dis-position’, meaning that all positions were juxta-posed and held in dialogue. The word is hyphenated to introduce movement into the word and to deconstruct the concept of an internal

or static 'trait' Rather, 'dis-position' and 'dis-positioning' refer to a dynamic openness to a co-creative process that is ever evolving. (McCarthy 2010, p8)

Taking arts based approaches to the deconstruction of silence offers opportunities to educators operating at the seams of civil society that could assist in the creation of social change and develop community educations position in relation to conflict transformation through the evocation of imaginative methodologies.

## 2.8 SUMMARY

This chapter explains why the research question is relevant to me as a border dweller and what experience I bring to the exploration of the field. It explores the nature of knowledge, and the many ways that knowing can be transferred from one person to another through actions and attitudes, through finding congruency between words and actions, through the acknowledgement of presuppositions or bias and through discerning truths through the adoption of a dis-position which is never static. Knowledge provides illuminating bridges which help us to cross the reef of understandings, with metaphors, metronomes, images and reflections. The nature of knowledge is that it gets distorted and can distort, it can disarm and it can disorientate. It can also empower. The knowledge of nature has been expanded through a combined response to the task of living through conflict and post-conflict contexts and that also presents a dilemma. This experience of discovery, is a 'moving force' which is either conducive to continued growth, or detrimental to it. If discovery is conducive to growth, then new knowledge is invented through that process. This chapter explores the role of epistemology and ontology in the construction of identity. It seeks ways to understand the 'others' understanding of reality and the role of humanisation of the 'other'. It explores the concept of positioning and dis-positioning. It raises the importance of silent and invisible imaginative spaces within communities in conflict. It begins to posit the enquiry beyond the binary opposites either-or debate that has manifested itself in the Irish conflict. An understanding of the role of education and the functions of a pedagogy that is grounded in peace is necessary in order to elaborate upon the constructs of silence, dialogue, and transformation in conflict, post-conflict and peace building communities.

I assert that border dwellers have particular ways of knowing that include the practices of silence in communicative contexts. Border dwellers often negotiate multiple and competing frames of references within contexts that are uncertain. I raised this idea in

educational settings, how do border dwellers know things and how do they know how to act differently? It seems it is an instinct, born of a critical matrix. It is a thing sensed, based upon indicators, that refines the knowing. The indicators include location, they assume each others experiences based upon where they live and how they define where they live. They assume certain frames of reference to exist based upon where people were schooled, based upon where people socialise, who they know, how they speak, the semantics they use to describe their understandings of 'others'. Border dwellers assume from such indicators the political positioning of people. Based on these indicators and the resultant assumptions they make they can usually make a judgement about what religious and political side a person emanates from. They are keenly aware then of heightened danger when they find ourselves in locations that signify risk, that signify when they are in the presence of others. I do not say that this truth is based upon rational evidence and empirical facts. It is a sensing, a knowing that comes from a developed sense of boundaries. The respondents in the research design have been drawn primarily from border dwellers north and south of the border. Respondents have also been drawn from further away from the border. There was some difficulty in engaging combatants who dwell in the southern border counties. I elaborate on the silencing of former combatants based in the southern border counties that has developed from societal stigma, discrimination, censorship of ideology and through the effects of a dominant patriarchal context in the findings chapter. However although some respondents are located geographically further from the border, they continue to negotiate borders and boundaries within communities in conflict through their community education work. This is explained in the methodology chapter. In the context of communicative silences how can post-conflict communities discover voice? The literature review grapples with the transgression between theory and practice.

## CHAPTER 3: THE INDESCRIBABLE AND THE UNDISCUSSIBLE

### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

This literature review begins by exploring contemporary academic writings defining peace education in general. It then describes the peace and reconciliation process as it applies in Ireland and identifies the theory that underpins it. It explores silence as a critical component of communication. It elaborates upon the practice of silence and dialogue as pedagogical tools. This chapter introduces the central theorists whose work is used to interpret the empirical findings in the thesis. The central theorists' are Paulo Freire and Jack Mezirow.

Freire's (1996, 1998, 2010) insights on oppression, transition, dialogue and education are relevant to the context within which this research project is situated. Freire describes silence as a product of cultural invasion. He describes the consequences of oppression and dehumanization, division and alienation. He asserts that cultural silence manifests itself through these processes. Freire's concept of conscientization (1996) links personal transformation with social change. He stressed that 'conscientization does not stop at the level of mere subjective perception of a situation, but through action prepares men (sic) for the struggle against the obstacles to their humanization' (p100). He concludes that dialogue can exert a humanising influence on the interaction between those who are oppressed and those who act as oppressors. He notes the significance of education to liberation.

Mezirow's (1991) Theory of Transformative Learning is used to interpret the processes of change that occur through significant and incremental learning experiences. Mezirow proposed that learning can increase awareness of prejudices, assumptions and frames of reference which are problematic. He described the conditions that are necessary to develop frames of reference that are inclusive and discriminating. Transformative Theory presents a roadmap to recovery from subjective oppression. Mezirow, Taylor and Associates (2009) suggest that 'meaningful knowledge is rooted in the knowledge-makers lived experience' (p264). The theory assists in describing the key components of personal transformation and creates linkages to the transformation of mindsets that

occur through collaborative discourse. Mezirow's ideas about collaborative discourse guided the empirical research towards Habermas's (1996) concepts of civil society and the public sphere.

Habermas's ideas about civil society are compatible with the role of organisations and social movements that developed in Ireland in response to societal problems caused by the conflict. The organisations that participated in the research project and the milieu within which they operate are consistent with his ideas about the public sphere. Habermas's public sphere where 'collaborative discourse provides a means through which we understand and critique our justifications and beliefs' is a sensitizing concept to the empirical findings. Habermas's (1984) Theory of Communicative Action and Mezirow's (1991) Theory of Transformative Learning are relevant to the dialogical processes that occur in the public sphere through civil society that is located in a post-conflict context. Fleming (2009) and Murphy and Fleming (2006) provide a nuanced interpretation of this complex work. They suggest the implications of Habermas's ideas for the academy.

Conflict theorists including Lederach are used to analyse the cyclical nature of conflict and to explore conflict transformation processes. Lederach's (1995, 1997, 2003, 2005) approach to conflict transformation provides insights on the processes that are useful to encourage the transformation of conflict. The focus on how community memory is laid down, and the implications for identity construction is a useful tool for the analysis of the thesis findings. In particular Lederach acknowledges the procedures that are necessary to facilitate understanding the past. He emphasises that dealing with the past is a critical component of conflict transformation. The illustrations' he provides offers educators ways of working in post-conflict contexts. His writings on the development of the 'moral imagination' provide an interesting comparative to the writings on feminist imaginative pedagogy.

Contemporary feminist writers provide analyses that underpins the quest for meaning and liberation from dominant patriarchal paradigms associated with 'frontier misogyny'. Feminist theorists that are drawn upon to explore the empirical findings include Greene (1973, 1995) hooks (1994) C. Gilligan (1977) A.L. Gilligan (1999) McWilliams (1995, 2010) and McMinn (2000, 2003). Feminist writers assist with the critique of theorists such as Habermas and Freire. They name the silence frequently encountered by both genders living in the border, and the reluctance to name the

experience of subordination and domination. They assist in the development of ‘voice’ as a response to silencing. McMinn and McWilliams provide particular insights into the impact of protracted conflict and multiple silencing on the lives of women. They offer a means to deconstruct the dominant patriarchal context of conflict. Feminist imaginative pedagogy offers processes through which we can begin to construct an interdependent and fair future through educative processes. They transcend boundaries through an imaginative, liberative methodology.

Authors whose work sensitises the reader to the plight of the protagonists include McKeown (1998) Jamieson, Shirlow, and Grounds (2010) McEvoy (2003) and Rolston (2011). They explore the particularities of the former political prisoner community. Coulter (1999) and Coulter and Murray (2008) elaborate upon the socio-economic conditions that contribute to class conflict. Ferriter (2005) provides analysis of the historical context to the conflict. Baumann (2009) is included for his insights on ‘voluntary apartheid’ in the context of Northern Ireland, and for exploring the normalisation of the ‘other’ in communities who are divided by conflict.

Bar-On’s (1989, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2001a, 2007) insights into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict provide a comparative context to the conflict in Ireland. He provides an exploration on the construction of identity through the relationship with ‘the other’. He describes asymmetrical power relations that contribute to silencing, and focuses upon barriers to intergenerational dialogue that occur through such processes.

### 3.1 PEDAGOGY OF PEACE EDUCATION

The pedagogy of peace education has been developing in different contexts throughout the world since the 1970’s with the emergence of liberation theology and radical critical theory. Sakade (2009) stated current peace education has been largely influenced by the development of peace research. There is an evolving landscape of concepts relating to peace education and conflict transformation. Two interconnected foci are apparent in the literature; knowledge focus and skills building. Peace studies attempted to combine the knowledge of peace with the skills needed for practice. Peace education is understood generally to aim to offer opportunities to develop the skills, knowledge and values required for the practice of conflict resolution, communication and cooperation in relation to issues of peace, war, violence, conflict and injustice. Gur-Ze’ev (2011)

outlined the influential trends which have shaped its morphing. The central trends in current peace education are:

- (1) Modern, positivistic trend; focuses upon developing objective professional knowledge through teaching conflict resolution skills.
- (2) Modern critical trend; focuses upon emancipatory commitment and centrality of giving 'voice' to the excluded.
- (3) Postmodern, multicultural and post colonialist trends; emphasises diversity, shared values, and solidarity.
- (4) Religious (mainly Christian) trends: focuses upon concepts such as charity, unity, justice, respect, and endorsing a culture of love.

Gur-Ze'ev (2011) asserted that 'some of the modern and some of the postmodern sub-trends are more socially and critically oriented than others' (p177). Gur-Ze'ev has produced a comprehensive encyclopedia of peace education in which he described in detail the various trends that have contributed to its development:

The positivistic-oriented trend manifests a strong belief in teaching conflict resolution strategies. Very little room is reserved here for peace education as an explicit set of ideals and values. Conflict resolution skills are here conceived as a matter of objective professional knowledge, good didactics and fully developed rational participants. (Gur-Ze'ev, 2011, p177)

He described the critical trend as:

The critical trend moves the discussion into one inspired by or realised within the framework of critical pedagogy. It offers peace education a special role in light of its immanent emancipatory commitment and the centrality of the 'voice' and the interests of the victims within this educational agenda. Freire, bell hooks, Rivage-Seul and many other critical educational theorists such as McLaren and Giroux wrote with the objective to give 'voice' and visibility to the perspectives and interests of the marginalized. (Gur-Ze'ev, 2011, p178)

He elaborated on the humanist trend and implied challenges inherent in its approach:

The more modern-humanistic oriented trends within critical peace education are attacked by postmodern-oriented critical peace educationalists that claim that the traditional (modern-oriented) Freirean framework (Freire 1996) is universalistic and essentialist, and conceive hierarchical-oppressive relations between teacher and students as a precondition for educational progress. (Gur-Ze'ev, 2011, p180)

Gur-Ze'ev suggested two further trends must be acknowledged in the definition and



evolution of Peace Education. They are the liberal trend and the multicultural trend, as outlined below:

The multicultural trend in peace education emphasises diversity as a precondition for peace, in contrast to the liberal agenda of enhancing shared values and a homogeneous kind of reflection towards universal solidarity and responsibility as praised by liberal (Aduan & Bar-On 2004, Bar-Tal 2005) and existentialist-oriented peace educators (Gordon 2005) and most of the theorists of civil education. (Gur-Ze'ev, 2011, p181)

Johan Galtung (1975) who developed two concepts of peace: 'negative peace' and 'positive peace', represented the liberal trend in peace education. 'Negative peace generally means the absence of violence between nations or groups, but also includes the situation where there is no physical violence but without interaction either' (p29). On the other hand, positive peace involves cooperation and integration between groups, with the absence of structural violence (or social injustice) in which 'the violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances' (p114). Gur-Ze'ev explored the complexities of the violence of the oppressed through the lens of critical education theorists:

Critical education theorists in the postmodernist multicultural and post colonialist framework, such as Peter McLaren, Ward Churchill and Ian Pappé, not only 'understand' but actually support the explicit violence of the oppressed and present it as legitimate counter-violence that echoes only the original colonialist violence and that is free of moral responsibility to its actions that ultimately will build the bridge from colonialism and resistance to post colonialism and peace. Within this framework effective violence of the oppressed is actually nothing but peace education in action. (Gur-Ze'ev, 2011, p177)

Gur-Ze'ev (2011) concluded 'peace, in its essence, is nothing but violence that successfully defeated its enemies and was victorious enough to silence even the voices and traces of the oppression and suffering that go along with its triumph' (p178). Peace education is made possible here by means of this new methodology 'for giving voice to silenced ones on the road to 'peace', which is conditioned by the deconstruction of the hegemony and its structural violence' (p178). Harber and Sakade (2009) find it is useful to distinguish between education *for* peace and education *about* peace:

The first, education for peace, aims to improve peaceful relations. The second, education about peace, aims to promote awareness of peace and conflict and offer the means of conflict resolution. It also includes knowledge and understanding of conflict theory: its causes, process and effects in social conditions and in personal relationships. (Harber and Sakade, 2009 p174)

The academic institutions involved in peace building in Ireland, as outlined in Chapter One, have undoubtedly been influenced by and contributed to the central trends of peace education. However it is noted by practitioners that a conflict resolution approach that seeks to develop fully rational participants in the pursuit of objective professional knowledge has limitations, one of which is the lack of recognition of the effective violence of the oppressed. Feeley (2007) focused on the root causes of problems as outlined by Freire. ‘we really don't have pedagogical problems, we have political problems with educational reflexe’ (p19).

Reardon (1999) cited in Ardizzone (2001) conceptualised peace education as a pedagogy that ‘incorporates a variety of knowledge, skills, and attitudes for interpreting ideas as well as the development of reflective and participatory capacities for applying knowledge to overcome problems and achieve possibilities’ (p20). Reardon's notion of nurturing reflective and participatory capacities echoes Freire's (1996) concept of praxis. Macintyre-Latta and Kim noted (2010) ‘praxis requires educators to think outside or beyond the rules and regulations; it demands creative thinking, care, moral judgment, compassion, critical consciousness, and agency’ (p137).

The key themes of peace education can be recognised across educational systems, often being integrated into other subjects. The objective of peace education, whether it be through education for mutual understanding (EMU) in the north of Ireland, or Civil Social and Political Education (CSPE) and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) in the south of Ireland is to encourage transformation of conflict. Peace education is not confined to the formal education system, informal community, and voluntary and civil society sectors and faith-based organisations facilitate learning and promote peace education through dialogue for change. McCann & Davey (2005) stated ‘peace is often seen as implicit or ‘hidden’ in the vocationally driven system of educational provision in Ireland, north and south’ (p10). They suggested ‘there is however general agreement across the fields that common purpose could be strengthened by common practice. This is the greatest challenge facing peace education’ (p10). Developers of a peer mediation programme<sup>2</sup> in schools suggest that foundational work needs to be addressed before education can attempt to grapple with the bigger questions:

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<sup>2</sup> The development of Peer Mediation in N. Ireland is the subject of a book, begun by Jerry Tyrrell and completed after his death by Seamus Farrell. Tyrrell J. 2002. Peer Mediation: A Process for Primary Schools. Souvenir Press London.

Hidden curriculum issues are as much a constraint to effective relationships education as is the fact that it has to compete for space with the subject's area of the visible curriculum. In that respect SPHE can be a catalyst for change, for the 'unhiding' of the hidden curriculum, of those aspects of a school's life and practice which poison rather than enhance the climate in which children are learning for life. (Farrell, 2013, p5)

Bar-Tal (2002) described peace education as being 'elusive in nature' (p27). A predominant feature of the peace and reconciliation process in Ireland has been the adoption of a five-strand conceptual framework model for reconciliation developed by Hamber and Kelly (2004). They identify the factors that are critically important namely 'the tensions, contradictions and paradoxes that exist between the five strands' (p2). Reconciliation is the process of how we deal with these tensions. Furthermore, reconciliation as a concept is always influenced by an individual's underlying assumptions. Lederach (1997) stated 'reconciliation promotes an encounter between the open expression of the painful past but at the same time seeks a long-term, interdependent future' (p22). Hamber and Kelly referred to different ideologies of reconciliation:

Religious ideology often emphasises the re-discovering of a new conscience through moral reflection, repentance, confession, and rebirth. A human rights approach might see it as achieved by regulating social interaction through the rule of law and preventing certain forms of violations of rights from happening again; or an inter-communal understanding may see the process of reconciliation as being about bridging the divides between different cultures and identity groups. (Hamber and Kelly, 2004, p6)

Education to address conflict has developed in a non-linear fashion with moments of reconciliation, conflict resolution, conflict intervention and conflict transformation.

#### *Five Strands of Reconciliation.*

Terms such as conflict resolution, conflict transformation (Lederach, 1995) conflict intervention, as well as reconciliation all play a distinct and evolving role in the overall milieu within the Irish context. Hamber and Kelly (2005) elaborated to clarify the term, and to encourage more understanding of reconciliation. This working definition of reconciliation has general acceptance and is considered a necessary process following conflict. The definition regards reconciliation as a voluntary act that cannot be imposed and involves five interwoven and related strands, as follows:

Developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society: the development of a vision of a shared future requiring the involvement of the whole society, at all levels. Although individuals may have different opinions or political beliefs, the articulation of a common vision of an interdependent, just, equitable, open and diverse society is a critical part of any reconciliation process;

Acknowledging and dealing with the past. Acknowledging the hurt, losses, truths, and suffering of the past. Providing the mechanisms for justice, healing, restitution or reparation, and restoration (including apologies if necessary and steps aimed at redress). To build reconciliation, individuals and institutions need to acknowledge their own role in the conflicts of the past, accepting, and learning from it in a constructive way so as to guarantee non-repetition.

Building positive relationships. Relationship building or renewal following violent conflict addressing issues of trust, prejudice, intolerance in this process, resulting in accepting commonalities and differences, and embracing and engaging with those who are different to us.

Significant cultural and attitudinal change: Changes in how people relate to, and their attitudes towards, one another. The culture of suspicion, fear, mistrust, and violence is broken down and opportunities and space opened up in which people can hear and be heard. A culture of respect for human rights and human difference is developed creating a context where each citizen becomes an active participant in society and feels a sense of belonging.

Substantial social, economic, and political change. The social, economic, and political structures that gave rise to the conflict and estrangement are identified, reconstructed or addressed, and transformed. (Hamber and Kelly, 2005, p4)

The five interwoven strands above form the basis on the approach to conflict transformation that is being implemented through the Special European Union's Programmes Body (SEUPB).

### 3.2 THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCT OF SILENCE

Freire (1996) argued that 'human existence cannot stay silent nor can it be nourished with false words, but only with true words with which men (sic) transform the world' (p69). Freire described silence in the context of oppression. 'every person however ignorant or submerged in the "culture of silence," can look critically at his or her world through a process of dialogue with others, and can gradually come to perceive his personal and social reality, think about it, and take action in regard to it' (p104). Freire agreed that the importance of silence in the context of communication is fundamental. Freire (2010) in writing about the roots of Brazilian 'mutism' stated that 'societies

which are denied dialogue in favour of decrees become predominantly silent' P21). He elaborated upon this point 'silence does not signify the absence of response, but rather a response which lacks a critical quality' (p21).

Hawes (2006) suggested that 'Dialogue can serve as a way to practice being silent and focused, listening and mindful' (p268). Li (2001) suggested that 'silence and speech form a continuum of human communication' (p157). Jaworski (1993) suggested a different approach. He advised that instead of searching for a final definition of silence, a critical inquiry into silence should focus on how silence works in different communicative contexts. Fanon (1963) described the colonial system as 'a world cut in two' such that the colonial subject is a 'tabula rasa' – which is to say a silent or empty space 'fabricated' by the colonizer to his own economic ends' (p2).

A great physical silence has been experienced according to Cunningham (2012) as a direct result of the great hunger. He identified three types of silences that emerged from the famine:

The silence witnessed by the absence of those who died, whole communities laid silent; a second great silence came from those who were guilty, those who profited from the misfortunes of others who have good reason for wanting it forgotten; the third great silence is born of a condition of the mind known as non-rational guilt, victims burdened with non rational guilt feel the guilt of survivors, why not me too when others I knew perished. (Cunningham, 2012, p5)

Beckett (1952) reinforced this idea in his query 'was I sleeping while the others suffered?' (p35). Cunningham notes 'paradoxically while victims have been observed to cling to their non-rational guilt, perpetrators often disavow their guilt through the use of a variety of strategies including projection, rationalization and denial' (p6). Cunningham provided insights into how silence embeds itself into communities, he suggested:

As a nation many Irish people have been reluctant to speak about the famine and how they or their ancestors survived. This is often referred to as 'hostage syndrome' where people who have survived a great trauma feel guilty about surviving and are often reluctant to speak about it as a result. (Cunningham, 2012, p6)

Bar-On (1998) noted the silence of the families of survivors:

This blame, combined with feelings of guilt, the guilt and anguish of the survivors themselves, gave rise to a process of silence and silencing that profoundly affected many families of survivors. Some of the emotional burden was wordlessly passed on to the second generation and it has taken many years

to decipher the social and psychological reasons for the silence. (Bar-On, 1998, p14)

The silence may have become embedded, acculturated through generations so that when trauma occurs silence becomes the dominant response. There is another aspect to cultural silence. People will be unwilling to publicly express their opinion if they believe they are in the minority. They will also be more vocal if they believe they are a part of the majority. Thus, the more marginalized you become, the less you speak. Silence itself can never be simply a sheer lack of voice. In respect to social relations there is no such thing as pure silence. Silences are, at least, always discernible by a definite gap or open place in the familiar refrain – whether of music, conversation, chatter. Silences like these are often themselves a sign that something is out of the ordinary, even terribly wrong. Kulkarni and Lemert (2012) observed that ‘since the 1990s, development theories have focused on the voice/silence trope as a corrective to the inability of global development policy to consider, precisely, the silence of targeted populations’ (p1). Spivak (1988) cited in Kulkarni and Lemert (2012) posed the question, ‘can the subaltern speak?’ They concluded that ‘Spivak makes an important point as to the social dynamics of silence among the lowest strata of postcolonial societies, themselves lodged in the lowest tier of globally stratified societies’ (p3). According to Freire (1996) ‘those who have been denied their primordial right to speak their word must first reclaim this right and prevent the continuation of this dehumanizing aggressions’ (p69). In order to do this, Freire emphasised dialogue as a ‘fundamental precondition for true humanization’ (p118).

### 3.3 ALIENATION FROM OTHERS

Freire wrote extensively on oppression and colonisation, silence and dialogue. He described the complexities that occurs and contributes to the development of a hidden curriculum, which results in the alienation of both sides from each other in a post-conflict environment. Freire (1996) referred to the means by which the oppressors maintain power through a divide and conquer technique ‘it must divide it and keep it divided in order to remain in power’ (p122). He elaborated ‘dividing in order to preserve the status quo, then is necessarily a fundamental objective of the theory of anti-dialogical action’ (p126). The oppressed respond by realising that ‘as long as they are divided they will always be easy prey for domination and manipulation’ (p126). He

explained 'all the actions of the dominant class manifest it's need to divide in order to facilitate the preservation of the oppressor state' (p128).

Researchers including Sherif et al (1988) have noted that unity amongst groups can be achieved through a collective definition of identity, particularly when confronted by an enemy. Taking a united stance is problematic for a number of reasons however: the minority oppressors will not tolerate any approach to unity that might alter their hegemony. Freire (1996) stated 'concepts such as unity, organisation and struggle pose a threat, for their realisation is necessary to actions of liberation' (p122). Freire (1996) suggested that the oppressors achieve disunity through a process of alienation. Alienation is intensified by breaking down regions into 'local communities', whilst ignoring their position in terms of 'totalities in themselves and as part of another totality, area, region, which in turn is part of another totality, a nation' (p123).

The (ICR) Institute for Conflict Research (2005) found the existence of forty-one Northern Ireland Office (NIO) barriers across the city of Belfast, with a total of eighty three security barriers altogether. In spite of the peace agreement Jarman acknowledges that 'barrier construction and extension has been an ongoing process over the past fourteen years' (p21). Jarman (2007) noted 'half of which had been built, extended or heightened since the ceasefires in 1994' (p22). He explained 'the term interface barrier or peaceline is generally used to refer to those barriers that have been authorized and built by the NIO in response to safety and security in an interface area' (p22).

Freire (1998) observed 'the more alienated a people are the easier it is to divide them' (p78). He noted that a strategy of inculcation is implemented in order to maintain division, 'to inculcate in the oppressed a sense of blame and culpability about their situation of oppression' (p78). Freire (1996) noted that a form of cultural action is employed by which the oppressors emphasise a focalized view of problems rather than seeing them as dimensions of a totality. In this way they 'manipulate the people by giving them the impression that they are being helped' (p122). The oppressed are divided by internalising the oppressor 'the oppressed are insecure in their duality as beings which "house" the oppressor' (p125). This is because on the one hand they 'resist' and on the other hand they are 'attracted' to the oppressor regime. This is manifested within the oppressed as 'basic insecurity' which the oppressor can easily manipulate. Freire (1996) suggested that the site of leadership is an area where manipulation and division can occur. 'oppressors do not favour promoting the

community as a whole, but rather selected leaders’ as this process can hinder the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention’ (p124).

### *Pedagogy of liberation*

Freire (1996) emphasised ‘a pedagogy must be forged *with*, not *for* the oppressed in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity (p30). He recognised ‘this pedagogy makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come the necessary engagement in the struggle for liberation’ (p30). He acknowledged the challenges and paradoxes such a pedagogy entails ‘the central problem is this: How can the oppressed, as divided, unauthentic beings, participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation?’ (p30). He responded by concluding ‘only as they discover themselves to be ‘hosts’ of the oppressor can they contribute to the midwifery of their liberating pedagogy’ (p30). Freire expounded ‘as long as they live in the duality in which *to be* is *to be like*, and to be like is to be like the oppressor, this contribution is impossible’ (p30).

### *Transformative Learning*

Mezirow, Taylor and Associates (2009) described transformation as follows: ‘transformation of one’s taken for granted frames of reference, meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind sets to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change and reflective’ (p8). Mezirow (2009) stated ‘imagining how things could be otherwise is central to the initiation of the transformation process’ (p28). Fleming (2007) suggested ‘applying the criteria (from Transformation Theory) of being more inclusive, more discriminating and more open to future change as the criteria for judging an improved internal working model’ (p88). Brookfield (2009a) expounded upon Mezirow’s transformational theory that proposes that critical reflection is integral to transformative learning. Brookfield contends that ‘the two central elements of transformative learning, objective and subjective reframing, involve either critical reflection on the assumptions of others (objective reframing) or on one’s own assumptions (subjective reframing)’ (p125). Brookfield (1995) offers ‘ideology critique as a learning process which describes the ways in which people learn to recognise how uncritically accepted and unjust dominant ideologies are embedded in everyday situations and practices’ (p13). Taylor (2009) outlined the core elements that frame a transformative approach to teaching. The core elements include ‘individual experience;



critical reflection; dialogue; holistic orientation; awareness of context; and an authentic practice' (p4). He clarified 'dialogue is the essential medium through which transformation is promoted and developed' (p9). He explored the notion 'dialogue is not so much analytical, point-counterpoint but emphasising relational and trustful communication often at times highly personal and self disclosing' (p9). Taylor (2009) alluded to learners 'edge of meaning', which he describes as 'a transitional zone, of knowing and meaning making' (p10). Gravett and Petersen (2009) outlined lessons learned in promoting dialogic teaching and suggest that 'the notion of a learning edge is very important in facilitating transformative learning' (p107). Wlodkowski (1999) cited in Gravett and Peterson (2009) suggested the necessity of learners being on the edge of their comfort zone, 'educators need to create the conditions where learners are challenged and encouraged toward critical reflection' (p107). Hammack (2009) alluded to a way of knowing that emerges as significant in conflict transformation 'while not devoid of theory, the newness was something sensed, something intuited, something called forth relationally, more than something grasped intellectually' (p4). Whilst acknowledging the importance of such processes, O'Hagan (2008) highlighted the barriers to such processes occurring 'people have been encouraged to build a shared, post conflict society, but have often been left without spaces where even the most basic of conversations about how to achieve such a society can take place between diverse communities in an atmosphere of safety and respect' (p12).

Baumann (2009) suggested that conflict transformation can only be truly embraced when the divisions in a post-conflict society are embraced as a means of transforming conflict. He explained this paradox 'societies that engage in "voluntary apartheid" can also be seen as a critical indicator of society's willingness and ability to enter peaceful conflict transformation' (p112). O'Sullivan and Russell (2009) explored the complexities and found that 'many people are content with a degree of separation but do not draw any particular relationship between this state of affairs and antagonism or violence' (p134).

### 3.4 DIALOGUE: A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL RESPONDING TO ALIENATION.

Freire (2010) placed great importance on dialogue, and the dire consequences of anti-dialogical action which he described as 'a theory of action based on anti dialectics - diametrically opposed to one stemming from dialectics' (p102). This course of action,

he emphasised has the potential for cultural invasion and he reasserts the role of dialogue within a humanistic approach ‘humanism is to make dialogue live, dialogue is not to invade, not to make slogans’ (p104). Freire suggested that dialogue is an educational pedagogy in response to the silencing of the oppressed. Freire (1998) recommended dialogue as a means to perceive reality. Dialogue is a methodological approach to overcoming difference and division. Dialogue builds bridges in the human experience. It explores humanity as an interconnected being. Dialogue is a response to what Freire (1996) noted as ‘the problem of humanization’ and is brought on by the process of dehumanization of the ‘other’. Dialogue invites discussions that attend to emotions as well as abstract reason. Dialogue assumes that to understand is to understand differently, we calibrate our pre-existing views to accommodate that difference. It is by being our authentic self, when we can express our values, beliefs, and our needs, when we are truly heard by the other that true dialogue occurs. Hawes (2006) affirmed the experience that dialogue is an act of co-creating mutual understanding. She suggests that ‘our commonalities and our differences form the conditions for mutual understanding’ (p264). She referred to Freire’s thoughts about dialogue as ‘an act of love that requires hope humility and faith in humanity, that becomes an equal relationship that builds mutual trust between the participants’ (p267). We experience joy in recognising our shared humanity. Deep dialogue is a methodology of engaging in dialogue that goes beyond surface level one-dimensional thinking and response patterns. It aims that participants engage in conversations that reaches into emotional contexts, and explores entrenched rationality. It is dialogue that is honest. It is dialogue that exposes insecure ontologies. It is risky business. Where dialogue, deep or otherwise is muted, the silence is deafening. In responding to cultural silence, the task of developing positive encounter dialogue between groups of ‘others’ is critical. According to Bar-On, Litvak-Hirsh and Othman (2007) ‘dialogue can be understood as learning how another group feels and thinks differently from one’s own group’ (p52). On the other hand acknowledging the asymmetrical power relations in constructing dialogue is not without its challenges particularly in an educational context. Freire & Macedo (1995) attempted to analyse the problems associated with an unreflective or anti-dialogical approach ‘in their attempts to cut the chains of oppressive educational practices, many educators blindly advocate the dialogical model, creating in turn a new form of methodological rigidity’ (p377).

Freire (1998) suggested maintaining ‘epistemological curiosity’ so that in the process of

learning, ‘authoritarianism and the epistemological error of the banking system can be circumvented and outmaneuvered’ (p32). This helped to prevent a ‘simple passive pretense at dialogue’ (p81). He highlighted the importance of listening ‘only the person who listens patiently and critically is able to speak *with* the other’ (p110). Hawes (2006) acknowledged ‘with dialogue, the outcome, (consensus, conversion, victory) doesn’t drive the process. The process *is* the outcome’ (p263). She asserted that ‘the turn to dialogue has come about in order to help people, who cannot talk to one another without arguing, dominating, withdrawing into silence or fighting, begin a process of mutual understanding’ (p236).

Lederach (2003) elaborated ‘many of the skill based mechanisms that are called upon to reduce violence are rooted in the communicative abilities to exchange ideas, find common definitions to issues, and seek ways forward towards solutions’ (p22). Lederach stressed ‘dialogue is necessary for both creating and addressing social and public spheres where human institutions, structures and patterns of relationships are constructed’ (p22). Lederach noted that the ‘processes designed to explore these deeper issues will need to have a goal of creating spaces for exchange and dialogue, rather than the goal of creating an immediate negotiated solution’ (p57). He elaborated ‘the most critical parts of the processes are the cultivation of internal self or intra-group spaces where safe and deep reflection about the nature of the situation, responsibility, hopes, and fears can be pursued’ (p57).

Bar-On (1989) described the shift in consciousness needed for former adversaries to engage in meaningful dialogue, and to begin to develop an understanding of how asymmetry of power relationships contributes to silencing of communities:

Listening to silent voices requires that the dominant side provide potential new space, as its hegemonic stories do not traditionally give space to silenced voices. The dominant side has to reconstruct its own stories, to understand how its own narratives prevent recognition of the legitimacy of the weaker side’s stories.  
(Bar-On, 1989, p34)

### *Intergenerational dialogue*

Bar-On (1999) highlighted the barriers in intergenerational dialogue, by focusing on ‘the indescribable and the undiscussible as basic impediments between the children of perpetrators and their social context’ (p34). In describing dialogue between Jewish and Arab Israelis he suggested ‘dialogue is essential to overcoming the intergenerational

effects of silence and conflict' (p34). Roche (2009) concluded that sectarianism is a social and an intergenerational phenomenon that is passed on by peers and by grandparents (p27). Consequently, 'any work with or for young people must focus on this nexus of relationships not only on problematising young people' (p27). Research conducted by Hamber and Kelly (2010) into the experiences of young people in the north of Ireland clarified the role of intergenerational dialogue in confronting bias, bigotry and prejudice:

Prejudices, be they sectarian or ethnic, were being passed down from their parents' and grandparents' generations to their own. One participant, for example, reflected that it might be possible to overcome the legacies of the past 'if you didn't keep bringing it on generation to generation.' Disillusioned with the perceived inability of older generations' to let go of the past and politicians' bitterness, bickering, and reluctance to make concessions, as well as their lack of vision about what the future might look like. (Hamber and Kelly, 2010, p11)

Richardson (2013) recognised the opportunities for conflict that exist for young men with time on their hands, who have had an experience of violence and who 'may be difficult to reintegrate into a peaceful society with an economy not strong enough to support them' (Richardson, RTE Radio 1, 22/3/13). Jamieson, Shirlow, and Grounds (2010) reiterated this point 'young people construct their ideas about social justice and the fairness of the state in many ways not least of which is the history of how justice has played out in the biographies of their parents' and grandparents' (p105). Bettelheim (1984) is cited by O'Hagan (2008) to illustrate the effects of silence on intergenerational dialogue 'what cannot be talked about can also not be put to rest; and if it is not, the wounds continue to fester from generation to generation' (p14). Lederach's poem (2005) *Inside the Maze* shows the potential for conflict to be transmitted from generation to generation:

*Inside the Maze*

My fear of peace?' he responds.

We sit hunched under bunks

Men with tattoos bring us tea,

Roll cigarettes and watch even out breathing.

'that at the end of the day,'

he says to us twice,

‘I’ll be back in this prison  
visit’n me children’s children’

### *Truth Recovery*

An important element of dialogue is in the interpretation of truth. According to Boraine (1999):

There are four kinds of truth, first there is the factual or forensic truth, second there is the personal/narrative truth. Third there is social or dialogical truth. Finally there is healing and restorative truth. (Boraine, 1999, p9)

This is developed further:

The process of acquiring the truth is almost as important as that of establishing truth. This process of dialogue points to the promotion of transparency, democracy, and participation as a basis of affirming human dignity and integrity. (Boraine, 1999, p9)

Boraine summed up the perspectives on the South African experience:

Some say it missed its mark by the perceived lack of representativeness caused by some feeling unsafe about their participation while others described it as a "witch hunt". The apparent inability to reconcile the tensions between truth, reconciliation, peace, and justice led many to say that justice was missing from the process. Others argue that in the trade-off between opposing demands — where amnesty is the biggest trade of all — true healing cannot take place. Finally, some argue that the failure to deal with economic injustice is one of its greatest omissions. (Boraine, 1999, p4)

Both sides in the conflict in Ireland have cited economic injustice as root causes for the conflict. This commonality of experience may provide a platform from which deeper truths may be addressed. In discussing concepts of victimhood however the complexities inherent in truth recovery become apparent. Bar-On (2001) identified the questions that arise between groups involved in conflict of ‘who suffered more?’ Breen Smyth (2008) acknowledged that the process couldn’t be victim led and suggested how it could be designed ‘it is the responsibility of the wider society to set the parameters of truth recovery and the international community must play an important role in witnessing and adjudicating such processes’ (p91). On the other hand Jamieson (2013) expanded upon the barriers to healing that have been introduced as part of the war on terror ‘the terrorism act is a barrier to healing, professionals (counselors, psychologists) are governed by it’ (Seminar: Beyond the Wire, 5 June 2013). Developing dialogue

amongst divided groups, by dealing with the entrenched silence, the code of silence, as a way of being that becomes inherent during conflict and post-conflict periods offers many challenges. It raises the questions: can education that is segregated address the commonality of needs relating to economic injustice? What type of dialogical process is needed for truth recovery that can begin to heal?

### 3.5 HUMAN RIGHTS DISCOURSE OF PEACEBUILDING

Schabas and Fitzmaurice (2007) set out to identify and assess the relationships between a human rights approach and post-conflict reconstruction, in the context of Ireland and internationally and to suggest a framework for the implementation of a human rights approach in the context of the Peace programme. They outlined the human rights concerns in implementing the terms of the Good Friday Agreement:

Peace II is aimed at a number of specific groups that have been affected by the violence due to the conflict in Northern Ireland, namely: victims of conflict and their families; people displaced as a result of the conflict and their families; politically motivated ex-prisoners and their families; women and young people. (Schabas and Fitzmaurice, 2007, p15)

Meanwhile they have found that there are inadequacies in how the programme translates on the ground in a human rights context:

The legal position of ex-prisoners is still unresolved with regard to a substantial set of issues. This group faces difficulty in accessing employment due to both legal and unlawful discrimination. (Schabas and Fitzmaurice, 2007, p127)

On the other hand Harvey, Kelly, McGearty and Murray (2005) have posited that ‘the Peace Programmes have had positive outcomes in giving ex-prisoners a sense of re-belonging to their communities, at least in the border counties’ (p128). However they acknowledged that ‘there has been controversy over the issues of funding for politically motivated ex-prisoners and also the definition of victims’ (p.129). A human rights approach to peace building and reconciliation in future programmes is recommended. In the meantime Schabas and Fitzmaurice conclude:

Research has shown that, in relation to Northern Ireland, there are specific groups whose human rights continue to be adversely impacted in the aftermath of the conflict. As such, ex-prisoners, displaced persons, women and minority communities face problems with discrimination, employment, poverty, health and crime, each of which directly or indirectly caused by the failure to protect their human rights and which, in turn, prevents them from securing such rights. (Schabas and Fitzmaurice, 2007, pp127-128)

Gormally, Maruna and McEvoy (2007) estimated that ‘around 14,000 people were displaced (by violence or other conflict-related issues) from the north to the border counties’ (p46) and suggested that there are ‘about 2,000 politically motivated ex-prisoners born in the south living in the southern border counties and about another 2,000 (6,000 with their families) originally from the north who have moved there’ (p47). Jamieson, Shirlow, and Grounds (2010) suggested that ‘there are approximately 15,000 former republican prisoners, and between 5,000 to 10,000 former loyalist prisoners who were imprisoned for politically motivated offences’ (p11). Ferriter (2005) confirmed ‘one in four catholic men between the ages of 16 and 44 were arrested during the conflict’ (p648). Jamieson, Shirlow, and Grounds (2010) concluded ‘former politically motivated prisoners make up a sizeable and distinct subgroup of northern Irelands conflict generation’ (p93). They estimated that they constitute up to 30% of men in the 50-59-age band and 12% of those aged 60-64. They noted significant evidence to suggest that there is ‘an urgent need to recognise former politically motivated prisoners as an at-risk group in both the development of policy and service provision’ (p93). Jamieson (2013) noted:

Our findings about political ex prisoners need to be put in context ...the sorts of difficulties they are experiencing are the same as other veterans, prisoners of war or often emergency service workers...the big difference is those groups have state provided assistance available but political ex prisoners here don’t. (Jamieson, Seminar, June 5 2013)

In relation to education and training provision for this cohort, the Good Friday Agreement aspired to offer ‘support including assistance directed towards availing of employment opportunities re-training, and or re-skilling and further education’ (Annex A, para. 5). Jamieson, Shirlow and Grounds (2010) have found that ‘having a conflict related conviction is probably the single most important factor in their social and economic exclusion’ (p94).

#### *Social and economic exclusion.*

Ritzer (2008) observed that ‘social problems are not temporary phenomena that can be solved rather they are rooted in the conflict within the existing system’ (p271). Coulter (1999) observed ‘Northern Ireland is a place where the many are exploited and oppressed in the interests of the few’ (p9). Coulter acknowledged the status of Northern Ireland ‘as an example of the genus of capitalist society’ (p11). He noted ‘the process

of capitalist accumulation has bestowed upon the province a distinctly complex social order...that has created an intricate sequence of hierarchies that oversee the allocation of material and figurative resources' (p11). Coulter summarised 'no amount of linguistic dexterity will be sufficient to alter that particular miserable reality' (p15).

Osborne and Dougherty (2009) explored the ambiguities around a shared future in their investigation on the integration of good relations into the review of local government structures underway in Northern Ireland. They found 'a commitment to revise current practices and a recognition that 'community relations' cannot be built by an investment into dialogue alone but must be integrated into everyday priorities such as economic development and planning' (p229). Jarman (2007) noted the factors that are necessary to facilitate the removal of interface barriers 'positive efforts from local politicians, more diverse and effective regeneration of interface areas and more cross community dialogue' (p31). McCann and Davey (2005) stated 'interface conflict goes beyond education; poverty and social exclusion have to be addressed' (p39). Describing the results of research into peace education, they reiterated 'there was a belief that peace education does have a role in interface contexts, but that approach may have to be more innovative, possibly through community education and church networks' (p39).

### 3.6 CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Conflict transformation as an approach to peace education recognises that conflict is a natural response in oppressed societies. A prominent aspect of peace education in Ireland is the conflict transformation approach developed by Lederach. Miall (2004) suggested that Lederach's work (1997) 'serves as one of the most comprehensive statements to date of conflict transformation thinking for practitioners' (p6). Miall defined conflict transformation as 'a process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict' (p4). Lederach (2003) noted that conflict transformation theory adopts the following principles:

Conflict is understood as an integral part of societies on-going evolution and development; it is a potentially positive and productive force for change if harnessed constructively; it seeks to transform the root causes themselves or the perceptions of the root causes – of a particular conflict; it is long term and requires substantial engagement and interaction. Conflict transformation is not just an approach and set of techniques, but a way of thinking about and understanding conflict itself. (Lederach, 2003, p4)



Lederach (2003) defined conflict transformation as a means to:

Envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life giving opportunities for constructing change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships. (Lederach, 2003, p22)

McEvoy (2003) pointed to the involvement of former prisoners in peace building:

Many such individuals are highly respected in their own communities. They have returned from prison with enhanced educational and organisational abilities and play a crucial role in the process of peace building at both a community and political level. (McEvoy, 2003, p333)

McEvoy elaborated on some of the crucial factors for peace building structures to operate effectively ‘crucially, such former combatants also have credibility within the paramilitary organisations’ (p333). Rolston (2011) refers to the body of evidence that supports the conflict transformation approach by former prisoners ‘there is ample evidence that ex-prisoner groups have encouraged and continue to promote approaches to post-conflict transformation that embeds peaceful methods’ (p17). Coiste na nLarchimí, is an umbrella body that coordinates a network of community groups whose role is to support former combatants and political prisoners and their families. They have engaged with conflict transformation in the approach to peace building. *Conflict Transformation from the Bottom Up* is a EU funded programme supporting former political prisoners, seminars, and workshops. In 2007 a consortium of former political prisoner groups was established, emerging from a number of representative groups who worked together to consider the range of issues associated with ‘dealing with the past’. The consortium includes representatives of political ex prisoners and former combatants from republican and loyalist traditions. ‘the political ex prisoner community has earned the respect of the broader community, and has opened up debate around issues that faced us in our common past’ (p1).

According to Lederach (2003):

In conflict transformation relationships are central. Relationships visible, and invisible, immediate and long term are at the heart of transformational processes. Conflict transformation views peace as a continuously evolving and developing quality of relationship. (Lederach, 2003, p17)

Lederach explained ‘the lenses of conflict transformation show: the immediate situation; underlying patterns and context and provides a conceptual framework’ (p11). The process draws upon dialogue between people of differing political and religious

groups. Lederach outlined the need to develop various capacities in the practice of conflict transformation. He highlighted the need to develop the capacity to cultivate the following five personal practices: See presenting issues as a window; Integrate multiple time frames; Pose the energies of conflict as dilemmas; Make complexity a friend not a foe and hear and engage the voices of identity (pp48-60). Brookfield (1995) advises that one needs to embark upon 'critical reflection as a means of assumption hunting' (p2). This assertion is given further substance by Brookfield when he further categorised assumptions into:

*Prescriptive assumptions* are assumptions about what we think ought to be happening in a particular situation. They are assumptions about how we think we ought to behave, what good process looks like, and what obligations we owe to each other. They concern the moral and ethical imperatives of behaviour. *Causal assumptions* help us understand how different parts of the world work and the conditions under which processes can be changed. They are usually stated in predictive terms. (Brookfield, 1995, p5)

### 3.7 EXPLORING ISSUES OF IDENTITY

Lederach (1997) reflected:

In situations of armed conflict, people seek security by identifying with something close to their experience and over which they have some control. In today's settings that unity of identity may be a clan, ethnicity, religion, or geographic/regional affiliation, or a mix of these. (Lederach, 1997, p12)

Lederach (2003) emphasised that 'issues of identity are at the root of most conflicts' (p55). He recommended a 'move towards not away from, the appeals to identity' (p57). Whilst this statement can easily be contested, there is validity in the recognition that a practitioner needs to 'be attentive to the voice of identity' (p55). He elaborated further 'at the deepest level, identity is lodged in the narratives of how people see themselves, who they are where they have come from and what they fear they will become or lose' (p55). Heaney's (2013) article *Back to the future for Irish identity*, suggested that 'Irish identity is the result of a constantly renewed effort to relate the world of yesterday, with its inherited iconography and pieties and perspectives, to the world of today and tomorrow' (p13). Bar-On (1998) suggested 'the socio-psychological approach to the subject of identity distinguishes between two essential processes: the structuring of identity by means of the 'other' or by creating an internal dialogue or discussion between the various components of the identity' (p3). He noted Sherif et al's assertion

(1988) that 'it is easier to unite in a collective definition of identity when faced by an enemy' (p3). Hogan (2010) stated that when the practice of education is successful 'it contributes to the unforced disclosure of a vibrant sense of personal identity' (p3). MacIntyre (1985) is cited in Hogan (2010) 'I inherit from the past of my family, my city, my tribe, my nation, a variety of debts, inheritances, rightful expectations and obligations' (p111). Whilst acknowledging the critical role of identity in conflict, there are also conflicts within which it is more difficult to locate the voice of identity, where something else is going on, such as in random street violence or domestic violence. However in relation to political conflict Ferriter (2005) noted:

It could be argued that the new language of respect for two traditions and tolerance of diversity reinforced some of the cultural isolationism it aimed to rectify. There were still it seemed only two labels and two colours to be tolerated. (Ferriter, 2005, p649)

The emergence of the loyalist flags protest at the beginning of 2013, illustrated yet again the importance of listening to the voice of identity. A Belfast City Council decision to replace the permanent flying of the Union Jack flag from Belfast City hall with eighteen nominated days per year could be seen as an attempt to implement parity of esteem between republican and unionist communities. Unionist politicians unhappy with the decision rallied the troops (loyalist paramilitaries) and in so doing initiated a violent response that they lost control of. This attempt at social closure offers lessons for the learning. Social closure can be traced back to Weber (1922) who noted that 'the process leading to "closure" is the result of the strategy pursued by each community to maximise their own privileges, advantages and communal success at the expense of the "other" communities within the same society' (p52). Smithey (2011) offered hope for an alternative view:

Collective identity is malleable, constructed in interaction with other social actors, and subject to incremental change. Those who sponsor the display of group symbols and rituals are situated to introduce new ideas and shift group boundaries. (Smithey, 2011, p34)

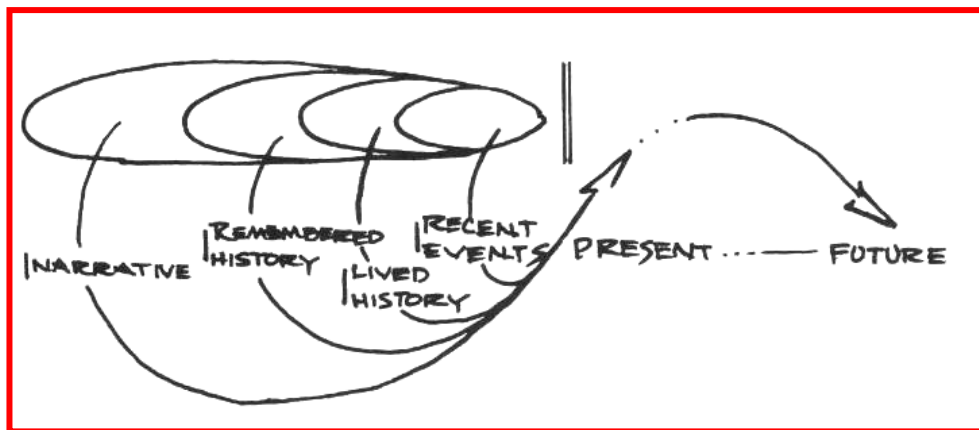
Smithey identified ways that identity can be constructed in interaction with others and through educational initiatives:

Programs that focus on histories of Protestant experience including origin myths, migration, industry, military battles and political struggles: Such programs constitute a form of single-identity work that runs risks of generating division and prejudices. However, they can also build confidence and provide grounds for cross-community dialogue and the development of more diverse,

sophisticated and shared historical narratives and identities. (Smithey, 2011, p25)

As Lederach's (2005) circles of history illustrates in figure 5, the memory of conflict in a community can extend back many generations. Therefore 'it is equally important to take a long-term perspective' (p141). The following illustration shows the forces that shape community memory, the narrative that emerges from within communities and is passed down from generation to generation. This narrative is remembered through formal and informal monuments to past events that can be commemorated by parades, marches, sculptures and graveside orations. It thus becomes part of the lived history of the present that influences recent events. It is a cyclical process that in its cyclical nature extends to the future and influences events there. It is important to remember that in the process of laying down community memory some narratives are excluded, silenced and or misinterpreted.

Figure 5 The past that lies before us.

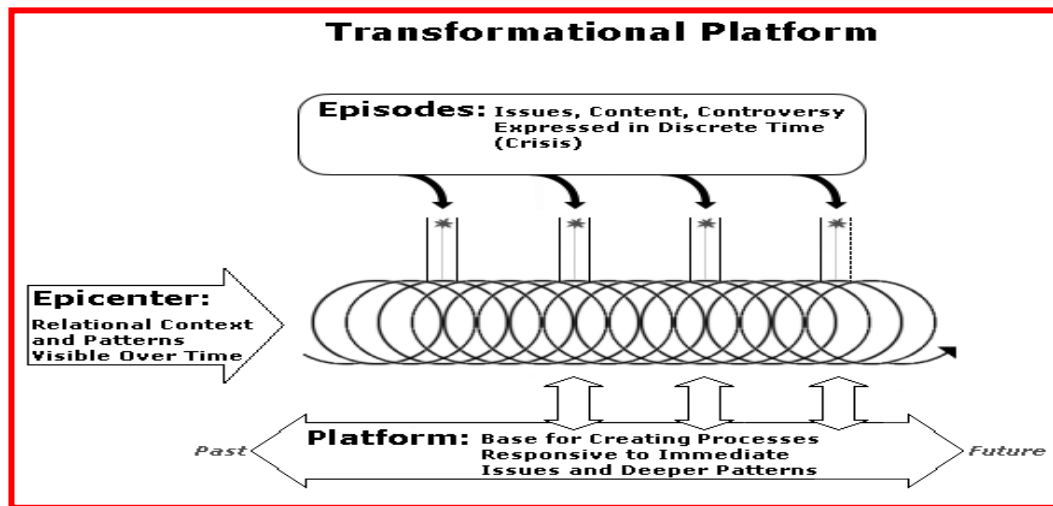


(Lederach, 2005, p141)

This figure presents a window through which patterns can be recognised. Lederach extends this introspective approach by taking specific episodes of conflict and relating them to the patterns that develop in response to commemorative events. In an attempt to make complexity a friend, Lederach illustrates how conflict can provide a platform where a transformation of the 'relationships interests and discourses' can be addressed by both sides. Lederach visualizes the roots of conflict as relational patterns and contexts that extend and are visible over time. The epicenter of the conflict is expressed as crises episodes. The responses to such crises episodes determine long-term solutions or in the absence of a reflexivity, the continuation of the cycle of violence. An example of providing appropriate responses at the platform is the Apprentice Boys' parade in

Derry (2013) where Orange Order and republican community leaders engaged in dialogue before the march commenced. The impact of this approach contributed to what was experienced as a peaceful march. The process evoked at the platform that attends to relationships, interests, and discourses has the capacity to change the experience of future marches in the area, if groups are willing to engage in and evoke similar processes. This may extend to other areas and groups facing the similar difficulties.

Figure 6 Transformational Platform



(Lederach, 2005, p142)

Figure 6 illustrates the concept that relational contexts and patterns that are visible over time constitute the epicenter of the conflict. Such patterns contribute to conflict through specific episodes, expressed as crises. The platform determines how the relationship patterns that contribute to conflict episodes are managed. It represents the inputs of transformational processes. The platform is a space. We can imagine it to be a space where dialogue is evoked. Through dialogue we can weave the past to the future. When we can storyline, describe, narrate we can come together in a new and changed way. A new direction in relationships and patterns could emerge through imaginative responses at the platform. Paffenholz (2013) stated that Lederach's theory has not been without its critics that include 'lack of power analysis, the limited role of outsiders, and uncritical discussion of "the local" stressing the need to focus on direct support to Track III (grassroots) actors' (p17).

### 3.8 THE POWER OF THE IMAGINATION

Lederach (2005) articulated that even acts of violence require some recognition of a relationship with 'the other'. It is from this very relationship that the ability to see the 'other' manifests moral imagination. He described 'moral imagination' as being made up of 'four distinct aspects of individual or group traits: relationships, paradoxical curiosity, creativity, and risk' (p35). Paradoxical curiosity occurs when self or group reflection occurs. It is apparent and enabled in the ability to see oneself and ones community in the web of relationship with the other. No longer seeing a dualistic difference but rather a more complex thinking approach to find out where the other is coming from and by this process contribute to their own complex identities. Lederach suggests that paradoxical curiosity 'opens up a reflective rather than a reactive process, in a reflective process people refuse to be forced into simplistic dualism about their situation and rather know their enemy and themselves through this lens' (p40).

Hammack (2009) reflecting upon Lederach's (2005) observations suggested that when describing conflict the imagination is too often 'corralled and shackled by the very parameters and sources that create and perpetrate violence' (p4). Hammock suggested 'this confusion may be transcended, not through the simple assertion of one old narrative over another, but through an ethos of continued political criticism which reaches out to embrace the other' (p4). Hammack elaborated upon the requirements of making such a shift out of conflict:

A willingness to risk and to step into a mysterious place that required something creative and spontaneous from them. It meant their stepping into what did not before exist, into a new and unfamiliar land; it tapped into what Lederach has come to refer to as "the moral imagination". (Hammack, 2009, p4)

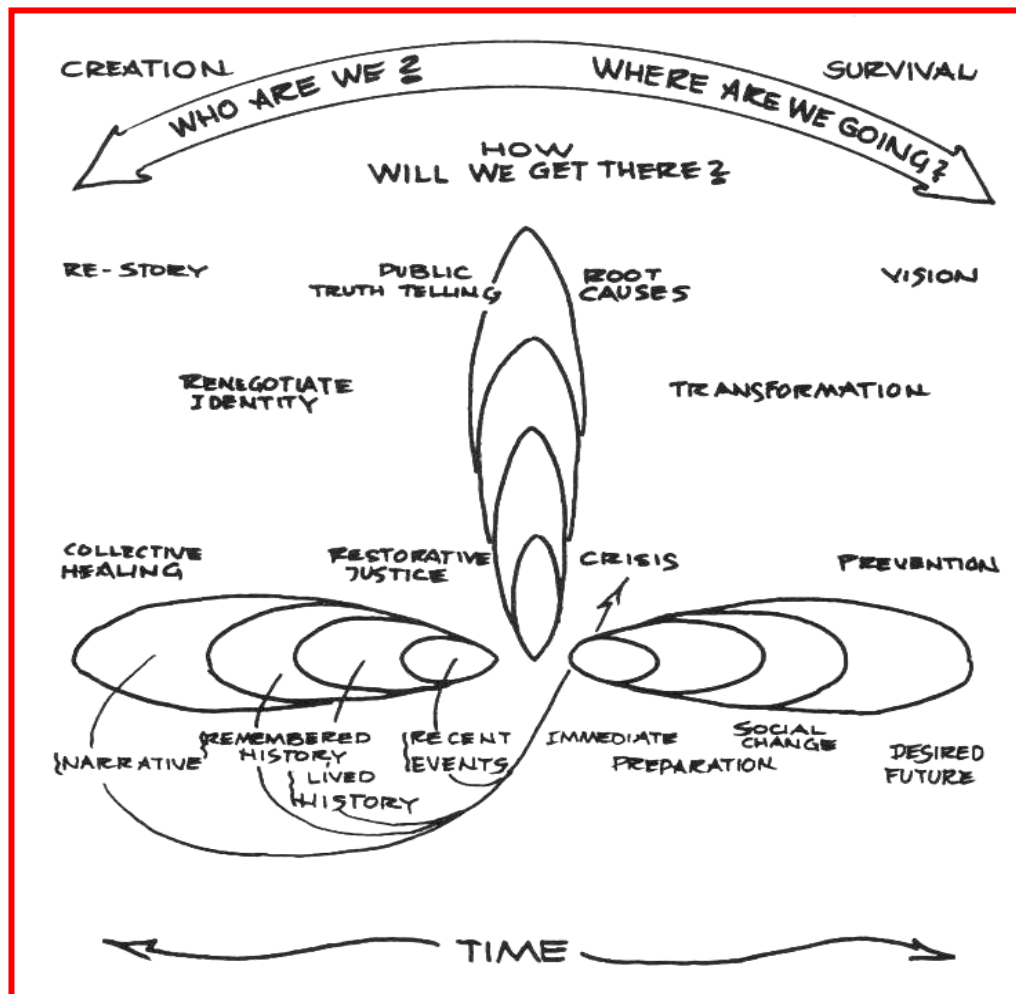
Hammack (2009) described the application of this approach:

When new spaces were introduced and birthed, what John Paul Lederach calls haiku or 'ah-ha' moments emerged, walls were broken down and constructive social change experienced, it was as if they [the people who were real agents of change] had not fully thought it through. (Hammack, 2009, p169)

Paffenholz (2013) stressed the need to accept the political nature of peacebuilding with all its complexities, and to be aware that 'the practice of peacebuilding has failed to be context sensitive, oriented towards the long term, inclusive or accountable to local constituencies' (p25).

Lederach (2005) urged communities in conflict to embrace complexity, ‘complexity facilitates the emergence of untold new angles, opportunities, and unexpected potentialities that surpass, replace and break the shackles of historic and relational patterns of repeated violence’ (p37). The extended framework for peace building figure below incorporated complexities around the questions: Who are we? Where are we going? How will we get there?

Figure 7. Expanded Framework for Peace building



(Lederach, 2005, p144)

Figure 7 depicts core concepts of identity, transformation, narrative, and lived history all located within an extended timeframe, all understood as necessary components for dealing with complex and protracted conflict. Lederach (2005) stated that ‘complexity suggests multiplicity and simultaneity’ (p53). He explained that at times of escalated conflict ‘we feel forced to live with multiple and competing frames of reference about what things mean that creates an atmosphere of rising ambiguity and uncertainty’ (p53).

It is at these times and in that public sphere that local actors can facilitate dialogue by placing multiplicity at the centre of the discourse. Lederach's (2005) framework can be used to facilitate intra-group dialogue that begins with personal narrative, proceeds to exploring community memory, and imagines *the past that lies before us* should we continue to relate to 'others' in the same patterned way. Through this process we can then begin to imagine what the future would look like if destructive relational patterns were changed. Layer by layer the various components can be built upon. We can address specific episodes of conflict that occurred in the past and that are pertinent to each group and explore the responses that occurred at the platform, and the effect that such responses had on the cycle of conflict through the *transformational platform*. Educators and facilitators can explore social cohesion through this framework by noting the actions that exacerbated or those that dissipated the conflict. They can begin to discern in collaboration with groupings of 'others' between those actions that incite and those actions that deconstruct the patterns of violence. The next step in the sequence of approaches focuses the discussion upon the *expanded framework for peace building* and raises the questions: who are we, where are we going and how will we get there? It is through this process that we can begin to explore a vision of the future that incorporates actions that are alternative to those already used, that are agreed and that can be tested for their effects. Lederach's illustrations; the past that lies before us, transformational platforms and the expanded framework for peace building are imaginative and utilitarian ways to engage the power of the imagination. Greene (1995) asserted the importance for educators to attend to the imagination in teaching and learning, and suggested that drawing on imagination increases learners' ability to see multiple perspectives. Greene (1973) stressed the importance of educational philosophy in this process:

Philosophy is a way of framing distinctive sorts of questions having to do with what is presupposed, perceived, intuited, believed, and known. It is a way of contemplating, examining, or thinking about what is taken to be significant, valuable, beautiful and worthy of commitment. Efforts to explore background consciousness may be involved, as may exploration of boundaries and the creation of unifying perspectives. (Greene, 1973, p7)

### 3.9 CREATING SAFE SPACES

The challenge that is inherent within the adoption of peace building frameworks through imaginative processes identified by Lederach (1995, 1997, 2003, 2005) and



Greene (1973, 1995) is to bring groups of ‘others’ together. One of the apparent needs of conflict transformation is to begin a process of intra group dialogue with the possibility that it will lead to inter group dialogue. This is best done slowly, through recognition of the rights and needs of each group, and recognition of the limitations that each step in the sequence of stages of peace building can accomplish. Such processes may only occur in spaces that are recognised as safe. The neutrality of such locations is crucial as a means to creating confidence in the process. This implies that a safe space demands constructs that enclose and protect. It is ironic that the interfaces, enclaves and barriers in Belfast and beyond, otherwise known as peace walls are examples of making spaces safe for its inhabitants to live in relative peace, whilst at the same time maintaining divisions. Jarman (2007) concluded ‘surely it is time to place a moratorium on the construction of walls and barriers, and instead look to other means of managing threats of violence’ through the ‘process of engaging with the residents of interface communities in dialogue and discussion to identify how, when and in what circumstances the barriers can finally start to be removed’ (p31). The question is raised; where would a safe space be located in order to conduct such necessary dialogue? Some groups meet in local hotels, perceived as neutral venues, which host members of all sides of the community irrespective of religious or political ideology. Belfast City Centre is often acknowledged as a neutral space, within which the Troubles or ‘us and them’ are not discussed. In order for conflict to be transformed however the existence of silent, albeit neutral spaces, continue to be problematic. Silence as a concept is multifaceted in relation to how groups of others communicate.

The primary concern for conflict transformation practitioners is to engage participants in dialogue that can lead to change in relationships between people who are or have been in conflict with each other. Addressing the approaches and needs of educators in dealing with conflict, Farrell (2013) suggested the foundational issues that need to be addressed at primary school level to facilitate peer mediation:

Didactic teaching and all the information in the world about these subjects will not equip a young person with the skills and in particular the values and attitudes which are the crucial factor. I don’t for a moment question the importance of these topics. But I would have a concern that the necessary *foundation* for *dealing* with them – the development of a child’s confidence to manage intra-personal, interpersonal, and social relationships – will not be attended to. Self-esteem is not taught; it is caught; it is internalised through the experience of being respected, valued, and made to feel the equal of everybody else. If a child

experiences something different, all the teaching is like water off a duck's back. (Farrell, 2013, p4)

Society also needs to deal with the legacy of conflict. The Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB) through The Peace III Operational Programme (2007-2013) noted 'Northern Ireland, for instance, remains a polarised divided society and this division is evident in terms of segregation in education and residential patterns, particularly in interface areas, and a lack of shared services, spaces and identity' (p35).

### 3.10 THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Habermas's (1996) definition of civil society is cited in Murphy and Fleming, (2006) as being:

Composed of more or less spontaneously emergent associations, organisations, and movements that, attuned to how societal problems resonate in the private public sphere, distill and transmit such reactions in amplified form to the public. (Murphy and Fleming, 2006, p51)

The role of civil society is explored here in a bid to assess how the proposed development of a North South Civic Forum in the Good Friday Agreement could deepen dialogue around contentious issues and offer a forum for dealing with the past. Bailey, Ward and Goodrick (2011) concluded:

In order for adult and community education to achieve a social change purpose, provision must be connected to social movements or broader collectives of people seeking fundamental change. Community education has the potential to mobilise learners for social movements. (Bailey, Ward and Goodrick, 2011, p83)

Habermas stated the role of civil society, the public sphere, in organising for societal change. Fleming (2000) stated 'commitment to a view of change that is gradual and a long term experiment in transformation is consistent with Habermas's view of what it is to be human, i.e. oriented towards achieving mutual understanding through discussion and dialogue' (p303). Fleming (2000) elaborated upon Habermas's and Mezirow's theories that 'justification of belief is done through collaborative discourse' (p306). But sometimes there is no justification for our beliefs. Habermas's (1984) Theory of Communicative Action within a public sphere guides the process through which knowledge can be understood, through the uncoupling of the *lifeworld* from the colonization by the system. Habermas's (1996) epistemology concerning the public sphere and the engagement with communicative, instrumental and collaborative

discourse, is a means through which we understand and critique our justifications and beliefs. Fleming (2000) referred to the *lifeworld* that according to Habermas is the 'reservoir of implicitly known traditions, the background assumptions that are embedded in language and culture and drawn upon by individuals in everyday life' (p308). Fleming asserted that civil society has a role to play in enculturation of beliefs and practices, and in cultivating connections. Fleming (2000) concluded that the concept of civil society has been defined by theorists including Gramsci, Hume, Marx and Hegel, as a site where:

Values, action oriented norms, meanings and identification are formed. Civil society does not only transmit or inculcate established practices or beliefs; it is also a site of social contestation, in which collective identities, ethical values, and alliances are forged. (Fleming, 2000, p304)

However the conditions necessary to engage in critical discourse and communicative action in Habermas's 'public sphere' are ideologically inspired along the lines of equality of participation and accessibility, reflexivity and problematising the unquestioned. Fleming referred to Habermas's (1984) Theory of Communicative Action that would offer a vision that allows us to 'become conscious of the difference between steering problems and problems of mutual understanding' (p308). This demands a number of competencies on behalf of the participant. Mezirow (2009) suggested that 'freedom, community and democracy are some of the conditions necessary for us to understand our experience in Transformative Learning Theory' (p20). Habermas's (1984) Theory of Communicative Action asserts the components that are necessary for this to happen. They include freedom from domination and equality of participation. Arts based methodologies can be useful in constructing such conditions, through the visual arts, theatre of the oppressed, poetry and music. However the freedom to participate in arts based communities can be bounded by predetermined factors and durable systems such as poverty and social exclusion. Paffenholz (2013) concluded that 'external funding and capacity building for civil society has mostly focused on Track II actors, especially urban elite-based NGOs, whereas Track I (top leadership) actors have the biggest change potential and Track III (grassroots) actors are important in their own right' (p20). Paffenholz asserted:

Donor driven NGO civil society initiatives have limited the capacity to create domestic social capital and ownership of the peace process. The fact that urban NGOs have often been supported at the expense of other civil society actors further supports this argument. (Paffenholz, 2013, p22)

Paff enholz (2013) concluded that ‘the mantra status of Lederach’s middle-out approach as an almost unquestioned theory of change in civil society peacebuilding invites reflections on theory-practice encounters and responsible peacebuilding scholarship’ (p1). Literature on processes of transformation in conflict and post-conflict societies has identified a number of theories that capture how change can occur. The literature shows that the processes of change most appropriate for changing attitudes, divisions, and prejudice, (key problems related to the post-conflict society in Northern Ireland and the Border Region) are building relationships, and changing individuals. The Peace III Operational Programme identified as helpful to underpin its activities, the individual theory of change developed by Woodrow (2003) and cited by Church and Rogers (2005) ‘the basis of this theory is that peace comes through transformative change of a critical mass of individuals, their consciousness, attitudes, behaviours and skills’ (p38). The Programme for Peace and Reconciliation outlines its activities in this regard ‘activities to encourage the individual theory of change include, inter alia, investment in individual change through training, personal transformation/consciousness raising workshops or processes, dialogues and encounter groups or trauma healing’ (p38). Woodrow (2003) cited in Church and Rogers (2005) suggested the healthy relationships and connections theory ‘the basis of this theory is that peace emerges out of a process of breaking down isolation, polarisation, division, prejudice and stereotypes between/among groups’ (p38).

How does this translate at grassroots level? Cavan Peace Partnership’s plan is an indicator of how attempts are being made to break down polarisation and isolation of groups affected by the conflict in the county. Table 5 overleaf offers an insight into the ways that Cavan County Peace Partnership adopts theories of change outlined above as specific activities in a bid to meet the needs of target groups:

**TABLE 5. GROUPS MOST AFFECTED BY CONFLICT IN COUNTY CAVAN**

Cavan Peace and Reconciliation, Peace III Phase II, Action Plan (2011-2013).

**(These were updated through the integration framework and the Peace III Phase II Consultation Processes)**

Target groups	Profile	The Needs and Issues arising from this group	Conclusions
<p><b>Victims of the Conflict</b></p>	<p>Victims of the conflict continue live in Cavan the families and survivors of the Belturbet bombing are but one example. There continue to be victims on all sides of the conflict and bitterness remains.</p>	<p>The Cavan Family Resource Centre provides counseling supports for some individuals. This work is time consuming and involves one-to-one supports. This service needs to be continued.</p>	<p>One to one mediation and counselling services should continue to be provided to assist victims and survivors.</p>
<p><b>Displaced Persons</b></p> <p>2005 research estimated that 11,000 persons moved from the north to south. We do not have any clear indication of the numbers that continue to live in County Cavan</p>	<p>Some displaced persons and their families continue to live in local authority housing estates in the county particularly in Cavan Town. Some members of this group still do not feel part of the wider community, believing that they are still perceived as being involved in the conflict.</p>	<p>Among the issues this group face include:</p> <p>A struggle with authority given the way they were treated by the authorities. - Limited education and as a consequence being stuck in poorly paid employment. This situation has been exacerbated in the economic downturn</p> <p>There are a significant number of individuals/families who while they were displaced, do not want to be identified as displaced.</p>	<p>One-to-one mediation and counselling services should continue to be made available to those displaced persons and families.</p>

Cavan Peace and Reconciliation, Peace III Phase II, Action Plan (2011-2013) (pp34-35).

<p><b>Ex-prisoners and their families, i.e. qualifying prisoners who were or would have been released under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ex-prisoner support organisations in neighbouring counties estimate that there are between 60 and 80 ex-prisoners and their families in the county.</li> <li>• Anecdotal evidence suggests that there are significant numbers of men living in West Cavan some of whom were caught up in the conflict.</li> <li>• The ex-prisoner community is not a homogeneous one and divisions remain within the ex-prisoner community.</li> <li>• Many ex-prisoners are both economically and socially marginalised.</li> <li>• There are no ex-prisoner support organisations in County Cavan... Some ex-prisoners in the county and their families receive support from ex-prisoner organisations in Monaghan and Leitrim.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This group has struggled to overcome their identity as prisoners and find it hard to locate employment. Many end up in self-employment because they cannot get a job working for others.</li> <li>• The children of ex-prisoners can often be stigmatised.</li> <li>• As ex-prisoners are getting older the effects of their incarceration have become more apparent and many suffer from ill health.</li> <li>• Ex-prisoners social welfare entitlements are often very limited (they missed paying stamps while in gaol). The cost of mediation and worry about the future without pension entitlements are key concerns for this group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These groups are supported under a separate strand of the peace III Programme but there is a need for the Partnership to build stronger links with Political ex-prisoners and their support organisations.</li> </ul>
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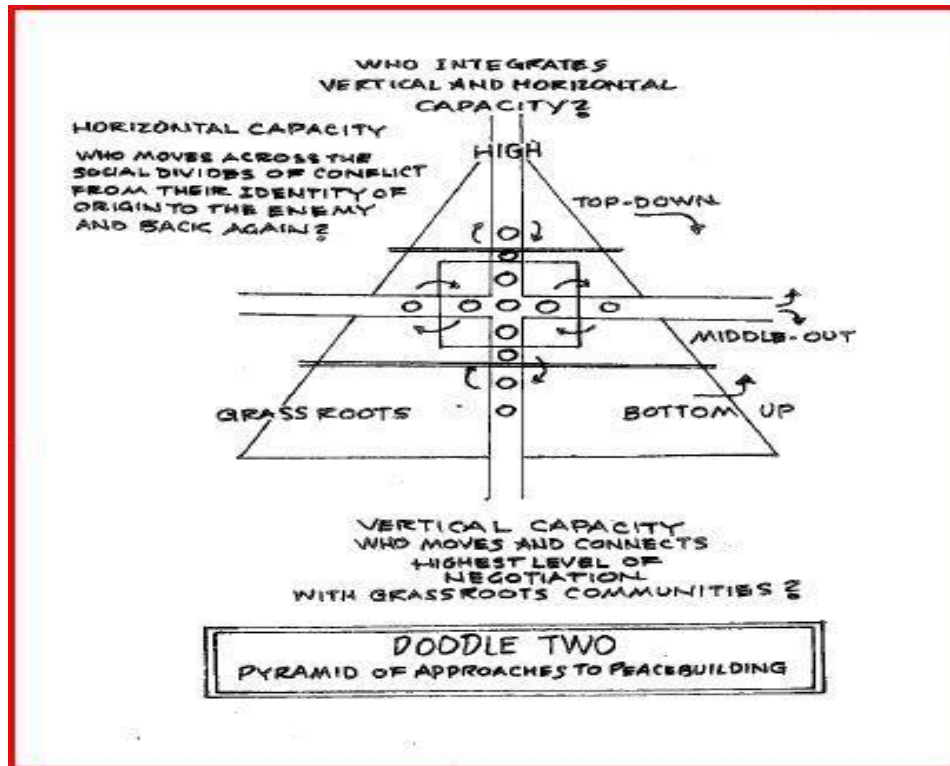
Jamieson, Shirlow, and Grounds (2010) suggest:

Former politically motivated prisoners and community groups should address attitudes of acquiescence towards hazardous alcohol behaviour among former politically motivated prisoners by incorporating alcohol education in health and well-being activities, de-stigmatising help-seeking, and supporting the dignity of recovering alcoholics through awareness activities. They should be funded to develop strategies, information resources, and outreach programmes to tackle the barriers that prevent access to help. (Jamieson, Shirlow and Grounds, 2010, p9)

Lederach (2005) designed and elaborated upon the Pyramid of Approaches to Peace Building Model (1997) to recognise the vertical and horizontal components to integration and communication between levels of society engaged in the negotiation of conflict transformation. Lederach (2005) asked ‘who moves across the social divides of conflict from their identity of origin to the enemy and back again?’ (p96). This model (overleaf) is useful to visualise the processes used during the peace negotiations, and to explore the importance of negotiators who move from grassroots through to middle level negotiators and on through to the highest level of governmental negotiation. Trusted negotiators emerge from communities and move horizontally across the social divides. They engage in dialogue with the trusted negotiators from the other side. The outcome of this process is fed into the crossroads. The crossroads could depict civil society organisations brought together to contemplate different positioning’s. People who represent the concerns of their respective sides in the conflict meet at this crossroads in an attempt to integrate the vertical and horizontal process. This is a means to link grassroots concerns with high level or governmental negotiations, and to link back to communities again in a bid to garner agreement.

Paffenholz (2013) stated that ‘Lederach (2005) replaces the middle-out (Track II support) approach explicitly with a web approach’ (p17). She expounded ‘whether support to Track II has enhanced local peoples agency and brought more quality into peacebuilding is questioned by many authors’ (p21). She also stated that ‘there is strong evidence in the case studies that the role of outsiders is much more dominant than highlighted in Conflict Transformation Theory, and points to the importance of powerful regional actors’ (p21). However Paffenholz (2013) explained that ‘donors tend to support mainly moderate, middle class groups due to their ability to speak, write and work in the donor language and their capacity to provide the required services in a perceived apolitical way’ (p21). Paffenholz states ‘it is important to note that civil society is not always the “good society” in support of peace, but rather reflects the society as a whole, acting as a mirror’ (p23). She asserts however ‘outside support to conflict transformation goes primarily to like-minded NGOs, ignoring the counteracting forces in civil society that have the power to make or break the peace process’ (p23). Figure 8 overleaf depicts Lederach’s (2005) visualisation of the movements of Track I, Track II and Track III representatives engaged in peace building.

Figure 8. Pyramid of approaches to peace-building.



Lederach, J.P. (2005) *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Peace building*.

In response to the question posed by Lederach ‘who moves across the social divides?’

McEvoy (2003) pointed to:

The central requirement is that the process of transition requires former combatants to be involved as well as a broad diversity of women’s groups, youth organisations, church groups, residents associations, etc., which make up civil society in these local communities. The intent is that such former combatants return to being organic members of such communities once more, the further we move from the political conflict. (McEvoy, 2003, p333)

### 3.11 GENDER

Many writers have noted the underrepresentation of women’s voices in peace building.

According to Long (2008) ‘the problem with silencing is that voices are not removed but rather muted’ (p131). She expanded upon the protocols of silence by suggesting that:

Silenced voices in the sense of excluded voices (Foucault 1972: 216) have already been a historical feature of educational discourse. The silence of women’s voices has been well attested by feminist writers (Belenky 1996). (Long, 2008, p131)



Golan (2011) suggested, in observations of intergroup dialogue between Israelis' and Palestinians' that 'women were more willing than the men to address a particularly controversial issue (the status of Jerusalem)' (p180). The concept of silence is repeated 31 times in a report that explores the role of women in peace building commissioned in 2003 by Area Development Management/Combat Poverty Agency (ADM/CPA). In highlighting the predominance of silence in relation to the conflict McMinn (2003) stated that 'women have been silenced because their perspectives did not fit easily within the dominant discourse' (p10). Silence is identified as an issue to be addressed particularly in the south of Ireland and for some it confirmed a sense of ambiguity towards the north:

I've been struck by the silence around the north. I went straight into the community sector, where I expected some discourse, some level of awareness, and have been appalled. It's constantly, 'don't mention the war'. At every opportunity we do, and we're ignored: politely and nicely, but ignored. (McMinn, 2003, p10)

Jamieson cited in McMinn (2003) suggested the need 'to look at the discourses of feminism and peace building' (p53). She highlighted 'those discourses contain conceptual traps because you're always trying to dovetail your projects for funding, you start to think in the funding framework terms of reference and forget your feminism and forget other issues' (p53). McAliskey is cited by McMinn (2003), she affirmed that women in their roles as community workers are being forced into a centrist agenda, through the implementation of stifling funding criteria:

There's been no room in the Catholic/Protestant community relations' agenda for many years for dissident Catholic or dissident Protestant women. There has been no recognition of the validity of the standpoint of the women who didn't fit either the broad feminist agenda or the community relations' agenda. (McMinn, 2003, p26)

One of the issues acknowledged in McMinn (2003) is the support that surrounded republican prisoners:

How many years' had republican prisoners spent in prison? 100,000 years served collectively by 15,000 prisoners. If you think about the support and care that's been surrounding those individuals, the magnitude of what women have done, and the cost of that, in terms of people's mental and emotional health has not really been acknowledged or made visible enough. There are other silences yet to be named. (McMinn, 2003, p19)

McMinn introduced the necessity to critique the language of peace building:

While it is important to acknowledge the magnitude of what women have done, it is necessary to be critical of the cliché that ‘women hold communities together’. “Silence” is the most significant barrier to the involvement of women in peace building. The idea that women had been useful in “holding communities together” during the period of conflict, but that women’s organisations were no longer needed has to be challenged. (McMinn, 2003, p1)

McWilliams (1995) noted the impact of the conflict ‘the interaction of militarism and masculinism in Northern Ireland means that there is a much wider tendency to use guns in the control and abuse of women within the context of domestic violence’ (p15). McWilliams (2010) described Cathy Harkin’s concept of ‘armed patriarchy’ and gave an example of how patriarchy was experienced when women engaged with men in a forum for dialogue and understanding, which she renamed the ‘forum for monologue and misunderstanding’ (p76). She elaborated:

The comments were puerile with frequent calls to “go back to the kitchen table, the only table you women will get to is the one you’re going to polish.” that put steel into us when we heard it. We knew we had been negotiating for years behind the scenes, but we had found ourselves politically homeless. We knew that we had a chance to finally get the process and the substance right. (McWilliams, 2010, p76)

She described how they coped within a patriarchal environment ‘we tried to find the humanity in the other person at the table, and it wasn’t easy, particularly when we were being called all kinds of names but it was really important to find that little piece of humanity’ (p79). On the other hand McKeown (1998) described the experiences of male political prisoners who engaged as learners in a feminist course in the Maze Prison. McMinn was the tutor on ‘changing the experience of women’ an Open University course. She wrote a contribution to a discussion on adult education and creative methodologies that McKeown replicated below:

No where else in my experience have groups of men, working class men participated in such large numbers in classes that sought to address feminist issues with a feminist educator. The classes succeeded in finding ways of relating theory to lived experience of challenging understandings of power relations between men and women and even, sometimes of imagining alternative possibilities. (McKeown, 1998, p256)

A feminist pedagogy could it seems, assist in the transformation of perceptions of republican combatants, McKeown described the impact the course had:

We were confronted with a lot about ourselves and men in general and got an insight into our position of power and just what that means in terms of effect upon women. We discovered there is no a-z of feminism; indeed our discussions were frequently centered on masculinity and the problems it caused for both men and women. (McKeown, 1998, p258)

McKeown elaborated:

The idea of over 200 republican prisoners discussing masculinity, male power, and feminist politics does not rest easily with the popular stereotype of the republican prisoner as a hardened terrorist. But once again it demonstrates how far removed those stereotypes are from the real people so labeled. (McKeown, 1998, p258)

McMinn (2000) suggested that while feminist and critical pedagogies ‘provide valuable insights into pedagogical processes, neither seems to offer a strategy that can be grounded in a wider political context for remedying the inequalities of women’s condition’ (p86). She concluded:

The remedy for cultural injustice is some sort of cultural or symbolic change that could involve upwardly revaluing disrespected identities and cultural products of maligned groups, more radically still it would involve wholesale transformation of societal patterns of representation interpretation and communication. Women’s groups however are not the definers of legitimacy in the cultural sphere. They are engaged in a constant battle for recognition. (McMinn, 2000, p92)

### 3.12 SUMMARY.

In summary, the literature review acknowledges the challenges that are inherent in describing the indescribable, and discussing the undiscussible. It outlines the approach to and the evolving moments of peace education. It describes a conceptual framework that may be applied to a pedagogy of peace. Such pedagogy requires: the transformation of interpersonal relationships; attending to the voice of identity; the role of the imagination in creating a vision of conflict transformed; the necessity to create safe spaces within which dialogue can occur. The literature reviews the social construction of silence, the role of alienation from others in post-conflict environments, and in inducing the practice of voluntary apartheid. It offers perspectives on conflict transformation and approaches to peace and reconciliation within an Irish context. It

elaborates upon intergenerational aspects of conflict, and concludes by describing aspects of silence that are impacting upon gender. The literature review focuses the study design and methodology into the following arenas: the impact of cultural silence; querying the group processes that assist dialogue; the exploration of conflict transformed and the role of community education in post conflict contexts.

## CHAPTER 4: STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the thesis provides an overview of the research design methodology and indicates the parameters of the study. This chapter builds upon the literature review. This section of the thesis explains the approaches taken in the research design and provides an overview of the steps taken throughout the process. It identifies the methods used to explore the research questions. It describes the context within which the research occurred. It offers insights into the rationale for the use of decisions in relation to how and why the research is conducted, and the changes that were made along the way. It explains the coding and analysis of the qualitative data. It lists the thematic categories that emerged from the coding process through the use of max qualitative data analysis computer software (MAXqda). It provides links to the analytical process. This chapter explains how the epistemological stance and ontological position through which the data is investigated impacted on the decisions made in the research design.

The research is positioned in a qualitative approach. It adopts a social constructivist positioning. This section of the thesis clarifies the research questions and the research aims. It outlines the research ethics. It provides a rationale for the use of a qualitative methodology to address the research question. In this process a number of key concepts emerged and are outlined in order to provide an overarching conceptual framework for the purposes of the inquiry. This chapter provides a rationale for focusing upon particular sites of education that relate to the research question. This chapter outlines the process through which the questions were explored, it describes the research participants and their involvement in the research. It explains the rationale for selecting the research participants, the storytellers.

### 4.1 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This thesis posits the following questions:

- What role does silence play in post-conflict communities?
- What roles can community education play in enabling dialogue?

The aims of the research process are:

- To better understand how communities transition from conflict to peace.
- To explore the importance of the experiences of communities in conflict and post-conflict contexts in education.
- To garner insights about enabling conflict transformation for the community education sector.
- To explore the meaning of empowerment for people who consider themselves to be oppressed.

#### 4.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN.

In the early stages of the research process I thought to engage with facilitators of peacebuilding activity in the border region who are working with community and voluntary groups whose wider concern is addressing the legacy of the conflict. This would be the most natural approach for me, as I have worked with many practitioners over the years and have recently undertaken research to design and deliver a course in Peace Education for practitioners in the field. However upon reflection, I felt that such a course of action may not get to the heart of the enquiry. The respondents' real life experiences and contexts, needed to be close to conflict, its transformation and management in order to fully address the research questions. The context that surrounded the lead up to the Peace Agreement is particularly interesting to explore. By implementing specific selection criteria it was anticipated that the research process would be streamlined and focused upon co-construction of new knowledge between practitioner/stakeholder/educator and researcher. A narrative inquiry approach was used in an attempt to listen and hear the story of the respondents' own educational experiences. I explored how their experiences might have prepared them for their role in peace building. By sharing my story of education and my experience with groups I have encouraged stories about the respondents' role as educator, facilitator, animator or mediator. The research questions were designed in such a way as to encourage the participants to engage in stories about how they respond to dialogue and how they cope with silence within groups.

The methodology for this research builds upon my understanding and experiences of the formal and informal adult and community education sector that incorporates an understanding of the concept of peace and conflict education. Foundational to this process is an awareness of the correlation between the various agencies and institutions that implement strategies for peace and their influence upon the peace-building practitioners. The methodology aims to garner insights into practice of dialogue, why transformation occurs, and to search for ways to cope with silence. The rationale for this approach is with a view to understanding the principles, the theories, and the practice through which practitioners engage in peace education and conflict transformation in communities affected by conflict. The co-construction of such knowledge hopes to inform transition for communities emerging from the abyss, to inform practice of pedagogical liberation and to create directions for transgression of communities in similar post-conflict episodes. This methodology aims to develop a deeper appreciation of conflict transformation derived from applying theory to practice and practice to theory. In speaking about ‘a conflict generation’ Ruth Jamieson (2013) suggested that there is a whole cohort of ex-combatants that need to be recognised in mainstream public policy. She said:

There is a loud silence on the issue, we skirt around it, its not fashionable. Currently criminalisation informs policy. The challenge is to join up and move things forward as a society and to seek ways to connect people within this context. (Jamieson, 2013, Beyond the Wire: Seminar 5 June 2013)

This research seeks ways to highlight how connections between people are being made, and sustained. Because of my experiences in education I feel that silence is an important feature of peace and conflict. I wish to explore the phenomena of silence in communicative contexts. Therefore this inquiry focuses upon groupings of people whose version of events were prone to being silenced in the past, whose personal stories were not highlighted and whose version of events were suppressed. For this reason, and having noted in the literature some of the research and practice in relation to conflict transformation amongst former combatants, a triangulation of approaches was used to validate the research findings. I invited research participants, who represented three specific sectors to discuss the research questions with the intention of developing a triangulation of inquiry. The groupings comprised respondents and/or respondent from the following sectors:

1. Former republican combatants and former republican political prisoners;
2. Deep Dialogue Group;
3. Conflict management practitioner.

*Group 1*      *Former republican combatants and former political prisoners.*

These respondents are part of a group who were in the past in conflict with a diametrically opposed group of others. They were key protagonists in the Troubles; part of the problem in the past and are now engaged in dialogue and working on solutions in communities together with former enemies. The story of how they engaged in conflict, emerged from conflict, and the reasons why they chose alternative options would, I feel offer valuable insights into what educators need to know to facilitate dialogue. I wanted to find out the significance, if any, that education played in their lives and in their decisions to change their tactics. An important aspect of conducting research with this cohort of people is self-disclosure. The rationale for inclusion of criteria in inviting participants to engage in the research is so that respondents will be self-identified through the work they do. I feel that this is important in order for a full and honest dialogue to emerge. Respondents will already be self-disclosed as former combatants or former political prisoners working within networks that support and provide advocacy for former politically motivated prisoners. Mindful of the sensitivities involved, I approached the umbrella organization, Coiste na nLarchimí, to invite participants to engage in the research. Coiste na nLarchimí is an all-Ireland network which has members throughout the north and border counties. There are 12 groups who are affiliated with the network throughout Ireland.

The mission statement of Coiste na nLarchimí is to operate as the umbrella organisation encompassing groups and individuals working for the social, economic and emotional well-being of current and former republican prisoners and their families. Coiste na nLarchimí co-ordinates the efforts of its members in an atmosphere of self-help, encouragement and mutual aid. The aims and objectives of the group are as follows:

- To work on behalf of the republican ex-prisoner community;
- To be ‘the’ representative body for republican ex-prisoners;
- To work to promote all legislative and discriminatory practices against ex-prisoners;
- To be a model of good practice.



*Group 2      Deep Dialogue Group*

The second respondent grouping invited into the discussion were representatives of community groups who engage in very specific dialogue activities within a peace building context. The Deep Dialogue group is a strong example of a group who are engaging in dialogue activities. The group comprises members from all sides of the divide, with differing religious, political, cultural and ideological standpoints, who come together to discuss peace and the legacy of the conflict. The aim of the group is the facilitation and nurturing of respect, trust and understanding through deep dialogue and storytelling between republicans, unionists, Catholics and Protestants along with others who were affected by the conflict. I wish to explore how they overcome polite silence on contentious issues and how they engage in dialogue that goes beyond surface-level discussion. I am curious to investigate what sustained them in their quest and what difference they felt they can make. I also wish to explore the vital components that assist in the facilitation of dialogue, from their perspective and experience.

*Respondent no 3      Conflict management practitioner.*

The third respondent who I feel has valuable experience to proffer the design process is a stakeholder who works in the field of conflict management. I particularly wished to explore the perspectives of a conflict management expert who was involved with former prisoners and/or combatants during the time that peace was brokered. Such insights would provide a valuable and possibly an alternative view, to the views and experiences of those who were directly involved in combat, of the dialogical process. Constructing a pattern of events from a perspective that hosts different experiences, located at one remove from the immediate experience of conflict would enable validity to be expressed or negated in a research space. Conflict management practitioners experience their own bias, political leanings and aspirations and I am interested to explore how epistemology is acknowledged in the approach to the management of conflicting ideologies and violent expressions of difference.

### 4.3 RATIONALE

The rationale for including representatives of specific former combatant groupings, and communities who are engaged in dialogue, along with a conflict management practitioner in the research relates to a set of three specific criteria. An overarching remit relates to the focus upon peace education, dialogue, and conflict transformation:

1. Invitations to take part in the research are based upon participants' experiences in education, working in a situation of conflict in the past and by contrast now living and working in a post-conflict environment.
2. The second criterion for inclusion in the research concerns the potential for policy-making insights to emerge in relation to peace and reconciliation and conflict transformation.
3. The third criterion relates to the respondents' direct role in education for peace building and conflict transformation, including dialogue activities.
4. The fourth criterion relates to respondents' being border dwellers in a geographic and symbolic sense. This would assist in developing the idea that border dwellers have particular ways of knowing and acting.

Respondents' work with a variety of groups that represent aspects of the conflict and the reconciliation process. The community and voluntary organisations that engaged in the research project are supported through the implementing bodies and institutions in their peace making endeavors. I chose those working with families affected by conflict, also those facilitating groups of women, combatants, and minority groups in order to hear about their experiences in a comprehensive way.

For the most part the criterion of border dweller was adhered to, however I moved away from the application of the criterion of geographic border dweller in one focus group and that was because of the difficulty in securing respondents who were former combatants from the southern border region. However the respondents in that case are symbolic border dwellers in that they occupy a context where they are engaged in crossing symbolic and pedagogic borders, negotiating physical barriers, interfaces and enclaves in the work that they engage in between groups of 'others'.

#### 4.4 RESEARCH ETHICS

The context within which this research is conducted is of a politically sensitive nature. In undertaking this research I was keenly aware of the need to protect the security of the research respondents, as well as to ensure the validity of the data. It is important then that boundaries are placed around what is revealed in qualitative research. I made it quite clear that the scope of the research was limited to the professional experience and practice of the respondents. This maintained relevance to the core research questions and aims of the research project. I was also keenly aware not to lead people into areas where they were uncomfortable or did not wish to go. The research supervisor played a key role in developing and ensuring ethical commitment throughout the study.

##### *Ethical approval*

The following is an excerpt from the application form provided to the Ethics Committee for approval to conduct the research. This information was also provided to the respondents before the research began.

*Details about how the data will be safeguarded, for what purposes it may be used, and for how long it will be kept.*

All information will be kept in password-protected, encrypted files. Identifiers will be removed where requested by the research participant. Some identifiers will be retained in order to provide relevant background information for the thesis. This will be kept in a separate compressed file which is password protected. A copy of the data will be kept on a USB memory stick. The data will also be encrypted. Data will be retained for the purpose of verification of the information. It will be retained for a period of 6 years, after 6 years the data will be placed in the trash option. Additional data storage, i.e. memory stick will be physically destroyed. Margaret Nugent, researcher, will be responsible for destroying all of the data. If future outputs relating to the research material are involved, the researcher will at that time request permission for any identifying material to be included. *If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the National University of Ireland Maynooth Ethics Committee.*

(Extract from submission to NUIM Ethics Committee, 28 June 2012)

The NUI Maynooth Ethics Committee granted approval for the research project on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2012.

### *Confidentiality and Consent*

Assurance of confidentiality for the respondents is a critical component of politically sensitive research. Permission, privacy and confidentiality of identity and data are very important. I invited potential stakeholders to become involved in addressing the research questions. Silverman (2000) noted aspects of settings and access that are relevant to the groups and settings I wished to engage with. He described these as ‘closed or private settings (organisations or deviant groups) where gatekeepers control access’ (p198). In order to gain access to respondents for this research I made contact with the Coiste na nLarchímí main network office. This approach to gatekeepers was an important aspect that contributed to the ethical considerations of the research. For this research it was important that respondents are self-disclosed former combatants and self-disclosed former political prisoners. Members of the Coiste network are self-disclosed as they openly access the support and services of this organisation. By contrast some former political prisoners groups in the south were reluctant to engage in this research. This reluctance manifest itself through a lack of willingness to follow up on invitations from me to participate; the reality is very much about ‘keeping your head down’. This relates to discrimination in employment policies that affect former combatants, ‘prisoners can legally be discriminated against<sup>3</sup>’. It also relates to vilification and scapegoating of former combatants in the southern Irish context. While the locations of respondents are not identified, I can reveal that only one group of the Coiste network that participated in the focus group research method is based in the south.

An information sheet was sent to all potential participants, (see appendix) and followed up with phone calls. Once interest in the research project was garnered, further communication ensued which clarified for the research participants the process of engagement, the boundaries of that engagement, the confidentiality aspect and the

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### 3. McConkey and Marks Vs. Simon Community.

Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (the 1998 Order),

12.1 The Tribunal was therefore satisfied that in relation to each claimant, subject to consideration of the provisions of Article 2(4) of the 1998 Order, the respondent had unlawfully discriminated against each claimant on the grounds of his political opinion. Article 2(4) states any reference to a person’s political opinion does not include an opinion which consists of or includes approval or acceptance of the use of violence for political ends connected with the affairs of Northern Ireland, including the use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any section of the public in fear.

assurance of continuous consent gathering, before commitment to print. All interviews and focus groups were carried out with informed consent. When I conducted the research with the participants, I waited until the end of the session to ask them to sign the consent form. In this way they knew exactly what they were consenting to. However I requested permission at the outset to use a recorder to record the proceedings. All agreed to this request.

In order to protect the confidentiality of the data, I ensured that the raw data was seen only by me. I transcribed all of the recordings myself. Although not all of the respondents requested anonymity, I provided it in a bid to protect those who did. The well-being and respect of the participant is paramount. Any contextual and personal data supplied is written in a way that minimises the risk of identification. I changed the names of all respondents, and gave them Irish pseudonyms as the Irish language was used and valued in many ways as a response by the participants, former combatants and former political prisoners in particular. I changed the names of the Coiste Network branches that engaged in the research in a bid to grant further anonymity to the respondents.

Respondents' must have sufficient access to the data in order to make a judgment regarding consent to its use. When I was happy that I had all of the data written up correctly I sent a copy back to the respondents to request that they approve, amend or clarify aspects of the recording. At the outset I suggested that I would send a copy of the transcript to each respondent within a two week time scale. I completed all transcripts within that time. Most of the respondents returned the document with comments, adjustments or just to say that they were happy with the content within a two week timeframe also. Some of the comments that came back to me were as follows:

‘OK. It’s embarrassing when you read back a manuscript of one’s self-talking. Seems inarticulate, but no problems.’

‘Dia duit, Margaret, That's sound, I would prefer to remain anonymous, thanks. I hope all goes well for you. Ádh mór.’

‘I have edited my contribution but tried to stay as faithful to the Q&A session as possible.’

I took on board the edited contributions, and amended the transcripts accordingly. I then sent each person that participated in the research a Christmas card and a book token as a

thank you for the time they took to engage with the research question. This was noted in the following communication:

Thank you so much for the Christmas card *and* the book token – though you really shouldn't have. I was delighted to get the card – so often researchers roll in and roll away never to be heard of, or from, again!

No adverse or personal conclusions are contained in the thesis. The analysis of the data was carefully scrutinised to ensure that the commentary remains at a level of professional and practical experience. Analysis of the data is conducted thematically. I also sent to each respondent a copy of the draft conclusions chapter in order that they might offer opinions, or revisions on the conclusions before final print. The comment below is indicative of the responses I received to the concluding chapter:

I appreciate that you are pointing to what ought to be being done in the Republic in terms of truth recovery and dealing with the past, and in that context noting what is being attempted and what has been achieved in Northern Ireland. It is a source of encouragement to be acknowledged and affirmed for the efforts being made.

#### 4.5 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

A qualitative methodology was adopted in this research process. A quantitative approach might survey all reported 25,000 former political prisoners in the north of Ireland. This approach would show interesting trends in relation to educational attainment, it could scope economic, social, and cultural factors impacting upon former combatants and could create a profile of former combatants. The data could be used with a view to influencing policy in relation to education and service provision for that cohort. This is a piece of research that has yet to be conducted. I adopted a qualitative approach because the numbers of former combatants and political prisoners who are self identified are few in number. The issues to be discussed would require a relationship to develop that would enable dialogue to occur. Freire (2010) suggests that the co-construction of dialogue penetrates the issues 'more and more lucidly in order to discover the true structural interrelations between the facts observed' (p96).

Ryan in Antonessa, Fallon, Ryan, Ryan and Walsh with Borys (2006) described qualitative research as a methodology which 'places value upon the understanding that research is produced, not discovered. This is achieved by adopting a learning rather than

a testing role' (p18). The social constructivist approach suggests that there is validity to peoples experiences, their interpretation of events. Their subjective experience is of key importance. Etherington (2004) emphasised the importance of 'an understanding of the impact of gender, cultural, history and socio-political contexts of an individual's experience, and how it influences how they make meaning all of which are important contributions to the research process' (p22). A social constructivist approach places value on the construction of knowledge between the participant and the researcher, the continuous unfolding and unfurling of a knowledge, and the collaboration/sharing in the development of that knowledge. It draws upon the construction of shared meaning between researcher and participant.

### *Social Constructionism*

Eisner (2001) stated 'researchers concerned with human relationships do not solve problems, they cope with situations' and suggested focusing upon the 'pluralism in our social life' (p138). Eisner explored the change that occurred in research with the growing acceptance of uncertainty, and the multiple ways of knowing espoused by feminist theory which questions the assumption of 'value neutral research'. (p138). The role of the researcher becomes embedded in the research process, and involves, according to Connolly (2007) 'layering the two narratives - that of narrator and that of listener' (p453). She refers to Downe's insight that 'the authors assumptions and beliefs not only direct the interview practice or conversation in many ways, but also these assumptions get inserted into the story' (p453). Foundational to this research I aim to engage in analyses of my own teaching methodology in order to explore educational imperatives of teachers for peace education. Macintyre-Latta and Kim(2010) referred to teaching methodologies as important sites of learning:

Attempts to reframe educator professional development are emerging, moving toward more constructivist orientations focusing on *how* teachers learn rather than *what* teachers learn. (MacIntyre-Latta and Kim, 2010, p.139)

Etherington (2004) described reflexive research as an important interpretative tool in analysing the data. She elaborated 'reflexivity in representing texts can expose and rebalance power relations between researcher and researched' (p 611). She described what this means:

Reflexive research encourages us to display in our writing/conversations the interactions between ourselves and our participants, from our first point of contact until we end those relationships, so that our work can be understood, not only in terms of *what* we have discovered, but *how* we have discovered it. (Etherington, 2004, p601)

This approach should encourage rigor, representation, and interpretation to occur simultaneously, and will influence the research process as it evolves.

#### VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The following figure provides a visual representation of the cyclical process involved in the research methodology and design of the methods used.

**Figure 9: Research Process and Conceptual Framework**

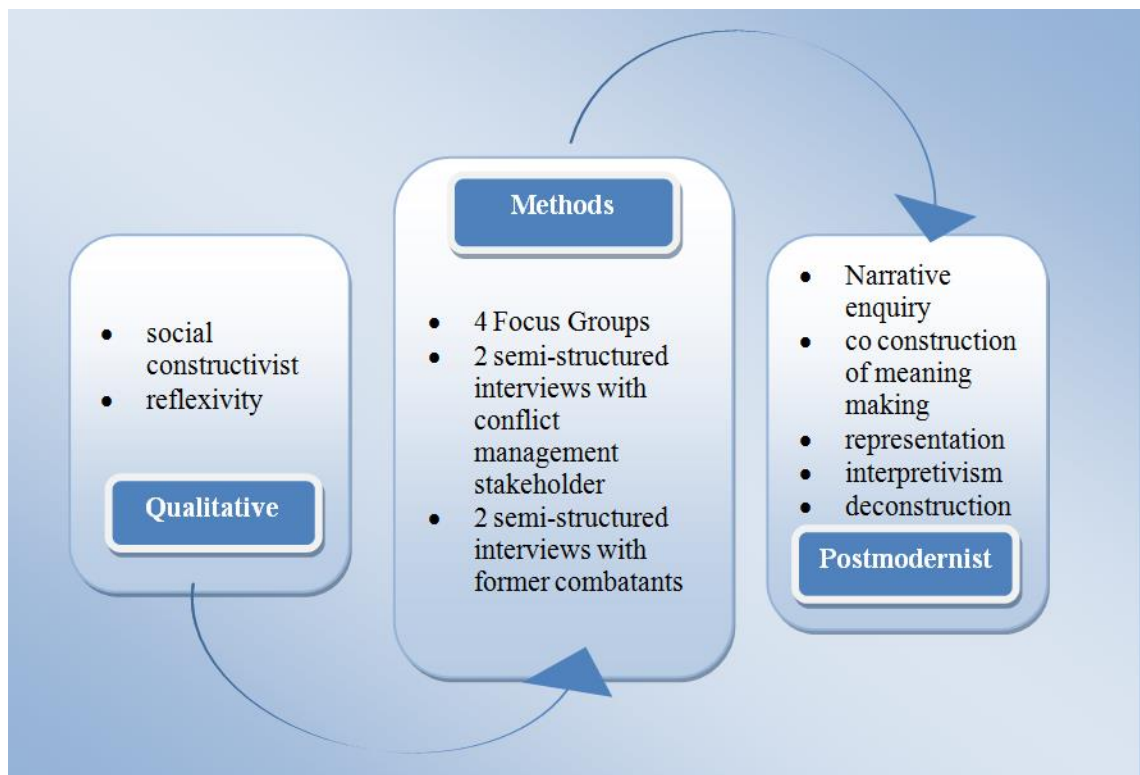


Figure 9 above represents the research process and the conceptual framework that guides that process. It incorporates reflexivity throughout each stage. A social constructivist approach, in this methodology aims to co-construct knowledge with stakeholders who are in pursuit of peace. Focus group research and semi-structured interviews are the methods chosen. The participants' knowledge of border dwellers and divided communities provides the rationale for their inclusion in the research. Their stories are important. Savin-Badin & Van Niekerk (2007) described narrative inquiry as:



In terms of locating it in the broad spectrum of qualitative research, it tends to be positioned within a constructivist stance with reflexivity, interpretivism, and representation being primary features of the approach. (Savin-Badin & Van Niekerk, 2007, p460)

### *Postmodernism*

Whilst there is no single type of methodology accepted by all postmodernists, some question the belief that there is any solid foundation for producing knowledge about society. Haralambos and Holborn (2008) elaborated on the postmodernist approach:

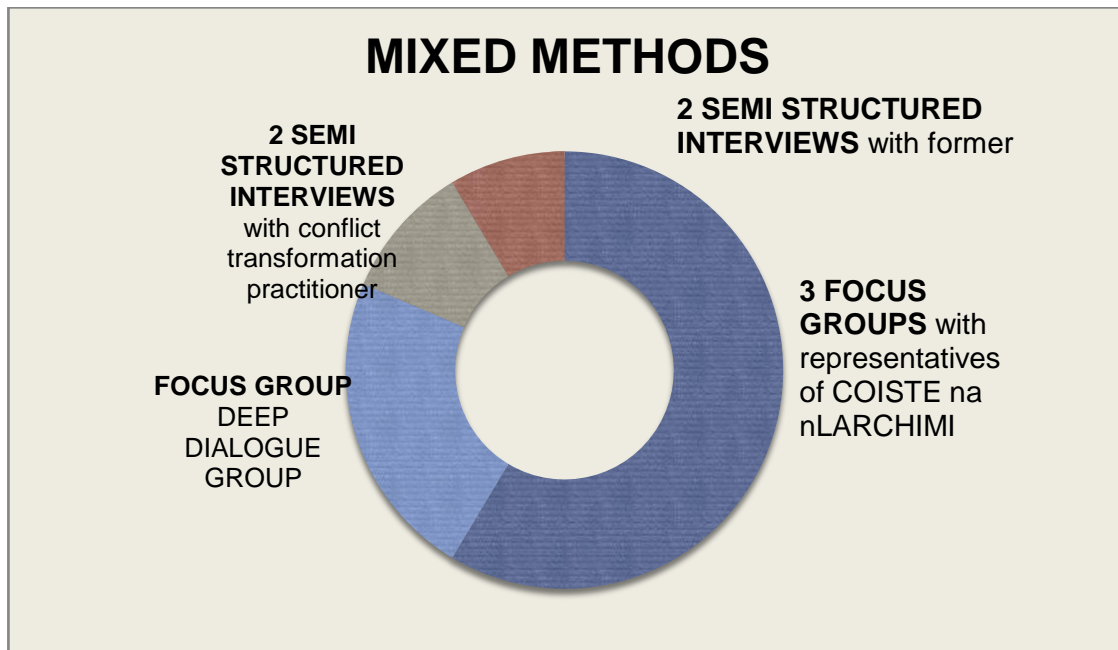
Lyotard (1984) believes that all knowledge is a form of storytelling. He sees all stories as equally valid. The implication of this view is that postmodern methodology should simply consist of allowing different people to tell their stories. (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008, p811)

A postmodernist perspective has potential to deconstruct ontological positions within the narrative inquiry method, at the interface that exists between identities and subjectivities. It provides a tool with which to challenge the apparent dichotomies between peace and conflict. Etherington (2004) elaborates upon the value of a postmodernist approach ‘as an alternative method of inquiry postmodernism invites other, often tentative marginalised voices to be heard alongside those of the dominant western discourses that value certainty, action and decisiveness’ (p21).

## 4.6 METHODS OF INQUIRY

The following figure captures the methods that were used in the research design:

Figure 10 Mixed Methods



The diversity of methods I used to garner understanding of the responses to the research questions and the context, within which the research questions are framed, was a qualitative approach with narrative inquiry. It included four focus groups and four semi-structured interviews with narrative inquiry. A total of twenty-three people participated in the empirical data gathering. Twenty-two people participated in four focus group sessions:

- 1) 3 people in focus group no 1;
- 2) 4 people in focus group no 2;
- 3) 3 people engaged in focus group no 3;
- 4) 12 people engaged in focus group no 4.

3 people participated in 4 Semi Structured interviews:

Two people engaged in one semi structured interview each. Each person had already engaged in a focus group session.

One person, additional to the people who engaged in focus group sessions participated in two semi-structured interview. One interview was conducted at the beginning phase of the research process and one interview at the end phase.

The first step in the design began with desk research. Desk research assisted me in identifying the stakeholders who are working within peace building and conflict transformation contexts. The desk research clarified the field of activity and guided me in the selection of people to invite to participate that would have relevant experience in education for peace building. Part of the desk research involved discussion with agency personnel whose remit is peace building and conflict management both at home and abroad. Such discussions led to identifying the key stakeholders whose experience and expertise would benefit the construction of knowledge that would enable the exploration of the research questions. I compiled a list of potential research participants, based also on my awareness and experience of peace building groups in the region. I then clarified the research aims and objectives and submitted an application for ethical approval. (See appendix)

The emergence of community and voluntary groupings, of whom two of the three cohorts of research participants are part of, has been facilitated and resourced by a complex funding mechanism since the Peace Agreement in 1998. Table 6 overleaf provide a visual representation of the context within which community groups in the six southern border counties and the north of Ireland are supported. This representation illustrates the working relationships between agencies supporting peace building in Ireland.

**TABLE 6: OVERVIEW OF FUNDING MECHANISMS.**

The funding mechanisms, implementation bodies, overview, priority areas and objectives are elaborated upon and outlined in the following table:

Implementing body	Overview	Priority areas	Objectives
<p><b>SEUPB:</b></p> <p>One of the six cross-border bodies set up under the agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland</p> <p>(See six cross border bodies below)<sup>4</sup></p>	<p>Main role is to manage cross-border European Union Structural Funds programmes in Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland, and parts of Western Scotland.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Managing Authority</li> <li>2. Joint Technical Secretariat</li> <li>3. Certifying Authority for the INTERREG IVA and PEACE III Programmes,</li> <li>4. Corporate Services</li> </ol>	<p>The SEUPB has a role to facilitate project participation in the INTERREG IVB Transnational Programmes and the INTERREG IVC Programme, which is open to projects across the European Union.</p>
<p><b>Interreg IVA:</b></p>	<p>European Union’s cross-border Programme for Territorial Co-operation, Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland.</p>	<p>Seeks to address the economic and social problems that result from the existence of borders.</p> <p>Priority 1: Co-operation for a more prosperous cross-border region:</p> <p>Priority 2: Co-operation for a sustainable cross-border region:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. By encouraging innovation and competitiveness in enterprise and business development and</li> <li>2. By promoting tourism;</li> <li>3. Promote cross-border co-operation in policy development and</li> <li>4. Improve access to services to promote the quality of life for</li> </ol>

1. Waterways Ireland, 2. Food Safety Promotion Board 3. Trade and Business Development Body (Intertrade Ireland) 4. Special European Union Programmes Body 5. The language body/ An Foras Teanga/ Ulster Scots Agency 6. Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights commission

			those living in the eligible area.
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Implementing Body	Overview	Priority Areas	Objectives
<b>PEACE III PROGRAMME:</b>	European Union Structural Funds Programme aimed at reinforcing progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promoting reconciliation.	The PEACE III Programme focuses on two strategic objectives: <b>Priority 1: Reconciling Communities.</b> <b>Priority2: Contributing to a Shared Society</b>	To build positive relations at the local level To acknowledge the past To create shared public spaces To develop key institutional capacity for a shared society
<b>Pobal:</b>	Under Priority 1 of the PEACE III Programme the Special EU Programmes Body has contracted Pobal, in partnership with the Community Relations Council in Northern Ireland.	Pobal delivers within the following two key areas: <b>Theme1.1:</b> Building positive relationships at local level. <b>Theme 1.2:</b> Acknowledging and dealing with the past.	Pobal provides technical support to 14 local authority led peace partnerships, 8 clusters in the north and six in the South.
<b>Co-operation Ireland:</b>	The leading peace-building charity on the island of Ireland.	Its mission is to underpin political agreement on the island of Ireland by building positive relationships at community level, both within Northern Ireland and between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, through the promotion of mutual understanding and co-operation.	Co-operation Ireland delivers cross-border and cross-community projects to a wide range of school, youth, and community organisations. Through this model groups have an opportunity to discuss the often 'swept under the

			carpet' topics of culture, identity and religion.
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#### 4.7 FOCUS GROUP RESEARCH

Focus group research was considered as an effective method that would provide an overview of the key considerations impacting on education for peace. It would also identify people who might be interested in going deeper into the themes that would emerge in the focus group method and who might be interested in becoming involved in further enquiry through semi structured interviews. Some groups were invited to participate in the research as an 'insider', that is by virtue of me having an ongoing working relationship with personnel, but the majority invited were by virtue of me being an 'outsider', having no previous working relationship with the representative personnel. I elaborated on this aspect of the research earlier. Silverman addressed some of the challenges associated with adopting insider positions in relation to validity of data:

Sometimes one doubts the validity of an explanation because the researcher has clearly made no attempt to deal with contrary cases. Sometimes the extended immersion in the field so typical of qualitative research leads to a certain preciousness about the validity of the researchers own interpretation of 'their tribe' or organisation. (Silverman, 2000, p11)

Silverman (2000) advised 'use the knowledge you have already gained as a resource in generating a researchable problem'. He suggested 'thinking about how it can sensitize you to various researchable issues'. In particular the sensitivities he highlighted are 'historical, cultural, political and contextual' (p65).

Three methods of inquiry were adopted and four focus group sessions conducted altogether. Three of the focus groups were conducted with representatives of Coiste na nLarchimi. One was conducted in Teach Árd, consisting of 3 members of different organisations who came together for the research but who work loosely with each other under an umbrella organisation. The second focus group was conducted in Teach Lairde with 4 representatives of educational initiatives, and the third focus group was conducted in Teach Lairde with 4 respondents, some of whom had been displaced from

north of the border during the Troubles. All three locations were significant sites of conflict throughout the Troubles and so I felt it would be particularly valuable for the outcomes of the research to facilitate focus group sessions in these locations with former republican combatants who were engaged in the conflict at the time. Whilst the invitation went out to all twelve organisations who operate as part of the Coiste network, it was those three groupings that responded positively.

Krueger (2002) stated that ‘crucial to the success of the focus group session was putting people at ease, and clarifying the boundaries of the discussion’ (p2). Silverman (2000) stated that ‘the impression you give may be very important in deciding whether you get overt access’ (p198). Each focus group discussion commenced with an explanation of my experiences of working with groups, and by declaring the difficulty encountered with dialogue in groups where silence occurs, particularly in relation to the conflict. A brief explanation of my political leanings and background was offered. I used the language that I considered appropriate to the context, language that I know in my capacity as ‘insider’ to be important descriptive tools that can allow a fusion of meanings, and by so doing assist in the collaborative process. As an example the term ‘armed struggle’ was used to describe the conflict. I spoke of the silence I encountered in relation to aspects of that struggle that I considered are important to discuss if the silence is to be broken. I explained that I was interested in the significance of education to the peace building process. Krueger acknowledged:

The first few moments in focus group discussion are critical. In a brief time the moderator must create a thoughtful, permissive atmosphere, provide ground rules, and set the tone of the discussion. Much of the success of group interviewing can be attributed to the development of this open environment.

(Krueger, 2002 p4)

There are a number of critical factors that the researcher needs to be aware of in conducting focus group research. These factors include: attention to detail, to the semantics used by participants to illustrate a point; paraphrasing and questioning to ensure understanding; and active listening techniques help to draw deeper meaning from the focus group sessions. Krueger (2002) advises the moderator to ‘listen for notable quotes, the well-said statements that illustrate an important point of view. Listen for

sentences or phrases that are particularly enlightening or eloquently express a particular point of view' (p10).

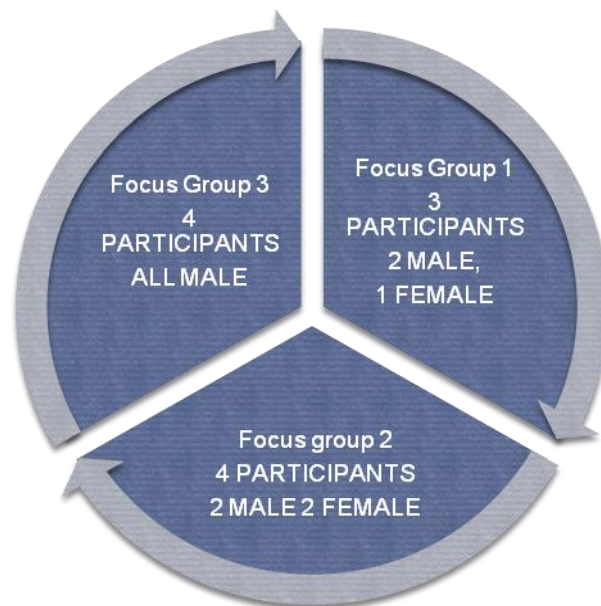
*Coiste na nLarchimí Focus Groups*

The Coiste network supports, advocates for, and provides educational opportunities for former political prisoners, combatants, and their families.

3 focus groups with representatives of republican former political prisoner networks were conducted. 11 members participated. All were members of Coiste na nLarchimí, 2 focus groups were held in the north of Ireland, and one in the south. There are 12 groups who are affiliated with the network throughout Ireland. All of the focus group sessions were conducted in the community offices where their activities and training projects were located.

*Coiste na nLarchimí Focus Groups*

**Figure 11** Focus Groups: Coiste Network



Focus group participant information



Participants completed a brief confidential questionnaire, the results of which are presented overleaf. This assisted in creating a profile of respondents: to assess the time spent in prison; to determine reasons for detention and to explore date of release. The questionnaire was optional and confidentiality assured. 8 questionnaires were completed, 3 declined to complete it. The questionnaire is included in the appendix.

**TABLE 7. RESPONDENTS BASELINE DATA**

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age group</b>	<b>Reason imprisoned</b>	<b>Time spent in prison</b>	<b>Year of release</b>	<b>When joined Coiste Network</b>	<b>Membership of other groups</b>
1	Male	50-60	1st time for possession, 2 <sup>nd</sup> time for conspiracy to cause explosives	9 years	2000-Good Friday Agreement	2000, for advice and advocacy Employment	Community group
2	Male	50-60	Bombing	Almost 9 years	1985	1997	Numerous community groups
3	Male	50-60	Republican Activity	14 years	1998	1999	
4	Female	40-50		3 years	1983, 1986	2001	Sinn Fein
5	Male	50-60	Possession of Weapons	10 years	1986	1990's	Sinn Fein Conradh Na Gaeilge
6	Male	50-60	Conspiracy to cause explosives. Possession of explosives	4 years	1984		
7	Female	60-70	Leading peaceful protests, not recognising court	6 months plus two shorter periods	1976, 1982, 1983	A few months ago	Sinn Fein, other republican groups, various C&V groups, regional and local mental health groups, Guide Dogs, founder member national H Block/Armagh SF Women's Dept.
8	Female	30-40	Never in jail	N/A		2001	Sinn Fein

*Focus group 1: Pilot group representatives of Coiste Network, Teach Árd.*

A pilot focus group was conducted with stakeholder members of representative community groups who provide support, advocacy, and education for former political prisoners, combatants and their families in the north of the country. This focus group was conducted on November 1<sup>st</sup> 2012. That morning the road into was blocked due to the murder of a Prison officer, David Black who worked in Maghaberry Jail, in Co Armagh. It was widely believed to be the work of dissident groups. The pilot focus group comprised 3 members, two male and one female of a coordinating network of former prisoners and combatants and their families. Each had a specific interest in education for transformation. Each represented a different community group aligned to the Coiste network. The three participants were former political prisoners, two of whom were released under the Good Friday Agreement. The purpose of the pilot focus group was to elucidate the potential problems that might arise in the research process, to further determine a framework within which to work, and to analyse potential themes and issues that emerged in the pilot process. The pilot focus group helped to determine an overview of the context within which the transition from armed conflict occurred. It clarified the role of education in the prisons, and identified some of the community projects that are currently making a difference in communities formerly divided by conflict. The role of identity was highlighted as significant in this process. However there were inconsistencies with the process also, each member had their own views of the process of conflict transformation, peace building, dialogue and their role in it. It was deemed necessary to follow up each person individually to focus down on meanings and processes which were alluded to in the group, but which due to time constraints were impossible to focus upon in any depth in the focus group format. The following comment received as feedback to the transcript explains how the respondents experienced this:

I did feel that we didn't quite get through everything during our session with you, so I would be more than happy to re-group until we are all satisfied that we have covered anything. Anytime you want to continue, just let me know.

The pilot focus group was important for the themes it invoked for further study in consecutive focus groups, and for identifying individual members who agreed to take part in a follow up semi-structured interview, with narrative inquiry. Participants signed a consent form that outlined their role in the research design and how they could intercept in the process at any time. Two participants completed a confidential questionnaire, the results of which are compiled in the findings section and which served to build up a profile of the research participants, the third participant declined the offer. Templates of the information sheet, the confidential questionnaire, and the consent sheet used are included in the appendices. The transcript of the pilot focus group was written up and sent back to the participants for their comments, inclusion of additional information or deletion of quotes. All three engaged in this process readily. Their recommendations were incorporated into the planning of the subsequent focus groups. All three agreed to participate in a semi-structured interview as a follow-up to the focus group session.

#### *Focus group 2: Representatives of Teach Álainn*

Noting the responses to the questions posed in the pilot focus group session, and redrafting them in order to elicit deep and focused responses in the following focus groups, a second focus group was facilitated in Teach Álainn. The focus group members comprised stakeholders of a republican former political prisoner and combatant support network, aligned with Coiste na nLarchimí. This group represented republicans and their families in the northern county. The group comprised two men and two women, three of whom were former political prisoners, all with an interest in education for peace. All members signed the consent form, which was presented at the end of the session, so that they knew what they were signing up to. All members completed the confidential questionnaire. Again shortly afterwards the transcript of the focus group was drafted and sent to participants for their comments. Three of the four respondents engaged in this process, and returned comments to me that I took on board and accommodated in further inquiry. Whilst the role of identity was apparent, as in the first pilot group, the main theme emerging from this discussion was the role of education, including youth education, prison education, and informal learning. The focus on education was achieved through engaging with the network's coordinator in choosing a

representative sample of participants who had experience of education in relation to peace building. A focus on education was also achieved through the sequencing of the questions posed as a result of reflection upon and feedback from the pilot study.

*Focus group 3: Teach Láirde.*

The third focus group was conducted in Teach Láirde, south of the border with representatives of the Coiste network. Three stakeholders participated. All three were former political prisoners. A fourth member joined and engaged briefly with the discussion. All members signed the consent form at the end of the focus group session and two members completed the confidential questionnaire. The interview transcripts were sent to the respondents for follow up, I did not receive any further input. I followed up with a telephone call, and it was suggested that the participants were content with the way the focus group discussion was represented in the transcript. The main theme emerging alongside identity, related to the discrimination and marginalisation felt by former political prisoners in the south of the country. The disparity of experiences and status between those north of the border and those south of the border was very apparent, and is discussed further in the findings.

A fourth focus group was planned with a group who are not part of the Coiste Network. The deep dialogue group, as they are named, comprises a diverse group of individuals that come from both sides of the divide to engage in dialogue. It was conducted in a hotel in County Cavan and involved 12 participants. The group comprised representatives of church, paramilitary, political and community activists from all sides of the divide.

*Focus group 4: Deep Dialogue Group. Cavan.*

The aim of the Deep Dialogue group is the facilitation and nurturing of respect, trust and understanding through deep dialogue and storytelling between republicans, Protestants and others affected by the conflict. Consent to conduct the focus group was

arranged with the project co-ordinator. When I arrived to facilitate the discussion I realised that I had worked with some of the members when the peace programme first commenced in the late 1990's. At that stage the focus of the programme was towards building single identity capacity. Single identity refers to groups who identify with one tradition, i.e. either republican or loyalist. The focus of the programme at that stage was also on developing weak infrastructure such as renovation of community halls and orange halls, which had run into disrepair. Fifteen years later members of disparate and ideologically different groups were now connected in dialogue. Guest speakers are part of the format of the Deep Dialogue group and have included representatives from the Police Service of Northern Ireland and from loyalist and republican ex-combatants and from Orange Order backgrounds. The focus group session commenced by engaging the members in the following questions:

- Why are you involved in this group?
- What are the key factors that have brought you together?

Following the discussion members of the group then engaged in writing their own personal reasons and motivations for being involved in the Deep Dialogue group on a stickie. They then placed their personal reflections on the wall so that we could look as a group at the commonalities, themes, and other insights emerging. A group discussion emerged during this process. The next stage involved the group working in smaller groups to discuss the risks and benefits of being involved in deep dialogue. The smaller groups then shared their responses with the full group. A general discussion followed concerning the question:

What is deep dialogue how would you explain it?

The responses to the topics raised in the process are discussed further in the findings section of the thesis. Within two weeks I transcribed the focus group session and sent it to the coordinator to disseminate. I did not receive any further feedback and when I contacted the group I was told that the members were happy with how the discussion was represented. The following excerpt appeared on the group's website:

Margaret's interaction with the group members led to animated discussion on the benefits of being part of a dialogue group, the challenges being part of such a group brings to each person that is involved and the learning outcomes for each member. In closing the Project Coordinator, thanked all for attending and for

their input into the session, with a special word of thanks to Margaret for including our Cavan group in her research.

([www.cfrc.ie/deep-dialogue-group](http://www.cfrc.ie/deep-dialogue-group), accessed 6<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2013)

#### 4.8 SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

A semi-structured interview method was used in order to explore and conceptualize peace and conflict, and to determine the role of education in the process. It was useful to garner insights into a methodological approach to the formation of facilitators and practitioners engaged in peace building activity. It guided the interview into realms of practice. It was used in order to guide the conversation into areas that relate to policy making, and how stakeholders experience policy. The respondents were asked to explore the issue of dialogue, and to identify issues around which silence occurs, also to explore if and how dialogue can be used in response to silence. The semi-structured interviews explored themes of conscientization, transformation, and praxis. Sufficient space was created in order to co-construct unidentified themes that emerge in the discussion.

Four semi-structured informal interviews were conducted. Two separate interviews were conducted with 2 individual members of the Coiste na nLarchimí focus group in Teach Árd. The semi-structured interviews allowed for a follow up and in-depth discussion about relevant points that emerged in the first pilot focus group.

Two semi-structured interviews, one in November at the start of the research process and one in February, towards the end of the data collection phase, with a conflict management practitioner who is also a peace educator with extensive experience in the field both at home and in an international context. He was engaged in facilitating dialogue during the official and unofficial lead up to the Peace Agreement in Ireland. He has also conducted conflict management and peace education in South Africa, in different countries in Africa including Nigeria at the interface of Islam and Christianity and in Norway, brokering between the Tamil Tigers and the Sri Lankan government. His work in Ireland is now focused on dealing with the legacy of a violent past that claimed the lives of thousands and injured thousands more. His insights and comments are presented in the findings alongside those of former combatants, in order to contextualize the thinking processes within the wider arena of conflict transformation.

Two main themes emerged in the interviews: that the legacy of conflict is trans-generational, and the necessity to deal effectively with truth recovery.

The semi-structured interviews conducted with individual former combatants ensured a follow up to concepts that emerged in the first pilot focus group, and as a means of conducting specific inquiry into the role of education in their lives, in prison, in building peace and in forging or deconstructing aspects of identity. The main themes emerging from these interviews were how community education helps to develop multi dimensional thinking processes and develops leadership within communities. The interviews constructed knowledge about dealing with difference, and engaging in dialogue with those perceived as coming from the 'other side'. This approach involved in-depth semi-structured or loosely structured forms of interviewing. Burgess (1984) calls them 'conversations with a purpose' (p102). According to Mason cited in May (2002):

The style is conversational, flexible and fluid, and the purpose is achieved through active engagement by interviewer and interviewee around relevant issues, topics, and experiences during the interview itself. This provides an interactive, situational, and generative approach to the acquisition of data. (May, 2002, p225)

Qualitative interviewing draws upon the construction of shared meaning between researcher and participant. Mason elaborates upon the conceptual framework of qualitative interviewing and advocates the centrality of subjectivity in qualitative interviewing as:

It has its roots in a range of theoretical and epistemological traditions, all of which give some privilege to the accounts of social actors, agents, individuals, or subjects, as data sources, and which assume or emphasise the centrality of talk and text in our ways of knowing about the social world. (May, 2002, p225)

Holloway & Jefferson (2000) have suggested that four principles facilitate the production of the interviewee's meaning; the use of open-ended questions:

Tell me about your stories of ...' Elicit stories: 'Relate examples of learning in fieldwork that are particularly memorable. Avoid 'why' questions—these tend to encourage intellectualization and can be threatening. (Holloway & Jefferson, 2000, p308)

To avoid this I asked people 'who were you and what was important to you the day the Good Friday Agreement was brokered?' I asked in this way because I remember



clearly who I was and what was important to me that day.

A narrative approach was used to explore participants' life story in relation to education and conflict. I explored *why* peace happened, what were the crucial factors that led to the creation of a peaceful non-violent response to conflict. I studied *how* the research participants work with communities and groups, considered to be from the other side. I identified the processes that led to the peace agreement. I explored the lessons they learned from *what* they do, the methods they employ, and the key skills they bring to the process of conflict transformation. I explored *where* they position themselves in relation to conflict, what role their own personal narrative plays in the journey, and if they identify themselves as peace builders and educators. I was curious to explore how the practice of peacebuilding is intertwined with personal identity. I explored how respondents articulate their vision of peace and conceptualise and understand the role of education in that journey. I aligned this inquiry with a review of the contemporary literature relating to conflict transformation, critical theory, peace pedagogy, the process of dialogue and the critical role of silence in communicative contexts.

#### 4.9 NARRATIVE INQUIRY

‘Republicans and unionists/loyalists are burdened by their own narratives’.

(Máire, research participant)

Savin-Badin & Van Niekerk (2007) suggested that ‘narrative inquiry is used to study educational experience since it is argued that humans are storytelling organisms who lead storied lives’ (p461). They contextualise it within qualitative research:

In terms of locating it in the broad spectrum of qualitative research, it tends to be positioned within a constructivist stance with reflexivity, interpretivism, and representation being primary features of the approach. (Savin- Badin & Van Niekerk, 2007 p460)

#### *Arts Based Methodologies*

As I approached this research I noticed that the telling of stories associated with the conflict was gathering momentum and becoming a dominant response at grassroots level to address how to break the silence and to assist people to articulate their

experiences. The following section briefly outlines some of the narratives that have emerged in recent times in order to illustrate what life was like during the conflict from various perspectives and how we might understand the ‘others’ understanding. A number of artistic approaches using storytelling, poetry, and verbatim theatre were developed by local peace partnerships to document the experiences of various stakeholders. For example, a series of three storytelling sessions were organised by Ennals (2010) to explore stories of love and conflict. *Stories of Love and Conflict in Troubled Times* is the booklet that resulted from the telling of these stories. ‘Each story is different and not all based in Ireland, but the common theme is the struggle people who are from different faiths or cultures face when they fall in love’ (p1). Brett (2011) compiled a booklet that explored the stories of former soldiers who patrolled the border. Fitzsimons in Brett (2011) noted ‘in the 1970’s troops from all over Ireland were posted along the border counties from Louth to Donegal on “temporary duty”’ (p4).

#### *Troubled conversations*

Verbatim Theatre acts as a form that gives voice to those who have been marginalised, forgotten or are invisible in society. In 2012 ‘Troubled Conversations’ a verbatim theatre piece written by Kevin O’Connor, on behalf of Culture Cavan was developed. The writer worked for months documenting the personal stories from ex-provisional IRA volunteers and victims of violence. The play that resulted was very much about the individual and delicate stories behind the Troubles. Their true-life stories were shared onstage so that audiences could collectively bear witness to issues of suffering, redemption, and social justice. The play recognised and appreciated the fact that diversity of opinion, belief, experience, and community background exists. In fragile political contexts there is a tension between the desire to address the hurts of the past and to ignore them. Either way the line between risk and opportunity is a tenuous one. There is the risk that when monologues emerge it has the effect of silencing the other, thereby closing down an opportunity for understanding.

#### *Stories of hope*

‘Stories of hope’ was an initiative between the Catholic Church and the Church of Ireland in Kinawley, Co Fermanagh, a small border village, located one mile from my own village. The initiative aimed to take us out of the trenches formed by our difficult history pointing to a better future. It comprised a series of five personal stories. I

attended two of them. Richard Moore, who was blinded when ten years old by a plastic bullet shot by a British soldier described his journey towards forgiveness to the audience.

Key to the use of narrative inquiry is the researcher's own narrative, and the sharing of that story, as a collaborative action with fellow practitioners. So it seemed justified to design the research in such a way as to encourage respondents to explore their stories in the research process and I to explore my perspectives with them, in order that a collaboration of understanding could emerge. This worked well as it allowed the participants to reflect back in time to a relevant turning point, to weave their story within a transitional time frame, and to reflect upon what was now different about how they view that transition. According to MacIntyre-Latta & Kim (2010) 'reflexivity is at the heart of narrative inquiry' (p140). Ky Lai, (2010) stated 'the narrative approach is an analytic process that produces storied accounts through engaging in narrative reasoning, noticing the differences and diversity of people's behaviour' (p79). The reason for the use of a narrative inquiry approach in this research is to hear the stories and to amplify the voices of stakeholders who have lived through conflict and are emerging in a post conflict era.

As teachers go about their work, living out and telling their stories, the different kinds of knowledge they hold and use in their work are brought forward, developed and refined. (Atkinson, 2012, p92).

#### 4.10 CONTEXT TO THE INQUIRY

It was important to explore the context that surrounded the lead up to the Peace Agreement in the research. Similarly it is important to provide a context within which this research was conducted as it played an influential role in the choice and sequence of questions and topics that were addressed in the design process. The diagram overleaf presents the sequence of events that occurred during the research process. On my way to Teach Árd on the first morning of the fieldwork, 1st of November 2012 the bus was diverted and delayed. It was not at that stage known why. It later transpired that a prison officer was shot and killed on the M1 on his way to work. Fifteen years after the Good Friday Agreement was signed, it was a pertinent reminder of the cyclical nature of conflict and that all of the issues remain to be solved. I broached the topic in the focus group, and the responses are noted in the findings section. The dominant response of those present was the condemnation of it as a murderous act, empathy with the suffering

of his family and the futility of the loss of David Black in terms of any political advancement. On the bus home, it was diverted again, although I spoke with a lady beside me for a couple of hours on that journey, we discussed every topic under the sun, but the murder of the prison officer was never mentioned. In fact when we had reached the natural conclusion to our discussion we began all over again about the price and location where a good cup of tea could be found in the town. I instinctively knew that this was how people in the north deal with the unknown, through silence, but I too had an inability that contributed to my silence. I did not know her opinion and she did not know mine. When she got off another man got on and sat beside me, he had a shorter journey to make with me, we spoke at an appropriate distance about what had happened, not mentioning but referring he said we are all one family and he couldn't figure out why we just can't get along. We had gained an understanding and the silence was broken.

In December 2012, as I proceeded with a second focus group and an interview, the context within which I conducted the field research was in the wake of the decision reached by politicians to fly the Union Jack on 18 designated days from City Hall in Belfast. This is an extremely contentious issue, prior to this the Union Jack flag, the symbol of British governance and power in the north of Ireland was flown on a daily basis. The response from loyalists was what has become known as the flag protest. The roots of this protest is acknowledged in the Findings section of the thesis. Many respondents blamed specific politicians for stirring up violence through a campaign of hatred and animosity, which once instigated they could not control. Fifteen years after the Good Friday Agreement, and six years after the politicians agreed to share power, the issues of identity and the symbolic expression of that identity caused a recurrence of violence and division. The flags issue was raised in the focus group and interview.

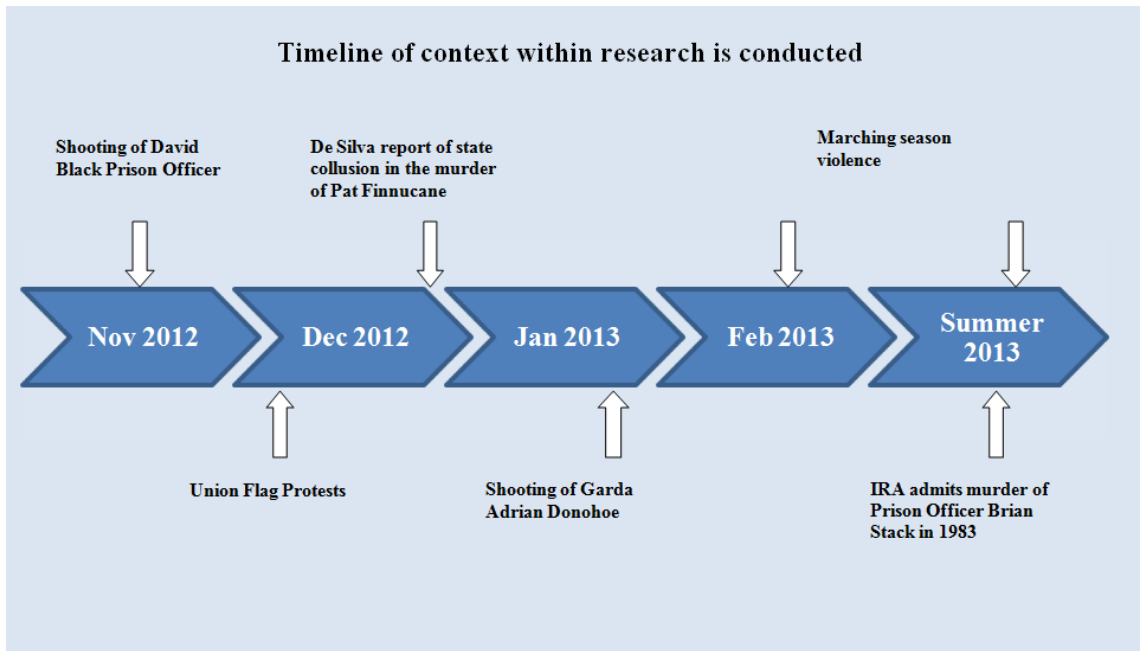
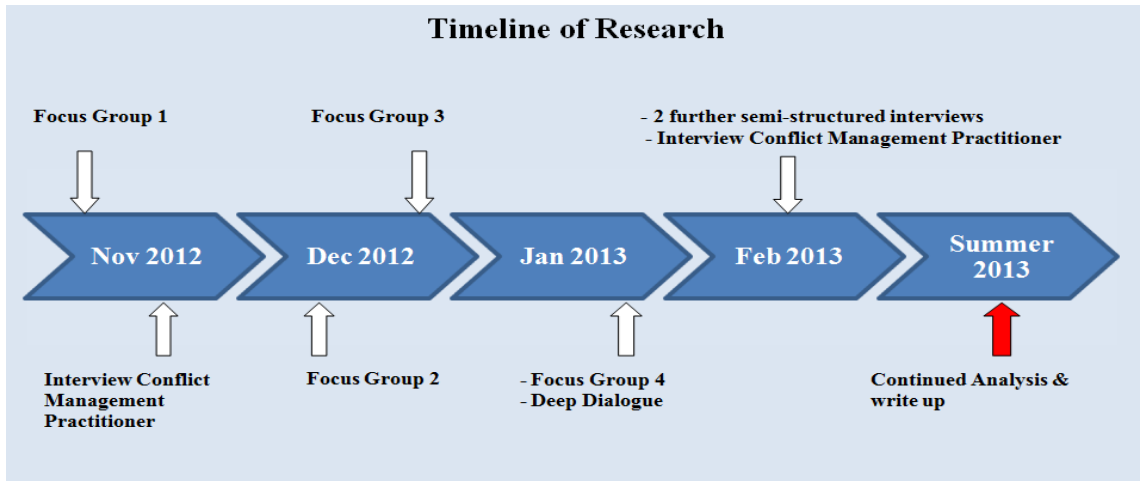
During December 2012, the de Silva Report was released. *The Report of the Patrick Finucane Review* which investigated the murder of human rights lawyer Pat Finucane in 1979 discovered, as previous reports also acknowledged, that there was elements of collusion between state and paramilitary elements in the decision to have this man murdered. The response to this report provoked outrage, as although collusion was admitted, the British government refused to allow an independent public inquiry into the murder.

The shooting of a member of An Garda Síochána (Irish police force) Adrian Donohue occurred in Dundalk during a robbery of a credit union. It is included in the timeline context as an acknowledgement of the instability of society at the present.

The summer of 2013 saw renewed violence on the streets of Belfast, in response to the Orange Order marching season. The twelfth of July was a particularly violent time. 32 PSNI officers were injured, 60 people were arrested, 1300 police officers were brought in to the north of Ireland to assist the PSNI to police the disruptions. The violence on the streets lasted for four days, but the repercussions will last far longer. The volatility reaches a climax every year around this time, loyalists conclude that their culture is being threatened when they are prevented from marching down republican areas and the conflict spirals out of control. There are positive outcomes noted also. In Derry City Orange Order, leaders and local community leaders engaged in dialogue first and marched second, it seemed to work this time.

Figure 12 overleaf provides a visual representation of the context and the timeline within which the research was conducted

Figure 12 TIMELINE OF RESEARCH



#### 4.11 CHALLENGES OF REPRESENTATION

The challenges encountered in the research design, relate to interpretation and representation of data. Challenges of using narrative inquiry as a method include those highlighted by Denzin (1997) in relation to representation. He explained that the writing of narratives poses particular complexities because of the presence of four paired terms in any social text. These are:

- (a) The 'real' and its representation in the text;
  - (b) The text and the author;
  - (c) Lived experience and its textual representations, and;
  - (d) The subject and his or her intentional meanings.
- (Denzin, 1997, p5)

This was particularly relevant to the stories I encountered. The reality of those whose entire life had been dogged by the struggle for liberty, in one case father, grandfather and self had been in jail for conflict related activities. That mindset is difficult to imagine, challenging to represent accurately, it is particularly challenging to try to walk in those shoes. Listening, noting, transcribing, getting to know the person becomes important. You cannot do this in one focus group, one interview, it is demanding of the need for a deeper relational sphere to evolve. Savin-Baden & Van Niekerk suggested the complexities of using narrative inquiry pertained to the relational sphere and representation of reliable data.

Stories are difficult to argue with when presented as good practice and therefore they are immediately problematic as representations of life. This is because stories are both connected to, and representative of, identities and thus to criticise a story is often therefore seen as a criticism of identity. (Savin- Badin & Van Niekerk, 2007, p463)

Some narratives objectified those whose identities differed. Some narratives aspired to making the 'other' adapt to and become more like their own identity in order for them to become acceptable. Others espoused a superiority complex in relation to the other side, whilst presenting recommendations for the other side to become more like themselves as if this approach held benevolent intentions. It is for this reason that I was rigorous in representing accurately what the storytellers told me. I listened to the transcripts as soon as I left the interviews and focus groups. Mostly I used public transport when I could. This was ideal for listening and making notes of the recordings. It also allowed me to listen to and to think about the various nuances that appeared in a person's voice, to interpret what they might mean, to notice when silences occurred, or

when the question was sidestepped.

Munro-Hendry (2010) expands upon the challenge of interpretation ‘the heart of interpretation is the creation of symbol systems. These are the spaces in which humans have attempted to represent their understanding of lived experiences and to make meaning’ (p76). Munro-Hendry (2010) suggests that ‘narrative is not a method, but rather a process of meaning making that encompasses three major spheres of inquiry: the scientific (physical), the symbolic (human experience) and the sacred (metaphysical)’ (p72).

#### 4.12 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

I transcribed the audio recordings, listened several times to each recording, and transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy. Once the data was accurately transcribed the process of analysis through coding of the data commenced. Max Qualitative Data Analysis (*MAXqda*) is the computer software I used to organise the data into coded segments. The process involved a number of steps and stages and was cyclical rather than linear in process. I began by manually grouping and colour coding data that was similar in concept, and by giving it a provisional label or code. This process is described as open coding and uses primarily the researchers intuition, memory of connected data, and use of analytical notes to self in the process of transcription and reading of raw data. Codes were then assigned to segments of text. 360 segments of data were coded, within that 19 concepts or labels emerged from the initial analysis of the segmented codes. The initial/ provisional coding of data was conducted following the first round of focus group sessions and interviews. The main coded groupings which first emerged are outlined in the table below in order of recurrence:



**Table 8**                      **Recurring themes**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>No of occurrences/ coded segments</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>No of occurrences / Coded segments</b>
Republican	57		
Post Peace Agreement	47	Victims	9
Dialogue	41	Sectarianism	9
Education	46	Internationalisation	9
Identity	28		
Loyalist	24		
Community	22	Personal Narrative	8
Lead up to peace	21		
Discrimination	14	Trust	8
Conflict	12	Leadership	7
Informers/collusion	11	Truth	7
Micro groups/ Dissidents	10	Group Theory	6

A second stage of analysis followed which allowed the raw coded data to become linked and connected through referencing of data across several transcripts. Following the second round of data gathering through qualitative interviewing and narrative inquiry I began to cross reference different data sets which had obvious connections in terms of the codes that were assigned to them. Examples of the segments that emerged through cross referencing of data across different transcripts are shown below. Each code was assigned a specific colour. This allowed for coloured image maps to be generated that assisted in visual mapping of the codes within each interview or focus group transcript. This process assisted with identifying the themes that were dominant in each interview or focus group session. It also assisted the analysis and cross-referencing of texts with similar coded segments.

**Code:** identity\|Post peace agreement.  
Transcript 1.

We either go away or we go back to conflict here, and all that that entails I was a bit depressed about it but we talked through it and worked through it ANC came in and helped people talk through it and work through it, I came to the conclusion, and this is probably the discussion going on for weeks before the special Árd Fheis, I came to the conclusion what we actually did was wrong and

what we are doing now is dealing with how we ensure that the objectives we went in to achieve are achieved in a peaceful way, without setting up, A loyalist setting up an army of resistance, to new political structures.

I feel the same now that I did once I worked that through.

Even though the 6 counties are still part of the UK it is a detached part and everybody apart from the unionists actually realise that.

**Code: identity\Post peace agreement  
Transcript 2.**

The Good Friday Agreement was signed in the days before the internet; it was hard to get a copy, My first reaction was totally unacceptable, once I got a copy of it, it was printed in the Belfast telegraph the following day, It was difficult to reconcile this idea of Parallel referenda. My first reaction was totally unacceptable; it took a lot of discussion. My biggest fear at that stage was what do we do now?

**Code: identity\post peace agreement  
Transcript 3**

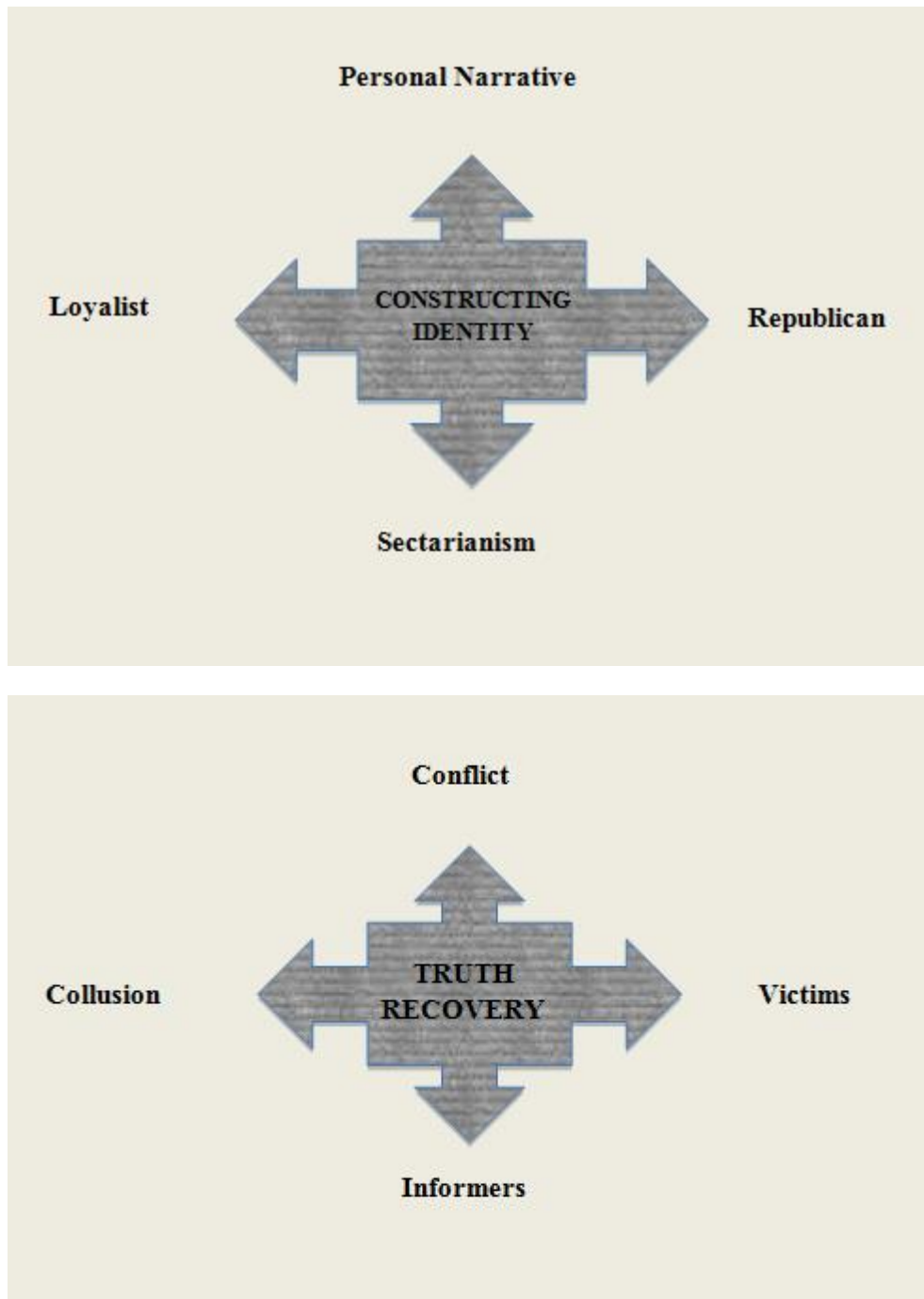
When the Good Friday Agreement was signed I was 18, I had been involved in republican politics since I was 15, and maybe as someone who was 18 yrs. old parts of me found it difficult to accept. You were engaging in a process that we did not know the outcome, we still don't know the outcome, but I believe what we have secured will inevitably bring about what we want.

It certainly was very difficult to accept, but as a republican you always have trust in your leadership. All the decisions of the leadership have proven to be in the best interests of the republican community, communication in terms of strategy is very important.

### *Themes*

The cross referencing of recurring codes together with the analysis of codes identified throughout the transcripts were then drawn together to indicate themes that emerged in the research data. Ten themes emerged as most significant in the research process. The themes were: transitional processes; transformation of mindsets; dialogue; constructing identity; the significance of education; stigma; truth recovery; semantics; censorship of ideology and gender. An example of how the theme of constructing identity emerged, its linkages in the data to codes such as Loyalist, Republican, Personal Narrative and Sectarianism is illustrated in figure 14 overleaf:

Figure 13. Development of Themes



The following section gives an in-depth view of the processes used to analyse data through the use of tools available in the qualitative data analysis software package, MAXqda. Analysis was assisted through the colour coding of codes and the development of sub-codes. Following initial colour coding, a colour image map of each transcript was produced which assisted in the analytical process. The ebb and flow and key indicators relating to themes became more obvious through this colour coding process. Overleaf the emergence of one theme – transitional processes is illustrated.

This illustration depicts how the codes identified in this transcript contributed to the theme.

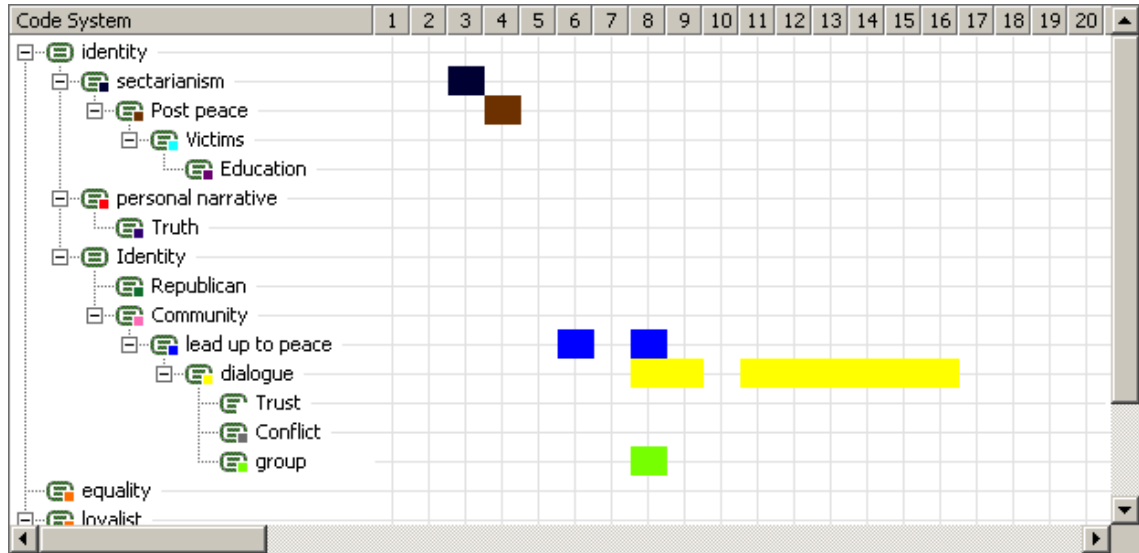
The next step in the coding of data was to assign each code and sub-code a colour and to assign that colour wherever that code appeared in every transcript. This assisted with providing clarity in the cross referencing of codes in the data. The colour image map overleaf represents the analysis of one transcript (transcript no 4). The assignment of a particular colour to each code that emerged through analysis of that transcript produced a visual representation of the ebb and flow of the conversation. The map indicates that the conversation began by focusing on the way that dialogue was designed in the lead up to peace (blue colour) and post peace (colour brown). It then proceeded to describe group processes (light green) and related it to the lead up to peace (blue). It then proceeded to describe how dialogue (yellow) and trust (white) were critical aspects of the transition. The conversation returned to the lead up to peace (blue) and the role of dialogue (yellow) and conflict is touched upon (light grey) returning to trust (white) then republican (dark green) then conflict (light grey) then lead up to peace (blue) then post peace (brown) republican (dark green) sectarianism (black) and victims (turquoise) again dialogue (yellow) and victims (turquoise) trust (white) and a large chunk about education (purple) proceeding to trust (white) personal narrative (red) truth (navy) and republican (dark green)

Theme: Transitional Processes.

The following illustrations provide an insight into the analytical journey that occurred through coding and colour mapping of transcript no 4.

Figure 14. Transitional Processes

Colour code system applied to a section of transcript no 4.



Colour map of the entire transcript on left produced from colour code system above with colour key to colour map on right.



- Line 1: lead up to peace (blue) trust (white) post peace (brown) trust (white) sectarianism (black) trust (white).
- Line 2: lead up to peace (blue) group process (green) lead up (blue).
- Line 3: dialogue (yellow) trust, dialogue, and lead up.
- Line 4: trust, dialogue.
- Line 5- Line 8: trust (white).
- Line 9: lead up to peace, trust.
- Line 10: dialogue, lead up to peace.
- Line 11-12: dialogue, trust, dialogue, trust, dialogue.
- Line 13: conflict, trust.
- Line 14: trust, conflict.
- Line 15: lead up to peace, conflict, republican, trust,
- Line 16: post peace, lead up to peace,
- Line 17: republican, sectarianism, victims, group processes,
- Line 18: dialogue, trust, republican,
- Line 19: group processes, post peace, dialogue,
- Line 20: group processes, dialogue,
- Line 21-23: group processes, trust, and group processes,
- Line 24-33: education, trust, and education
- Line 34: personal narrative, trust, education, trust, sectarianism, and education.
- Line 35-37: personal narrative.
- Line 38: republican, truth, personal narrative,
- Line 40: trust, republican.

It becomes obvious through this type of analysis that the main indicators that assisted in the transitional processes involved moving from the lead up to peace, towards the signing of the Peace Agreement (GFA) and on towards dialogue in a post-conflict context in this transcript are as follows: Trust, dialogue, group processes, victims, education and personal narrative. It is worth noting at this stage that the following process of analysis was applied to every transcript.

#### 4.13 COMMUNITY EDUCATION INDUCING PRAXIS

Munro-Hendry (2010) raises the question ‘how will scholars engage in dialogue with others if they stay within the comfortable confines of current paradigms?’ She responds by suggesting ‘resituating narrative as inquiry, as an epistemology of doubt, has the potential to break down the barriers and walls that keep scholars from engaging in meaningful dialogues across differences’ (p78). Whilst the analytical phase of the research project was progressing the context was evolving in a cyclical nature as it does most summers in the north of Ireland. The spiral of violence provided the backdrop to this study. The marching season was preempted by the flag protests. Dissident activities were increasingly coalescing and security was advancing in response.

Peace education is concerned with building connections between people who are not only like-minded, but also building connections between people who are not like minded, who are other situated. Atkinson (2012) highlighted the importance of and potential for ongoing public dialogue between university researchers and practitioners for validating knowledge claims. McCann and Davey (2005) called for ‘intensification of co-operation between researchers and practitioners’ on issues pertaining to peace education’ (p11). Narrative inquiry in education has been associated with the teacher-knowledge research field, whose interests have been concerned with deepening the understanding of teacher practical knowledge through developing epistemologies, methodologies, and modes of representation for studying and representing teachers’ work, their thinking about it, and how they make meaning of it.

The methodology paid attention to muted discourses, relational issues, priority was given to the meaning making that occurs from a tentative, marginalised perspective.

Munro-Hendry (2010) explained narrative as ‘the ways in which we organise and make meaning’ She further suggests that narrative is a structure (or structures) for organising our knowledge and experience’ (p73). Savin-Baden & Van Niekerk (2007) suggest ‘narratives do not necessarily have a plot or structured storyline but are interruptions of reflection in a storied life’ (p464). They emphasise the skill of listening that researchers must develop in order to conduct narrative inquiry effectively ‘The role of the researcher is to be an effective listener and to see the interviewee as a storyteller rather than as a respondent’ (p464). Dunne (2003) claimed that research into teaching is best served by narrative modes of inquiry since ‘to understand a teacher’s practice is to find an illuminating story (or stories) to tell of what she has been involved in with her students’ (p367). According to Dunne (2003) teaching is an ‘enacted story’ in which teacher and students become characters contributing to and constructing a storyline, and actively seeking creative resolutions to tensions and conflicts that may occur in teaching and learning (p367).

#### 4.14 SUMMARY

This chapter described the procedures and directions that were prioritised in response to the identified needs of the study. Rationale is outlined for the decisions to include three different groupings of stakeholders in the research: former combatants; a conflict management expert; and a group involved in dialogue between people with varying perspectives and ideologies. Participants were border dwellers, in a geographical and symbolic sense. An interesting set of paradigms emerged through this process that elaborated upon the multi facets of conflict transformation. The overarching theme of peace education concentrated the minds of the focus group members and interviewees. This provided insights into the significance of education to conflict and the transition from conflict to peace. Each group validated the others understanding of transformation and highlighted their concerns, the risks involved and the benefits of engaging in the process. There were challenges; the more that silence was alluded to in the discussions the more elusive it became. Fear manifested itself in pockets of silence; some network members failed to engage, I believe because of the fear of exposure. They were predominately located south of the border. I became aware of what I also needed to remain silent about in this study, assertions that I could not replicate, for fear of consequences. The emergence of the themes described in the following chapter was conditional on the particular methodology employed and described in this chapter.

## CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS

### 5.0 INTRODUCTION

The findings chapter of this thesis presents the themes that emerged in the research. The findings are presented in a chronological order although this is not necessarily how they were described – they are presented in this way in order to portray a logical sequence to the story of conflict and peace. This section begins by describing a story of armed conflict that moved and changed from conflict to negotiation. It develops the participants' responses in a linear structure to the factors that influenced the transition from conflict to peace. It proceeds to present the respondents' thoughts on education and its significance to the peace building process. It presents respondents' findings on the influence of dialogue, how dialogue was developed, and the key factors that needed to be in place for dialogue to occur. The respondents explained their ideas on how they view 'others' and what their responses are to difference.

Whilst not all of the storytellers have requested anonymity, it has been granted to all in a bid to protect those who have. I have changed the names of all respondents, and have given them Irish pseudonyms as the Irish language was used and valued in many ways as a response by the participants, former combatants and former political prisoners in particular. Máire, Mícheál, and Seán are the pseudonyms that I used for the respondents in the first focus group. Mícheál and Seán engaged in semi-structured interviews as a follow up to the focus group session and as a means to engage at a deeper level with educational issues. Áine, Sinead, Peadar and Dáithí were the pseudonyms used for the participants in the second focus group and Malachy, Cian, Feidhelm and Barra were the pseudonyms used for members of the third focus group.

I have changed the names of the Coiste Network branches that engaged in the research in a bid to grant further anonymity to the respondents. The pseudonyms I have given them are Teach Árd, Teach Álainn, and Teach Láirde. Cathal is the pseudonym used for the inter-faith conflict management practitioner who engaged in two semi-structured interviews. I have not given names to each of the members of the deep dialogue group. There were twelve members. Their ideas are represented with reference simply to members of the deep dialogue group.



This section presents the findings that emerged in the exploration of the research questions:

- What role does silence play in post-conflict communities?
- What roles can community education play in enabling dialogue?

Ten themes emerged and are outlined below:

Transitional Processes, Transformation of Mindsets, Design of Dialogue, Constructing Identity, the Significance of Education, Stigma, Truth Recovery, Semantics, Censorship of Ideology and Gender.

### 5.1 THEME 1: TRANSITIONAL PROCESSES

Respondents described the context leading up to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) that contributed to the transition from armed struggle to a political strategy. Cathal who was involved at that time in a facilitator capacity explained the context:

There was recognition within both state and paramilitary circles that nobody could win; there was a stalemate. On both sides a search began to take place for alternatives to armed struggle.

He emphasised that the process was not led by external factors but the recognition by paramilitaries of the need for change, and the role of prisoners from both sides in this process:

Way before this, conversations took place among loyalists and republicans, in the prisons before they were segregated and outside prison especially involving the more socially oriented official IRA and their loyalist counterparts.

Seán described his circumstances as a prisoner in the lead up to the agreement:

I was following the process during the build up, discussions were constantly going on, I was involved in the discussions so I had the luxury of sitting with a group of people with valid ideas, who were like-minded. It was a very healthy environment in that sense, for me that period was about being able to internalise what was going on and to analyse it. I was fortunate I had a large group of comrades around me and we were able to discuss things and work things out, it made the journey a lot easier. If I were on the outside, I wouldn't have had that.

Mícheál elaborated on the transition from identifying as a combatant towards identifying as a political activist that occurred through discussion in jail:

Gerry Adams in '73 said arms struggle is only a means to the end, its not the end, you are all politicians. We said no we are in the military, but he said no.

Peadar elaborated upon the concept of critical thinking as an element in the transition from violence to peace:

In the IRA it wasn't all about being an action man, it was about being a thinking political activist, the thinking was the important part.

Máire described her involvement in the process that led to the signing of the GFA. She was OTR (on the run) and had a political brief to build consensus around the 'Towards a lasting peace'.<sup>5</sup>

It wasn't an overnight transformation; it was a long period of time and a depth of discussion around it.

She described the transition from armed struggle to electoral strategy and identified the dilemmas involved in accepting and making that transition:

The process was at least eight years for a change of mind-set; people were absolutely committed to the armed struggle.

Máire described how the evolving context facilitated the changing political landscape. She summarised the key contextual factors that influenced the peace building process:

The reason we were able to make the transition? We had a highly political base. We had leadership that was proven and had the confidence of the base. There was an alignment of the stars, Clinton and Blair were in power, and the Tories were gone. We achieved the objective of internationalizing the struggle. We had the credibility.

The internationalization of the struggle was noted as significant. Peadar suggested that an awareness of the processes that occurred in similar struggles internationally assisted him to understand and engage in the transition:

The South African context and the Middle East, we had an affinity with the Palestinian struggle and affinity with the Basque struggle. We recognised that there are differences in people who seized the time and those who didn't. There's a time when you have to take risks and grasp opportunities.

He described the processes involved:

I was a bit depressed about it, but we talked through it, and worked through it. Members of the African National Congress (ANC) came in and helped people talk through it and work through it.

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<sup>5</sup> Towards a lasting Peace: Sinn Fein Strategy Document, 1992.

Whilst reflective of the dilemmas that occurred for those engaged in armed struggle, I think Máire described how the armed struggle was understood within the context of an occupying force, and as a legitimate response to that invasion in the following passage:

It was asking a lot for people to embrace this, that's why it took so long to convince each other that this was the right route. But with the new alignment, a rethinking and a sense of the possibility to harness political will in order to affect change.

She described the tipping point as been driven by the adoption of the electoral strategy:

The election of Bobby Sands as M.P. was the point. It was Jim Gibney, when Bobby was on Hunger strike, who said we should run Bobby Sands, that technique wasn't used since the 1920's. Elect him into parliament to get him out of jail. We thought they would have to release the prisoners from jail, so we started to run people as councillors, testing the waters there, it proved to be a weapon in our arsenal, armed struggle still dominated the field, but it was going to have to come to a balance, to see what way forward. The Bobby Sands thing gave the impetus to move forward.

Sinéad described her reaction to the strategic approach adopted by republicans as a means to transition from armed conflict:

I was 18 when the GFA was signed, I had been involved in republican politics since I was 15, parts of me found it very difficult to accept, but to move away from armed struggle without a strategy would have been difficult.

Sinéad elaborated on a key factor influencing the transition:

It showed republicans that there was an alternative: we didn't need to lose any more volunteers. More people didn't have to go to prison and lose their freedom, that's why we got behind our leadership and supported them.

She responded confidently to adopting the idea of a strategic transition from conflict. This illustrated the building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships:

Republican strategy is still intact and in my mind we are probably a lot closer to achieving our objectives and hopefully engaging all of our communities.

Peadar described his reaction to the GFA:

I was very pleased the day the Good Friday Agreement was signed, it was a very important step in moving our struggle into a new phase, victory would be closer, not closer in time, or inevitable, but it was a conclusion strategy. There were tactical decisions we all discussed the merits in an ongoing basis.

But this level of confidence was not been adopted unanimously. Mícheál had a different approach to the agreement on the day the GFA was announced he described the effect it had on him as an inmate:

I was a PoW (Prisoner of War) I got up on Saturday morning, read the Good Friday Agreement and nearly threw up in a bucket. I was sickened by it. Why are we signing up to this? It was [the influence of] Paulo Freire, this critical analysis of it. I had a broad based education. I had a social science degree as well. So I could see this is the reality, this is accepting, this is the transition.

Áine described her reaction:

I was desperately disappointed we had family meetings amongst republicans when the process was going on. I was very glad no more volunteers would die, but it's not very revolutionary, I had to force myself to say you can't expect it to be handed in your lap.

So this strategy was not without its challenges for those who were formerly involved in conflict as Cathal described below:

A peace agreement is very difficult for former combatants. Can you imagine people who had command and control of entire streets but when the Good Friday Agreement came, those guys whose very identity was built around their being in control and their paramilitary activity, going from a position of power to powerlessness – a complete loss of status and little or no chance of getting employment.

This is emphasised further through Cathal's observation:

So you could see a lot of stalling by combatants because of the implications of the peace process for themselves personally. Maybe even then many of them could see that it would mean they would have to face their ghosts.

The theme transitional processes identified the route out of conflict and the processes involved in making that transition. Key components were the recognition of a stalemate, engagement in comprehensive grassroots discussions, development of a strategic approach, internationalization of the struggle, the importance of timing and the recognition of grasping the opportunities the era presented, the role of analysis and

internalisation of ideas and the change in thinking that enabled soldiers engaged in armed struggle to recognise their role as political prisoners who engaged in and supported an electoral strategy.

## 5.2 THEME 2: TRANSFORMATION OF MINDSETS

The following section describes how combatants justified the use of armed struggle and provides an insight into the mindset that sees violence as the only viable option. It then proceeds to note where a transformation in that thinking occurred and the critical factors that facilitated that change. Máire spoke about why armed conflict was used as a strategy during the Troubles:

I saw political violence as a tool but I wasn't handcuffed to it. It was in the absence of all other viable alternatives. We didn't have any alternative options our only option was to resist.

Seán described the context within which terrorism activities prevailed:

War was brought to us, ordinary people had to make extraordinary decisions.

Áine elaborated and described various responses:

We were confronted with a situation that is intolerable, and we have to teach each other how to deal with it, whether by arms struggle when that was a necessity thrust upon us, or by political means, or by education for transformation.

The role that the suppression of human rights played in igniting conflict, which then manifested in a community's response to structural and systemic discrimination, is noted. In this context Máire noted that:

Communities' in conflict saw themselves as having no other option, but to resist or face extermination.

Máire noted:

We weren't gunmen and gunwomen for nationalism; we had an ideology.

She explained:

We were not at war with loyalists, or unionists, we were at war with the British government.

She justified the reason for ongoing violent responses:

You cannot stop civil unrest at the drop of a hat, like you can't stop civil war.

The following section explores why combatants' thinking changed and the significance of education to that transformation. Mícheál described the change in focus from indoctrination to the role of critical education in assisting him to critique the agreement and described what it meant for him:

Back in the cages we were told what to think. We were indoctrinated, but studying this, like Freire, Brendan Hughes, got us to read a chapter and asked us what we thought. We began to think for ourselves. Brendan Hughes helped us to think for ourselves. It was difficult to chew on what we were being told, but we were told you are a political prisoner you have the duty to think and be political.

The transformation of the mindset of the soldier/combatant towards a mindset that acted as a political force is a theme that emerged in relation to education in the prisons. Peadar described how that mindset was developed:

You were encouraged into having a duty to think for yourself and to be political. The jails were a hotbed of discussion.

Dáithí described how following a period of time in which analysis of the context was engaged in conclusions could be drawn:

I came to the conclusion that what we actually did was wrong and what we are doing now is dealing with how we ensure the objectives we went in to achieve are achieved in a peaceful way, without a Loyalist setting up an army of resistance to new political structures.

Mícheál acknowledged the benefit of the focus on critical education to the transformation:

We are articulate we are skillful; I think because of the Freire stuff.

The following passage indicates how 'developing frames of reference that are more inclusive and discriminating' encouraged former adversaries to recognise the similarity of their narratives. Mícheál articulated further in the findings:

So me and another loyalist we are at the same conference. We came up together, you become friends and then you talk to people like a round table thing, a victims group, or a former police officer, and I say 'I'm a former republican prisoner' and he says 'I'm a former loyalist prisoner'. We are always singing off the same hymn sheet; about our own communities and about young people and making sure they don't get into violence. Then we

formed a consortium. Last year we talked to 4-500 young people.

Mícheál described how the consortium has developed into a community initiative and how they engage with youth and community groups:

Spearhead in Enniskillen they do this cross community stuff, they heard about us and asked us to come in they were doing 'shared histories'.

He described how the process evolved:

We would go in and storyline and the kids are like 'oh you have got a loyalist and a republican who did life sentences in prison'. I tell them I was about your age when the Troubles started, and then I tell them about my view of why I became involved. Suppression of civil rights, army on the streets I didn't just pick up that gun. I am not defending why I did it I am just saying that I am a product of those times. Then the loyalist would go through a similar thing but he would see the civil rights as the enemy. He thought then, and he was told that the civil rights were the IRA and they would take their British-ness away.

The format of the event encourages young people to ask questions and to clarify some of the issues that are raised. Young people ask: 'why are you still friends?' Mícheál explained how they respond to this paradox by emphasising the nature of dialogue and listening in dealing with difference:

But we still fight, we argue in front of the kids about the flag thing. I say I think our flag should be up there and he says well it's a foreign flag. We turn to the kids and say at least we can talk to each other and I can sit and listen to him that's what's important in your lives.

Mícheál elaborated on how the session proceeds and how they share their personal narratives:

We say don't go down our road, you are out there now and there's a LVF (Loyalist Volunteer Force) or real IRA or real UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force) out there. Think about what we say. We were in a 12 by 6 cell 24 hours a day for years and years. Walking around a wee small yard no bigger than this room, not with grass or a pet dog or cat, having a beer being with my woman all those kind of things. That's a sacrifice you make and what it does to your own family.

In summary Mícheál described the processes as:

It's a kind of mentoring educational thing.

Peadar also recognised the type of work that needs to continue:

I'm looking at a younger generation of people coming up and taking over, there is a process going forward. I understand more the complexities here in the north. I understand them theoretically. There is a very important job of nation building, finding a way into the unionist community and to talk and build relationships.

A participant in the deep dialogue focus group asserted the role of dialogue in the process of transformation:

Without a dialogue you will never get to that space if you don't talk, don't hear don't listen to the other side, it just doesn't happen overnight. The more we talk and move it along the more you can see the other person's point of view without losing your own identity or your own culture.

The critical factors in the transformation of mindsets as described by respondents above included the following processes: articulation and justification of the situation combatants found themselves in; a move from indoctrination to critical thinking, analysis and towards drawing conclusions; embracing the complexities; sharing of narratives between those previously considered enemies and in so doing acknowledging that recognition is an important aspect; building of relationships with communities of 'others' and developing a long term and inclusive strategic approach.

### 5.3 THEME 3: THE DESIGN OF DIALOGUE

The transition that occurred in the jails from resisting through violence what was conceived as an occupation by imperial forces and the suppression of human rights, to adopting an electoral strategy seemed to open up the opportunity for combatants to consider the possibility of engaging in dialogue with those perceived as 'others'. A conflict management practitioner, Cathal, facilitated dialogue between loyalists and republicans during the conflict. He described the process in the lead up to dialogue below. Single identity work involves discussion between like-minded people, with similar ideologies, ethnic background political or religious affiliation:

Well at the beginning it was mostly at single identity level leading to the option to take it forward to dialogue, all parties being willing.

He described the process of negotiation through intermediaries below:



In the initial stages of dialogue the parties usually do not meet but engage in discussion with intermediaries. My colleague and myself operated as couriers between the two. The intermediaries were cross community we were sometimes 2, 3 or 4, but always representative of the two sides.

He then outlined the questions that were posed to each group in a bid to explore the possibilities of bringing them together:

The model I used in the apartheid situation in South Africa involved 2 questions for each group – one containing a request or demand and the other towards making and offer. Question 1. What do you want to hear from the other side that would enable you to entertain the possibility to meet them? Question 2. What would you be prepared to offer to the other side that might encourage them to consider meeting you?

Within the dialogical process, Cathal noted the similarities of needs that evolved in response to the process described above:

The commonalities of need become so obvious. Security for my children, future for my family, amnesty in the case of prisoners, this is what we want and very often recognition for the services we rendered to our cause.

Máire offered a glimpse into the conversations that crossed back and forth between the intermediaries, and the paramilitaries:

Loyalists said they couldn't hear us until the sound of the bombs died down.

So it seemed that preliminary talks offered an opportunity to develop ground rules that provided a pathway for further discussion. Cathal elaborated:

Different circumstances meant that sometimes there was quite a bit of exchanging and responding but on hearing the willingness of the other side, the demands became less strident, more negotiable.

Trust was a key factor that had to be developed during this process of negotiation in the lead up to dialogue. This manifested itself in the demands for security and a neutral venue for those involved in the dialogue. Cathal explained what was necessary in order for dialogue to proceed:

The trust was built up by creating a climate in which they did not feel condemned or demonized.

He elaborated on other key factors, such as respect for others that needed to be understood by all who were party to the discussions:

Those of us who were part of this process had to engage with the ethical dilemmas around violence. The position that I took was that while I had the right as an individual to declare my commitment to non-violence I have no judgment about those who have opted for violence as a way to achieve their objectives. So “I respect you, but don’t expect me to subscribe to violence”.

He noted some difficulties with the idea of respect for combatants that was crucial to dialogue, but was not always forthcoming from all parties to the negotiations:

There were very few people (political negotiators) in the official peace process that were prepared to adopt that position: their position was “we fundamentally reject you and until you decide to change your ways .....

However he suggested that a critical position that was necessary for all to adopt, despite public condemnation of paramilitaries was:

A profound regard for everybody, recognition that we are all part of the problem any self-righteousness in this business is not on.

Cathal qualified his role as facilitator of dialogue within single identity groupings with the recognition that the single identity discussions had to move forward, he describes below the role of the mediator in moving it along to encourage substantive talk:

The point being that somewhere in the middle of facilitation there is trying to move/push/cajole things forward.

He then described factors that he understood to be critical in order to facilitate a move towards dialogue:

An equally important point in the process is the role of confidentiality. Confidentiality as critical to trust; and a willingness to stay with peoples anger, not trying to block them giving expression to what they feel. To dismiss their ideology their ranting and raving, would be to lose them, just to say ‘you have the right to vent – and so also do others. And they’d say ‘Ok no problem’.

Once the negotiation process began yet prior to actual cross community dialogue, Cathal suggested that each side immersed itself in a sequence of posturing and position taking. He suggested the underlying purpose of this sequence of events was to hide from the other side any vulnerability or expression of fear:

That points to fear, and lack of trust, and so the need is to create an environment of trust and confidentiality in which parties can engage, at least with the intermediaries if not directly with the other side, in sharing about real needs and to move beyond position-taking.

Mícheál, a former Republican combatant now working closely with loyalist activists elaborated on the commonalities that emerged in dialogue:

Telling two different stories with a similar narrative about getting involved in conflict.

Cathal concurred:

Conversations unearthed a range of shared interests and needs surrounding the social deprivation they both experienced in their respective communities.

The experience confirmed for me that beyond political ideologies, their main difference was their addresses. Belonging to the paramilitary group that predominated in your area was the thing to do; it was where you got your identity, substantially your sense of belonging, sense of purpose, not least for those whose belonging to mainstream society was tenuous at the best of times.

An equal but different motivation for stalling relates to the process of representation of diverse opinions and ideologies at peace agreements and how consensus is developed with the wider grassroots membership:

The individualist mindsets of Europe dictate that delegations are sent to represent the various groups; this happened at the formal level of Belfast agreement. Things would go well from Monday to Thursday evening but when they starting thinking about going back to their constituents they would start to hold back and dig in.

Cathal remembers how the dialogue progressed and regressed, and the reasoning behind it:

Representatives of different sides were coming to the point where they could see the value of agreement. But then looking back and thinking, I can't go back to my constituents they will shoot me.

According to Cathal this experience differed for each group that were party to the negotiations:

Republicans had a network for consulting with their constituencies, unionists didn't so they couldn't as easily engage in the process, Sinn Fein Representatives would return to base and seek to replicate the journey they had been on in their discussions with their members, take instructions and come back for the next round.

### *Cross Community Dialogue*

The Deep Dialogue group is a community- based group that participated in the research project. Respondents' identified why they became involved in dialogue, the processes they engaged, and the motivation for members who come from various political,

religious, and ideological leanings, to engage in dialogue. They also identified the risks associated with engaging in dialogue with those perceived as 'others'. The group engaged in a brainstorming session to identify why they became involved. The following observations emerged:

Group Brainstorm: Main points emerged.

- Because somebody coordinated it. Co-ordination is a key factor
- To hear different viewpoints
- To discuss people's different perceptions of one side from the other, it's an arena to be able to do that
- More understanding from each other
- For those of us involved in peace work understanding and continuing that peace work
- Networking
- Just this side of the border, trying to get back to where we were before the last conflict
- There are more ways to being a Christian than being in the pulpit, that's the reason why, it's practical
- Curious about each other
- To give our viewpoints as well. We all have something to say, it's a platform to say where you are coming from and as well as listening
- To express your own and to maybe address some of the misperceptions that are out there
- Probably also for some of us feeling an obligation to come together because maybe the thinking is that it is necessary for individual groups denominations ethos, to put in their tuppence worth, there is an obligation to represent your particular ethos
- Culture
- For me it is a deep down sincere want to forward the peace progress in any way that I can
- To promote understanding
- I would agree with the deep down sincere and spiritual reason. At the beginning it was for networking, finance as in travel expenses, but there is now a changing reason why I am here, deep down sincerity, I was working for an organisation in the past but I am here tonight for more sincere reasons, SEUPB funded in the past, now its very different now I come for the spiritual aspects.

Members of the group engaged in a discussion about the root of the conflict as perceived by wider society, and described their interpretation of it:

Problems seem to be that in this part of the world it is Catholic against Protestant and everything is blamed on religion. There are other religions so far they haven't come in to the scenario, I think what we are missing badly we should have something studying the scriptures, most religions are based on the bible, Christianity explored, that's the common denominator, if both could look at the base of the thing instead of Catholic and Protestant, there's never been any

reconciliation on that aspect, you are a Catholic you are a Protestant something to bring a certain amount of people together to study the scripture in some way.

This observation was addressed in the following way:

Are you saying we are coming together because we have something in common?

And responded by suggesting:

I'm sure there are people out there who wouldn't come in here if they were getting paid, you definitely have to want to come here, I think if we could get rid of the awful myth of deep hurt that both believe in the bible, but that seems to be at the root of the problems.

An alternative viewpoint then emerged in the discussion:

I think that's one of the perceptions, and that's a very legitimate view  
For me religion would never come in to it, for me I'm a Catholic but I wouldn't be a very good practicing Catholic or I would never say I wasn't a Catholic, it would be an analysis of the conflict being a political conflict. There has been much cross over too. Traditionally colonialism has used one sect against another to maintain divisions. It was never religious differences, anywhere on the horizon at all.

The theme of the loss of connectivity between neighbours during the conflict was acknowledged as having a lasting impact. The following quotes expressed how that loss of connectivity is experienced, and the hope that engaging in dialogue will address this aspect of the Troubles:

For the likes of Clones and other border areas would be the same, we lost contact with three quarters of our hinterland; we were isolated so to reconnect again, because that has never happened.

Another expressed an understanding of how border dwellers have been programmed to act in limiting schemata:

There was a man (from north of the border) who used to walk to Clones for tobacco, it took him a couple of hours between working and standing talking, that's the place they went, the roads are open now but the cars are literally programmed to go the other way.

Others suggested:

We lost the relationship between our northern neighbours; we've never got it back to what it was.

An acknowledgement that economic factors are limited in what they can achieve:

When fuel was significantly cheaper with us (in south) we were getting people back in to buy fuel. But from a social side of things they don't come back, we

thought when they would be in to buy groceries we could encourage them. We thought we could woo them to functions, but our wooing process is not that good. (Laughing)

When members were asked to reflect upon their own personal reasons for involvement in the group, significant motivation for engaging in dialogue with others was elaborated upon, and reinforced the theme of connectivity:

Not to go back to the suffering and the days when so many people losing their lives, for me peace work is so important. We need to understand each other it's (deep dialogue) a good forum for that.

To get back to the good days when all neighbours helped each other no matter the religion. Just a sincere want for peace and harmony again. Forget about politics, lets pray for peace.

Want to move on and reconnect with people, get a better understanding of rather than having perceptions, feel it was important to acknowledge that there was hurt on both sides.

The group then identified the risks involved in engaging in dialogue with those perceived as others:

- Isolation: from family, group and church.
- Offending others in the group or community.
- Shunned by part of your own community. Friction.
- Betraying your own community.
- Been seen as a sell out. Losing the trust of one's own people.
- What are you going there for? Criticism.

One respondent noted the changing landscape in relation to risk:

There is personal risk saying anything about yourself - this is greater depending on where you lived or which side you are coming from. This has changed a lot in the past 10 years.

Another expressed a fear of the unknown in the beginning of group formation:

Fear of the people in the room at the initial formation of the group.

The benefits of engaging in dialogue were acknowledged as:

- It gives people a forum to say what they want in a safe environment
- Benefit of a good facilitator
- Feeling or doing some good - moving on

- Opportunity to meet people in interface
- Understanding
- Build trust
- Builds confidence
- Idea where other people are coming from in their community
- Friendships
- Safe forum
- Gaining a better understanding of other's views
- Group truthfulness
- Addresses false perceptions.

Where deep dialogue emerged as educational, it was noted by respondents in the group as having the following functions:

It is education regarding the myths and misunderstanding.

Informal education where you don't pigeonhole and you withdraw from the 'blame game'.

The perception of the other changes, or maybe the misconception you had is broken down. You move away from the misconception to more of a reality to where they were coming from.

Listening to, hearing and understanding the other side was noted as important in the process:

I have a deep desire within me for peace. To listen to other people's point of view and to express my own views in a safe forum. To give opportunity to those who have lost loved ones in the Troubles to express their pain and to help them see a reason to go on.

In conclusion the importance of acknowledging a personal narrative was highlighted:

No matter who you are you have a life story to tell, sometimes the conflict is created when there isn't an outlet for people to tell their story and talk about how life has treated them, so the platform to do that to express as well as all of the other listening.

#### 5.4 THEME 4: CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY

The theme of Republican identity emerged very strongly in the first focus group in Teach Árd, particularly in discussion about the lead up to the Peace Agreement. It emerged throughout the research as a significant factor. The following extracts present

how this emerged. Cathal's experience of facilitating dialogue between former adversaries discovered:

At the core of conflict there is the crucial issue of identity.

Cathal elaborates upon how this construct of identity manifests itself:

Northern nationalists have had a different journey from their republican cousins. They are different. In the south they are called 'Nordies' - alongside Poles and Lithuanians. So there is certain ambivalence as to who we are. By the same token the unionists declare themselves to be British - but they get the message loud and clear from the 'mainland' that they are not really. So there is ambivalence on both sides.

He observed how this core issue in turn manifests itself as conflict:

I think the internal dynamic runs something like this 'I'm not sure who I am but I'm damned sure who I'm agin (against). So both tribes based their identity not so much in terms of who they are but who they are agin. That means that having the other as enemy is crucial to our respective identities, which means we find it hard to let go of our enemy and embrace him as (anything) other than enemy who will we be then?

Identity, as it is discussed in the findings shows clear demarcation lines in relation to social class. Mícheál explains how this was manifested:

Most, if not all of the IRA, came from working class areas.

Máire identified the Catholic community as being:

Third class citizens, with poor Protestant loyalists being second-class citizens, they lived in similar houses, but the difference was that they had access to jobs.

Loyalists are thought to have insecure ontologies, Máire suggested:

They destroyed their communities through drugs, prostitution, and intimidation.

Máire acknowledged that republicans saw loyalist paramilitaries as:

Native militia growing up, all focused on the IRA, who went to war against republicans, against Catholics. They were militia of the state armed by the state.

In this context she explained in contrast how the Irish republican Army was seen to be:

Taking on the standing imperialist force, with the added complication of loyalism, muddying the waters.

From a republican viewpoint Máire explains her understanding of Loyalism:



Loyalists are led by the nose and used by unionism whenever they want to trump up opposition.

A member of the deep dialogue group agreed:

Their own elected political leaders look them upon as 'scum' at other times.

Whereas Máire believes that republican former prisoners are seen within their own communities as having credibility:

Our community held the ex prisoner in such high esteem in some cases as 'heroes', they proved themselves outside of jail because they were of service to the community, that's why they were protected by the community.

Sinéad, in discussing the change in strategy from armed conflict to political negotiation elaborates on identity:

I don't feel that I have compromised my identity or I have changed in any way, but with a grounded strategy at the end of the day the work you have done is getting you closer.

Loyalists, on the other hand, as noted by Dáithí in the research are seen as:

Struggling with identity, they are a race of people who don't really know how to fit in.

Dáithí spoke about doing third world studies in prison and asked the tutor:

What is the loyalist perspective on all of this? Republicans came at it from the point of view of the colonised rather than the coloniser. The loyalist analysis was similar to our own, but the conclusions were totally different. They have to analyse where they came from, they have to rewrite and say they were duped; political unionism is moving on without them.

Whilst republicans acknowledged that loyalists had a similar narrative about getting involved in the conflict, the motivation according to Máire is understood as different:

We never produced anyone like a Johnny Adare; the amount of oppression from loyalist militia upon their own community is a story still to be told. We (republicans) see it as racketeering, the Protestant community they see it as conflict attacks, they thought the IRA would come and murder us in our beds, so if we needed to pay for it (protection) that's ok.

Loyalist experience of leadership is believed to be different to republicans, Máire suggested:

There is a psychological split between unionists and loyalists, loyalists do all of the violence, and we are unionists we don't do violence but if you don't do this the loyalists will go mad.

Máire said:

Political unionism kept them in a cupboard, never sat at the table with them.

The theme of influencing loyalists is strong in the research data:

The time will come when we will support loyalism to move from political unionism, you may have working class leadership representing them, whose chief identity is not loyalism, something for the future, we have great hope in it developing.

Máire developed this idea further:

We train loyalist ex prisoners here, because so many doors are closed to ex prisoners on both sides, we go in to their areas, which at the start that was quite a challenge.

Seán emphasised how community development impacts on the construction of identity:

Within community development you find so many identities within it, its so broad ranging, different nationalities within it, take west Belfast it's so broad ranging. Over a ten year period how much that community has changed there are so many identities within it. The whole thing about equality is now about equality of gay and lesbian rights. We are not stuck in a period whereby one identity marks out a community. A community is always developing.

Seán identified specific opportunities for community development in relation to identity and leadership issues:

For the flags issue, stuff about identity and people talking about their voices, it's about people depending too much upon being led and can't find leadership within their own communities.

Seán responded to the use of flags to assert identity, he speaks to the 'other side':

You are going to have to start dealing with this in your community. You are going to have to find within yourselves some kind of strength for identity. You are depending on a symbol. Our identity is about what we can develop we don't depend on a symbol to tell us this is what our community is about; I think it's about a lot broader things than a symbol.

He acknowledged the complexities that existed if communities are experienced as monolithic entities:

If you are sitting with a fixed view, about how people should view you it becomes problematic, when other people are asking where do we feature within this? How people deal with it then is to revert to type, we have always dealt with this by doing a, b or c so we will do the same now.

Seán suggested:

Whereas within communities and community development it's about much more than that, it might have been a factor 10, 15 years ago but because of the way the community is now it doesn't feature as a top priority, there may be other priorities.

## 5.5 THEME 5: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EDUCATION

The significance of education to republicans in the prisons was a main contributing factor and was a process engaged in by inmates in order to fortify their identity, to understand the position they found themselves in, to politicise their thinking and to develop the skills to engage in dialogue. It was also found to be a useful way to pass the time.

Máire suggested:

Nationalism had a love affair with education born out of necessity.

Education was needed on the outside (of prison) older political prisoners encouraged the younger ones to 'do education'. As Mícheál noted:

I left school in 1968, when I was 14 when I went to work, when I joined the republican movement then I went to prison. I could barely read and write I didn't come out with any accreditation. But straightaway you were encouraged by the older ones why not read a book, and stop reading comics. I was still reading the beano.

Mícheál reflected upon the educational processes that occurred in prison:

There was an ethos there to learn history; at the start it was very formal with a blackboard. When Adams and Hughes came in they said 'get yourselves into a circle'. I was asked to read half a chapter of *The Orange State* by Michael Farrell then they asked me my opinion. They asked me what I thought. That planted the seed of discourse and discussion. That was an informal structure.

Peadar explained:

We were trying to develop the notion of a republican university, Long Kesh and Portlaoise (prisons) as being republican campuses.

Máire commented:

The Kesh was called the university because the emphasis was on 'educate to deliberate'.

Peadar described the way that was played out:

The jail talk phenomena, people lived their lives through the Irish language.

Freire and Gramsci were noted as important contributors to prisoner education. Cian elaborated:

Education became very highly developed in the prisons, but there was a precedence for that in the cages, (Long Kesh) there was that interest among the group of prisoners, they embraced that hunger for knowledge and a hunger to look at and learn from the wider world with regards to their own struggle.

Cian whose educational background is law explains his influences and how he engaged with others in a critical engagement with their situation:

Another name I remember was Gramsci and his political studies, I was interested in it from a legal point of view, we were going to do a chapter each, different book ideas were being kicked around, as wee mini homages to that. Our way of acknowledging that this was where these ideas were coming from-the prison diaries.

Feidhelm elaborated on the significance of critical and liberation theory to the politicisation of former combatants:

Not long after I got out, the house was raided, I had all these publications under the bed, liberation theology and other struggles around the world, the branch took it away with them, when they came back they said, 'you couldn't believe all that shit' but yes, Paulo Freire, liberation theology and others.

Respondents noted differences between formal and informal education structures and systems. They noted how the formal structures implemented by prison officials became interrupted at times when disruptions occurred.

Áine, a former female political prisoner noted some prison officers attitude to education:

Some of the screws were real dinosaur brains, they were suspicious of books, and all we got was Mills and Boons.

Peadar concurred:

When IRA prisoners first started going into jails in England, they took *Plato's Republic* out of the library, they thought it was a republican text.

Respondents noted the importance of reading, watching films, such as *The Great Silence* many of which related to international struggle and discussed the creative responses engaged in by freedom fighters' to education as essential. Peadar described the commonalities that existed between freedom fighters' internationalization of the struggle:

I talked to a guy from the African National Congress who was released after serving 19 years in prison in South Africa, they couldn't get their hands on enough Irish books, they had to get covers of trashy novels and put them on Irish books. They were big into Sean O'Casey and Irish history books they were inspirational.

Áine noted various authors that were influential such as:

Walter Macken, author of the trilogy, *The Silent People, Seek the Fair land, and The Scorching Wind*. Historical novels are seen an important way of bringing people into the study of history.

Peadar agreed and elaborated:

There is a snobby attitude towards reading historical novels. It's an important way of bringing people into the study of history. Peter Beresford Ellis wrote extensively on Celtic Studies, he did an anthology of Irish Horror, an anthology of Connolly, and the Sister Fidelma novels.

Áine also noted:

I got Kitson's *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, and Peacekeeping* (in prison). I was really disappointed when I read it we already knew most of that. Like Paris in the commune we were separated; we had a big flyover coming down architecturally engineered by the Brits separating different parts of the community. We thought Kitson was a bit backward by the time we got it.

She emphasised the importance of adult education as:

If you are designing to get adults into learning get them into what they need to know about their own interests and their own survival interests.

Participants in the study referred to the educational processes adopted in mainstream systems as problematic, reinforcing the authority of the state and suggest that a radical overhaul of the education system is necessary as a precursor to the aspiration for a reformed society. Áine articulated how such a change might evolve:

It's about transforming the education system, I would approach it from a process point of view, peer advocacy, each one teach one, you become the teacher, the teacher is a peer.

Seán narrated the experience of formative schooling coupled with the desire to begin to learn Irish in secondary school:

I couldn't wait to go to secondary school to learn Irish within a year I absolutely detested it.

The crushing of the love of the Irish language by a teacher in secondary school engaging in banking techniques was paramount.

That teacher absolutely ruined a whole generation of people coming through that school.

Mícheál remembered one teacher who treated him 'like a human being' and the positive impact that left on him:

When I think back at my school I remember one teacher. The only guy who treated you like a human being, that followed me through although I didn't do well academically at school you always remember this guy was decent he said 'why don't you shape your self up' and you do listen.

Respondents suggested an education system that attends to human concerns alongside market concerns would explore topics such as:

How do people deal successfully with oppression?

Respondents suggest that the aims and objectives of the education system could be revised to respond to the living of a life as a subject capable of adapting to the worldview surrounding them. Áine suggested:

Education should be modeled on what you need to know to live your life and it shouldn't be modeled on what you need to know to pass exams. A new system would be team-taught, shared learning, break down the authoritarian learning where there's a teacher at the top, that process reinforces the authority of the state, you don't question things.

Referring to an education system that arises from necessity and justifying the emerging responses to conflict Sinead suggests the changes she would like to see in the curriculum in the north of Ireland.

I would like to see more emphasis placed on the Irish language taught in schools, it may be taught to GCSE but beyond that there is no capacity for our native language to be taught, our history and aspects of our culture are neglected from our curriculum.

Peadar suggested the socio historical context as an important site of education:

Teaching how the history of this island evolved, Irish history was minimum and considered minor, the important history was the British monarchs and war, republicans are happy to see most points of view brought out and explored and discussed.

Dáithí suggested an important site of learning would be:

Colonialism, what specifically in terms of world history colonialism actually meant to people to north America, South Africa, and other parts of Africa. I would like to see history concentrating on the impact on ordinary people and what colonialism means nowadays, you can near enough trace all the major conflicts back to colonialism.

Cathal summarised:

In Northern Ireland, this whole two tribes nonsense is a political construct, which we have all fallen into subscribing. We have in fact a pluralist society, and our education must reflect that with a focus not just on 'the two communities' but in intercultural relationships.

### *Community education*

Seán described his interest in community education:

It wasn't actually until in my later years that I became more interested in some aspects of it in terms of education within communities, how important it is for people's understanding of the settings within which they are in working in or being activists. I see it as central to what you need to be about and for any sort of personal development or community development or activism at all.

He described the processes that are important in community education:

When I was active as a republican in terms of seeing within communities, which are very underfunded no investments in them where people actually need to have an idea of the construct of a society they are in, and how you actually work within it and how you actually empower people about how to make the best of whatever is available in their lives, and how you actually, in terms of challenging structures and institutions and state and whatever else. From that

sense I see education in terms of those people and those views that people can actually articulate them and bring people along and sort of bring out.

He elaborated on the role of community education in articulating needs:

For a great many people to actually express views which people were actually holding but didn't have an idea of where they wanted to go with if they felt themselves that there was some issue that they wanted to deal with or whatever else and other things were impacting upon it, but didn't know how to steer their way through it without coming up against buffers, I suppose in that sense I sort of seen education is used to empower people and people actually use it, not for a particular set role but very broadly within settings within communities.

He described the challenges that being involved in community education raised:

Some people would have had the view that education was just, it was something that if you got involved in, you lost touch with what you should be doing in terms of republican activism, but I saw it as something that was fairly empowering to people, that was my recognition of it people taking time to actually involve themselves in it.

He elaborated:

I think It can be a very powerful tool for communities, from personal development up to community development up to people actually being able to manage projects and manage it in the sense that it is for the community and its not like a personal fiefdom.

He contextualized:

Communities within republican areas, when you look at how people have a sense of where they are in their lives as a community and where they have come from, that sense of confidence about where you can go with things, in contrast you are hearing recently about Loyalists being left behind and where they get their leadership from.

Seán described the impact of community education on developing leadership as:

In community education, communities grow the leadership within. That's where they get it and that's where they recognise it, it's not like the old banking system where knowledge is poured into you. People take control they take a wee bit of power and know through education you can start to find answers; within communities for community development that's where I see the importance of education.

Seán suggested that education is needs to be embedded in the community:

It's something that has to be embedded. It's something that takes a bit of growth within the communities that I recognise for many years and there are historical reasons for it.



Seán acknowledged the contribution of education in articulating a communities' identity:

With community education people depend on themselves to actually get through. We know where we are now. Loyalist communities believed that the state would always look after them and look at what sort of legacy that's left. There's a large gap where people can't articulate where they are as a community, what their identity is and what they should be doing about it.

In recognising the role of an embedded community approach to education Seán suggested how such an approach manifests itself in times of crises:

Community development if it has shown anything within our communities it has shown how people can now seek to find ways around things, its not about what they have done in the past and this is what we do now, it's about the best way through it.

He noted:

Within community education communities grow their own leadership.

Áine elaborated on the role of leadership:

I think in a republican organisation everybody has to take a leadership role.

Seán suggested:

There's leadership who remove themselves from the community, then there's places where nobody has got what it takes to step out and to be a leader and to make the move, you've heard the argument it's 15 years since the Good Friday Agreement and we are still at this point.

Áine expanded:

It's not just agreements people have to make the agreements work, they need leadership, people have to invest in it if they don't disasters happen.

A respondent in the deep dialogue group asserted:

The politicians went to Stormont and forgot about them, we heard that from both sides that was a mirror image of both sides.

Seán articulated the role of community education in the following observation:

People need to have an idea of the construct of a society they are in, and how you work within it and how you empower people, in terms of challenging structures and institutions.

Áine described how the approach to education could be renegotiated:

For me it's about transforming the education system, not just about the subjects we teach. I do adult education we teach community workers how to get involved through a peer advocacy course.

She expanded upon how this type of education is designed:

We teach civil rights. It should be a lot of live teaching you should get lots of films that's how people learn these days people don't just read books. Do that with young people make it team taught everyone has something to do you get real people there for discussions you get the loyalists for their point of view as well because its shared learning.

Máire has noted the underachievement in education of young Protestant loyalists. She refers to Dawn Purvis's attempts:

Dawn Purvis<sup>6</sup> MLA she represented working class loyalists, she emerged, she came into conflict over loyalist murder of loyalists but prior to her departure she commissioned a report, why young working class Protestant boys were doing so badly in school compared to republicans.

Máire suggested the reasons for the differing approach to education between republicans and loyalists:

On the republican side you had to get out you had to get an education to get out. Loyalists had a job for life loyalists were going to get a job in the dockyards it was handed down from father to son. That led to low academic results they didn't need education it was not a necessity and that translated into the jails.

Máire asked:

How do we instill a love of learning?

The data provided evidence that those with a keenly developed love of learning faced challenges and barriers in continuing their education, both in prison and in mainstream educational settings. Peadar elaborated on some of the challenges he faced while imprisoned in England:

I tried to get back into study habits with a one-year course. I wanted to do a Masters. I was a math's teacher, my special subject was the philosophy of science, I was accepted for Canterbury University and just as I was due to start it was blocked, I wasn't allowed to do it. There were various obstacles put in your way trying to get through the formal system. The interesting thing about the university, they tried to convince me to do ethics, I was in jail for terrorism, that's the way they saw it. They were trying to impose on me an identity that wasn't what my academic identity was it was a strange one. I wasn't allowed to do it.

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<sup>6</sup> Purvis, D (2011) Educational disadvantage among Protestant working class: A call to action.

Barra mentioned his experience of applying for a degree in Queen's university, Belfast and the letter of rejection that followed his disclosure on the application of having a political conviction:

The letter said 'we note you were convicted of criminal offences'. This was Queens University; I wanted to do an honours degree in French. I wanted to start my degree as an ordinary person in the class not to be nudged at or about. I had to drop it. So it haunts you. Several of our people have done degrees; they must not have disclosed it.

Cian wanted to gain access to higher education and faced rejection:

The idea of anybody trying to become a solicitor in the south having a republican conviction in the south it just wasn't on, it wasn't going to happen, it didn't matter what you put forward.

The processes adopted in education practice highlighted how discrimination is experienced, and how silence is adopted, even when access to education is achieved. Barra elaborated on how such processes are internalised:

Sometimes you don't know what reaction you are going to get, when I went to do that equality studies course in Maynooth two or three years ago. I remember on the first day everybody introduced himself or herself. I said 'I work for a community group' they dug at me and dug at me, what's your target group. What's your target group, what's the name of the organisation? Then I had to say, (former political prisoners) everybody is looking at me a wee bit differently now.

Malachy suggested:

Republicans have to battle in every area of their lives including education.

## 5.6 THEME 6: STIGMA

The experience south of the border for former political prisoners is a different one to that of the north, and coincides with the experience of being a republican displaced person in general. Barra identified how he feels he is being perceived:

Marginalisation, stigma, scapegoating, when they hear who you are and when they hear the northern accent it's actually even worse.

He described the impact upon him following his displacement south of the border:

Your presence was resented and you were harassed on a daily basis by special branch.

Malachy gives further elaboration to this point in the following comment and suggests exclusion:

There certainly is an agenda amongst the major (political) parties to exclude republicans the reality is that they are still viewed with great suspicion.

Malachy elaborated on his understanding of the outcomes of peace negotiations in a post-conflict era:

Post the peace building am I valued as a republican prisoner in the 26 counties? Certainly not, treated with suspicion and put up with.

Malachy raised a question that queried recognition:

An openly republican person in 2012, in the 26 counties would that person with the proper qualifications, going into any private establishment agency, statutory or the large voluntary agencies would that person speaking and living openly as a Republican, or as a gay man or woman, the same comparison or question can be asked would you flourish in that environment would it be possible for you to enter that and find yourself at the top of that organisation at the end of 25 years?

Malachy explained how stigma impacts upon access to formal learning systems and of former political prisoners being treated as criminal:

If you go to university it's a question on the list 'do you have you a criminal record? Political ex prisoners if you ask people about criminal record republicans won't respond yes. So under their (university) rules and regulations, if they discover you have a criminal record you can be removed from the course and you can have your qualification removed. So many years into the peace process that prison record is considered criminal.

Malachy suggested that there are ways that such barriers could be lifted and recognition could be achieved:

There should be 10 grounds for discrimination in modern society the 10<sup>th</sup> should be political prisoners.

He further suggested that discrimination impacts upon the limitation of services offered to former prisoners in the aftermath of conflict:

Because of scapegoating and discrimination there has been no effort made to treat post-traumatic stress. That's a silent thing that has held a lot of people back.

The following excerpt highlights how suspicion of former combatants influences and is perceived by former combatants living in the southern state in contemporary Ireland. Malachy emphasised:

The major groups in this country that are vilified are republican ex political prisoners, there is a lot of scapegoating, the Troubles has been blamed on one community, on one outlook, that has been done by the British, by loyalists, by the unionist state in the 6 counties, by the government because it suited them.

Despite this observation, Malachy noted:

Ex prisoners are involved in their community in some way, the percentage of ex prisoners would be very high, they have an interest in communities despite the difficulties they have faced and still do face.

#### 5.7 THEME 7: TRUTH RECOVERY: WHERE TO NOW?

True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice

(Martin Luther King, Jr.)

A concept that emerged in the research relates to the transition from a peace building, post-conflict era (1998 to 2012) to a 'post peace building' context; designed in response to a decade of centennial commemorations. This new era presents as all the more challenging because of the implications it hosts for a renewal of conflict in the context of truth recovery. Digging up the past is messy business in a post-conflict context. Cathal highlights challenges and complexities that are involved in the process:

In Northern Ireland there is collusion in trying not to deal with the need for truth to be told, truth is the first victim of violence.

He elaborated:

We are aware of situations where there was state collusion. There was also considerable protection of inside informers.

Truth recovery is necessary for victims of violence and their families, many who feel forgotten during the peace building context, and the promotion to power of those who are seen as responsible for the violence inflicted. Cathal describes how this process is emerging:

The lies: the mythologies; the spins that are put upon things; and therefore it's my observation that those who have truth to tell are colluding with each other in

trying to prevent truth being told. So that the handshake between Martin McGuinness and the Queen was as much as anything a wink-wink, an agreement to **not** wash each others dirty linen in public.

He cemented his observation with a further comment and confirms why he believes that collusion around truth recovery is being rolled out in the public domain:

The Sinn Fein position at the moment they keep on saying we are ready for a truth recovery process. They know very well that the British government does not want the truth to be told so they can say that in the knowledge that they will not be required to tell the truth and so does that make sense?

In relation to truth recovery he commented:

I remain convinced of the critical need for the truth to be told insofar as it is possible; there is a reality that much of what happened, that the truth around it cannot be recovered, but in so far as it can victims need and have a right to know what is available by way of truth as to the circumstances leading to the death of their loved one or whatever it was and given that conflict always is very very messy.

Tadhg listed the numerous reports down the years into collusion between state forces and paramilitaries, in a bid to interpret the needs and demands of truth recovery:

The British Irish Rights Watch report 1999<sup>7</sup>, in 2003 the Peter Cory<sup>8</sup> report showed collusion and the absence of records, the Inquiries Act 2005<sup>9</sup> Stephens<sup>10</sup> completed 3 reports and the de Silva report 2012<sup>11</sup>.

Tadhg extrapolated what the existence of numerous reports suggested:

They have had 10 years to collate the information. The British government has been managing truth for decades. The Weston Park Agreement was meant to shore up peace. There is evidence that there was collusion in six cases and there

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<sup>7</sup> British Irish Rights Watch. (1999). [Deadly Intelligence: State involvement in Loyalist murder in Northern Ireland](#). London: British Irish Rights Watch.

<sup>8</sup> Cory, Peter. (2003b). [Cory Collusion Inquiry Report: Patrick Finucane](#). London: HMSO/The Stationary Office (TSO).

<sup>9</sup> The Inquiries Act (2005). The Act provides a statutory framework that may be used by ministers wishing to establish an inquiry with full powers to call for witnesses and evidence.

<sup>10</sup> Stevens, John. (2003). [Stevens Enquiry: Overview and Recommendations](#). Belfast: Stephens Enquiry.

<sup>11</sup> de Silva, Desmond. (2012). [Pat Finucane Review: An independent review into any state involvement in the murder of Pat Finucane](#). [On-line Report]. Web: <<http://www.patfinucanereview.org/report/index.html>>.

has been no consultation with the families, the British government have policies that allow collusion to happen.

Peadar acknowledged the problems encountered:

The Pat Finucane report released in the last few days where collusion has been admitted, and recognised and still there will be no public inquiry about it because they still want to scapegoat one section, when it was obvious it was a dirty war on all sides.

So whose truth is favoured, and whose truth is muted? Malachy asked:

Ask the simple questions, it can give you some kind of a picture, can the RUC man who has 20 years service and retired, can he travel, can he foster a child, has he access to insurance and a mortgage, has his involvement in the troubles affected his life in any of these ways, of course it hasn't.

Tadhg supported the need to develop a forum for truth recovery focused on equality rather than hierarchy:

Truth and equality don't hurt anybody but the rich. I don't want anybody to go to prison for my brother's murder I just want the truth. Judicial enquires would help the truth building process. But Eames Bradley and the HET (Historical Enquiries Team) are all elements of a process of stalling, obstructing, and prevaricating, there is no forum in place for truth recovery with victims groups based on equality.

Speaking about a loyalist with whom he has formed a friendship and working relationship Mícheál suggested:

What we need now is truth recovery, the other guy I work with the other loyalist he is on trial now for something he is alleged to have done 40 years ago. I don't understand that. It's called the historical enquiries team (HET) He has already served a life sentence. So my argument is if he ever gets sentenced he is going to have to go to prison. I don't see the benefit of dealing with the past in that way. It's mostly loyalists that are getting done that's because the police weren't properly investigating their murders they didn't see killing Catholics as a crime. I don't think it's right. He is a youth worker I told him if you ever get sentenced I would testify on your behalf.

Máire suggested the difficulties with linking concepts together and raises the need to uncouple truth and reconciliation:

Truth and reconciliation, do they go together? Truth recovery is a long arduous and futile process. It has taken four years of political discussions to define

victim. Don't make truth conditional on reconciliation the process may be helped by the uncoupling of truth and reconciliation.

She pondered:

Are we brave enough as a society to ask what went wrong? We need an open commitment to seek out ways to deal with the past. We are prevented from doing so by the burden of our stories.

Máire explained how this commitment could be forthcoming and suggested possibilities:

We need outside help we need international assistance. We are too tribal we are still traumatised by the pain of our losses. People are older but they are not less entrenched. We don't have the distance from it to be fair to everyone. Help us to solve this.

In explaining how the process evolves on the ground she expanded:

Dealing with the past deeply divides, peace stops when we try to deal with contentious issues, because the interpretations, the narratives are all different. After one and a half years what can we agree on? We are directed towards the aspiration that it should never happen again.

In conclusion Máire suggested:

We are a divided community but we are doing our best to heal.

## 5.8 THEME 8: SEMANTICS

The language that was used and the meanings made of words emerged in the data as particularly important for the respondents. Coulter (1999) noted 'words are routinely employed both to affirm and undermine the legitimacy of the partition settlement' (p8). The findings in the data suggested that 'language is a powerful weapon'. This set the context for the discussions that followed in that the use of commonplace words was queried for meanings and interpretations. Thus validation of meanings became an ongoing task. In particular the term 'combatant' is an accepted term that was validated by the UN for the purpose of describing those who engaged in conflict, its association is with a recognised right to revolt. In clarifying the position Mícheál suggested:

The difference between me I was convicted of IRA membership, I can say I am a former IRA man. The loyalist and me tomorrow would say 'former combatant' but the rest would say activist, republican activist so you can interpret that. So they would rather use the word activist, I don't mind about me because I proved I was a combatant. The judge said this man is political.



He explained how he felt a combatant is recognised:

Tim Pat Cogan said there has always been a structured revolt, he wrote a book about the IRA. It is a structured organisation; it's not like a gang. We had a press office that released statements.

He elaborated on the legal position. There is a mandatory prison sentence for membership of the IRA, and how this prevents deep discussion:

Other republicans they cannot talk about stuff, anything deeper. They can't really talk about it they get a wee bit defensive.

The term 'political' prisoner is historically complex in that it marked a five- year protest in jail for recognition of political status that culminated in a hunger strike in which 10 people died. Equally the term terrorist is fraught with meanings. Mícheál explained:

I was invited to a victims conference, two police officers who were seriously injured, they spoke about the nightmares, post traumatic stress, their wives would say about waking up screaming in cold sweats. He turned around and said 'I kind of came out of that and then I was watching TV and seeing all these murderous terrorists get out' and I'm thinking he's talking about me.

Mícheál described how his ability to disclose himself as a former combatant allowed dialogue to emerge:

I was having breakfast and he came over to sit beside me. They asked me what victims group do you belong to, they thought I was a victim I said I'm not a victim, I probably am to a certain extent, but I'm a republican I was one of them murdering terrorists. I said I understand your pain you're going through I'll go over and sit over there, (I didn't have to do that cause it was my table), if you don't like what I did I will go over there and sit. They were polite, they said no no no stay there and we had a talk that was a good start. Then we had a talk, how to talk to victims without talking down to them.

The term 'paramilitary' is a contentious label. Máire suggested:

Loyalists refer to themselves as 'paramilitaries' - republicans refer to themselves as 'volunteers' (of the Irish Republican Army) or as soldiers - they believe they were members of an army and given that language can be a powerful weapon you can understand that they don't like the term 'paramilitary' it's the 'terrorist' or 'freedom fighter' school of thought. The IRA was the *only* army fighting the British. Their volunteers fought and died as soldiers. They deserve to be recognised as such.

Mícheál described how whilst the use of language can alienate it could also provide a tool for dialogue when language is adjusted to be inclusive rather than as a weapon:

The terms changed, loyalist death squads, we don't use that now, pope-burning programme, they say there were Protestants burned out of their homes too. Loyalists say what do you mean 'occupation' they say an attack on the British state is an attack on their British-ness. They say it wasn't all 'collusion', they weren't an arm of the state we weren't puppets of the British state, and they were fighting for their own communities.

The assertions of politicians have also proven to be a site of challenge and adaptation of language, as noted in Mícheál's comment:

When Gerry Adams said, we want the Brits out, David Irvine said 'hang on we are the Brits we live in sandy row and mid ulster'. We changed our language.

In reference to Peter Robinson's recent assertion that 'most nationalists are happy to be British', the following comment indicated the potential for elaboration on that point:

Most nationalists are content. They are not happy with the border or happy to be British. Most unionists don't catch on to that, instead of Peter Robinson saying they are happy to be British, he should have said I feel Catholics feel less discriminated against; It was a cold house for Catholics from the 1920s and so on up. They feel less repressed they feel comfortable. They can be part of the economy and commerce.

However there exists a group of non-conformists who oppose official republican policy, and who especially oppose policy emerging from what they see as an authoritarian state. In relation to what is termed 'dissidents' in the media, those who could be considered to be opponents of the Good Friday Agreement, republicans call 'micro groups' meaning that such groups are small in number, insignificant and irrelevant. It is believed that dissidents may not have come to terms with the evolution in identity of former political prisoners in the north of Ireland. The term 'traitors' is noticeable on the political murals in Derry. Republicans noted that their identity is being hijacked by dissidents. When the matter of the emergence of dissident elements was broached in each of the focus groups the following responses emerged. Cian made the point with regard to dissident/micro groups:

If you look at their track records from a militaristic point of view it's tokenistic what impact have they had on the Brits?

The respondents in the main disregarded the existence of dissident/micro groups as a threat to peace, Seán explained:

In the case of the continuity group they have been around for a quarter of a century and what impact have they actually had on the British politically?

A common theme emerged in response to questions around the existence of micro elements. Peadar raised the question:

Whose agenda does it suit for a lot of these micro groups to exist?

He suggested that:

The existence of these groups does allow for the pretense of a highly developed security response.

Cian elaborated further:

The MI5 have doubled themselves to combat the micro groups, MI5 seems to have developed a life of it's own, pursuing its own agenda as the peace process went on. It's something very sinister sitting in the background, it's not something I would be trustful of in any shape or form, it's a very sinister thing that's happening.

In a different context Cathal observed about dissidents:

On the republican side it is in some ways a disparate group but more and more I think coming together coalescing, claiming to be the pure guardians of the republican ideology and on those grounds regarding Sinn Fein as the great betrayers and therefore as number one enemy.

He advanced the conversation in relation to loyalist dissident groups:

Then on the other side, I don't know if they are called dissidents, are those loyalists paramilitaries, who have been waiting in the wings and have been active all along sometimes criminally so deeply involved in drugs and so on, but exercising considerable power even bullying power over the communities in which they live, and as in the situation right now demonstrating their ability to bring chaos back to society. So they haven't gone away they are in there and they are influencing.

Mícheál suggested ways that have been explored to engage in dialogue with micro groups:

The leaders of our movement threw down the challenge to them, the republican network for unity challenged them intellectually on the media, where is this going, what possible end to it? They don't have the intellect, the competence to put their argument forward.

However in a different context he acknowledged:

They (micro groups) deconstruct every argument.

Seán cited lack of relevance as an issue:

They just don't feature because they don't have the credibility of their community they are going nowhere. Media for their reasons, highball it up.

## 5.9 THEME 9: CENSORSHIP OF IDEOLOGY

A republican ideology is perceived as one that aims to treat each person equally, which embraces civil and human rights.

Áine elaborated:

Republicanism doesn't mean getting the Brits out and defeating them militarily, its socialism and self-determination. Nationalism can be a very negative thing look at the states but for oppressed people it can be a very good thing.

Sinead suggested:

The idea we are offering is good for everybody on this island, not just for us.

Peadar agreed:

Learning about the nature of loyalism, understanding there is a very important job of Nation building, finding a way into the unionist community and to talk and build relations. If we are going to build the type of country we want we can only do it with them. If you want a healthy democratic country you need to win their allegiance. Change is possible but very slow I learnt a lot about the dynamic I try to open my mind to the complexities.

Sinead suggested:

A republican curriculum would be very much about bringing people forward through personal development.

Republicans are happy to see most points of view brought out and explored and discussed.

Sinead offered another insight:

There are debates at the grassroots level everything is discussed debated and analysed. Hopefully that's keeping us on the right tracks.

In relation to censorship of ideology the following findings emerged. Cian described his experience of working for a border county newspaper writing stories of interest to republicans:

In the newsroom it became like a battle a day, every story you did someone was trying to cut it, bump it or bin it, 'edit it'. It wasn't that I was trying to be sneaky or trying to slide in republican views I was trying to be openly reflective.

Another participant referred to censorship:

What's happening with republicanism in the 26 counties is the censoring of that whole ideal and what it might represent, it's constantly suppressed.

An example was given of how that suppression manifested itself.

We are playing catch up, section 31; we lost 22 years of the airwaves Orla Guerin was sacked from RTE because Martin McGuinness's (Current deputy first minister of Northern Ireland) voice was heard one day.

Cian elaborated:

That imposed state censorship, but it led to within media a culture of self-censorship, which is far more insidious, because it lasted.

And Malachy concurred:

If society views a republican movement in that way, in suspicion, wants to silence them then it will certainly view the individual and want to silence them too.

Barra suggested

For a lot of people they were afraid to be associated or known as republicans because the Gardaí or the policeman would pick on them as 'known associates'.

South of the border:

It's a criminal conspiracy, experiences down there (for former political prisoners) is very reflective of going back to their community, keeping their head down, and not saying where they were and what they were about, very reflective of keeping your head down.

The experience of republican ex prisoners south of the border is different from that north of the border, and this is reflected in the unwillingness of former prisoners or combatants in the southern border counties to become engaged in the research.

But censorship and silencing created conditions whereby intelligence gathering through the use of informants thrive. When questioned about spying and infiltration the response was swift and decisive:

Malachy suggested that:

British media has always portrayed republican informers and in the 26 counties as ‘victims’ the IRA is wrong, the informer is informing on the IRA, in some way the informer becomes honorable.

This point was developed further in the following analysis:

Every country, every organisation, every agency that has ever been involved in dealing with informers, the history of the British with their own informers is the same, they have always treated them very strictly.

Malachy agreed:

It’s a very disingenuous thing to make it just a republican thing.

A rationale developed in the discussion in relation to how informers are dealt with:

For every historical struggle in every area of the world the informer has been the cause of, responsible for the deaths of his or her former comrades, the reality is you are putting the lives of your former colleagues in danger, in many cases for personal gain.

Beyond the realms of ‘intelligence gathering’ or ‘informers’ there are moments in which holding confidences can contribute to deep dialogue that extends beyond contrasting ideologies.

#### 5.10 THEME 10: GENDER

Probably one of the biggest differences between republicanism and unionism as noted by republican respondents is the different attitudes towards the role of women in peace building and gender equality.

Máire raised an issue that she felt required attention in the research process:

One point I want to make is the different attitudes towards gender equality within loyalist/unionism and nationalism/republican side. It is probably one of the biggest differences between republicanism and unionism.

She explained how this is apparent to her:

I could say ‘that’s a meeting of republicans’ because of the number of women that are at the table.

She elaborated on this point:

In terms of the gender thing, the consortium that we are represented on is ‘prison to peace’. We (women ex prisoners) have a role to play in political tourism.

She explicated:

One of the gatekeepers of the (peace) money is the Community Foundation of Northern Ireland (CFNI). I asked them why I was the only woman there (at a conference in Donegal). I was there because I had something to say on the issue of the underrepresentation of women in the evolving peace process. I asked the CFNI why don't you convene a meeting of women from the different organisations?

She explained how this request progressed:

First meeting that CFNI convened all agreed to convene a meeting of women. Representatives of all interested parties showed up. All agreed but it went to a board of all men, there are no women on the board, our people had no problem, but I think they (unionists/loyalists) were frightened of us contaminating them; here do you want to know a bit about feminism?

She described the limitations:

When they turned up they weren't allowed to be on their own they had a gatekeeper. They had to have a man with them they weren't allowed to come on their own.

Whereas republicans are seen to value and include a feminist ideology, Máire believed that loyalist women are more controlled by loyalist males. Máire explains how she sees this:

They are not let out, in case feminism rubs off on them. We have 700 female ex prisoner; they literally haven't any. We wouldn't have had a war if the women hadn't taken part; it concerns me to see the lack of development within loyalism regarding the gender issue. There are no women at the table, the underrepresentation of women in the evolving peace process. You have to deal with that as well.

When describing an experience of engaging in dialogue as a representative Máire explored how her gender influenced her capacity to be heard in negotiations:

Unionist men felt insulted, they felt nationalism has undervalued them because they sent a woman, that's what Sinn Fein thinks of us they sent a woman, you don't have to be an ex prisoner, some women didn't get caught, didn't go to jail, doesn't mean they shouldn't be at the table.

Mícheál described an influence he exerts in informal conversation with former loyalist combatants:

When you are talking over a drink, you notice the sexism, they talk about Pakistanis', or women, I say it has been an education for them when I say I would rather you wouldn't say that, when we talk about our women, it does influence them.

When discussing how he became involved in community work, he suggested that it occurred to him through a visit with his mother when he got out of prison:

I was on a visit with me ma and she was saying, there's nothing for kids in the area. That's what made me do it.

Máire spoke about the impact of a spouse's imprisonment on women and the sense of isolation as experienced by the wife of a unionist who was imprisoned for the murder of a catholic:

This guy had a good job prior to imprisonment, he came from a middle class family very church orientated, coffee mornings with ladies of the church. He was caught in connection with assassination of a catholic, three ways into his sentence he realised his wife was protecting him all the time she eventually broke down, talking about the kids after school activities, she said we don't have friends.

She described how the unionist explained his situation:

Because he was regarded as a unionist, he said 'here's what you didn't get about us, when you (republicans) came out of jail there was street parties. I crept out of jail, my wife was waiting, and I went home, no public celebration. My community regarded me as a traitor'. He was going out with arms he was not supposed to have he should have been supporting the British army, RUC, UDR etc. He was going against his community; He couldn't get a job, his kids were isolated and had no friends.

She emphasised the impact of his imprisonment on his wife and family:

His children were isolated; the parents in his community wouldn't allow their children to play with his children in case they were contaminated. His kids were isolated, his wife was uninvited, his imprisonment made her life so lonely in the community.

She then explained how women proactively responded to the situation they found themselves in as spouses:

A woman came to his door one night very late, and said give this fella a ring, he is offering work as a lorry driver, give him a ring, she said don't tell anyone about my nephew, there was a bribe, her nephew was inside, I don't want to go down the path of your wife and be isolated, she was buying his silence.



## 5.11 SUMMARY

In this chapter the data is presented under the ten themes that emerged as most significant in the research process. The themes were: transitional processes; transformation of mindsets; dialogue; constructing identity; the significance of education; stigma; truth recovery; semantics; censorship of ideology and gender. This chapter provided insights into the commonalities of interpretation across the research participant cohorts. It also identified differences in interpretation by research participants. In so doing it created a narrative that moved from conflict to peace and identified the important factors and challenges in that transition. In the following chapter an analysis of the findings section is presented. The analysis chapter draws upon the central theorists identified in Chapter Three and is aligned with the literature that was reviewed.

## CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

### 6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter interprets the data presented in Chapter five through the lens of the literature that was reviewed in Chapter three. It locates critical and radical theory within the findings. The analysis chapter supports the recognition of a Freirean ideology within the transformational process from conflict to peace. It acknowledges Mezirow's (1991) Theory of Transformative Learning within the data. The main themes that emerged in conjunction with the theoretical perspectives employed suggest the development of a number of constructs. The constructs are foundational to the research question and aims. They inform pedagogy of peace. The constructs are as follows:

- The construct of silence as a societal response to conflict;
- The construct of dialogue as one means to deconstruct the silence;
- The acknowledgement of truth being multifaceted;
- The complexity of dealing with the past in post conflict communities.

The research data suggested ways that meaning can be made of these constructs through the works of critical theorist Freire on humanisation, on the role of education in transitional contexts, on radical and critical education, on the role of silence, and on the role of dialogue. Analysis of the themes that emerged in the research data illustrates how Mezirow's Theory of Transformative Learning (1991) has proven useful in this process. The strategic approach adopted by republicans as a means to transform the struggle from armed conflict towards political strategy echoes Mezirow's (2009) Ten Phases of Learning. The strategic transition out of conflict illustrated the building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships, and the reintegration into one's life with renewed and inclusive frames of references.

Lederach's (1995, 1997, 2003, 2005) approach to conflict transformation, and Bar-On's (1998) understanding of the 'other' expounds the inevitability and cyclical nature of what might seem like random acts of violence. The analysis of the research data built upon contemporary research into the former political prisoner community as undertaken by Rolston, (2011) Jamieson, Shirlow and Grounds (2010) Gormally, Maruna and McEvoy (2007) amongst others and offers insights from the perspective of a human rights approach to peace building. A feminist imaginative pedagogy assists with the

interpretation of the data. A socio economic analysis of the findings contextualizes the data within a Marxist framework.

## 6.1 TRANSITIONAL PROCESSES

Freire (2010) noted that ‘while all transition involves change not all change results in transition’ (p6). Freire suggested that in moving from one epoch to another tasks begin to lose their substance and significance ‘in that transitional phase education became a highly important task’ (p7). He clarified the complexities and paradoxes that prevail in the transitional process and suggests the requirements of moving forward in such a phase:

The transition had aspects of prolonging and conserving the old society at the same time that it extended forward into the new society. The new perceptions did not prevail easily or without sacrifice; the old themes had to exhaust their validity before they could give way to the new and those who lacked the ability to perceive the mystery of the times responded to each retreat with tragic hopelessness and generalized fear. (Freire, 2010, p7)

The data suggested that primarily the Good Friday Agreement was negotiated because of the realisation by the republican paramilitaries that they could not defeat British military by violent means. They did not have the resources or people power to win this war, against such a strong imperialist force. They could not continue to suffer the losses of the republican family, through imprisonment, hunger strike, and death by loyalist militia or state forces. Whilst engaged in the armed struggle they saw themselves as having ‘no other alternative’ and were ‘confronted by a situation that is intolerable’. The way that they dealt with this the data suggested was through ‘teaching each other how to deal with it, by education for transformation’. How did they come to this realisation? The role of leadership seemed critical. Republican leadership began to communicate an alternative strategy: an electoral strategy and they built consensus around it through grassroots consultation process. The data acknowledged the amount of time that process took. Respondents suggested ‘it wasn’t an overnight transformation, it was a long period of time and a depth of discussion’. The data suggested that the process of engaging in dialogue in prison was fundamental. Freire (2010) suggested ‘born of a critical matrix, dialogue creates a critical attitude’ (p40). He elaborated ‘whoever enters into dialogue does so with someone about something and that something ought to constitute the new content of our proposed education’ (p41). McKeown explained:

For those republican prisoners who had experienced the blanket protest (1976-1981), debate discussion and personal development had become a central feature of their lives. There was a thirst for knowledge and critical analysis. Following the ending of the protest there was a period when the culture of education was restricted and lapsed into compulsory republican lectures however no one was happy with that. (McKeown, 1998, p238)

So what began in prison as formal education, with a blackboard and lectures respondents noted 'there was an ethos to learn history about the 'ism's' associated with the conflict, such as republicanism, nationalism, imperialism' this approach was as McKeown stated experienced by the political prisoners as follows:

Education was a turn off for most people a section leader got a group of men together and read out the lecture and asked did anyone have any questions, no one asked. The attitude was to get out as quick as you can. (McKeown, 1998, p239)

He observed that after the five-year protest and the hunger strikes in 1981, 'attention became focused on the need for a programme of political development and education throughout the camp' (p258). This suggests that praxis was at play, action followed by a period of reflection followed by a process of informed action. McKeown stated:

That type of thought and level of political consciousness only came about through a process of ongoing reflection upon their actions leading to changes or refinement of their actions and accepting mistakes when they were made. (McKeown, 1998, p259)

The data supported Freire's (2010) assertion 'during the transitional phase the new perceptions did not prevail easily or without sacrifice' (p7). The transitional phase saw struggles emerge within the republican movement. The data noted the sense of powerlessness experienced by those who resisted the transition. This powerlessness was related to the transition from relative power and control by virtue of being a member of a paramilitary organisation, towards complete lack of power and potential unemployment for those with conflict related records. However the improved socio-economic conditions played a role in the transitional process. Smyth and Cebulla (2008) noted 'in the 1990's the Northern Ireland economy experienced what appeared to be a fundamental turn-round in fortunes...employment in Northern Ireland had increased by 37 percent in little over a decade' (p177). Smyth and Cebulla cited in Coulter and Murray (2008) observed some of the factors that contributed to the rise in employment:

The large share of employment contributed to the regional economy by the public sector, retailing, and membership organisations. Many of the latter emerged as a result of the civil conflict, representing grassroots and community based organisations concerned with social and economic development. (Coulter and Murray, 2008, p178)

Smyth and Cebulla (2008) noted the factors that exacerbated socio-economic differences between Catholics and Protestants:

Employment growth in the ten years leading up to the new millennium remained firmly anchored in security related occupations, such as the police, the prison service and the Royal Irish Regiment, which had been a major source of employment – especially for members of the Protestant community-throughout the conflict. (Coulter and Murray, 2008, p179)

Within the prevailing socio economic context on the outside, a struggle developed in prison between approaches to education some of which were pragmatic and focused upon Marxism-Leninism. This approach to education underpinned the concept of revolutionary consciousness; the republican plan was to educate a group of republicans within prison to become a class-conscious vanguard, fighters for the working class. Freire (1996) guarded against the ‘banking system of education’ and denounced ‘methodological rigidity’. McKeown (1998) noted ‘we had to introduce some orthodox form of criticism, some form of analysis and self analysis’ (p240). This appealed to people because it tackled the immediate situation in the jail and ‘it acknowledged the hierarchical structures within the movement’ (p241). The suggestion was ‘a period of discussion be initiated which would look at how people felt they fitted into the republican structures, what criticisms they had of those structures and how they saw their role, on a two to two basis or one to one basis’ (p239).

The process of education through lectures gave way to a process of education that was engaged in dialogue, sitting in circles, being asked what they think, in the words of Mícheál ‘planted the seeds of discourse and discussion’. Education moved from formal approaches to a critical approach, education had a function and a mantra: educate to deliberate. Freire was acknowledged in the data ‘Freire, liberation theology and others’, and in the literature, McKeown (1998) said ‘It was during this time that the writings of Freire reached the camp, his theories were to have a major impact on our thinking and future developments’ (p238). The republican movement developed strong grassroots involvement in the prisons and sought to build consensus around their political strategy not alone in prison but on the outside also through what became known as republican

family meetings. Lederach's (2005) Pyramid of Approaches to Peace-building model reflects the processes that were engaged in and illustrates how it was necessary for grassroots consensus to affirm the validity of the transition from conflict to peace. This consensus was developed through group dialogue that was facilitated on both sides by trusted negotiators, who had credibility within their respective movements and who had the mandate to enter into the negotiation process on behalf of grassroots communities.

The transitional phase became similar to Freire's (2010) Culture Circles where 'people lived their lives through Irish' and this assisted in the development of an approach to education that was critical. Freire (2010) noted 'the shock between a yesterday which is losing relevance but still seeking to survive, and a tomorrow which is gaining substance' (p6). The data offers examples of how that shock was experienced by former combatants, and recognises the various ways in which the transition was internalised. The critical role of dialogue in the transition was noted. Freire (2010) stated 'societies which are denied dialogue in favour of decrees are predominantly silent' (p21). This resonated in terms of how critical theory and a familiarity with Freirean thinking ensured that dialogue was central to the decision to consider the merits of a Peace Agreement. The data reflected discussions were held on an ongoing basis, and political strategy underpinned that transition.

## 6.2 TRANSFORMATION OF MINDSETS

Mezirow (2007) stated:

Transformations may be epochal - a sudden major reorientation in habit of mind, often associated with significant life crises, or a cumulative progressive sequence of insights resulting in changes in point of view and leading to a transformation in habit of mind. (Mezirow, 2007, p22)

The transitional processes described by former combatants in the data emphasised that the transformations experienced by them were consistent with the types described by Mezirow (2007) the significant life crisis, by recognising wrongdoing, and the cumulative progressive sequence of insights brought about by the type of education and skills that were needed by combatants to engage in critical analysis of their situation. They discovered and honed the skills through a process of collaborative dialogue, which built consensus about alternatives through a depth of discussion. The data suggested that

it took a long time, eight years, to work through this phase. Lederach (2003) noted that the skills required to reduce violence are ‘rooted in the communicative abilities to exchange ideas’ (p22). The data showed how such communicative abilities were nurtured within what Lederach (2003) called ‘intra group spaces where safe and deep reflection about the nature of the situation, responsibilities, hopes and fears could be pursued’ (p57). The prison environment cultivated internal self or intra group spaces where combatants felt they could engage in safe and deep reflection. Respondents noted this as a luxury that was not available to those on the outside.

The data suggested that it was in embracing Hope and Timmel’s (1999) training for transformation techniques; problem posing; scenario posing; and placing themselves in the ‘others’ shoes that the inmates of the Maze/ Long Kesh and Crumlin Road prison engaged in transformative practice. The practice of education became central, from something that had very little relevance, or peripheral to their lives to something that was central to their lives. Through this process they made the shift from identifying as soldiers fighting a war to political subjects, capable of transforming their world by engaging in education through critical theory.

The account of respondents echoes Mezirow’s (1991) Transformative Learning Theory, which describes the first stage of transformation: as resulting from the experience of a disorienting dilemma. This is apparent in the way that combatants described their initial feelings upon reading the terms of the peace negotiation grappling with the political transition and the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, a disorienting dilemma emerged, the findings noted feelings of ‘I was desperately disappointed’ another said his first reaction was ‘totally unacceptable’. A former combatant spoke of his dilemma: ‘my biggest fear was what do we do now?’ indicating a significant life crisis and a process of self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt and shame. One respondent noted ‘I came to the conclusion that what we did was wrong’ which led to a critical assessment of assumptions. This suggests a developing awareness of the process of transformation akin to Mezirow’s (2009) ‘exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and action, and planning a course of action’ (p19). Going forward, respondents recognised the work that needs to continue. In particular they noted the need for a strategic approach to nation building, and older combatants articulated the need to engage with the youth in formulating a vision for the future. Mezirow (2007) suggested that ‘a reintegration into ones’ life on the basis of conditions dictated by

one's new perspective were apparent in the phases of meaning becoming clarified' (p22). The themes of nation building, engaging all of our communities, and finding a way into the community of 'others' reflects Mezirow's (2009) process of transformative learning that begins with a disorienting dilemma, and moves through identified stages of learning that culminates in a 'reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by ones new perspective' (p19). Mezirow (2009) suggests that 'transformative learning may be understood as the epistemology of how adults learn to reason for themselves' (p23). The data offers numerous examples of how respondents' have reasoned for themselves, a process which moves beyond as Mezirow (2009) stated 'acting on assimilated beliefs, values, feelings, and judgment of others' (p23). The data also offers examples of where the role of Lederach's 'moral imagination' could be useful in an analysis of transitional processes and transformation of mindsets. McKeown summed up the contribution of Mezirow to the transitional phase:

Mezirow speaks of perspective transformation by which he means the reaching of a stage of consciousness where we question the social relations around us. Mezirow states that we most often accept unchallenged those social relations and therefore view human activity as something external to us rather than as a human product. It was this challenging of the social relations in the Irish republican prisoner community of the H blocks that made the dynamic within their educational process so powerful, other prisoners before then had debated radical politics but often ignored the social relations of the group, so nothing changed. (McKeown, 1998, p245)

The data reveals that political prisoners developed the notion of a republican university. This resonates with Habermas's idea about the role of collaborative discourse within universities that influences the public sphere. Fleming (2009) clarified Habermas's (1970) assertion that the university has a responsibility to 'bring to consciousness through reflection, the relation of living generations to active cultural traditions...in such a way that decisions can be made dependent on a consensus arrived at through discussion free from domination' (p113). Fleming (2009) noted 'the challenge for universities is to both resist the colonizing forces of the system and to identify a critical role in the light of this analysis' (p114). Fleming suggested:

For Habermas the main adult learning project is to learn how a democratic society might organize itself so that the most free form of discussion is possible and in this discussion the real needs of people may be identified and brought forward for political decision-making. (Fleming, 2009, p113)



In the prison environment the data provided evidence that the public sphere became vibrant, and reflected Flemings description of the public sphere as a community of discourse:

It refers to those informal conversations that people have where they can discuss matters of mutual concern as peers and learn about facts, events, opinions, interests and perspectives of others in an atmosphere free of coercion and inequalities that would incline individuals to acquiesce or be silent (Fleming, 2009, p114)

It is ironic that even though the members of the republican movement were imprisoned, they developed the type of university structure that responded to conflict and colonisation by the system of the *lifeworld*, that was idealistically inspired along the lines of inclusivity and where people could participate equally and without domination.

### 6.3 DESIGN OF DIALOGUE

A number of characteristics relating to dialogue emerged through the findings sections. Dialogue was noted in the data as having the capacity to: develop understanding; to develop trust between groups of others; and to build confidence in one's own analysis of the conflict. Dialogue has embedded within it the capacity to recognise the other's right to exist. Bar-On (1998) noted 'those who were perceived in the past only as threatening or opposing could now also be seen as part of a complex, more significant system' (p5). Hawes (2006) suggested, as noted earlier 'our commonalities and our differences form the conditions for mutual understanding' (p264). Freire (1996) noted dialogue 'as a fundamental precondition for true humanization' (p118). Humanization of the other can be achieved through the sharing of stories. The data suggested how this approach was and is developing. Angelou (1969) noted that there is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you. Reclaiming the right to speak and to tell your story is prominent in the literature. It relates to 'giving voice' as explored by Gilligan (1977) and inherent in an approach to peace education that is understood by critical education theorists in the postmodern multicultural and post colonialist framework. The importance of the facilitator's role in holding storied spaces seemed critical, not only by encouraging sharing within formal dialogue process, but also with holding confidences.

This process is not without personal risk. The risk associated with participating in dialogue is acknowledged in the data. Lederach (2003) suggests that developing a moral imagination requires risktaking. Bar-On, Litvak-Hirsh and Othman (2007) observed 'it was clear that dialogue required a safe space somewhat protected from the

polarized, violent reality outside' (p34). Members' of the deep dialogue group articulated the risks associated with engaging in dialogue with those perceived as 'enemies'

O'Sullivan in Murphy and Adair (2004) described the motivation for setting up the Glencree Centre for Reconciliation and the recognised silence that surrounded IRA violence 'they felt that the silence had to be broken and that they should do something about it' (p140). Dangers inherent in dialogue have been identified, but Nolan (2004) suggested other dangers include 'namely that they stay on the surface - the superficial level, and avoid going deep enough to reach the real hard issues' (p130). The data that emerged in the deep dialogue group supported this assertion.

An important aspect that emerged in the data is the coordination of dialogue. The data suggested that coordination and good facilitation is key. Providing a safe and neutral venue is important. Safe spaces where stories: community educators' and facilitators stories; participants' and students' stories; stories of combatants; politicians, security personnel and victims can be told, listened to, and crucially heard.

#### *The role of civil society*

Habermas (1996) cited in Murphy and Fleming, (2006) defined civil society as:

Composed of more or less spontaneously emergent associations, organisations, and movements that, attuned to how societal problems resonate in the private public sphere, distill and transmit such reactions in amplified form to the public. (Murphy and Fleming, 2006, p51)

The data identified how the spontaneously emergent associations, organisations and movements such as the civil rights movement, the republican movement, the orange order distill and transmit their reactions to societal problems through marches, flag protests and commemorative events in amplified form. The Deep Dialogue group, the Glencree Centre for Reconciliation, Corrymeela, the Junction in Derry and the Coiste na Larchimí group are all powerful examples of what Murphy and Fleming (2006) refer to as:

Voluntary organisations in civil society are comprised of citizens who seek acceptable interpretations for their social interests and experiences and who wish to exert influence on institutionalised opinion and will formation. (Murphy and Fleming, 2006, p51)

Habermas (1996) noted that these organisations ‘push topics of general interest and act as advocates for neglected issues and underrepresented groups; for groups that are difficult to organise or that pursue cultural, religious or humanitarian aims’ (p368). The role of such organisations in organising for social change cannot be underestimated, their role, according to Habermas (1996) cited in Murphy and Fleming (2006), is to ‘inoculate *lifeworld* values of caring ethical concerns and democratic principles into the system and so resist and reverse colonization’ (p51).

### *Arts Based Methodologies*

The data provided evidence that the communicative context of silence and dialogue can be served very well through arts based methodologies. The data suggested that facilitators of dialogue can ‘use lots of films, that’s how people learn these days’. Carl Rogers, inspired and co financed a film ‘The Steel Shutters’ (1973). It provided Carl Rogers with the opportunity to show how you can create a safe space for people to talk openly about their personal experiences of conflict. Corry (2004) opined that the film inspired ‘trained facilitators to replicate the Carl Rogers peacemaking model’ and ‘it showed how mass media with viewer participation could facilitate conflict resolution and trigger social change’ (p35). Verwoerd (2004) noted ‘the importance of having places like Glenree where people on either side of a divide can meet, shake hands and look each other in the eye’ (p164). McDonagh (2004) noted that spaces for dialogue need:

A real centre with proper facilities including overnight accommodation for serious encounters even between the apparently irreconcilable, and professional staff to mediate between the different and the difficult. (Murphy & Adair, 2004, p114)

If we move dialogue into the realm of the philosophical and the imagination, many more possibilities emerge. Rumi (1995) imagined a place where such possibilities exist:

Out beyond ideas of rightdoing and wrongdoing there is a field,  
I’ll meet you there  
When the soul lies down in that grass  
The world is too full to talk about  
Ideas, language, even the phrase *each other*  
doesn’t make any sense (Rumi, 1995, p36).

If we confine ourselves to viewing Ireland as purely geographical, we limit our options for identity. The fifth province is one such possibility for expanding identities and spaces associated with them. The metaphor of the fifth province was first re-awakened by Kearney and Hederman during the years 1977 to 1985. They provided a literary forum for the expression of diverse views across political, religious and cultural divides in the Irish context. Hederman & Kearney attempted to transcend these ambivalent divides in the Irish cultural landscape. McCarthy (2010) suggested that the fifth province was a forum that moved towards a different kind of ‘community’ on the island of Ireland:

It was envisaged to be a forum where people of difference, whatever this was (religious, ethnic, cultural, etc), might peacefully co-exist, inter-act and cocreate. It was a forum for viewing oneself and the ‘other’ (one-and other/one another) differently – of ‘inter-viewing’ as it were. It was a forum where one might ‘be’ differently in a more peaceful harmony – a space of inter-being. (McCarthy, 2010, p8)

Le Brocquy (1981) cited in McCarthy (2010) said:

It is in the interweave of dialogue that the ordinary lines of communication between the participants are ruptured and re-conjugated. In this interweave participants become, as it were, co-authors in the elaboration and invention of new transformative experiences and stories. (McCarthy, 2010, p8)

#### 6.4 CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY

The themes that emerged in the data offered insights into the importance of identity to conflict. The data also suggested that there is a hierarchy of identities, an authority identity: that of being truly authentically Irish or truly authentically British, to which each side in the conflict aspired. Cathal suggested that ambivalence from the perceived true Irish authentic identity figures and community (southern republic of Ireland identity) towards their diluted, less authentic, tainted Northern Irish cousin is borne out by each side and is at the core of the conflict in identity.

The data suggested that identify was reinforced through development of the Irish language, Irish music, and literature as focal points of learning for inmates. It also deepened semantic differences; it became a way of speaking that reinforced identity and

encouraged collusion with each other. But it reinforced exclusion of others from the conversation. The 'jail talk phenomena' strengthened the approach to 'finding voice' and articulating the nationalist/republican ideology. Enculturation is manifest through the importance placed upon the use of the cultural traditions and fortifies a sense of cultural identity, as Irish republicans or nationalists. In some way it becomes another tool in the armory against imperialism and colonisation.

### *Identity and labeling*

When do you stop being an ex prisoner? This is a consistent theme in relation to former prisoner identity. It is linked to recognition and validation of their experience as political prisoners of war. It is also used to challenge the legal discrimination of former prisoners. When do you stop being an ex prisoner? Former combatants perceived identity has evolved throughout the past fifteen years from that of terrorists, murderers, combatants, perpetrators of violence, to peace builders, part of the solution, and lately an identity constructed as victim.

### *Identity as victim*

The dialogue around victims, victimisation, and the blurring of boundaries between victims is a contemporary one, and discussed primarily within the context of the Victims Commission in Northern Ireland. The data illuminates the transition of former combatants from 'murdering terrorist to peace builder and to being seen as part of the solution'. However there are different interpretations offered, Justice for Innocent Victims of Terrorism (JIVT) is a group representing the concerns of victims. They suggest 'Peace is not the absence of terrorism but the presence of justice'. They ask 'what has been suppressed in the name of state security?' Does it have the potential to invoke deep emotion, deep anger. Is it capable of re-invoking a 'post peace building' reign of conflict?

The lack of basic civil rights for the catholic community, the civil rights movement's assertion of their rights and the subsequent suppression by lethal force of those rights by British military in Derry on what has become known as 'Bloody Sunday' is noted as a key contributing factor in the resurgence of a violent identity conflict which has lasted from 1969 to 1998, and became known as the Troubles. A human rights approach as suggested by Schabas and Fitzmaurice (2007) is as critical today as it was then. They

acknowledged research that provided evidence that ‘there are specific groups whose human rights continue to be adversely affected’ (p127). They listed the groups as ex prisoners, displaced people, women, and minority communities.

If according to Lederach (2003) ‘issues of identity are at the root of most conflicts’ (p55), then issues of identity can provide a path for transforming conflict. Lederach’s visualisation of *the past that lies before us* provides useful arts based methodology that identifies the narratives that are laid down about a community’s identity. Republicans in the research sample, having explored their past identified with social class issues that are impacting upon the loyalist community. Loyalist identity was not wholly seen as a diametrically opposed identity, particularly when it came to social class and oppression by powerful elites. There were commonalities that emerged through the dialogical process. In juxtaposition there is a strong emphasis upon difference, ‘them and us’ is an accepted term, the ‘other side’ also a commonly used reference of meaning.

Time spent in jail, in Long Kesh, ‘the cages’, and Crumlin Road jail, exposed republicans to loyalist thinking and social class conditions in a way that would not have been possible on the outside. Loyalist identity, according to the participants is seen as different to a republican identity, in the following ways:

- Loyalist/unionist leadership is seen as hierarchical, non-grassroots, coming from the top down and elitist.
- Loyalism and unionism is seen as fragmented, there appears to be a lack of unity between different unionist groups.
- Education is seen as less important to a loyalist, emphasis was on ‘pumping iron’ primarily because access to employment was enhanced due to a loyalist/unionist identity. Therefore educational attainment was understood as a less important aspect of economic survival. Studies in low educational attainment for Protestant young people are highlighted to emphasise this point. Research respondents noted the disparity between republicans and loyalists in the uptake of educational opportunities in prison.
- Loyalists are noted as being less efficient, particularly in how they organise.

- During the conflict they were seen by republicans to be prone to racketeering and intimidation.
- Loyalism is seen by republicans to be struggling with analysis, and reluctant to deal with awkward questions, confused even.
- Loyalists are seen as the ‘heavies’, who are rallied in to do the violence for the unionists, who in turn are the middle class elite rulers.
- Another highlighted difference was in relation to gender.

By contrast, republicans believe themselves to be:

- Well versed in their ideology. They can relate to aspects of imperialism, colonialism and enculturation of imperialist values through the teaching of a distorted history and in their understanding of the aspects and impacts of oppression. They can link the impacts of colonialism to struggles internationally. They can relate to socialism.
- Education is highly regarded ‘education for deliberation’ is the mantra. Critical theory is embraced.
- The republican movement is understood to be organised, strategic, and professional. Republican ex prisoners’ offices are run efficiently.
- Republican ex prisoners are embedded within their communities north of the country, protected by their communities, seen, and promoted as ‘heroes’.

The data suggested that as the peace process evolved, republicans and loyalists engaged in conflict transformation processes. They began to recognise the commonalities of their stories, and began to recognise the validity of each other’s needs within the context of social deprivation. Two diametrically opposed perspectives emerged, and through the narrative approach these perspectives became as Mezirow (2007) noted ‘more inclusive, discriminating, and more open to change’ (p20). Despite this process, societal segregation of republicans and loyalists, Catholics and Protestants is deeply rooted in many of the systems and structures of the public sphere. Ferriter (2005) explored religious segregation:

In 1993 it was estimated that about one half of the province’s 1.5 million people lived in areas more than 90 percent Protestant or 95 percent Catholic with fewer

than 110,000 people living in areas with roughly equal numbers of Catholic and Protestant. (Ferriter, 2005, p649)

Ferriter (2005) elaborated 'there is a tendency of people from both communities to say that they enjoyed good community relations, when in reality there was minimal contact between the two religions' (p650). Referring to the education and other systems Baumann (2009) suggests that 'Voluntary apartheid' exists in Northern Ireland as a barrier to effective peace building:

The underlying assumption of the theory posits that a lasting and secure peace can only be achieved by the absence of voluntary apartheid: since as long as these negative, endogenous structures are left over as virulent factors, the danger of society's return to violence is eminent. (Baumann, 2009, p112)

The reinforcement of borders, interfaces, enclaves and peace lines are monuments of our inability to talk to each other. People have become displaced and in that displacement have become isolated.

There are diametrically opposed views expressed in relation to identity, which bears resonance to in-group/out-group bias, and theories of projection. Klein developed Freud's (1921) theories further in describing interactions between the inner and outer worlds as projection and introjection. Projection takes aspects of one's internal world and projects them onto external subjects. This can be a defense mechanism where it is used to expel and externalise uncomfortable inner thoughts and feelings. Projective identification involves projection into another object then identifying with the object usually a person. It is 'output' from the internal world into the outer world. Ideas that emerge from the study of groups' supports the maintenance of the in-group above and beyond the out-group bias and is wrapped up within the concept of identity. Paradoxically the findings suggest that when differences were identified, ways were found within which a nurturing of difference could occur, republicans began to feel responsibility towards their loyalist counterparts and recognition of their plight in economic terms. Republicans expressed concern over the lack of representative leadership in the loyalist community. Similarly recognition of the underrepresentation of unionist and loyalist women in the evolving peace process was noted in the data.

The religious divide has been used as the core reason for the conflict, the dominant discourse. The data however supports the paradigm that this emphasis upon religious divides is 'a political construct' republicans see this as an imperialist ploy to 'divide and



conquer'. Freire (1998) suggested that colonists adopt this strategy in their bid to overpower. Some respondents in the research see the conflict as a religious war whereas republicans in general believe that religion does not come into it and it was a class war. Differing ontological understandings have developed from differing epistemological foundations for the causes of the conflict. These differences in conceptualization of the roots of the conflict have emerged in the thesis and are contributing to prolonged division. Lederach's advice about 'making complexity a friend' is one way to deconstruct such imagined differences. Wegerif (2008) highlights the complexities that arise in communication between groups involved in conflict, particularly in relation to shared meaning. He suggests 'that dialogic and dialectic imply incompatible assumptions about meaning: dialogic presupposes that meaning arises only in the context of difference, whereas dialectic presupposes that differences are contradictions leading to a movement of overcoming' (p359). Identity is a complex construct: the data supports the need to build connections between people that would contribute to an understanding of how the overstepping of the boundaries between the economy, the state powers, and the *lifeworld* can create identity conflicts.

## 6.5 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EDUCATION

The findings provided evidence that education was highly significant in prison. Different types of education were practiced. Political prisoners devised their own structures and systems of education. In the beginning, education initiated by political prisoners was formal in its approach with a blackboard and lectures, 'there was an ethos to learn history', about the 'ism's' associated with the conflict, such as republicanism, nationalism, imperialism'. This was noted as important so that republicans had the knowledge about the theories that underpinned their ideology. A dialectic lecturing approach was adopted, on the history of the republican movement. Freire (2010) noted that through this process the oppressed could 'perceive critically the themes of their time, and thus to intervene actively in reality' (p6). Dewey in contrast noted:

Any movement that thinks in terms of some 'ism' about education, even such ism as progressivism...becomes so involved in reaction against other isms that they unwittingly control it. For it then forms their principle by reaction against them instead of by a comprehensive, constructive survey of needs, problems, and possibilities. (Dewey, 1997, p6)

*The practice of critical education in prison*

Republicans engaged in critical education that was fundamental to both formal and informal education in the prisons, and beyond. For a republican, the history of discriminatory practices in employment in the north of the country, meant that for many Catholics, the only way to access employment was through improved educational attainment. This situation in effect had the impact of creating further differences between Catholic and Protestant in terms of their educational attainment. The republican mantra was 'educate to deliberate'. It also contributed to increased employability in the wider Catholic community. Smyth and Cebulla in Coulter and Murray (2008) noted

This trend has tended to reinforce the pattern of increasing of Catholics in professional, managerial, and white-collar occupations, particularly in the state sector. (Coulter and Murray, 2008, p183)

The data suggests that education was a significant aspect in the transitional period, in the transformation of mindsets, in the decisions taken, in the tools used to engage in dialogue. The role of critical theorists in leveraging this position is crucial. Paulo Freire has played a distinct role in helping to achieve peace in Ireland; Gramsci's influence too is noted. McKeown (1998) quoted a prisoner as saying 'the pedagogical theories of Paulo Freire impacted greatly upon me, I felt exhilarated on first reading Freire' (p238). McKeown explained Freire's appeal 'Freire's ideas had an immediate appeal to us all as we could clearly identify similarities with what had been happening educationally in our wings during the blanket protest' (p238). This suggests the acknowledgement of what Freire (1998) guarded against 'methodological rigidity' (p33). Freire suggested:

In speaking of the construction of knowledge, I ought to be involved practically, incarnationally, in such construction and be involving the student in it also. Otherwise I fall into the net of contradictions that loses any power to convince (Freire, 1998, p50)

An acknowledgement of colonisation, its impact, and complexities provide combatants with a means to read their lived reality. It facilitates understanding and encourages deep responses to the paradigms they lived through. It also assisted in the analysis of the hierarchical structures within the republican movement itself. Critical theory as explored through both formal and informal educational programmes which some

political prisoners engaged with in prison has provided a pathway for peace to formulate. A commitment to education by former combatants and political prisoners who participated in this research is fundamental to viewing the process of transformation that occurs when social domination is resisted through educative processes.

#### *Development from within or formation from without?*

Dewey (1997) noted the ‘opposition between the idea that knowledge is development from within, or that it is the result of formation from without’ (p27). The respondents reflected upon the role of education in their lives prior to becoming involved in the republican movement. It was experienced in the main as focused on the development of knowledge from without. Two sites of educational influence emerged as the stories unfolded: the curriculum subjects of Irish and History. For some, formative education was delivered through Freire’s ‘banking’ methodology, their reality of occupation contrasted sharply with their experiences of education particularly in relation to the teaching of history. Irish history in the north of Ireland was considered taboo. A focus on imperialist British history in the curriculum denied the reality of Catholic oppression and subjugation. It lacked recognition of the impact of colonization on the colonized. It was not their peoples’ history. There was an acute lack of recognition of the republican communities ‘native’ Irish language in the curriculum in Northern Ireland. Freire’s influence assisted combatants and those who considered themselves oppressed to read their world and to name that world, in fora that were similar to Freire’s culture circles, where people lived their lives through Irish.

#### *Formal and informal education*

In prison a peer education philosophy emerged which manifested itself beyond the prison walls. This was a new departure in terms of how education had previously been experienced. Education became significant and central. Education became inclusive and participatory in its approach. Learning occurred most readily through informal peer educational structures. Peer education encouraged equality of participation, sitting in a circle and the use of analysis, reflection, and problem posing. This process led to what Mezirow, Taylor, and Associates (2009) would term as ‘learning that transforms problematic frames of reference to make them more inclusive, discriminating, reflective and emotionally able to change’ (p22).

Formal education structures were also put in place by the prison system. Although many noted disruptions and challenges within the formal system, it was not without its advantages. Through the formal structure, republicans gained accreditation through external bodies such as the Open University. Many republican prisoners achieved degrees whilst living out their sentence.

However respondents noted the barriers faced by former prisoners now in accessing higher education due to the criminalisation of their past. Having to declare a criminal record is problematic for former political prisoners for a number of reasons: it counteracts their identity as prisoner of war or political prisoner; it subverts the gains made by the blanket protest and hunger strikes of the 1980's in which their comrades died for the right to recognition of their political status; it calls into question the apparent motives of violent responses to the 'armed struggle' for liberty; it undermines the recognition and validation of their role in the peace process. Honneth (1996) stressed 'all forms of social injustice are forms of mal-distribution of recognition' and he noted that 'the struggle for recognition occurs at three levels the family, civil society, and the state' (p424).

Fleming (2000) explained 'critical theory holds out the promise of enabling us to think of all society as a vast school by creating autonomous public spheres of debate and discussion' (p307). He suggested that this 'gives educators interested in transformative change a clear mandate to work in the seams and at the boundaries of systems to humanise and transform them so that they operate in the interests of all' (p307). Fleming noted that 'radical adult educators have long been involved in identifying spaces where critical learning can take place, and now civil society is regarded as a prime location for learning that is free from domination by either the state or the economy' (p307). Ironically the educational processes put in place by republican prisoners became free from domination by either the state or the economy. Respondents noted this as 'a luxury, surrounded by like minded people' and the ability to 'analyse, debate and discuss'. However Fleming noted 'frequently the state and dominant classes achieve their hegemony through the organisations of civil society' (p307) To guard against the hegemony of the state that can lead to 'mal-distribution of recognition' barriers to participation in formal education systems have been highlighted

throughout the research process in the data and are related to the questions: When does a former political prisoner stop being a political prisoner?

The Good Friday Agreement (1998) stated that the governments ‘recognise the importance of measures to facilitate prisoners by providing support both prior to and after release, and assistance directed towards availing of further education’ (p49). Fifteen years later, barriers to access education and acceptance within some formal systems were acknowledged in the data. Bailey, Ward, and Goodrick (2011) stated ‘political injustices were internalized into the psychological structures of individuals’ (p54). The data also noted that such barriers result in people remaining silent about their past. Bailey, Ward, and Goodrick (2011) acknowledged that a lack of social recognition is a feature of disadvantage that is crucial to address. They suggested that the role of community education is to ‘promote the rationale for social recognition work’ (p11).

*Community Education: the public sphere of pedagogy of peace*

Community education is acknowledged in the data as a site where personal development and empowerment can be fostered. Bailey, Ward, and Goodrick (2011) supported that assertion ‘self esteem is achieved through the recognition of one’s value to their community through work’ (p40). Smithey (2011) notes the role of community development and education as follows:

Community development and cultural traditions work, such as cultural tourism, often parallel one another, and while there is no consensus, many community workers believe organizing around cultural traditions work can build human and social capital that is often lacking in Protestant working-class areas. (Smithey, 2011, p22)

Community education emerged in the data as assisting in the development of thinking about communities as multidimensional entities, as pluralist multicultural societies. One of the characteristics of community education would be an emphasis on intercultural relationships.

The purpose of education is acknowledged in the literature. Bailey, Ward and Goodrick (2011) suggested ‘the purpose of education is not to make people feel happy or satisfied with these conditions, but to illuminate the alienated relationship between the material conditions of life and the subjective experience’ (p41). They also highlighted the role of critical education is ‘to work towards a formally just society, but also a decent society where each member can construct his or her own good life in a caring

community and strive for self-realisation of ones' practical relation to self in a reciprocal relation of recognition' (p41).

This suggests the concept of praxis, action reflection and renewed action, becomes embedded in the response to crises. Bailey, Ward, and Goodrick (2011) cited Amsler 'development of self esteem, confidence and bringing emotion into learning is necessary to inspire learners to act and to value the construction of an alternative society' (p41). They cited Callahan 'the very praxis of critical theory relies on emotion as its catalyst' (p41). Differences were noticed in the data within communities that appeared to lack a critical approach.

Community education has the potential to critique the 'them and us' thinking which promotes conflict and in-group/out-group bias. It helps to move a community's view of the other's identity from one that is an embedded 'other'. As Bar-On (1998) notes 'the 'other' can be perceived as one, monolithic, constant element, as opposed to a constant, integrated 'self' to one which recognises the 'others' validity to exist' (p4). The data suggested that the 'two tribes nonsense is a political construct' and highlighted the importance of education in acknowledging a move away from two sides towards developing intercultural relationships. Community education is seen to have a role in the blurring of boundaries, and establishing a healthy transition away from one-dimensional thinking processes. McKeown (1998) specified how training for transformation techniques were utilised in prison 'Sometime after the introduction of the training for transformation books I adapted them to a specifically Irish and republican context' (p253). The analysis of meta-narratives through discussions and adult education techniques such as training for transformation is noted elsewhere in the findings. 'Republican education is about training for transformation'. In describing education in prison McKeown stated 'it was a mutual process, you found that your own perception of the reality wasn't the perception of others, it was only through those discussions that we learned the depth of men's perceptions and their inhibitions, their hang up and barriers' (p243). O'Sullivan, Morrell and O'Connor develop this transformative thinking process further:

Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self locations; our relationships with other human beings and the natural world; our understanding of the relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our body awareness, our visions of alternative approaches

to living; and our sense of the possibilities for social justice and personal joy (O'Sullivan, Morrell & O'Connor, 2002 p.xvii)

### *Socio-economic conditions*

McKeown (1998) noted that the social and economic context was explored in prison, a culture of education was encouraged through 'teaching of orthodox Marxism Leninism, also influenced by pedagogical theories within a humanistic framework' (p237). Social class restrictions provided the fan that flamed the Troubles. The Troubles were seen as a justified community response to the suppression of human rights for the catholic community, police harassment, and asymmetrical power structures. Republicans and loyalists emerged from working class families, but respondents noted differences, with republicans noting that loyalists were second class citizens because of their access to jobs and housing, whereas republicans were third class citizens due to lack of access to both. Jobs and housing were controlled by unionist elites for the most part. Republicans responded by engaging in education. Republican ideology stresses equality, the Good Friday Agreement suggested parity of esteem for both communities. Boraine (1999) noted that in the South African reconciliation process the failure to deal with economic injustice was its greatest omission. Respondents' noted the inadequacy of opposition politics, politics of division in dealing with social and economic problems. Kulkarni and Lemert (2012) noted the importance to recognise the 'social dynamics of silence among the lowest strata of postcolonial societies' (p3). Recognition of a common republican and loyalist class struggle towards an elitist imposed capitalist society structure is evident in the findings. Smyth and Cebulla in Coulter and Murray (2008) noted 'Protestant working class are becoming increasingly marginal as their traditional sources of employment disappear, although apart from isolated and somewhat incoherent protests little organized resistance to these changes seems to be emerging' (p187).

Republicans in the findings noted their venture into loyalist areas to train loyalist former prisoners because many avenues to employment were closed to them, thus recognising the commonality of need in relation to social and economic injustices. They also noted the aspiration towards a 'working class leadership' for loyalists. The question for community education is how do we deconstruct socially and politically constructed structures of alienation? Hamber and Kelly (2005) observed that substantial social,

economic, and political change need to occur. They noted that to facilitate the process of reconciliation ‘the social, economic, and political structures that gave rise to the conflict and estrangement are identified, reconstructed or addressed, and transformed’ (p4). Smyth and Cebulla in Coulter and Murray (2008) noted ‘well over a quarter of Northern Ireland’s households - 29.6 percent - were poor in 2002/03’ and determined that ‘there is less possibility of exiting poverty in Northern Ireland’ (p184). Hillyard et al cited in Coulter and Murray (2008) estimated ‘36 percent of Catholic households and 25 percent of Protestant households are “poor” in Northern Ireland ’ (p185). They observed ‘the changing pattern of poverty can be seen in shifts in educational attainment in the two communities’ (p186). They noted:

It is difficult to interpret the statistics on education and to decode the underlying reasons but one thing is clear: the main determinant of educational achievement is not religion but class, the effects of which are filtered differently through the two parallel educational systems. (Coulter and Murray, 2008, p186)

### *Intergenerational aspects*

The role of former political prisoners in delivering community education initiatives, in managing conflict and in mentoring young people is elaborated upon in the data. Respondents highlighted some of the community initiatives that are contributing to managing conflict in interface spaces and with young people. The Prison to Peace initiative, designed and delivered by former political prisoners from both sides reaches out to schools across the north of Ireland is an example of how community education has a role to play in formal education structures. Some schools have adopted the programme more readily than others. Its emphasis is on the stark reality of how combatants get involved in conflict-generated activity and end up in prison with a criminal record. It advises looking beyond nationalism, republicanism, unionism, and loyalism with ‘rose tinted glasses’ and encourages young people to listen to their story and think for themselves when they are confronted by groups of dissidents who may be condoning violence. The data extrapolated how such interactions could have value in transforming young peoples’ response to social and economic-exacerbated conflict. O’Hagan (2008) stated ‘what cannot be talked about can also not be put to rest, the wounds continue to fester from generation to generation’ (p105). Dialogue is essential to overcoming the intergenerational effects of silence and conflict. The intergenerational



aspect of community education emerged as significant and has the potential, as suggested in the findings and in the literature, to form a core aspect of Ireland's pedagogy of peace.

## 6.6 STIGMA

The data provided evidence of the stigma that former republican prisoners experience in their lives and the impact such stigma exerted on themselves and their families. Displaced people experienced stigma also. The stigma comes from the dominant discourse on the conflict and on the blame that is apportioned to those who emerge from the republican family. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Garda imposed the stigma of the 'known associate' and the 'safe house' on families in their searching and harassment of suspected republican activists within communities. Stigma breeds silence. The data connects stigma with 'contamination'. Stigma is evoked in practices of scapegoating, in discrimination and in marginalisation of those that are stigmatised. But stigma was extended to the loyalist communities also, as noted in the data, Loyalist prisoners' wives were 'isolated, uninvited, parents wouldn't allow their children to play with children (of political prisoners)'. The internment of people without trial resulted in the stigmatization of thousands of suspected republican activists. An important aspect of the stigmatization of political prisoners is the stigma their wives and children endured within their own communities. Bar-On (1995) noted this concept in relation to the survivors of the holocaust:

This blame, combined with feelings of guilt, the guilt and anguish of the survivors themselves, gave rise to a process of silence and silencing that profoundly affected many families of survivors. Some of the emotional burden was wordlessly passed on to the second generation and it has taken many years to decipher the social and psychological reasons for the silence. (Bar-On, 1995 p14)

Because of stigma, the data suggested that 'there has been no effort made to treat post traumatic stress, that's a silent thing that has held a lot of people back'. Bar-On (2001a) noted the silencing of psychologists that occurred in Israel 'a hyper-political atmosphere scared Israeli psychologists into neutrality and objectivism' (p2). Jamieson (2013) highlights the same hyper political atmosphere as an impediment to treatment of post-traumatic stress amongst former political prisoners in Northern Ireland. Bar-On (2001a)

explained the impact of the silencing of psychologists ‘it was extremely difficult to diagnose and treat such emotional wounds in a context of social polarization, as their acknowledgement had political implications’ (p2). Bar-On acknowledged another factor, the social pioneering role of psychologists:

According to Herman’s claim psychologists are a solid part of the social status quo. This situation, with all its attendant comfort, prevents them from openly identifying and proclaiming phenomena that society is still reluctant to debate, but which urgently need “a voice”. (Bar-on, 2001a, p4)

The data suggested that a type of inverted stigmatization occurred towards informers, as the dominant response. They are stigmatized, derided, and held in contempt by the republican movement. In contrast the dominant discourse has been to make a hero of people that informed on the republican movement.

Habermas (1996) identified actors such as journalists ‘who emerge from the public with a critical mandate, the tasks they ought to fulfill is that of a central and systemic player in the construction and support of a critical public sphere’ (p378). The data supported the notion that the media was silenced, or biased in its interpretation of conflict related events. This bias promotes the authority of the state, and fails to live up to the ideology of supporting a critical public sphere. It contributes to stigmatization of a significant cohort of the ‘conflict generation’ despite their peace-building activities in communities, and with young people.

## 6.7 TRUTH RECOVERY: WHERE TO NOW?

The dominant discourse relating to truth recovery has been acknowledged during this research timeline. Share, Tovey and Corcoran (2007) suggested:

The concept of trust is increasingly being used as a way to think about relations in civil society. Trusting others makes it easy for us to co-operate with them and to engage in collective endeavours. Some civil society theorists such as Keane (1998) argue that what civil society needs is not trust but distrust of unaccountable power. (Share, Tovey, and Corcoran, 2007, p137)

How we deal with truth recovery and disclosure is an important aspect of dialogue going forward. Baumann (2009) noted ‘given the historical fact that 1,800 of the almost 4,000 killings since 1969 have not yet been solved, the communities desire for disclosure has a particular relevance’ (p111). The de Silva Report (2012) into the murder of Pat Finucane was met with silence from both governments concerning

aspects of state collusion, and the refusal to enter into a state inquiry. The data acknowledged the injustice that respondents felt towards this response and the cynicism that exists towards the recovery of truth about state collusion. The concept of the cyclicity of collusion engaged in by state forces, which manifested itself with the Irish State forces colluding with British state forces who in turn colluded with loyalist paramilitary organisations is very evident during the timeline within which this research was conducted. Republicans on the other hand are known to have highly developed networks and ways of consulting with grassroots members. Ferriter (2005) noted ‘the discipline of the republican movement guaranteed exceptional faith in the leadership, at least publically’ and suggested ‘stepping outside of the tribe equated with going to the enemy, dissidence was traditionally less tolerated and pronounced in republican culture than within unionism’ (p658). However Shirlow & Murtagh (2006) noted ‘the presentation of those who were labeled as deviant and transgressive cannot now be counterposed by an acceptance that those cast as ‘deviants’ were themselves victims of politically motivated violence’ (p29).

Within the discourse relating to victims, the conceptualisation of what is termed as ‘a hierarchy of victims’ has occurred. This discourse is acting as a barrier towards truth recovery. The data suggested that former politically motivated prisoners are working together to transform conflict but are facing legalistic enquiries into truth recovery that are considered to be problematic. Lederach (2003) noted that the ‘processes designed to explore these deeper issues will need to have a goal of creating spaces for exchange and dialogue, rather than the goal of creating an immediate negotiated solution’ (p57). The data provided evidence that dealing with the past deeply divides, however respondents are in agreement with the aspiration that the conflict will never happen again. Mezirow Taylor and Associates’ (2009) thoughts resonate here ‘learning may be understood as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experience to guide future action’ (p22). Gilligan (1999) cited in Connolly and Ryan suggested that truth is to be found in a feminist pedagogy:

A feminist pedagogy is a truthful method of education in so far as its truth is revealed in action. This historical understanding of truth is common to all liberation movements and therefore requires not simply the decision to act but the very action itself. (Connolly & Ryan, 1999, p211)

A pedagogy that is truthful in method could deconstruct the concept of forgiveness. There have been champions of forgiveness throughout the conflict. People like Gordon Wilson, Richard Moore, Colin Perry, and Jo Berry, amongst many others have engaged in acts of forgiveness. The data supported the complexities of acts of forgiveness in circumstances of violent conflict: In particular forgiveness is not predetermined by the need to develop renewed relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. Psychologists describe silent forgiveness as something that the victim does for their own recovery process. The data suggested that the processes that assisted with truth recovery involved justice seminars, such as those organised by Corrymeela Community that brought former security personnel and former combatants together in round table discussion. Ogelsby (2004) noted the challenges associated with historical memory, in a study of Guatemala's *memory of silence*:

Given the psychological complexity of memory construction, it can be difficult for people to talk about their decisions or indecisions in a given moment that may have had serious consequences. The effort to justify what one did or did not do in a situation of crisis can lead to a constant reinterpretation of memory. This critique does not mean that there is a "silent majority" of revolutionaries out there waiting for a chance to speak out, only that we need other categories more fluid than "victim" to talk about this history. (Ogelsby, 2004, p31)

Lederach's (2005) expanded framework for peace building offers ways in which memory can be reconstructed, through imaginative methodologies, that gives recognition to multiple narratives. Gilligan (1999) suggested 'the movement from individual to systemic analysis encourages a shift from any residual feelings of guilt or victimhood, the foundations of oppression are clearly located within the systems, the structures and the institutions of society' (p210). Camus (1948:229) cited in Greene (1973) asks 'how can we in every predicament take the victims side so as to reduce the damage done?' (p197). Greene suggested:

By coming together we need to think again about overcoming our and others peculiar silences where commitments are concerned. We need in our re-viewing to recapture some of the experiences of coming together that occurred in the peace movement and the civil rights movement. (Greene, 1995, p197)

Whilst Greene is referring to the civil rights movement in America, and we know that the civil rights movement in the north is prone to multiple interpretations, nevertheless the experience of coming together is what is important here, a space where questions can be asked. Greene (1995) asked 'how can we reconcile the multiple realities of

human lives, how can we do it without mythicizing' (p197). She responded by highlighting the development of the 'social imagination' this kind of reshaping imagination may be released through many sorts of dialogue, it all depends upon a breaking free, a leap and then a question' (p198).

The Victim's Commission and The Historical Inquiries Unit are handling past mistakes, by engaging in difficult conversations. However the section of the GFA addressing the question of victims is very abstract and left wide open for interpretation. Baumann (2009) stated 'the morality of the 'others' violence has to be recognised' (p108). Lederach (2003) suggests evoking the 'moral imagination' through 'paradoxical curiosity' that gives rise to a recognition of the 'others' right to exist (p59). Dewey (1997) acknowledged 'conditions have to be created if the potentiality is to be actualized, conditions of cooperation, mutuality, support' (p293).

## 6.8 SEMANTICS

Silence is a semantic process, a process of communication. This thesis notes how codes of silence occur in post-conflict societies through gaps in communication, across interfaces and boundaries and through Marcuse's concept of repressive tolerance. Within such societies an insider is privy to semantic understandings. It is understanding what it means when someone says 'say nothing and keep saying it', it is semantics, how groups of 'others' relate, how they attempt to tap into each others' reality, to acknowledge who they are and how they can relate or how they dominate. The suppression of culture reinforces semantic silences, and offers ways of knowing that suggest why cultures implode in conflict under the burden of suppression. The use of language embraces semantic understandings. The data suggested 'language is a powerful weapon' and can impact on how stories are told and heard.

There are numerous examples of this in the north of Ireland, in border communities and in the data. The labeling of groupings in society as republican, unionist, or loyalist has been problematic, fraught with meanings. All republicans are tarred with the one brush. If I declare as a republican or a unionist or loyalist what am I really saying? What do I condone? Is it best to remain silent about such inclinations, or risk exclusion from civilized society? The labeling of people who died in the conflict as 'innocents' by the

Protestant community provides recognition of the suffering and injustice of Protestant victims. Those same people labeled as ‘legitimate targets’ in the telling of republican stories affects how that story is heard. Other terms such as ‘occupation’ and ‘collusion’ create divisions in how republican stories are heard by loyalists. Republicans prefer the term ‘volunteers’ rather than paramilitaries to describe members of the IRA.

Equally the term ‘traitor’ or ‘touts’ carries with it a depth of fear, nobody wants to be labeled as that. The dominant discourse is that informers provide ‘intelligence’. The data suggested that informers are vilified. This is a particularly poignant aspect of the conflict, and an area that carries a depth of semantic silences. Within this silence legitimate critique is suppressed.

Freire (2010) explored the question of representation, by stating ‘from a semantic stand point words have a basic meaning, and a contextual meaning’ (p87). In other words, is what you say what I think you are saying? and if so, what does that mean to you? Denzin and Lincoln (2005) referred to ‘Saussurian linguistic theory, which views all relationships between words and what those words signify as the function of an internal relationship within some linguistic system’ they relate also to the ‘postmodern historical moment which problematizes truth as partial, identity as fluid, language as an unclear referent system’ (p203). A study of the semantic nature of the conflict in Ireland would shed light on the complexities of developing dialogue between groups of ‘others’. But Lederach (2003) noted:

we can easily fall into a technique-oriented approach toward dialogue and assume that it can only happen in direct face-to-face processes...in deep identity work the opposite may be true. Appropriate exchange may include dialogue through music, the arts, rituals, dialogue as sport, fun and laughter, and dialogue as shared work to preserve communal territory. (Lederach, 2003, p59)

## 6.9 CENSORSHIP OF IDEOLOGY

### *Republican ideology*

The association with republicanism as an ideology in the data is powerful, the term ‘as a republican’ emerged strongly in the focus groups. Republicanism is a world-view that is seen as inclusive and having a moral imperative, always on the side of the oppressed and ‘having an outreach programme’. Lederach’s (2005) ‘moral imagination’ contributes understanding of how the ability to articulate ones ideology can lead groups

of ‘others’ to develop a paradoxical curiosity towards each other. When you identify as a republican you have a ‘republican family’ and a grassroots leadership. Education is strongly advocated, but it is cautious of didactic education, it uses the methodologies of training for transformation as developed by Hope and Timmel (1999). The data confirms that censorship of ideology has a profound and negative impact on how personal identity is experienced. Hall (1992) cited in Haralambos and Holborn (2008) stated:

Identity itself became a political issue. Identity politics as it has become known, is concerned with the differences between groups of people and with allowing individuals to express those differences. It emphasises the importance of hearing different voices, particularly those of oppressed groups. (Haralambos and Holborn, 2008, p696)

Hall explores the ‘impact of globalization on identities in the revival of ethnicity as a source of identity, often in opposition to existing nationalism’ (p697). On the other hand Bauman (1996) cited in Haralambos and Holborn (2008) suggested that ‘identity has become simply a matter of choices, and not even choices that are necessarily consistent or regular’ (p697). The data suggests that silencing by ideology has contributed to the phenomena of collusion. The extent of the censoring of ideology that was implemented during the Troubles is a major societal issue that will need to emerge through the process of truth recovery. If a person’s ideology is censored it has a dehumanizing effect on that person. The data suggests that ‘it is very reflective of keeping your head down’. It also leads society to view individuals with suspicion and mistrust. This process of mistrust and suspicion contributes to and validates the discrimination of former republican combatants through policy frameworks. If a republican ideology is muted, then what ideology is favoured and dominates in that process? Gilligan (1999) reflected ‘to confront the prevailing patriarchal ideology we must understand the nature of ideology and begin to articulate an alternative set of radically new ideas’ (p210).

McWilliams (2010) described how dialogue could be managed even in instances of censorship or secrecy. She described an encounter between a person from Sinn Féin who spoke about how violence had visited him – how his son had been killed in action trying to ambush someone from the British army. He made the point that there was not a day in his life when he wasn’t aware of just what damage violence did. And then the unionist got up and spoke in exactly the same form, after that, they got into a very long and detailed discussion:

After both of them had spoken movingly about the impact of violence on their lives, one of them came up and said, “please don’t tell anyone when we go home that this has happened.” it was also a sign of how precious that moment was that none of us told that story when we went home because it would have created such difficulties. What transpired between those two was kept secret, and, over a year later, when I confronted the member from the other party about the importance of talking to political opponents, he said, “You know, I’m still not there. I’m still not able to tell anybody that that once happened.” but I’m sure that one day he will be able to talk about the importance of those moments. (McWilliams, 2010, p15)

A phase of social, political, and religious censorship of ideology has pervaded the Irish state for many years. Censorship is nurtured by both the church and state. Censorship of Catholic priests by their hierarchy, censorship of the media stimulated an atmosphere of selective reporting that exists to this day. The political call for censorship of art in the Athlone Gallery is an example of the contemporary polarization of some storytellers. Visual artworks such as ‘Fragments sur les institutions Républicaines IV’ by artist Shane Cullen which depicts letters of the Hunger Strikers created controversy in the Council Chambers of Athlone. Story-telling as a peace-building methodology, ironically is not without its ability to silence. According to Bar-On, Litvak-Hirsh & Othman (2007):

Telling a story from one side of the conflict can silence the other side’s voice, particularly in a context of asymmetric power relations. For example, a Jewish Israeli reference to the 1948 war as a war of independence (for Israel) silences Palestinians who see it as their catastrophe. (Bar-On, Litvak-Hirsh & Othman, 2007 p36)

The data confirms that censorship of ideology has a profound and negative impact on how personal identity is experienced.

## 6.10 GENDER

Gary Mitchell, a Protestant playwright cited in Ferriter (2005) suggested that Protestant men’s attitudes towards protestant women were: ‘to silence them, keep them at home, protect them, don’t allow them to do anything’ (p656). Ferriter (2005) described the motivation for women to become involved in the conflict ‘the Troubles ensured many women became politically active in order to protect the well-being of their families or because they could sympathise and feel solidarity with other women when they were



under attack' (p631). He elaborated 'many teenage girls joined the IRA in the 1970's and were particularly active in carrying weapons and intelligence gathering' (p631). Despite their participation he observed 'But the paramilitaries remained sexist, their attitude to these women, indeed the papacy and the army council of the IRA had a lot in common' (p631). A patriarchal environment has persisted and led to, according to Máire (research respondent) the 'underrepresentation of women in the evolving peace process'. The data suggested that loyalist women 'are not let out in case feminism rubs off of them'. It also led to what Arthur described in McWilliams (2010) as 'frontier misogyny' (p58). He noted:

The inclusion of the Women's Coalition in the negotiation process was crucial. It brought a completely new dimension, and it humanized some of our politicians. (McWilliams, 2010, p59)

If we compare the phenomena of the 'other' with how feminism has been perceived some correlations emerge. Bar-On (1998) noted that the 'other' can be perceived as one monolithic constant element, equally Connolly and Ryan (1999) noted the challenges that faces feminism in its portrayal 'as a single monolithic entity, whereas it is by no means a unified body of theory or practice' (p2). Gilligan (1999) responded to the silencing of women:

The exploration of female experience is a highly imaginative act. It opens up a space where we can break the silence about our feelings of oppression induced so often by male imagery of who we are. (Connolly and Ryan, 1999, p209)

She urged 'it is vital that we recognise the existence of the *female imagination* and the difference between female and male imagination' (p205). Lederach's concept of the imagination may be 'moral' whereas the female imagination may be linked primarily to arts-based methodologies that recognise freedom from oppression. Gilligan (1999) urged 'to envisage the future creatively is to stand in the present and to see a reality other than what it is' (p211) and suggested that 'because the imagination is the place of seeing what should be and of feeling what ought to be, then a feminist pedagogy which gives primacy to imagination is essentially a pedagogy towards societal transformation' (p211). McWilliams noted that women are 'memory bearing'. McWilliams (1995) has broken the silence on the extent of domestic violence in a society where violence has become normalized. 'women in other conflict situations have found that with the arrival of peace they were expected to remain silent about these kinds of abuses' (p15). In her comparison of the peace process and domestic violence in (2010) she stated:

You know, peace is a bit like domestic violence. When the women leave a violent relationship, everyone leaves them in the belief that they've walked away from violence and they're safe. In fact that's probably one of the most dangerous moments, because as you know, the person who's been perpetrating the violence will say, "if I can't have you, no one else will." those women are living in tense and threatening situations. We have to remember that leaving violence behind is a process and not an event. (McWilliams, 2010, p63)

## 6.11 SUMMARY

In summary, this chapter provided an analysis of the themes that emerged in the findings section. The themes that were focused on are: Transitional Processes; Transformation of Mindsets; Dialogue; Identity; Significance of Education; Stigma; Truth Recovery; Semantics; Censorship of Ideology and Gender. In this chapter the themes were analysed through the interpretation and relevance of the central theorists whose theories were explored in the Literature Review. The theme of Transitional Processes bore resonance to Freire's epoch of transition. The role of dialogue in changing perceptions and frames of reference to assist them to become more discerning and discriminatory was juxtaposed with Mezirow's Theory of Transformative Learning and the Transformation of Mindsets. The analysis of themes suggested that they are interrelated; dialogue was a significant process during the transition from conflict to peace. Education that was rooted in dialogue and collaborative discourse assisted with the creation of that transition. But dialogue needed to take cognisance of the semantics and the meanings implied within language. On the other hand silencing and censorship of ideology contributes to the experience of stigma, alienation and further imposes difference. The lack of representation of women in the evolving peace process is linked to gender silencing processes. Women have experienced multiple silences. But a feminist pedagogy embedded with imagination can assist community education to break the silence and works towards the recovery of a multiplicity of truths.

## CHAPTER 7: THE ENDGAME

Beckett's play *Endgame* would embody the idea of Irish post colonialism for some.

Pearson (2001) writes:

What we initially find by placing *Endgame* in the context of Irishness and colonialism is that we are dealing with a play that dramatises many unresolved paradoxes of decolonisation known acutely by the Irish and the Irish writer - most notably language dispossession and the co-dependency of identity between long-standing coloniser and colonised. (Pearson, 2001, p216)

### 7.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter ties together the disparate strands of the thesis. It weaves the meanings that are inferred throughout the research process. It focuses on the research title: *Deepening Dialogue in Silent Spaces: Ireland's Pedagogy of Peace*. It revisits the research questions:

- What role does silence play in post-conflict communities?
- What roles can community education play in enabling dialogue?

The aims of the research process that were identified at the outset of the inquiry are addressed in this chapter. The aims are:

- To better understand how communities transition from conflict to peace.
- To explore the importance of the experiences of communities in conflict and post-conflict contexts in education.
- To garner insights about enabling conflict transformation for the community education sector.
- To explore the meaning of empowerment for people who consider themselves to be oppressed.

This chapter draws conclusions from the meaning making that transpired throughout the research process in response to the research questions and aims. It indicates policy and practice implications that relate to the research questions. This thesis explores the transition of former combatants who are now committed peace builders through the lens of their experiences of education and community processes. It highlights the important

aspects of that transition and the truth recovery process through the experiences of a conflict management practitioner. The understandings that emerged from the deep dialogue community group into handling contentious issues in honest conversations are significant to community education practice. This chapter distills the implications of the findings and analyses for educators, for policy making and for funding decisions. It begins by highlighting new knowledge that emerges in the research data and in the analyses of the themes that were generated. It proceeds to outline the implications of that new knowledge for the community education sector. It suggests ways that educational systems and structures can benefit from this new knowledge by designing and engaging with a pedagogy of peace. Two key concepts appear throughout this research as important for educators to consider: The concept of silence and the concept of dialogue. In particular it identifies the relationship of the concepts to a pedagogy for peace. An awareness of silence in different communicative contexts emerges as significant.

➤ What role does silence play in post-conflict communities?

Silence has several functions in post-conflict communities, and in educational spaces within such communities. Silence acts as a safety valve. When engaging in open and honest conversations about conflict related events, the practice of silence incorporates and holds risk. Silence occurs as a result of living with socially and politically sculptured silencing techniques. This type of silence suggests hegemonic invasion of the domestic sphere and includes manipulation of the facts by media. Silences whether they are state, religious, media or paramilitary induced Omertá contributes to an attitudinal division in the country. It contributes to the myth that the conflict was only in the north of Ireland, and that elsewhere on the Island was unaffected because it was unspoken. A 'not in my name' attitude developed which created further ambivalence and yet further divisions. Silence in post-conflict communities also contributes to the thinking that our problems are now solved and we have moved on.

The role of silence in post-conflict communities is to host and reinforce communal processes of ambiguity and ambivalence because other ways of dealing with the legacy of conflict are unknown. Silence reinforces the practice of repressive tolerance. Silences on conflict related issues are an easier option between friends and communities of 'others'. Selective silence provides opportunities to engage with neighbours in

‘normal’ non-conflict related conversations. It provides wider society with an escape clause.

This thesis concludes that a widespread process of constructive ambiguity developed within the silence. It is easier and safer to condemn the violence of the oppressed, than to engage in a critique of the factors that gave rise to it. During the Troubles few people in communities in conflict spoke about injustice, about what they saw or heard, what they knew to be true, lest they too appear to be radical or terrorists and viewed with suspicion, for fear that they might ‘disappear’ or be declared an informer. Silence has a depth of responsibility as an exercise in single consciousness because it can give rise to censorship by ideology. To commit to republican ideology in the south of Ireland, could result in exclusion from opportunities afforded to those of mainstream political views. Although there are exceptions to this assertion, this thesis concludes that those who are opposed to the partitionist mindset have been silenced; their ideology has been censored and in some cases vilified. The Good Friday Agreement altered significantly aspects of societal and politically sculptured silence but there is still a way to go before we are comfortable with a radical response to oppression. This thesis concludes that oppression is an act of violence. It posits that if we can understand the violence of the oppressed through the lens of critical education theorists, then we can construct a pedagogy of peace.

This thesis asks:

- What roles can community education play in enabling dialogue?

This thesis aimed:

- To better understand how communities transition from conflict to peace.

This thesis concludes that education is a highly important task in the transitional phase from one epoch to another. Education that is critical, that addresses the concerns of the people, and that provides them with the skills to name their world is crucial to the transition from conflict to peace. The educational processes that are described in this thesis provide insights into education that is transformational for the individual. It acknowledges the challenges of linking the transformation of individuals to the transformation of society. So the role of education in post-conflict communities is to develop the skills and practices that are needed to enable communities to engage in deep

and honest dialogue about their difficult past. The role of education in post-conflict communities is to enable communities through dialogue to imagine a fair and interdependent future. As we transition from one epoch, that of post-conflict into another epoch - that of truth recovery, we must be resilient in preventing a post-peace building context to dominate. Education that underpins and manages successful truth recovery processes needs resources akin to those that aided the transition from 1998 to 2013. The Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB) in collaboration with communities is successfully managing the transition from conflict to peace. It can continue that work by consciously managing the next transition and reposition the power within communities. This would require that the power would be returned to this body rather than handed over to centralised power structures. We have learned from communities that have transitioned from conflict to peace that it is the people who have the knowledge and the means to sustain peace, but they need power of position, and continuous support in terms of community education initiatives.

This thesis acknowledges Freire's assertion that those who are denied dialogue in favour of decrees will be predominantly silent. The Good Friday Agreement (GFA) has proven to be a valuable decree to date, but it has denied the people an opportunity to engage in dialogue about many aspects of our conflict. In particular the denial of the development of a North-South Civic Forum, as promised in the Agreement has left a yawning gap in the dialogical process that was envisaged.

## 7.1 NEW KNOWLEDGE EMERGING

New knowledge points to the transformation of combatants from terrorists, perpetrators of violence, prisoners of war, towards their identification as peace-builders, and to being part of the solution, particularly in community and youth education. What is interesting is that the findings reveal that the respondents do not feel that their identity has been compromised or changed in this transformational process. But rather that the context has changed and their empowerment through education has been fundamental in adapting to that changing context. New knowledge highlighted the role of education in the transformation process, and in developing the dialogue that led to a peace agreement. There are strong indicators that Freire's theories of liberation through critical education significantly influenced the build up to the Peace Agreement.

Mezirow's theories assisted in sustaining the implications of peace as it proceeded, through the transformation of problematic frames of references for those previously involved in conflict in divided communities. Education played a central and functional role in the peace process, and continues to do so going forward. The community and voluntary organisations and social movements that responded to the conflict and that continue to facilitate dialogue on matters pertaining to peace and conflict in the public sphere, has echoed Habermas's thoughts on communicative action.

New knowledge emerges also in relation to the outcomes for a society that engages with the practice of ideology censorship. The implications for society continuing to engage in censorship are a threat to sustaining peace. It pushes those ideologies, and those that hold them further underground and reinforces the potential for violent responses. The practice of ideology censorship reinforces the practice of stigmatisation, reinforces the practice of marginalisation, and creates societal tolerance of discrimination. It creates silent spaces that are oppressive spaces. Community educators' role is to discriminate between silences that are oppressive and those that are empowering. The role of community education is to create spaces that recognise and acknowledge when silences are oppressive and to facilitate those silences that are conducive to growth and dialogue.

This thesis concludes that the disparity between the status of former political prisoners in the north and those in the south of Ireland emerges as significant and must be acknowledged in policy frameworks. It reinforces the 'silent spaces' aspect of this research. Former combatants in the north appear to have a stronger human rights position, and have exerted that position over the years through education. The ethos of former combatants in the south appears to be 'to keep the head down'. The reasons for this are multiple, and not least related to the legalistic framework adopted in the process of truth recovery. In particular this thesis highlights that former political prisoners, north and south are discriminated against in employment practices and in education. Acts of discrimination are enforced in law, i.e. McConkey and Marks versus the Simon Community, that allows those with conflict related offences to be discriminated against in employment. The Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Act 2005, prevents former combatants from speaking about conflict related issues in therapeutic settings, psychologists are forced by law to report such utterances. This is despite numerous reports acknowledging the need to extend such services for former combatants and their families. This is a paradox.

## 7.2 LIMITATIONS

In terms of the limitations of the research I have primarily garnered the views of those republican combatants who are broadly in agreement with the terms of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. I see this as a starting point. I have not included the voices of those who are broadly against the terms of the agreement, who have become what the media referred to as dissident groups and which former combatants referred to as micro groups. Such groups are vilified in society.

People who disagree with the change in the constitutional right to a united Ireland (GFA) could be given the opportunity to engage in dialogue, and in giving voice to their actions, to commit to analysis of their ideology. This is a piece of work that needs to be undertaken. Are we brave enough as a society to ask what do they know and what do they mean by engaging in the communication of violence? Violence *is* a means of communication. An awareness of the conditions that give rise to the formation of violence is critical.

I have limited this inquiry primarily to former politically motivated prisoners of republican ideology. The rationale for this approach is due to my understanding of that ideology. I went deep into that ideology, as there were aspects of it that I found complex and wanted to clarify. I felt a need to go deeper into one ideology rather than to try to include former politically motivated prisoners of loyalist or unionist ideology. However that research is equally important to undertake in loyalist communities. I suggest that a researcher that originates from the Loyalist/Unionist community might best undertake it.

I feel limited in the contribution I can offer in this thesis to the underrepresentation of women in the evolving peace process. The research is limited in describing the experiences of women who are combatants. Each time I came close to hearing that experience, I felt like Icarus, flying too close to the sun. As a mother I felt like my heart was burning when I heard women describe separation from their children because of the role of conflict in their lives. Women: combatants and non-combatants and families of combatants have a depth of knowledge about the conflict that needs to be heard. There are an estimated 1100 republican women former political prisoners. Their collective



memory bearing capacity can assist with truth recovery. Women have a role to play in re-imagining communities; their underrepresentation in the evolving peace process is a threat to the sustainability of peace. A feminist imaginative pedagogy would contribute to this process. This is a further piece of research that would be a major contribution to Ireland's pedagogy of peace.

### 7.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

This study of the role of education in post-conflict communities suggested that the community education sector is best placed to engage in a pedagogy of peace. It is a site where troubled conversations can occur. It is a site that can develop and embrace the practice of silence as a pedagogical tool. Community education can place value on silence in communicative contexts through arts-based methodologies. Lederach's (2003) warning to resist always seeing 'dialogue as talk' opens up opportunities for other ways that community education can engage with serious issues through creative methodologies. Community education can transcend the boundaries that separate formal and informal learning spaces, and can transcend the rules of engagement of dialogical processes. Paradoxically, by nurturing constructive silent spaces, deep dialogue can be enabled.

The aim of this thesis is:

- To explore the importance of the experiences of communities in conflict and post conflict contexts in education.

#### *Implications for community education*

Community education provides the space necessary to engage in truth recovery processes, beyond legalistic frameworks. Initiative such as those embraced by Towards Understanding and Healing, in The Junction, Derry, The Glencree Centre for Reconciliation in County Wicklow and the Deep Dialogue Group in County Cavan are powerful examples of humanising processes. Community education requires a safe space in which to operate and a safe space needs coordination. It needs facilitators who are trained in positive encounter dialogue whose role is to ensure that risk is responsibly managed, who could design and implement the boundaries of safe encounters. These processes need to be mainstreamed considering the numbers of victims and former

political prisoners and their families that exist. Spaces need to be developed so that communities of ‘others’ can speak with one another, listen and hear one and other and begin to philosophise about what went wrong? Conflict is trans-generational; the implication for community education is that policy makers encourage all age cohorts to participate together in dialogue about the conflict. Intergenerational dialogue is so important. Community education is well placed to create the spaces in which intergenerational dialogue can occur. It is necessary to establish a framework of intergenerational dialogue that would support the truth recovery process. In supporting that process, the need to push boundaries beyond age-segregated education emerges.

A Social Action Model of community education could help to break the silence in order to deepen dialogue on contentious issues. The features of this model of community education have been noted as: attending to social recognition of learners and addressing barriers to learning; reaching disadvantaged learners; fostering critical reflection; ensuring experiential learning, and preparation for social action and community development. Such features primarily attested to can assist with the creation of spaces that lead to a deepening of dialogue. Community educators can and have provoked and nurtured dialogue that is deep, that is honest yet risky but that is capable of changing society. The visibility and value of community education is raised in this process.

Community educators must raise the serious questions, must push the boundaries and be prepared to provoke, to break free, to take a leap and then to question; to engage with those questions; to acknowledge our bias; and to offer opportunities for silent reflection on poetry, visual arts, music. But community educators need to operate within policy frameworks within the education sector that are inclusive of, rather than suspicious of former combatants. We may have become dispossessed of the language to describe our experiences, but community educators can rediscover and embrace the semantics we know to have meaning, in order to reconstitute our ways of knowing into new and more inclusive ways. This demands that community educators model the values of courage, paradoxical curiosity, and posing conflict as dilemmas’. Community educators’ role is to cultivate relationships and to manage risk. Of all of these competencies, the most critical is the management of risk. Community educators’ who are comfortable with their own narrative, can develop ways that facilitate the telling of their own story and explore with others how that story has influenced their understanding of the conflict in Ireland.

The concepts of silence and dialogue arise as both challenges and opportunities for educators. Managing both concepts in educational spaces has several requirements. Those requirements include: being comfortable with silence in the learning space; building a safe space; building relationship and connecting people; facilitating peer mediation of conflict; nurturing dialogue; holding space for anger to arise; taking the time it takes for stories to be told; recognition of the rights of others: an ability to dance with difference and allowing truth telling to unfold. Community educators' task then, as articulated by Greene (1995) 'is to create situations in which we are moved to begin to ask in all the tones of voice there are "why"' (p6).

This thesis aimed:

- To garner insights about enabling conflict transformation for the community education sector.

The Lederach (2003) Model of Conflict Transformation has proven to be an imaginative model through which to filter the experiences of communities in conflict and to facilitate understanding. It offers opportunities to make complexity a friend, to host a multiplicity of time-frames and a multiplicity of truths and narratives. It invokes the idea of the 'moral imagination' as a pedagogical tool. The most fundamental challenge in peace building is not about bringing like-minded people together or attempting to win converts to a particular solution. In contrast, it involves intentionally seeking to link people who are not like-minded or not like-situated. Lederach's (2005) Pyramid of Approaches to Peace Building is useful for engaging in explicit strategic networking amongst communities of 'others'. It focus's dialogue on the nexus of relationships - that which lies between top-down and bottom-up as a dissemination point for understanding to transfer across the divides.

Lederach's (2005) *the past that lie's before us* Model provides educators with a process through which we can examine the past and the narratives that emerge from it in a non-confrontational way. It offers an understanding of how individual and community memory is laid down. It could be used to examine the complexities of our family origins, the origins of our names, our identity, the role taken by previous generations, our historical monuments and our decrees and by so doing enable us to see beyond the 'us and them' construct of divided communities. Used effectively, it can enable us to

recover truths, when explored through the window of multiple political and social class contexts.

Lederach's (2005) Model of *transformational platform* can provide educators with a visual tool for the representation of the analysis of specific conflict incidents. It can be used to discriminate between conflict that is a normal part of a communities' response to oppression or injustice, and those that are related to identity, to put in place transformational platforms that address the long-term effects of division and alienation. There are limitations in terms of what this model can do to envisage a fair and interdependent society for a future that embraces limited conflict.

Lederach's (2005) model in many ways is rooted in the past and the relational sphere there. It falls short of visualizing a way out of the cyclical nature of conflict. The processes at the platform, whilst useful are unknown in terms of their future impact on conflict. Lederach's focus on the 'moral imagination' hosts religious connotations that may be unhelpful in communities where seemingly religious divisions exist. Indeed this thesis concludes with a further paradox; religious ideology has very little to offer the conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland. This is because the conflict is at its roots a class conflict perpetrated by overstepping of the boundaries by the state and the economy.

Habermas has more to offer here in terms of naming the inequality of the world that exists when the *lifeworld* is colonized in this way. This thesis concludes that Habermas's theories can engage communities in resistance to economic imbalance through the systems of civil society and by using communicative action that is learned. This is where education of a significant mass of people is needed. Freire's approach to naming the banking methodology of the education system, and offering instead a critical theory to engage communities in learning is very useful but is idealistically inspired along equality of participation of social class and gender. It fails to recognise that the power to implement systems of education lies with the state, the state is the funding arm of community education as such it controls its activities and the methodologies it uses. Habermas prompts civil society to align itself with social movements in order to realize its true potential for social change.

This is where the social imaginative and a feminist pedagogy can assist with dealing with present conflicts through relationship centric approaches and enable educators to

collaborate with communities in imagining a future that moves beyond *either-or* dichotomies. An engagement with arts-based methodologies can identify appropriate ways in which community education can transcend the boundaries, reach out to each other, and attempt to overcome alienation through unity. By recognising that the economy and its power structures have united in adversity against community, that same community can rise in unity against a common enemy in a philosophy of peaceful resistance.

#### 7.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

This thesis aimed:

- To explore the meaning of empowerment for people who consider themselves to be oppressed.

This thesis provides evidence of empowerment through education for people who consider themselves to be oppressed. It provides evidence of the understanding that emerged through dialogue of the ineffectual methods that were employed by armed struggle. It concludes that empowerment was a product of the process of dealing with oppression through dialogue and consensus building. The changing economic, political and equality legislation landscape also contributed to empowerment of the wider Catholic community.

Political prisoners from republican and loyalist origins are accredited with having played a significant role in the negotiations leading to the Good Friday Agreement. There are a number of examples where they are actively involved in community development and education initiatives that are assisting with the sustainability of peace. Initiatives that are noteworthy include: *Conflict Transformation from the Bottom Up* and *STEPS the Prison to Peace Programme*. Community education's responsibility is to work at the seams of structures and systems in order to humanize them. Such initiatives as mentioned above, implemented in the south would contribute to trans-generational understanding of the Troubles.

This thesis concludes that, in some instances, oppressive practice continues. Contemporary literature and the findings in this thesis concur that the criminalisation aspect of 25,000 former political prisoners is a major societal issue that is complicated by silence, legalistic frameworks and discriminatory practices. This research concludes that there are a number of policies that need to be reviewed in order for social and

political silence to be broken, and for deep dialogue to occur on this issue. The policies are those that relate to the barriers that prevent equal access for a range of services, for former politically motivated prisoners. Having a conflict related criminal record restricts access to education and to employment, which further compounds socio-economic inequalities.

There is a need to make it safe for former combatants to speak their truth, to unveil the reality that lies beyond justification and memory manipulation. The exclusion of former combatants from dialogue that aims to develop a fair and interdependent future, particularly in the south of Ireland is a barrier to any imaginative opportunities that could develop for Ireland's pedagogy of peace. The inevitability of future episodes of conflict is inherent in such exclusionary practices. But the legalistic framework that excludes a cohort of the population from expressing their political views in educational spaces, views that have been extended and amended as a result of their engagement with conflict, is a major barrier to the creation of transformation at the platform. An imaginative pedagogy would look for insights to the long-term question: How long is a former political prisoner a former political prisoner?

A paradox exists in relation to influence, recognition, and positive regard in mainstream society. The United Nations has acknowledged former combatants as having a recognised right to revolt. At the same time, a substantial number of former combatants, political prisoners, and their families are living with post-traumatic stress disorder. They are living with guilt and with shock. A substantial number of them are living with alcohol and substance abuse. They are living in an era of discrimination and marginalization that manifests itself in barriers to education, to employment and to accessing psychological services. This research highlights the need for a review of the policies that directly exclude former political prisoners from mainstream society including education. A review of this nature could be carried out in the south of Ireland, and a comparative analysis conducted with the findings of Jamieson, Shirlow, and Grounds (2010).

Ireland is entering a transitional phase in which we are seeking to deal with the past through truth recovery processes. Education is a highly important factor in this transition. By embracing the idea that conflict is a normal aspect of living we can begin to design ways to manage it. Lederach's Model of Conflict Transformation provides

insights into the cyclical aspects of conflict. Community education can use this model to help to ease this transition: provide opportunities for dialogue; and encourage the transformation of patterns of exclusion, into opportunities for inclusion.

*Implications for higher and further education*

Further and higher education systems could review their access policies and practices in order to make them more conducive to learning lessons from the Troubles. Former political prisoners who participated in this research have requested higher education and training opportunities in specific subjects. These are areas in which they feel that they can contribute. They are wide ranging and include: equality studies; conflict transformation; mediation skills and human rights issues. This research concludes that the academy could build upon its already significant engagement and offer its resources to the community. Institutions of higher and further education can consider their policy framework and examine its implications for how it responds to an overarching pedagogy of peace. An awareness of the policies and practices within university or higher and further education systems that are actually negating positive peace efforts is critical.

The academy needs a paradigm shift away from teaching *to* and towards learning *with* communities and former combatants. To listen to what they have to offer wider society from their experiences. In this way the academy could grow leadership with communities where it is needed. It would become embedded in post-conflict communities in order that solutions to serious and recurring issues can be found. Freire's theoretical framework offers the academy ways in which they can implement this paradigm shift.

*Law alone cannot solve the problems of society (Ela Gandhi)*

In Constitution Hill Jail, a quote from Nelson Mandela is written above the entrance to the cell in which he was imprisoned: 'it is said that no one truly knows a nation until one has been inside its jails. A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones.' We in the south of Ireland will ignore this judgment at our peril. The systems of education that were put in place in the prisons in the north of the country greatly assisted the transformational learning processes of former combatants. Education in prisons and beyond that is critical, that is linked to the political context,

that resists banking methodology and that is peer led, designed, and implemented has facilitated paradigm shifts in understanding about conflict.

*Developing relevant processes for multiplicity of truths to be recovered*

Processes are being developed whereby safe spaces for positive encounter dialogue exists beyond legal frameworks. Such processes need to be conscious of the imperative to minimize risks to those who engage in truth telling. This requires that an amnesty exist within that space for telling of truths, separate from that of the Historical Enquiries Team, (HET) and criminal legislation. It demands developing boundaries about what might be revealed beyond that encounter and what might be held *in camera*. According to Honneth (1996) the struggle for recognition could form a core principle in the telling of all stories. The need to deal effectively with truth recovery through using narrative as a methodology requires, amongst other things, a safe space within which to practice. A safe space has four requirements in order to function effectively: a requirement to develop relevant process; a requirement on educators trained in positive encounter dialogue and in critical theory who can use silence effectively; a requirement for civil society to have power of position; a requirement to prioritise arts-based methodologies.

*Arts-based methodologies*

Greene (1995) suggested ‘in connection with the arts and with a community always in the making: the community that may someday be called a democracy’ (p6). Arts- based methodologies, such as those supported under the *Building Peace through the Arts – Re-Imaging Communities Programme* will enable communities to engage artists in the development of public art, promoting tolerance and understanding. This initiative could encourage the imagination of a safe space in which we can acknowledge the past yet move towards an interdependent and fair future. Grass- roots responses in post-conflict communities have been vibrant, particularly within arts-based methodologies. Initiatives such as the Verbatim Theatre piece *Troubled Conversations*, written by Kevin O’Connor (2012) shared onstage the true stories of ex provisional IRA volunteers and victims of violence. The audience collectively bore witness to issues of suffering, redemption, and social justice. A facilitated discussion followed the piece that encouraged audience participation in the troubled conversation. Through theatre, the visual arts, poetry and music, opportunities emerge that can contribute to our



understanding and imagining. If pedagogy of peace were a dance it would be the Siege of Venice, a dance in which partners of others would move in and move out and twirl about, grappling with difference, but always moving. The 60<sup>th</sup> annual Fleadh, hosted in Cavan for three years (2010-2012) highlighted what can happen when cultures are shared. The Ulster Scots Agency was invited to take part and three lambeg drums, symbols of the Orange Order and the Ancient Order of Hibernians took part in the opening ceremony. It was a historic first. There was obvious strategy here by the festival organisers of reaching out to the ‘other’ culture. We risk vulnerability one step at a time.

## 7.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR IRELANDS PEDAGOGY OF PEACE

Pedagogy of peace is a philosophy of education; the epistemology of which is rooted in a philosophy of unity. It imagines a space where all of the people of the nation are united. Pedagogy of peace is an educational practice that would nurture and deepen dialogue. It seeks out that which is often kept locked away in silent spaces. The suppression of culture reinforced semantic silences; it silenced the knowledge of why cultures implode. It created rules and the consequences of breaking those rules. Silent spaces exist in classrooms, in curricula, in communities, in workplaces, in memories.

*What are the characteristics of pedagogy of peace?*

Pedagogy of peace is intimately connected with the concepts of time, creating time and constructing space within which difficult conversations can emerge. A variety of spaces are required and include; interspaces, spaces to enter into rather than interfaces; silent spaces; storied spaces; complex spaces; contested spaces; tentative spaces; angry spaces; commemorative spaces; sad spaces; but critically all spaces must be safe spaces. Educators comfortable with, aware of and who model silence can contribute to the process of understanding. Silence is a response that enables dialogue to emerge, not quickly, in rapid quick-fired succession but slowly, thoughtfully, appropriately and over time. By acknowledging that there is no greater agony than bearing an untold story, safe spaces where stories: community educators’ stories; participants’ and students’ stories; stories of combatants; politicians, security personnel and victims can be told, listened to, and crucially, *heard*. Educators’ could create positive encounter dialogue

through holding storied spaces. By sharing their stories, former combatants are playing a key role in transforming the reality of conflict in communities affected by violence, disadvantage, and social issues. There are further spaces needed. Spaces where help can be asked for and help can be given: help to deal with post-traumatic stress; help to deal with the legacy of the conflict; help for the husbands, the wives, the children, and the families. Help in dealing with discrimination, help to lift the stigma, help to deal with the past of a nation united in only one thing; grief.

What place might exist to facilitate the emergence of this connectedness? Verwoerd's emphasis is placed on the need to develop connections between people:

That's my problem with this peace-building language: it's sometimes all over the place. We are not building peace or building people, we are cultivating connections. This is a metaphor that makes sense. It is about change in the actual life energy that happens in the people, in relationships. (Verwoerd, 2011, p36)

Proponents of the concept of the fifth province have imagined such a space. *An Ceidu* is a mythological province that contains pieces of each province but is also one in its own entirety. According to McCarthy:

It was an imagined place where different interests came together and discoursed. Relationships between one-and-other became possible. Realities were deconstructed and constructed. Fact and image were sundered and reunited. It was a province of imagination, a province of possibilities. (McCarthy, 2010, p8)

*What has Ireland's pedagogy of peace achieved?*

1.995 billion euro (€1,995,000,000) has been spent in Northern Ireland and the six border counties since 1998 through the Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. What has it achieved? It has achieved an understanding of conflict, an understanding of identity and an understanding of how we can begin to deepen dialogue about contentious issues. We have gained an insight into the transitional processes, and what can sustain them. Communities in the north of Ireland and the six border counties have experienced a tentative transformation from conflict to peace. We have developed community infrastructure, community initiatives and arts-based methodologies that have contributed to the transformation of mindsets. Civic society networks have been

strengthened. These networks have designed strategies and facilitated dialogue through which the experiences and definitions of victims can be heard.

In terms of how we are implementing Hamber and Kelly's (2004) Five Strands of Reconciliation: we are struggling with the development of a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society; we are at the threshold of acknowledging and dealing with the past; we are building positive relationships; we have witnessed significant cultural and attitudinal change and we are addressing substantial social change but we are restricted by the lack of economic and political change. The Good Friday Agreement has served us well. But it needs to be revisited by all parties to that agreement. The problems of society can sometimes be traced to and acknowledged in sites of exclusion, isolation, and discrimination. So what remains to be done?

- De-stigmatise those who were involved in the conflict;
- Recognise the multiplicity of truths and create spaces for truth telling;
- Acknowledge and overcome alienation through imaginative arts-based methodologies;
- Establish an overarching role for civil society.

A review of the Good Friday Agreement would identify aspects of the agreement that have not been implemented to date. It would also identify those areas that continue to create exclusion, isolation, and discrimination. The recognition of the role of participatory democracy in the Good Friday Agreement has yet to be implemented through the formation and financing of the North-South Civic Forum. It's implementation may provide a threat to the power of the North-South Ministerial Council and the Border Authority. The lack of implementation of a North-South Civic Forum is also a threat to peace. Acknowledging that civil society has work to do to unite itself is the first step. Engaging philosophically with the concept of unity is a worthy aspiration, which requires unity-proofing of the systems and structures that are employed in this process. The politics of division and opposition are no longer a good fit for this newly constituted way of being. They are outmoded, and reminiscent of past failures. The findings and analysis of this thesis suggested that progression towards an interdependent and fair society through peaceful means is being led by wider civil society structures that include former combatant networks even as their impact is on the periphery. Civil society structures and community educators are ideally placed to

continue this work but they need power of position, and they need a specific fund to resource this work. A safe and open space would allow civil society, north, and south to address the question: How can we begin to construct a process for dealing with the past?

A deconstructed united Ireland can take its spiritual and philosophical base from the progress made in the north of the country. It is the people of the north that have made coherent advances beyond oppression towards equality and self-determination, albeit they are struggling to maintain that position on a daily basis. We in the south of the country have a lot to learn from that struggle. We can learn this through communicative action in the context of a North-South Civic Forum. There is some insight and some lessons to be learned from the struggle that combatants aligned with in their attempt to free Ireland militarily. In acknowledging military defeat by British forces, they have used Freirean methodologies to name their world, and the position of oppression they occupied within it. They have allowed the discourse of equality, human rights, and unity to emerge. Much more is to be gained from the outcomes achieved through critical reflection upon the deeds of the past and the role wider society played, the consequences of which are a poisonous legacy.

## 7.6 FURTHER RESEARCH

This thesis concludes that opportunities for further research exist in relation to the use of arts-based methodologies to facilitate dialogical, communicative, and educational development of Ireland's Pedagogy of Peace. Education has a wealth of arts-based resources at its disposal; the challenge is to discover how educators can apply them to truth recovery processes, conflict transformational processes, and the development of an interdependent and fair future. This thesis concludes that research into the loyalist former political prisoner community, focusing on the role of education in the transition from armed conflict to brokering the Peace Agreement would provide a critical and comparative study to this one. Research into the role of silence within the loyalist community would constitute an important aspect of that study.

A quantitative study of approximately 25,000 former political prisoners that would inform a socio economic profile of that community, north and south, loyalist and republican, would be a worthwhile exercise. In particular a study of approximately

1100 female former political prisoners, and combatants would inform a gendered approach to conflict transformation, the results of such a study would indicate focused qualitative research that could be undertaken with that cohort.

This thesis concludes that qualitative research into the former combatant community south of the border, that focuses on education, would inform what community education can contribute to this cohort, and what that cohort can contribute to community education. A study is also needed of approximately 14,000 displaced people, to identify their educational needs and to indicate what community education can learn from their experiences.

This thesis highlights the need for research into an overarching role for civil society in the development of a North-South Civic Forum; to focus on how that forum could be structured; how it might be financed; and what it could contribute to humanising and harmonizing the different systems and structures that influence socio economic deficiencies for communities living both sides of the border.

## 7.7 SUMMARY

In conclusion, what role does silence play in post-conflict communities? The role of silence in post-conflict communities is, paradoxically, to acknowledge the depth of dialogue that needs to be developed in spaces that have remained silent for some time. The role of silence is to facilitate a move beyond surface level discussion. Ireland's pedagogy of peace involves acknowledging and tapping into the silent pauses that occur within educational spaces when contentious issues arise. Educators need to take risks, one step at a time, in modeling open and honest dialogue. An awareness of individual and community narratives that have contributed to silence and an understanding of how family and community memories are laid down can assist the process of deepening dialogue. Women have experienced multiple silences in communities in conflict. By integrating Lederach's 'moral imagination' with Greene's 'social imagination' we can come closer with communities to imagining a fair and interdependent future that recognises the role of the male and the female imagination in that process.

What roles can community education play in enabling dialogue? Ireland's pedagogy of peace is revealed by community educators adapting and extending critical theories to

suit the context. Community educators have deconstructed silent spaces and developed the framework for a liberating pedagogy to take root. The role of silence is fundamentally linked to the theories of Freire, to his ability to humanise and to liberate. Individuals' underlying assumptions and ideologies fundamentally affect how they see reconciliation, in that regard Mezirow and Lederach's theories underpin transformation, and Bar-On's ideas recognise the impact of 'othering'. Beyond the silence, within dialogical processes the theories of Habermas articulates the role of civil society in holding forth the borders between the economy/state and the *lifeworld* of communities through communicative action. The role of silence is to create awareness. Critical education that is linked with politics can create awareness of the need for transformation to occur in the political educational relational sphere. In collaboration with the arts and drawing upon the feminist imaginative liberating pedagogy of hooks, Greene, Gilligan, McMinn, McWilliams and others, community educators can and have, with the support of an academy that is embedded in the community, design a future where dialogue is enabled and where conflict is transformed. The past is a foreign country, but one that community education can negotiate through dialogue.

In summary there is still a body of work to be achieved by the inhabitants of this small nation as we respond to the question of how we can deal with the past. Leaving aside the geographical and territorial claims to nationhood, the philosophy of unity and disunity is a useful starting point. It begins with acknowledging the duality revealed within our identities, for many of us we are conflicted with our relationship with Britain, with England. It's conquest of Ireland has left deep socio economic and psychological scars. We are also inexplicably linked through our integrated families and historical connections. This dichotomy, this duality, this conflicting position is acknowledged as we attempt to put the past behind us and look to a shared future. We are similarly conflicted with our relationship with Ireland north and south and the partition that divides and alienates us, our loss of voice contributed in part by our loss of language. As we transcend these boundaries through education we can create the paradigm shift required to enable government to serve the people rather than serving the economy. As historically oppressed people, we are attracted to and host the ontology of oppressor, we want and need to cast off this slavish attitude and move towards an empowered identity, but we must consistently guard against the oppressor within.

## APPENDIX

- Information sheet and consent form
- Research questions
- Confidential questionnaire
- Section of Good Friday Agreement dealing with Prisoners
- Section of Good Friday Agreement dealing with Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution.

## **Information Sheet and consent form for research participants.**

Research Title: The role of education in building and sustaining peace.

The aims of the research are as follows:

- (1) To document the experiences of stakeholders engaged in peacebuilding in the border area and beyond.
- (2) To identify key skills, processes, and methodologies used by practitioners in their peace building activities.
- (3) To identify recommendations for peace education and for practitioners.

Participants can expect to become involved in a focus group of one hour's duration each. Following each focus group a transcript will be sent to you for your information. You may decide to amend, remove comments, or make additions where necessary at this point. You are assured of complete confidentiality from the researcher and throughout the research process. Should you wish to participate anonymously all identifiers will be removed.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw from the research process at any time without any negative consequences to you. In this instance any data that you have provided during the research process will be removed at your request.

### **Researcher(s) name, address, and contact number**

- Margaret Nugent,
- Dept. of Adult & Community Education, NUI Maynooth.
- Contact number: (01) 708 3937
- E mail address [Margaret.nugent@nuim.ie](mailto:Margaret.nugent@nuim.ie)

### **University involved in the research**

- Department of Adult & Community Education,
- NUI Maynooth, Co Kildare



### **Supervisor(s) name, address, and contact number**

- Professor Anne Ryan,
- Department of adult & community education,
- NUI Maynooth, Co Kildare.
- Contact Number: (01) 708 3683
- E mail address, [anne.ryan@nuim.ie](mailto:anne.ryan@nuim.ie)

### **Details about how the data will be safeguarded, for what purposes it may be used, and for how long it will be kept.**

All information will be kept in password-protected, encrypted files. Identifiers will be removed where requested by the research participant. Some identifiers will be retained in order to provide relevant background information for the thesis. This will be kept in a separate compressed file which is password protected. A copy of the data will be kept on a USB memory stick. The data will also be encrypted. Data will be retained for the purpose of verification of the information. It will be retained for a period of 6 years, after 6 years the data will be placed in the trash option. Additional data storage, i.e. memory stick will be physically destroyed. Margaret Nugent, researcher, will be responsible for destroying all of the data. If future outputs relating to the research material are involved, the researcher will at that time request permission for any identifying material to be included.

*If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the National University of Ireland Maynooth Ethics Committee at [research.ethics@nuim.ie](mailto:research.ethics@nuim.ie) or +353 (0)1 708 6019. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.*

## **Consent form**

I, ( ..... ) of the following organisation (.....) hereby provide my consent to engage in this research relating to the role of education in building and sustaining peace conducted by Margaret Nugent.

I agree to participate in 1 focus group meeting, of 1 hour in duration, during the time frame November 2012 to January 2013 with Margaret Nugent, researcher. If I wish to collaborate further in the research process that will be at my own discretion.

I expect to read the transcripts of the focus group discussion as soon as they become available, and in any case before they form part of the research document. I understand that I may add to, amend or remove any data that I deem inappropriate in the content.

I also understand that I will be sent a draft copy of the concluding chapter of the research document, prior to submission to NUI Maynooth, so that any queries I may have in relation to the thesis can be addressed.

I understand that I can expect complete confidentiality from the researcher, and that my contribution can be anonymous if I wish it to be. All identifiers will be removed should I request it. Furthermore I have been assured that I can contact the researcher at any time to address any concerns I may have relating to the research. I have been provided with an information sheet by the researcher.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

(Block Capitals)

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP/SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS AND NARRATIVE INQUIRY

### **Identity**

Who were you and what was important to you 14 years ago?

Who are you and what is important to you now?

It has been written that you were negotiators of the GFA, 14 years on has it achieved what you thought it might

If so, why

Has your ideology changed, are you happy with the change in the process, why

### **Ideology and process**

Have you changed your beliefs, Why

Is the process keeping up with your beliefs,

why does the peace process suit you

Tracking change, how moved, what was the tipping point, why did it happen, what were the outside forces at play.

What support did you get to move from one ideology to another

Do you think you have a part to play now in advancing your ideology.

How are older people dealing with this change, what do you have to offer them

how are younger people relating to your ideology

What do you have to offer young people of differing ideologies

Does everyone in the community view it as a peace process

What is your vision for the future, has it changed from 20 years ago

## **Dialogue**

what is dialogue for peace; why does it happen, what is the process involved, what are the benefits, risks

how is dialogue facilitated;

How do you dialogue with those whose processes haven't changed.

do contentious issues arise

are there discussions that are off the agenda

how do you deal with contentious issues

how silence is and has been used;

what is important about silence; how is silence managed;

## **Process of change**

Have you changed your beliefs, is the process keeping up with your beliefs, does the peace process suit you

Tracking change, how moved, what was the tipping point

What support did you get to move from one ideology to another

how silence is and has been used;

what is important about silence; how is silence managed;

## **Armed struggle**

why did it happen, what were the crucial aspects,

what was your reality at that time

Do you feel like an advocat of peace or a victim

What way were you viewed by the wider community

How does it feel now, , were there significant points along the way, what were they

What level of leadership do you have in the community

What are the crucial aspects.

Social divides

Who moves beyond their origin of identity, does it happen, why and how

Has your focus, has your beliefs changed,

Is there cohesiveness in the coiste network, why, or how do you accommodate differing views.

### **Education**

Do you think that there are any particular gaps or silences in the education system/curriculum. why

what does peace education have to offer to mainstream education.

What are the challenges that we need to be aware of;

How can teachers and adult educators manage contentious issues in the classroom.

What gaps are there in the curriculum

Where does peace education fit.

What can you offer combatants in international areas of conflict

What is important to you to suggest for inclusion in the research/ further areas of research that need to be completed.

Confidential Questionnaire

Please place a circle where relevant

Age Group:    20-30                    30-40                    40-50                    50-60                    60-70

70 plus.

Were you in prison                    Yes                    No

If yes, what were you imprisoned for?

---

How long were you in prison?

---

What year were you released?

---

When did you join Coiste?

---

What other groups are/were you a member of?

---

Name

(optional)

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This information forms baseline data of all research participants. The results will be collated to show overall results and will not be used as an individual document.

completed by Autumn 1999.

## **PRISONERS**

1. Both Governments will put in place mechanisms to provide for an accelerated programme for the release of prisoners, including transferred prisoners, convicted of scheduled offences in Northern Ireland or, in the case of those sentenced outside Northern Ireland, similar offences (referred to hereafter as qualifying prisoners). Any such arrangements will protect the rights of individual prisoners under national and international law.
2. Prisoners affiliated to organisations which have not established or are not maintaining a complete and unequivocal ceasefire will not benefit from the arrangements. The situation in this regard will be kept under review.
3. Both Governments will complete a review process within a fixed time frame and set prospective release dates for all qualifying prisoners. The review process would provide for the advance of the release dates of qualifying prisoners while allowing account to be taken of the seriousness of the offences for which the person was convicted and the need to protect the community. In addition, the intention would be that should the circumstances allow it, any qualifying prisoners who remained in custody two years after the commencement of the scheme would be released at that point.
4. The Governments will seek to enact the appropriate legislation to give effect to these arrangements by the end of June 1998.
5. The Governments continue to recognise the importance of measures to facilitate the reintegration of prisoners into the community by providing support both prior to and after release, including assistance directed towards availing of employment opportunities, re-training and/or re-skilling, and further education.

## Appendices 1 B Replacement of Articles 2 and 3 in Constitution of Ireland

1937 Version

### Article 2

The national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its islands, and the territorial seas.

### Article 3

Pending the re-integration of the national territory, and without prejudice to the right of the parliament and government established by this constitution to exercise jurisdiction over the whole territory, the laws enacted by the parliament shall have the like area and extent of application as the laws of Saorstát Éireann and the like extra-territorial effect.

Current Version Adopted 1999 in fulfillment of commitment made in the Good Friday Agreement, 1998

Article 2 It is the entitlement and birthright of every person born in the island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, to be part of the Irish nation. That is also the entitlement of all persons otherwise qualified in accordance with law to be citizens of Ireland. Furthermore, the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage.

Article 3.1. It is the firm will of the Irish nation, in harmony and friendship, to unite all the people who share the territory of the island of Ireland, in all the diversity of their identities and traditions, recognising that a united Ireland shall be brought about only by peaceful means with the consent of a majority of the people, democratically expressed, in both jurisdictions in the island. Until then, the laws enacted by the Parliament established by this Constitution shall have the like area and extent of application as the laws enacted by the Parliament that existed immediately before the coming into operation of this Constitution.

3.2. Institutions with executive powers and functions that are shared between those jurisdictions may be established by their respective responsible authorities for stated purposes and may exercise powers and functions in respect of all or any part of the island. It is the entitlement and birthright of every person born in the island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, to be part of the Irish nation. This is also the entitlement of all persons otherwise qualified in accordance with law to be citizens of Ireland. Furthermore, the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage.



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