



CRC e bulletin

5th Annual Victims & Survivors Conference

Patricia O'Neill, Communications Officer at CRC, reports on the 5th Annual Victims & Survivors Conference held on 15th & 16th September.



Back, from left to right, Carol Taylor, Frances Dennison, Brian Mullan, Joan Clements and Paul Jordan (all CRC staff). Front, from left to right, Sandra Bloom MD (CommunityWorks) and Duncan Morrow (CEO, CRC)

I recently attended ‘The 5th Annual Conference working with Victims and Survivors’ held at the Radisson Hotel in Limavady; around 150 delegates attended representing a wide range of groups.

We were welcomed by Paul Jordan (acting Director of Funding and Development at the Community Relations Council (CRC)) and by Duncan Morrow CEO of CRC, who talked about the difficulties affecting the Victims Sector in the present political climate. He stressed the importance of clearly identifying the needs of the sector and of “Creating a vision big enough for all of us.”
(Duncan’s speech will be available on CRC website soon).

The keynote speaker was Sandra Bloom MD who, as an American Board-Certified psychiatrist, speaks nationally and internationally about the impact of traumatic experience. Sandra delivered a practical and inspirational speech which emphasised the importance of “Honouring the past and, more vitally, determining our future.” Sandra went on to outline how trauma impacts on individuals, family, organisations and society.

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Edited by
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and
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This was an enlightening presentation and I think many in the room were able to identify with the effect trauma can have both physically and emotionally.

The statement “The way things get conveyed through generations is very insidious” probably stood out for a lot of us. She went on to say “If we, as individuals can identify and deal with our own experience maybe we can pass down something more precious.” Her presentation ended with a quote from Gandhi, “Be the change you want to see.”

There were a good range of workshops on issues identified by the sector.

Suicide: The Risk and Protective Factors – facilitated by Contact Youth

The workshop explored how to recognise the risks of suicide and what protective factors should be put in place to best serve the individuals involved.

Be Positive about your Mental Health – Southern Area Health Promotion Department

This was an interactive workshop exploring what positive mental health is and practical way to apply it to our lives.

Transformative Dialogue – Koram Centre

Participants were introduced to a victim/survivor centred transformative dialogue method currently being developed by the Koram Centre and Universities in Minnesota and the Marquette Law School.

Compassion Fatigue – Caring for the Helper – Lenadoon Counselling Service

The workshop delivered a background on Figleys model of Compassion Fatigue follow by discussion.

Peace III Funding Clinic – CRC and Border Action

The clinic offered participants an opportunity to meet with staff to discuss project ideas and get practical advice on applying for Peace III funding.

There was a great deal of positive feedback from participants and the evaluation forms bear this out when asked what session/workshop they liked best the responses were;

- Sandra Bloom and Funding/Peace III workshop
- Funding. Patricia was excellent, very friendly, very helpful and no rush
- I attended the suicide workshop which was informative. The mental health workshop was very important as it brought people together in drama and laughter
- I attended the carers’ workshop and found it excellent because it made me realise that I need to look after myself as well.
- The suicide awareness workshop
- Mental health (workshop)
- Peace III funding (clinic)
- The Laughter workshop – excellent

The second day of the conference was just as busy; Frances Dennison introduced the session and Tony McCusker (Chair of CRC) reflected on the first day and introduced the panel for the next session, Bertha McDougall, Victims Commissioner, John Clarke, Head of Victims Unit and Duncan Morrow. The panelists outlined their views/thoughts on the Consultation paper, *Outline draft strategic approach for Victims and Survivor*, and delegates were asked to work in groups to review the document. The session brought to light a range of views and questions; the main queries regarded the make up of the Victims Forum, funding and the timeline. Some of the comments are outlined below.

The Forum

- Forum is too complex
- How are the Forum members appointed/elected/paid?.

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- Will there be paid staff? How much will they be paid?
- How do we prevent Forum becoming a QUANGO run by civil servants?
- Is the new Forum going to be cost effective?
- How fully independent can the forum be if it is set up by 'The State'?

Funding

- Concerns regarding who will administer service funding.
- Is funding going to be mainstream and stable instead of hand to mouth?
- Will it be a financial burden on the sector?

Timeline

- Timetable not achievable; conflict in the panel on timetable.
- Timeline is not helpful.
- Adopt and adapt – improve.
- Time scales unrealistic

There was a question and answer session with the panel when the above statements/questions were discussed. There was a general feeling in the hall that this process needed more time for consultation.

At the end of the session Junior Minister, Jeffrey Donaldson addressed the delegates and stated

We are determined to get it right for Victims and Survivors. We want all those who suffered to be the masters of the future, and not just the victims of our history. Victims and Survivors must receive the dividend that devolution has brought. We acknowledge that across Northern Ireland there were many different experiences of the troubles. We recognise that there is no "quick fix" or "one size fits all" solution. What we do want is to meet that need whatever that need is. We can do this by protecting victims from further hurt; by ensuring better counselling facilities; by allowing the opportunities for Victims to be able to remember in a way they are comfortable with; and by providing financial support where this is necessary. These are only some of the many ways that Government can help victims and survivors.

(For the full text of the speech please go to www.community-relations.org.uk and look at the Speeches page.)

A short question and answer session highlighted some of the different views of delegates but also illustrated an accord that exists between many of those present.

Finally, during the conference three groups WAVE, Survivors of Trauma and Families Beyond Conflict showcased films of their work. WAVE designed a youth video project which allowed its young members to experience the art of making a stop motion animation. The result was Friendly Street a short animated film introduced by the group's patron Jimmy Nesbitt; Survivors of Trauma's video highlighted the impact of their complementary therapies. The group also provides training programmes and befriending services.

I had the opportunity to speak to Sharon Bailey of Families Beyond Conflict and asked her to send me some information about the group, this is her reply:

See over

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In August 2000 the close-knit Shankill community imploded. It was all the more traumatic because it was something we never expected; the Community was under attack from itself.

Loyalist gunmen opened fire at the Rex Bar on the Shankill Road during a paramilitary parade. Many families were physically forced or intimidated out of their homes since the feud erupted between the rival paramilitary Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF)/Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF).

Within a few weeks the increasing violence between the two rival paramilitary groups had forced more than 160 families to leave their homes causing serious domestic upheaval; this number was to rise to 230.

We were seeing a permanently divided Shankill gradually taking shape as the rival loyalists pursued their feud, at a huge cost to the people who once felt they were the people who moulded the Shankill community.

The crisis was moving too fast for the authorities to deal with and with families having nowhere to go, it was a case of sharing with family and friends. Mari, an F.B.C. founder member tells a story of how her family of five and another family of six shared a one-bedroom flat while struggling to maintain an ordinary every day environment for their children.

Originally established as Families Of Displaced, Dispersed & Distressed, (F.O.D.D.D.) to address the fall-out of the Feud when families came together to help themselves and others. They recognised and addressed the fact that victims needed help and support to access housing, grants and compensation for loss of homes and possessions. The founder members trained themselves in a range of relevant topics such as Housing Rights, Grief, Trauma & the Helping Relationship, Steps to Excellence, Media Training and Women Moving On, to name but a few.

Through the years we have worked to create capacity and confidence building in the Community by offering Educational courses with adults returning to Essential Skills, learning English, Maths, Creative Writing, Poetry, Life-coaching and ICT Skills. Our Recreational courses offer adults life-long skills such as Art, Crocheting, Budgeting your Money, Dress-Making, Flower Arranging, Digital Photography and many more. We have accessed training in topics such as Suicide Awareness & Prevention, Poverty Awareness, Disability Awareness, Committee Skills, Personal Empowerment and Family Health & Well-being.

The Group have taken part in Community events that have given our volunteers an opportunity to develop their communication skills and self-confidence building. Bringing home a range of trophies has also given us a sense of pride in our achievements and raised our profile in the wider community, so much so that we are now in constant demand to participate in every Greater Shankill event.

Cross-community, Cross-border engagement has been extremely beneficial, offering us the chance to build relationships, participate in story-sharing and allows us to accept, understand and appreciate each other's differences rather than viewing them as negatives. We are totally committed to our new partnerships and friendships to secure reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust.

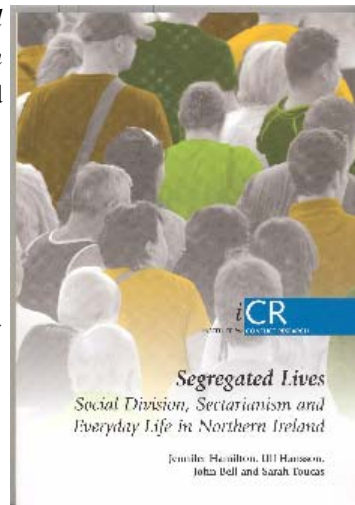
F.B.C. is composed of local people and thus is fully embedded in the community and it is groups like ourselves that are committed to making a difference to the lives of everyone in our community. I watch with deep pride the progression and achievements of adults and children who come through our doors and I know that we are creating opportunities, tools and life-long skills to empower people to make significant differences in their lives and in their families lives and a chance to use those skills to benefit the community. Long may we continue.

It was a good conference, the issues raised and debated were challenging at times but the majority of us came away feeling it had been productive and worthwhile.

Segregated Lives

An overview of by John Bell of *Segregated Lives: Social Division, Sectarianism and Everyday Life in Northern Ireland* Hamilton Jennifer, Hansson Ulf, Bell John and Toucas Sarah, (Belfast: Institute for Conflict Research)

The Institute for Conflict Research has recently completed a major study that documents and analyses the ways and means that sectarianism and segregation are sustained and extended through the routine and mundane decisions that people make in their everyday lives. The seventeen-month study was funded by the Community Relations Council through the European Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation and was carried out between May 2007 and March 2008 in six areas of Northern Ireland:



1. Castleberg and Newtownstewart in County Tyrone
2. Kilrea in County Londonderry
3. Dunclug estate in Ballymena
4. Shandon Park estate in Newry
5. Stranmillis in South Belfast
6. New Lodge and Tigers Bay in North Belfast

The research involved a qualitative and anthropological approach and included nearly 170 in-depth, semi-structured interviews and conversations; some people also completed a diary of their daily activities for a week, recording their routine movements and activities, others were asked to map their impressions of segregation in their communities. The researchers also accompanied some people in a walk around their environment to gain a sense of how people's perceptions are translated into daily routines of shopping, work and accessing services and other facilities.

The six case study areas highlighted some variety of differences in people's experiences and understandings of these issues, and identified something of the diverse impact that segregation and sectarianism have on people and which, the research suggests, often depends on factors such as the age, gender, social background, place of residence and the experiences of the individual. This variety of factors and individual experiences are used to construct the 'mental maps' that people use to guide their personal routines and practices, while the mental maps are in turn reinforced, and at times challenged by routine experiences. The routines of separation and division are sustained through practice, but the routines can and do change as people's perception of their social environment changes.

The following briefly sets out some of the generalised findings from the research:

Segregation and division impacts upon all people, but at differing levels and intensities. In Castleberg and North Belfast people described high levels of segregation and separation while in Dunclug and Shandon Park people spoke of higher degrees of mixing and more positive relationships; while residents of Stranmillis considered their area to be largely mixed and fairly well integrated, but with little public recognition of communal identities.

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Segregation and sectarianism are a continuing legacy of the Troubles. The perceived legacy of the Troubles had a significant impact on the scale to which segregation and sectarianism were felt to have impacted upon daily routines. Kilrea and Castleberg were both badly affected by the Troubles and sectarian attitudes helped to sustain high levels of segregation and inter-communal tensions.

Levels of sectarianism and segregation have changed in recent years. Residents in Dunclug suggested levels of segregation and sectarianism in Ballymena were higher now than previously. This contrasted with Newry, where interviewees felt that the city had progressed enormously since the Troubles and they felt generally safe in the city centre.

Economic regeneration can have a positive impact on segregation. The development of spaces like the Odyssey complex have provided a shared social space for people in segregated interface areas of North Belfast, providing of course they can access and afford the facilities. More generally people choose a location for shopping on the basis of price and value for money.

But economic change can also have a negative impact. The opening of the border was perceived by some in Castleberg to have a negative impact on the local commercial sector and trade and the prosperity of the town had suffered now that people had a wider choice of facilities and services elsewhere in the vicinity.

Mixed or neutral spaces are more available than in the past. There was an increase in mixed or neutral areas and spaces in many of the locations.

But they co-exist with heavily segregated spaces. While the residents of Stranmillis lived in a mixed and shared environment, they were all too aware of, and adapted their movements to, the sectarian divisions beyond the boundaries of Stranmillis.

Living in a small community highlights identity and difference; anonymity on the other hand helps dissipate community identity. In Stranmillis, there is a limited degree of contact with neighbours and a strong potential for being 'anonymous', which could be used to reduce any perceived impact from a communal to an individual level. This was in stark contrast to the situation in smaller and more geographically contained communities such as those in rural areas where the majority of interviewees believed that 'everyone knew everyone' and it was easy to 'tell' someone's community background.

The work environment is generally neutral, but dominated by avoidance. The work environment was regarded as neutral, but few would raise political or religious matters due to reluctance in identifying one's community background.

Accessing work can still be problematic for issues of safety and sectarianism. Several interviewees were wary of working in an area dominated by the 'Other' community.

The views expressed in this magazine by contributors are their own and may not necessarily be attributed to the CRC.

The direct impact of segregation relates to social class. The residents of the interface communities in the north of the city were only too aware of the highly segregated and divided nature of space and resources and the extent to which they adapted their movements and avoided certain spaces. In contrast residents of Stranmillis believed that sectarian division did not impact upon their lives to any extent within their own area, but they were aware of the sectarian geography of other parts of Belfast.

Education remains largely segregated, but informal integration can be a positive factor. Most interviewees chose schools based on religious affiliation, however in some areas people noted informal integration of schools, primarily through Catholics attending Protestant schools and in particular those with a good reputation.

But wearing school uniforms in public can create problems for young people. School uniforms clearly identified a young person's community background.

Shopping environments are increasingly neutral. For many people the choice of where to shop was based on value for money, convenience and quality rather than on allegiance to community background.

But access to resources and facilities can be limited by time of day and time of year. Accessing services such as banks and health services varied from area to area with the main issue relating to safety in accessing ATMs at night.

Asserting community identity can undermine social cohesion. Flags, parades and bonfires were all potential or actual sources of tension, which impacted negatively on community relations.

But denying opportunities to display community identity can erode a sense of belonging. In rural areas where demographic change had left one community in a minority there were strong feelings that wider elements of their culture were being eroded and the minority were being 'pushed out'.

Sectarianism and segregation impacts most heavily on young males. Sectarian attitudes appear more deeply entrenched among young males and young males were perceived as more of a threat and generally perceived to be more at risk of being the victims of a sectarian attack.

People will socialise together if the space is safe and/or anonymous. Socialising was still heavily segregated in some areas, and some people chose to travel some distance to avoid locally divided bars or clubs. But some city centre pubs were now seen as mixed and interviewees feel safer socialising in these central spaces than they did during the Troubles.

The research thus highlights how segregation and sectarian attitudes impact on different aspects of everyday life, in differing ways, in different areas. In some areas there are greater levels of mixing, sharing and integrating, while in others the legacy of the past, of hostility, fear and mistrust dominate the wider social environment. In most social environments the process of avoidance still appears to dominate interactions between members of the two main communities. Although the legacy of the Troubles and recent experiences of violence remain factors in how people act as social beings, the research illustrates something of the diversity of experiences that are affected by factors of age, gender, class and location. Individuals are not solely constrained by their past and there is some evidence of positive change and greater levels of mixing in some aspects of social life in many areas across Northern Ireland.

The full report is available online at www.conflictresearch.org.uk and hard copies can be obtained free of charge by contacting info@conflictresearch.org.uk or from ICR, North City Business Centre, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast BT15 4AD.

The Role of Education in Reconciliation

Unesco Conference, La Mon Hotel, 3rd September 2008

Clare Magill

It is vital Northern Ireland does not pass on the causes of division and sectarianism to the next generation, junior minister Jeffrey Donaldson told the UNESCO Centre's Education and Reconciliation Conference, held at the La Mon Hotel on the 3rd of September. He highlighted the importance of mutual respect and challenging the causes of division. Mr Donaldson - who with Sinn Fein fellow junior minister Gerry Kelly is responsible for children and young people's issues - said: "It is vital that we as a society ensure that the causes of division and sectarianism do not follow down to our children and young people. The decisions and choices that we make today, have the potential to fundamentally change, for better or for worse, the world our children and grandchildren will live in."

The DUP Lagan Valley MP said key to achieving the goal of a shared and better future was the way children were educated and enlightened. "How we model their perceptions of the past will determine their attitudes in the future. Our inclusive society must be a tolerant one where our children can play together and learn together with self respect and respect for others," he said.

The conference focused on the initial findings of a comparative research project looking at the role of education in reconciliation processes in Northern Ireland and Bosnia & Herzegovina. 91 children and young people were interviewed across both NI and Bosnia as part of the project, funded under Measure 2.1 'Outward and Forward Looking Region' of the Peace II Extension.

The project team were interested to learn from children and young people:

1. Their experiences of conflict;
2. Their awareness and understanding of the conflict;
3. How they learn about the conflict (from whom, when, how?);
4. Their understanding of the concept of 'reconciliation'; and
5. Their views on the role of education in reconciliation.

"We no longer have any children in our primary schools with direct experience of the conflict in Northern Ireland; teenagers may have some memories from their early childhood, but young adults in their twenties grew up with the Troubles," commented Professor Alan Smith, UNESCO Chair at the University of Ulster. "This research involved interviews with each of these age groups. A common message from all age groups was a desire to understand how and why the conflict happened and this raises the question of how, as a society, we explain the conflict to successive generations of children and young people. The research indicated that family, friends and community are important means of intergenerational learning about the conflict, but we also want to clarify what role, if any, should be played by informal education through the youth services and formal education through schools."

Dr Brandon Hamber, Director of INCORE, spoke about children and young people's views on reconciliation. Considering the differences in the views of children and young people in NI and Bosnia, he pointed out that while young people in Bosnia were clearly concerned about the socio-economic dimensions of reconciliation there, their counterparts here were more preoccupied with the issue of dealing with the past.

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Project Coordinator Clare Magill presented the project's initial findings on the role of education in reconciliation, emphasising the importance of seeking out children and young people's views on this issue.

The conference was well attended, with good representation from formal and informal education stakeholders, as well as from the community, voluntary, and victims & survivors sectors. Among those attending were Louise Warde Hunter (DENI), Bob Collins (Equality Commission), Mike Nesbitt and Bertha McDougall (Commission for Victims & Survivors). The conference heard from representatives of the Office of the Basque Presidency, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE) Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Education for Peace Institute of the Balkans, as well as from local delegates.

Dr Duncan Morrow, CRC, brought the conference to a close, remarking that reconciliation involves redefining who we are in relation to other people. This has clear implications for schools, he said, and stressed the important role education has to play in the reconciliation processes both here in Northern Ireland and in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

Dr Derick Wilson, as Chair, thanked participants for their involvement in the conference. He reminded them that the event itself represented different generations of practitioners and this had been an important forum to meet and encourage one another. The conference was also part of a process to further refine the draft report and recommendations.

The project's final report is due to be released in December. For further information, please contact Project Coordinator Clare Magill - c.magill@ulster.ac.uk.



Mike Nesbitt, Commissioner for Victims and Survivors and Neil Alldred from the UNESCO Centre at the Conference

Young People and Sectarianism

*Against a background of a Department of Education consultation on 'Priorities for Youth' in developing a new strategy for the Youth Service **Mikhaila Woods** and **James Dunbar**, Gen X project workers with the **1825 Project** in Craigavon, outline some thoughts on dealing with the problem of young people and sectarianism.*

Within the wider Craigavon area (inclusive of Lurgan, Brownlow and Portadown) the issue of sectarian behaviour is still very evident. Many of the young people living in these areas, which are often segregated, have become engaged in anti-social behaviour such as rioting, graffiti, petty crime and vandalism, and there is a steady increase in the amount of drugs and alcohol being consumed by children and young people. There are many contributing factors to this including a lack of amenities available to all communities within the wider area. Even with the wide range of education and youth services available locally a number of young people are still disengaging with all service provision. This can be seen by the drop in the number of young people attending local youth services and the increase in the number hanging about on the streets. This leads to many young people becoming demotivated, bored and more likely to engage in anti-social activities. This was seen towards the end of August 2008 when young people in the Brownlow area became engaged in politically motivated violence resulting in riots with local PSNI Officers.

Through our work and engagement with young people aged 18 to 25 years old across the wider Craigavon area we can see that sectarianism is still an issue. Many of these young people come from very different community backgrounds and would not necessarily engage with people they know to be from other backgrounds. However, throughout the duration of their involvement with the 1825 Project they have an opportunity to openly discuss the issue of sectarianism in relation to their own community, looking at how sectarianism is still in existence, the impact it has on their community and ways in which they can make a positive contribution to the management of sectarian behaviour among other young people living in their area.

Organisations working together in collective partnerships are the only way forward as a means to address this issue. Each organisation within the Craigavon area is unique and has varying skills and abilities but together, working collectively, we can use the best from each organisation to address the issue of sectarianism within the wider Craigavon area.

Sectarianism is still a problem in Craigavon and in working with young people in the area we can begin to give them the skills needed to positively address and manage the attitudes and behaviour of others in their communities in a bid to develop a shared future for everyone. It could be argued that community based projects with their bottom-up approach are best placed to address this issue since statutory agencies do not seem to have put in place any plans to deal with this issue locally.

Bonfire Management Programme

Jonny Byrne, Research Officer, ICR

The 2008 Belfast City Council (BCC) Bonfire Management Programme aimed to support a number of communities in Belfast in the celebration of their cultural tradition through positive engagement, whilst engaging with the perceived negative aspects that have become associated with bonfires. It also sought to work with and support local communities to bring about improvements in bonfire management, particularly in terms of inclusivity, safety and increased family atmosphere and it finally sought to further reduce the adverse Health and Environmental impacts of bonfires on the city including the illegal disposal of waste.

This is the second of a three year programme of Bonfire Management undertaken by BCC and is supported by the NIHE, CRC, BCC Community Safety Partnership, and the Community Relations Unit (OFMDFM). Groundwork NI assist the Council in the delivery of the programme. The Institute for Conflict Research have completed an evaluation of the 2008 programme and concluded that it has significantly improved the environmental and cultural aspects of bonfires within the city. All of the participating bonfire sites have developed a comprehensive understanding of the negative consequences of burning tyres and other toxic materials. None of the sites had these types of materials on their sites this year. The general site maintenance improved this year and bonfire committees and builders consulted widely within their communities about the size and location of their bonfires. This engagement has also shown benefits to other agencies within the city, with sites in the programme requiring less intervention than those not in the programme.

A further development was the increase in family and festival events that surrounded bonfires. This year discussions with bonfire committees revealed that there was an increased sense of community safety at their sites. This was also reflected in PSNI statistics which noted a significant decrease in recorded incidents in bonfire sites within the programme, compared to those outside of the programme.

Overall in Northern Ireland, the PSNI recorded approximately 557 incidents related to bonfires between 1st April and 23rd July 2008. This is an increase of 157 incidents on the previous year. In Belfast (A and B Districts), there were a total of 289 incidents recorded between 1st April 2008 and 23rd July 2008 compared with 224 incidents recorded last year that related to bonfires. This is an increase of 65 incidents.

However only 25 incidents occurred in and around sites participating on the Bonfire Management Programme with the Council – 11% of all Belfast incidents. As there were 36 incidents recorded in 2007, this is a 30% reduction in incidents at managed sites compared with last year.

Of the 177 incidents dealt with by the Fire Service in Belfast (up 7 overall on last year), 19 were at sites participating on the Councils Bonfire Management Programme, a reduction in 4 on 2007 – a 12% reduction on 2007.

Communities had become more culturally aware and bonfire committees had made significant attempts to increase participation from young people. They were no longer seen as being associated with paramilitary organisations, and there was distinct lack of paramilitary symbols and flags at those sites that participated in the programme, although it must be noted that sites continued to place Nationalist and Republican symbols on top of their bonfires. One aspect of the programme is the

opportunity for groups and wider members of the community to participate in a cultural awareness programme. These programmes provide the groups with safe environments to explore the history and cultural significance of the bonfire, and develop an increased understanding of the impact of the bonfires across different communities.

Overall the Bonfire Management Programme is making a considerable difference to ways communities celebrate the Eleventh. They are becoming more empowered and confident in the processes, and are beginning to explore the cultural significance of bonfires within a more historical framework. No longer are they synonymous with paramilitary shows of strength, instead they are being transformed into festival events that are much more than just about the bonfire.

Building the Peace

Dympna McGlade is Director of Policy for CRC

In his paper *Beyond Violence: Building Sustainable Peace*, John Paul Lederach, professor of international *peace building*, suggests that peace builders must learn to design for the future, and they must learn to contextualize present actions within longer-term plans.

Many groundbreaking projects and programmes throughout the region are addressing the legacy of forty plus years of injustice, inequality, loss and trauma.

Most of these projects are delivered by non-governmental organisations ie voluntary and community groups based in communities hardest hit by the conflict and working hard to address interface issues; build shared neighbourhoods; negotiate on parades and protests; promote anti sectarian and anti racist approaches and work with young people to help them explore and understand their important role in this work.

These projects are models of best practice in peace building and should be held up as such at local, regional, national and international level. The two Junior Ministers recently visited the United States where Gerry Kelly said '*We are on a journey out of conflict and division and other countries across the world can learn from us. Our message to our friends in the US is that through courage and dialogue the most intractable of problems can be overcome*'.

Two such projects have recently been launched:

- The *Shared Neighbourhood Programme* was launched in August 2008 and aims to respond to communities in their desire to live together by working to address the legacy of communities living separately by supporting and encouraging thirty shared neighbourhoods across Northern Ireland over the next three years where people feel safe and welcome irrespective of colour, creed or political opinion. This Programme is funded by the International Fund for Ireland.
- The Suffolk Lenadon Interface Group (SLIG) launched its new peace building strategy which is committed to building a community where all within it feel safe, confident, valued and able to look to a future free of segregation and sectarianism. This strategy is funded by Atlantic Philanthropies.

Local activists have been empowered to lead these two peace building models which will contribute greatly to laying the foundations for a regional conflict transformation and reconciliation plans.

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The Shared Neighbourhood Programme and SLIG Peace Building Strategy both have the difficult task of addressing the legacy of our conflict, not least of all interface and housing issues. They need the time and investment to overcome years of division and violence through support by key stakeholders, both community and government, over a long period of time to undo the legacy of the past.

But their current independent funding is time limited and needs to be fed into an overarching vision and plan which mainstreams the work throughout all community activity including housing, education, training and education, youth work, health, social and economic regeneration projects etc. In other words they must be viewed through a conflict transformation and reconciliation lens by all service providers and policy makers. This will need new thinking, risk taking and forward planning by all.

It will require service providers and policy makers to work closely with local communities and, where necessary, make special arrangements to support their plans for a more shared, safe and integrated society eg at the launch of the SLIG Peace Strategy independent research from Millward Brown was also released which highlighted that 60% of parents in Suffolk/Lenadoon said that they would prefer to send their children to a school of mixed religion. However, the community was turned down on its request for integrated status for Suffolk Primary School. This is a serious concern for the SLIG Peace Plan as it seeks to maintain and grow the Suffolk community. It has real implications for this privately funded programme and also the IFI funded Shared Neighbourhoods Programme and other similarly funded groups. Projects such as these should be viewed as opportunities to not only strengthen communities but to sustain society. A holistic assessment must be made for each area with the commitment to cover the costs of transformation and sustainability – short term costs vs. longer term benefits of a shared and better future.

This requires a new model which explores economic cost balanced alongside social benefit assessment which would be in line with the emergence of local area planning ie no service is an island! An approach such as this could create a public/private/voluntary/community partnership approach with matching interventions to examine the wider transformative benefits.

This ‘special circumstances’ approach could assist in the regions approach to peace building and give the communities the opportunity to develop long-term sustainability.

Profile—Maureen Hetherington—Council Member

Maureen Hetherington is a board member of the Community Relations Council, was a former Chair of the Communications Committee, and is currently Chair of the Victims and Survivors Grant Aid Programme. Maureen has an MA in Humanities and has been working as a community relations practitioner for the past sixteen years.

Initiatives have included heading up several major projects, examples which include; *Seeing Sense: Prejudice Challenge Teachers Educational Resource* (now in every post-primary school in Northern Ireland), *The Right to Hope Project* (conflict resolution programme with young people which is cross-community, cross-cultural and cross-border), *Towards Understanding and Healing (TUH)*, a project that focuses on bringing together the multi-faceted layers of the conflict through personal encounter.

As Chairperson of TUH, Maureen has been responsible for securing major funding for training resources on dealing with the past through storytelling and positive encounter

If you would like to comment or submit an article for this bulletin or advertise a community relations event or publication, please contact Patricia at poneill@nicrc.org.uk or Ellana at info@nicrc.org.uk.

dialogue, which includes an accredited Trainers Resource Pack for wide dissemination in schools, public and private sector and the community and voluntary sector.

Maureen envisioned and secured funding for The Junction, a Community Relations Resource and Peace Building Centre, set up to address the fragmentation and isolation of community relations practitioners and organisations working in the field. The Centre has a local, national and international remit. As Coordinator of the Centre, Maureen delivers training on good relations and conflict resolution working with statutory, educational, private, community and voluntary sectors. Her role includes consultancy work and she has helped other Councils in the development of their Community Relations Strategy Plans. The Junction also runs a Peer Mediation Programme for schools and several other school initiatives focusing on prejudice issues.

Maureen directed the research and publication of books such as *My Faith, Our Faith*, and *Children in Crossfire* and, in the capacity of Chairperson of An Crann/The Tree, supported publications such as *Bear in Mind these Troubles*, *All our Yesterdays* and *Crossings*. Her most recent publication is *A Day of Reflection* which follows one Mayor's journey through the complexities of remembrance and has supported and had input into publications such as *Collaboration for Shared Education* (in collaboration with St Columb's Park House) and a Junction publication *Northern Ireland; Issues of Ongoing Concern*.

She has travelled extensively in relation to her work and has been involved in Conflict Resolution and Mediation training in several countries in conflict such as The Balkans, Middle East, South Africa, and Cyprus. She has travelled to the States to deliver talks on 'Reconciliation Conversations', and is currently involved in ongoing work with Israelis and Palestinians.

Forthcoming Events/News

New Staff at CRC

Marie Roe—Administrative Assistant, Policy and Development

Patricia Cuthel—Administrative Assistant—Funding and Development

Gordon Walker—Development Officer—EU Programme

A Gift of Time

A Certificate Award ceremony, organised by the Community Relations Council took place on Tuesday evening 30 September in Corick House, Clogher, for those involved in the Accredited Befriending Volunteer Programme. The event, called 'The Gift of Time - A New Beginning and Support for Individuals, Victims and Survivors', was organized by the Community Relations Council and was attended by 150 guests. Paul Clark, UTV presenter, as the special guest, presented 65 certificates to the befriending volunteers.



From left to right, Brendan McAllister, Victims Commissioner, Paul Clarke, TV Presenter and Bertha McDougal, Victims Commissioner at the Befriending event.

Forthcoming Events/News

CRC Publications Grant Scheme

CRC operates a small Publications Grant Scheme of £30,000 annually to support publications that will contribute to greater understanding and better community relations in Northern Ireland. While the scheme was designed with local commercial publishers in mind, since these could provide a professional editing service and had proven marketing and promotional experience, the scheme is now also open to applications from other organisations producing educational or learning resources of a community relations nature, particularly if these are to be used as part of a planned or established learning programme with an identified target audience.

If, as a community relations practitioner, your organisation is planning to produce printed learning resources of a professional standard for use as part of a community relations training programme, or for a wider audience, you might consider applying to the Community Relations Council for grant support to cover printing costs. Individual grants are normally up to £5,000 (£7,000 in exceptional cases).

Criteria and application forms are available from the CRC website or on request from CRC tel 90-227500. Early discussion with CRC of the planned publication is welcomed.

We are also considering using the scheme to allow CRC to commission the production of learning materials which we would publish ourselves. We would welcome your views on this. In particular we would like to know what type of learning material you think there is a demand for.

For further information or to respond

Contact Ray Mullan
Director of Communications
rmullan@nicrc.org.uk
tel 028 90 227500

Learning Together in Faith Communities

This morning conference will explore the connections between lifelong learning in community and spirituality from local and international perspectives.

The keynote address and three workshops will unpack the issues, dynamics, methods and values, which underpin such an educational approach.

Saturday 18th October, 9am—1.30pm at Open Learning, School of Education, Queen's University, Belfast.

Enrol on line at www.qub.ac.uk/edu or email Colin Meneely at c.meneely@bopenworld.com or Johnston McMaster at mcmastj@tcd.ie

Belfam: Belfast family & community history

Exhibition, Belfast 1911: A day in the Life of a City, Tuesday 21st October at 10am in the Performance Area of the Linen Hall Library, Belfast

Email n.khaoury@qub.ac.uk or phone 9097 5352

Forthcoming Events/News

Open College Network accredited training courses

The Peace and Reconciliation Group will deliver the following courses in Autumn 2008

- Exploring Diversity: Facilitating Community Relations Work
- Intermediate Conflict Resolution and Mediation Skills

The Courses will be held at PRG Offices, 16 Bishop Street, L'Derry, BT48 6PW.

For further information contact PRG's Training Officer, Catherine McColgan on 7136 9206

Women's Information Group

The group have moved premises and are now situated at 7 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1NA, phone 9024 4119

The group are holding an Information Day entitled "Shared Future or Future Deferred?" on Tuesday 14th October. This Information Day will recap key points from the Information Days of fears around sectarianism and racism held in November 2007 and May 2008.

CRC Core Funding Programme

The core funding programme will open to applications during the first week of October and applications will be available on the CRC website. Closing date for new applicants is 4.00pm on Friday 28th November and for renewal applicants Friday 31st October.

Interface Sevens Soccer Tournament

Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group is currently recruiting for our inaugural Interface Sevens Soccer Tournament on 31st October 2008, at Balmoral High School playing fields, 10am-4pm.

7-a-side Soccer Teams from interfaces all over Belfast will be competing in a Tournament, and the day will also include a conflict resolution workshop, and a Q&A Panel including top local footballers, a sports psychologist, a mystery local celebrity and other distinguished guests!

Entrance and participation are completely free. All players will receive medals and the winners of each competition will receive trophies.

Age Categories: Boys Under 18's, Girls Under 18's, Boys Under 16's, Girls Under 16's.

To express your interest please contact Neil at SLIG on 028 9062 9146 or email nmckee@slig.co.uk before 10th October. All completed applications must be returned by 24th October.

Forthcoming Events/News

Mediation Northern Ireland

Mediation Northern Ireland have announced their new training for 2008/9. They are offering courses in; *Handling Life's Conflicts*, *Foundation Training in Mediation* and *Group Mediation Skills*. They can also provide tailored training to meet individual needs of groups and organisations. For further information contact;

Mediation Northern Ireland
83 University Street
Belfast BT7 1HP

Tel: +44 (0)28 9043 8614

Mail: training@mediationnorthernireland.org

Book Launch - The place called reconciliation

Save the Date and come join us for the upcoming launch of Corrymeela Community Leader David Steven's new book.

29 October, 5:30-7:00 pm at Union Theological College, Belfast, 108 Botanic Avenue.

Bill of Rights Information Seminar

Omagh Women's Area Network (OWAN) and Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network (NIRWN) are hosting a Bill of Rights Information Seminar.

Date: Wednesday 22 October 2008

Venue: Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh

Time: 10am – 1.15pm

What does a Bill of Rights mean for rural women?
What are the potential benefits and obstacles?

A panel of speakers will share their experiences and answer questions
Representatives from the NI Human Rights Commission will also be present.

Lunch is provided

RSVP with Paula at NIRWN by Wednesday 15 October

Tel: 028 86 769191 Email: paula@nirwn.org.uk

PPR Project Launches YouTube Station

As part of our plans to make our resources more widely available, the PPR Project proudly announces the launch of its new YouTube station. The station can be found through our website or by visiting

<http://www.youtube.com/PPRProject>

We would encourage you to subscribe to our channel, pass this information on to others and to check back to see new videos as they are posted!

Forthcoming Events/News

Currently, we have videos available from each of our groups: the Seven Towers Monitoring Group, the PIPS/Greater Shankill Bereaved Families Rights Group, the Lower Shankill Residents' Voice and the Resident's Jury on the Regeneration of Girdwood Barracks & Crumlin Road Gaol.

We hope you find them useful, and we look forward to hearing your comments.

New Books

Opening Doors—Meeting Challenges, a new publication which details the learning and work of the Capacity Building Towards Rural Reconciliation Programme is now available. The publication highlights the community development and peace building work which took place as a result of being involved in this programme and is a useful resource to find out how other groups are developing stronger relationships in their rural areas. To order a copy, contact Zoe at zoe@ruralcommunitynetwork.org.

Mediative Work with Local Governance—A Good Practice Guide available from Mediation Northern Ireland, info@mediationnorthernireland.org or phone 9043 8614

Peace and Reconciliation Worksheets for Facilitators by Michael Doherty (£10). A wire-bound workbook of 50 worksheets with suggested exercises for groups of all ages. The publication also contains advice for facilitators and suggested icebreakers. Available from Yes Publications, 10-12 Bishop Street, L'Derry, BT48 6PW, phone 7126 1941 or email yes@yespublications.org

Plays in a Peace Process by Dave Duggan (Guildhall Press £8.95) This book brings together in one publication the full text of dramatic writing by playwright Dave Duggan in response to the peace process in Ireland between 1994 and 2007. Themes covered include the clashing of cultures, the pressure on policing in a society coming out of conflict, the relationship between victims and perpetrators of political violence, the search for truth in the Saville Inquiry and the challenge of truth recovery generally.

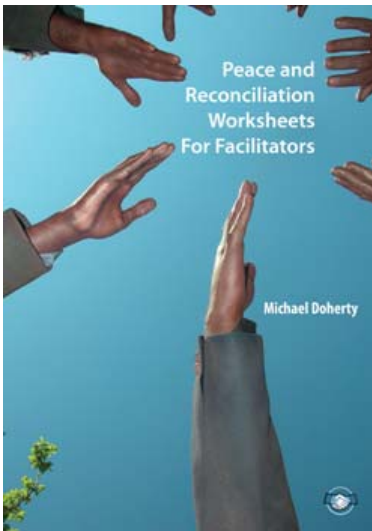
Designing an All-Inclusive Democracy: consensual voting procedures for use in Parliaments, Councils and Committees

Edited by Peter Emerson, published by Springer (price £57.50 hardback) With free CD-Rom.

Democracy is for everybody, not just a majority. This book describes the voting procedures by which majority rule may be replaced by a more consensual system of governance. The first part of the book describes three voting procedures, the Modified Borda Count, the Quota Borda System and the Matrix Vote. In the second part the voting mechanisms are discussed by a number of contributors against the background of the theory of voting, social choice theory, human rights and mediation practice. The book is illustrated with over 100 tables.

Youth Link: NI Resource Pack EDI Windows in Best Practice

EDI Windows in Best Practice profiles good practice developed with managers, youth practitioners, young adults and young people. As a legacy of the "Building Social Capital" Peace II Extension Programme, it will be made





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Promoting a peaceful and fair society based on reconciliation and mutual trust.

WWW.NICRC.ORG.UK

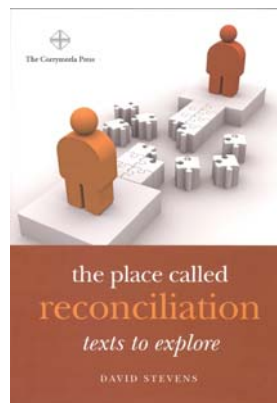


Posters available from CRC phone 90227500 and ask for Patricia O'Neill or Ellana Tomasso or email info@nicrc.org.uk

New Books continued

available to church based youth, community, voluntary and statutory groups to further the building of good relations/community relations across Northern Ireland and the Border Counties.

The Place called Reconciliation—texts to explore by David Stevens (Corrymeela Press £6.99) These biblical reflections on reconciliation and related themes have been written out of 40 years experience of being involved in the Corrymeela Community.



Segregated Lives—Social Division, Sectarianism and Everyday Life in Northern Ireland by Jennifer Hamilton, Ulf Hansson, John Bell and Sarah Toucas (ICR £5) The report documents the findings of a seventeen-month study funded by CRC through the European Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. The research documents and analyses the ways and means that sectarianism and segregation are sustained and extended through the routine and mundane decisions that people make in their everyday lives.

A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Peace-Building (SEUPB) Independent consultants PricewaterhouseCoopers were commissioned by the PEACE II Monitoring Committee to undertake research to explore best practice in an international context and develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for peace building, reconciliation and conflict resolution interventions for future programmes. The findings reveal that the experience in NI and the Border Region are at the cutting edge of monitoring and evaluating peace building interventions. Phone 9026 6660 or email info@seupb.eu

Let's Talk Let's Listen (Equality Commission) Guidance for public Authorities on consulting and involving children and young people. Phone 9089 0890 or email information@equalityni.org.