

**Parading Anxieties:  
Drumcree, Sectarianism, and the  
Contested Production of Knowledge in  
Peace Process Era Northern Ireland**

by

**Andrea Walisser**

B.A. (Hons., History), Simon Fraser University, 2009

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

in the  
Department of History  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

© **Andrea Walisser 2013**

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY**

**Fall 2013**

All rights reserved.

However, in accordance with the *Copyright Act of Canada*, this work may be reproduced, without authorization, under the conditions for "Fair Dealing." Therefore, limited reproduction of this work for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review and news reporting is likely to be in accordance with the law, particularly if cited appropriately.

# Approval

**Name:** Andrea Walisser

**Degree:** Master of Arts (History)

**Title of Thesis:** *Parading Anxieties:  
Drumcree, Sectarianism, and the  
Contested Production of Knowledge in  
Peace Process Era Northern Ireland*

**Examining Committee:** **Chair:**Aaron Windel  
Assistant Professor of History

**Willeen Keough**  
Senior Supervisor  
Associate Professor of History  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Leith Davis**  
Supervisor  
Professor of English  
\_\_\_\_\_

**David Wilson**  
External Examiner  
Professor, Department of History  
University of Toronto  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Date Defended:** September 13, 2013

## Partial Copyright Licence



The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the non-exclusive, royalty-free right to include a digital copy of this thesis, project or extended essay[s] and associated supplemental files (“Work”) (title[s] below) in Summit, the Institutional Research Repository at SFU. SFU may also make copies of the Work for purposes of a scholarly or research nature; for users of the SFU Library; or in response to a request from another library, or educational institution, on SFU’s own behalf or for one of its users. Distribution may be in any form.

The author has further agreed that SFU may keep more than one copy of the Work for purposes of back-up and security; and that SFU may, without changing the content, translate, if technically possible, the Work to any medium or format for the purpose of preserving the Work and facilitating the exercise of SFU’s rights under this licence.

It is understood that copying, publication, or public performance of the Work for commercial purposes shall not be allowed without the author’s written permission.

While granting the above uses to SFU, the author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in the Work, and may deal with the copyright in the Work in any way consistent with the terms of this licence, including the right to change the Work for subsequent purposes, including editing and publishing the Work in whole or in part, and licensing the content to other parties as the author may desire.

The author represents and warrants that he/she has the right to grant the rights contained in this licence and that the Work does not, to the best of the author’s knowledge, infringe upon anyone’s copyright. The author has obtained written copyright permission, where required, for the use of any third-party copyrighted material contained in the Work. The author represents and warrants that the Work is his/her own original work and that he/she has not previously assigned or relinquished the rights conferred in this licence.

Simon Fraser University Library  
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

revised Fall 2013

## **Abstract**

The conflict over the Drumcree parade that erupted less than a year after the IRA announced its landmark 1994 ceasefire acted as a lightning rod for the social anxieties being brought on by the acceleration of Northern Ireland's peace process. This thesis argues that Drumcree provided a significant forum in which the public in Northern Ireland debated and contested the social, economic, and political changes being wrought by the process. It examines the public conversation about Drumcree to show that the mid-1990s saw Protestants and Catholics beginning to grapple with the changing power relationship between them that was a central characteristic of this period, identifying Drumcree as a space wherein the dynamic nature of the sectarian divide becomes visible to historians. It suggests that the perceived significance of the outcome of the dispute led participants on both sides to attempt to influence public perception of Drumcree through the production of knowledge about the conflict, and prompted those critical of the conflict to resist the imposition of these competing narratives.

**Keywords:** Northern Ireland; peace process; sectarianism; Orange Order; parading; cultural knowledge

## **Acknowledgements**

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my senior supervisor, Dr. Willeen Keough, not only for her indispensable guidance, support, and good humour during the undertaking of this thesis work, but also for the several years of mentorship she has offered me throughout my career at SFU, first as an undergraduate, and then as a graduate student. It has been a pleasure and an honour to develop my skills as a student of history under her tutelage.

Professor Leith Davis provided invaluable input as a scholar of print culture and Scottish and Irish nationalism and literature, and was an excellent fit as a second supervisor of a history project that focused so much on narrative, discourse, and literary analysis. Professor David Wilson's offer to serve as external examiner on this thesis from far afield was hugely appreciated; I very much valued his expertise in the field, as well as his propensity to ask those tough questions about Northern Ireland for which there are not often easy answers. Dr. Aaron Windel approached this thesis from the unique perspective of a British historian—at once inside and outside the Northern Ireland fold—and his contributions were most welcome. I thank each of my committee members for their thoughtful and challenging questions and suggestions, which will undoubtedly help me to improve as a scholar and a historian going forward.

I also thank Dr. Dominic Bryan and the faculty and staff at the Institute of Irish Studies at Queen's University Belfast for supporting my research and for making me feel so at home in Northern Ireland. In addition to setting me up with library privileges and a workspace for the duration of my stay, Dr. Bryan was kind enough to offer me access to the extensive collection of Drumcree-related texts that he collected over the course of the conflict in his capacity as an anthropologist and researcher at the Centre for the Study of Conflict at the University of Ulster. At present, few of these texts have been collected in any official archive and thus are not readily accessible to historians; it was extremely beneficial to have the opportunity to work with this collection. Dr. Bryan's extensive knowledge of Orange parading disputes and his recollections about Drumcree also provided important context for me as I began my fieldwork.

I gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, which helped to fund this research through graduate and travel grants.

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the support of my parents, Bev and Colin Walisser, who have been unfailingly encouraging of my academic endeavours from the earliest.

I have benefitted hugely from our graduate program's collegial and collaborative atmosphere, and from the feedback of some excellent scholars and peers, many of whom have become great friends. I would like to particularly acknowledge Paulo Amaral, Sarah Nickel, and Maddie Knickerbocker for their invaluable input and consistent willingness to listen and offer advice. The many conversations we had about our respective projects, often in passing or while lingering in office doorways, were some of the most helpful and significant moments in the development and "figuring out" of my ideas and arguments. I would also like to acknowledge the support I have received from my other friends and loved ones, many of whom have experienced varying degrees of "sympathy pains" over the past few years, and are as happy as anyone to see the completion of this thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff and faculty in the Department of History, where, in particular, I have had the opportunity to learn from several brilliant women scholars and writers whose mentorship is much valued, and whose examples will put me in good stead moving forward. My tenure as a history student at SFU has been nothing but enjoyable.

## Table of Contents

Approval.....	ii
Partial Copyright Licence .....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Acknowledgements .....	v
Table of Contents.....	vii
List of Figures.....	viii
List of Acronyms.....	ix
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Parading Anxieties: A Society in Transition .....	4
Literature.....	18
<b>Chapter 1. Re-making Myths: The Deployment of Tropes at Drumcree .....</b>	<b>26</b>
The Orange Citadel and the Siege of Drumcree.....	30
Nationalists under Siege .....	39
Claiming Victimhood: Orange Narratives of Civil Rights and Oppression .....	44
Nationalist Discourses of Victimhood at Drumcree .....	51
<b>Chapter 2. The Authority of Experience and the Creation of Information.....</b>	<b>63</b>
Giving Testimony .....	65
Writing Histories .....	77
“The Facts” .....	83
Maps .....	88
<b>Chapter 3. Negotiating Dissent: Drumcree’s Discontents.....</b>	<b>96</b>
Negotiating Identity under the Tyranny of Narrative.....	97
Between a Rock and a Hard Place: The Church of Ireland Navigates Drumcree.....	107
“In levity there is relief”: Satirical Interpretations of the Dispute .....	115
Drumcree Holidays '97 .....	117
“Give My Head Peace”: The Hole in the Wall Gang.....	122
The Portadown News .....	129
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>140</b>
Unpublished Primary Sources .....	140
Dr. Dominic Bryan’s Private Collection.....	140
Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast .....	140
Other Unpublished Primary Sources .....	142
Published Primary Sources .....	144
Dr. Dominic Bryan’s Private Collection.....	144
Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast .....	144
Government Legislation.....	144
Other Published Primary Sources .....	145
Newspapers.....	146
Secondary Sources.....	146

## List of Figures

Figure 1.1. “Community under Siege” .....	41
Figure 1.2. “1969/1996” .....	52
Figure 1.3. “Re-Route Sectarian Marches” .....	54
Figure 2.1. “Estates off the Garvaghy Road” .....	87
Figure 2.2. “95% RC/Nationalist” .....	90
Figure 2.3. “The Invasion” .....	91
Figure 2.4. “Route of the Annual Drumcree Church Parade” .....	94



## List of Acronyms

AIA	Anglo-Irish Agreement
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
DSD	Downing Street Declaration
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
GFA	Good Friday Agreement
GRRC	Garvaghy Road Residents Coalition
IRA	Irish Republican Army
LVF	Loyalist Volunteer Force
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force

# Introduction

On the morning of Sunday, 9 July 1995, the Orangemen of Portadown, Northern Ireland, set off on parade as they did each year, in their bowler hats and Orange collarettes, marching from Carleton Street Orange Hall in the town centre towards Drumcree Parish Church. The tradition dated back to 1807 and had been observed almost every year since: on the Sunday before the Twelfth of July holiday, Portadown District—the local Orange Order lodge—paraded out of town to Drumcree Church, where the Orangemen took in Sunday service and then completed the loop back into town via the Garvagh Road. The Drumcree parade route had been the subject of some debate among Portadown’s residents in recent years, however; in 1985, the parade had been re-routed away from its traditional path back into town under the Obins Street tunnel due to the protest of the nationalist residents living nearby.<sup>1</sup> In 1995, the route came under fire once more as the residents of the majority-nationalist Garvagh area demanded that the Orange parade be re-routed again, this time away from the Garvagh Road. But in the context of Northern Ireland’s steadily accelerating peace process, the question of re-routing the Drumcree parade took on a significance that moved far beyond local considerations. This thesis will suggest that the annual contest that ensued between Portadown District and the Garvagh residents over Drumcree provided a significant forum in which the residents of the town of Portadown and the wider public in

<sup>1</sup> A brief note on nomenclature: in the Northern Irish context, the term “nationalist” refers to individuals and groups who advocated for some form of Irish independence from Britain. Nationalism is most often—though not exclusively—associated with Catholicism. The term “unionist” refers to individuals and groups who support the maintenance of Northern Ireland’s official connection (the Union) with Great Britain; unionism is most often—though not exclusively—associated with Protestantism. “Republican” and “republicanism” denote particularly hardline forms of nationalism while “loyalist” and “loyalism” denote particularly hardline forms of unionism; in some cases the terms “republicanism” and “loyalism” have been associated with individuals and groups who endorse the use of violence in advocating for the political aims of nationalism and unionism respectively, as was the mandate of organizations like the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a republican paramilitary group, and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), a loyalist paramilitary organization.

Northern Ireland discussed, contested, and resisted the changes being wrought by the peace process that defined Northern Irish political life in the mid-to-late 1990s.

Although it was in many ways a distinctly Peace Process Era conflict, the crisis that occurred over the Drumcree parade in the 1990s had much deeper historical roots. The Orange Order, a Protestant fraternal organization structured similarly to the Freemasons, had been founded near Portadown in 1795. Despite the Order's unswerving insistence that it was an exclusively religious organization, it was, most importantly, associated with an Ulster-Protestant ethno-cultural identity.<sup>2</sup> Politically, the Order has long been associated with the ideology of unionism, which held that Ireland's official connection with Britain should be maintained.<sup>3</sup> In 1920, Irish nationalist agitation against British rule had culminated in the partition of the island into two self-governing territories. Nationalist politicians in the south were granted limited independence from Britain in the 26 counties that made up Southern Ireland and later became the fully independent Republic of Ireland. Unionist politicians in the north, however, had railed against Home Rule so vociferously that Britain granted them their own semi-autonomous state, which was to remain part of the United Kingdom.<sup>4</sup>

Northern Ireland was made up of six of the nine counties of the province of Ulster: Antrim, Armagh, Londonderry, Down, Fermanagh, and Tyrone were included while Cavan, Monaghan, and Donegal, each of which had large Catholic majorities, were excluded in order to ensure a clear Protestant and unionist voting majority in the new

<sup>2</sup> See Eric P. Kauffman, *The Orange Order: A Contemporary Northern Irish History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). Since the Norman invasion, Ireland has been divided into four provinces: Ulster, Leinster, Munster, and Connacht. Ulster is the most northerly province and is home to a large proportion of Ireland's Protestant population.

<sup>3</sup> The constitutional connection between Ireland and Britain was forged with the *Act of Union (1801)*. Ironically, before the legislation creating union was passed, the Orange Order had opposed it, as it was supposed to be accompanied by full Catholic emancipation. British fears of Protestant opposition saw this idea abandoned, however, and Catholic emancipation was not granted until 1829.

<sup>4</sup> Unionist politicians had seen the passage of proposed Home Rule bills blocked in 1886 and 1893 before a third bill finally passed the British Houses of Parliament in 1914. The enactment of that bill was suspended due to the outbreak of World War I, however, and Home Rule for the south of Ireland was not granted until the passing of the *Government of Ireland Act* (also known as the Fourth Home Rule Bill) in 1920.

state.<sup>5</sup> The Orange Order gained unprecedented political influence with the establishment of Northern Ireland; it became a significant symbol of the Protestant community's institutionalized hegemony over the state's Catholic minority and was an active participant in the maintenance of the same.<sup>6</sup>

The parading tradition was one of the central and most public elements of Orangeism; the Order's first parade in celebration of the Twelfth of July holiday had been held in Portadown in July 1796, just a year after the Order's founding. The Twelfth marked the high point of the unionist calendar, celebrating the victory of the Protestant King William of Orange over the Catholic King James II at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.<sup>7</sup> In unionist collective memory, the battle has been remembered as the moment when any defensible Irish Catholic claim to the province of Ulster was defeated. In light of its symbolic connections to the Boyne, nationalists perceived Orange parading to be a territorial act of aggression, an annual reassertion of Protestant supremacy over Catholics in Northern Ireland. While the Order often claimed that the parading tradition was purely about giving witness for the Protestant faith, nationalists insisted that it was, in fact, a triumphalist, political, and sectarian activity. It was for these reasons that many Garvaghy residents objected to the passing of the annual Drumcree parade along the Garvaghy Road on its return route into Portadown's town centre.

<sup>5</sup> At partition, about 66 percent of the new state's population was Protestant, while about 33 percent of the population was Catholic. See P.A. Compton, "The Demographic Dimension of Integration and Division in Northern Ireland," in *Integration and Division*, eds. F.W. Boal and N.H. Douglas (London: Academic Press, 1982). Since partition, the Protestant majority has steadily been shrinking; Northern Ireland's 2011 census shows that the Catholic minority now stands at about 45 percent of the total population. "NI Census: Catholic population growing as Protestant numbers decline," *The Journal*, 12 December 2012.

<sup>6</sup> The vast majority of Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) politicians, who enjoyed uninterrupted governance over Northern Ireland from 1921 to 1972 (when Britain dissolved the state's devolved parliament), counted themselves Orangemen. All of the state's Prime Ministers were Orangemen, and there were only three Cabinet ministers in that 50-year period who were *not* Orangemen. The Order itself officially held 122 of 760 seats on the Ulster Unionist Council (the ruling body of the UUP), and the majority of the rest of the seats would have been filled by individuals who were Orangemen. Under the unionist government, Orange parades became official "rituals of state," and the Twelfth of July was made a national holiday. Dominic Bryan, *Orange Parades: The Politics of Ritual, Tradition, and Control* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 60.

<sup>7</sup> William went on to solidify his hold on the British Crown and to re-establish Protestantism as England's state religion at the conclusion of what has become known as the Glorious Revolution.

In May 1995, a number of those residents organized to form the Garvaghy Road Residents Coalition (GRRC) and launched a campaign to have the upcoming summer's parade re-routed away from the Garvaghy Road.<sup>8</sup> By the day of the parade, the GRRC-led agitation was such that the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), Northern Ireland's state police force, moved to deflect the parade from the Garvaghy Road in the interest of preserving law and order in Portadown. When the Orangemen stepped out of Drumcree Parish Church at the conclusion of the morning service on 9 July, they found their route back into town blocked by members of the RUC who had erected a barricade a short distance away from the church. Within minutes, the interruption turned to a standoff. The Orangemen demanded to be let down the road, and refused to disperse until the parade had successfully been completed; Portadown District Master Harold Gracey soon mounted a podium a few feet away from the police cordon and declared that the brethren would not back down, "Let it be hours. Let it be days. Let it be weeks."<sup>9</sup> As the RUC stood its ground, the Orangemen gathered on the hill adjacent to the church and were joined by supporters who soon numbered in the thousands.

## **Parading Anxieties: A Society in Transition**

It was no coincidence that renewed conflict over the Drumcree parade erupted when it did in 1995. After 25 years of intercommunal violence and sustained antagonism between the Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland—a period known as "The Troubles"—the year 1994 had seen a watershed moment in the state's emergent peace process. On 31 August 1994, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) had announced a "complete cessation of military operations" that was to take effect as of midnight.<sup>10</sup> In its statement, the IRA's Central Command cited "the potential of the

<sup>8</sup> Chris Ryder and Vincent Kearney, *Drumcree: The Orange Order's Last Stand* (London: Methuen, 2001), 105.

<sup>9</sup> Harold Gracey, Portadown, 9 July 1995, as quoted in Ryder and Kearny, *Drumcree*, 104.

<sup>10</sup> "Irish Republican Army Ceasefire Statement, 31 August 1994," accessed 2 July 2013, Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN), University of Ulster, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ira31894.htm>.

current political situation [to secure a] just and lasting settlement” in Northern Ireland, and underlined its “definitive commitment” to the success of the peace process.<sup>11</sup>

The ceasefire was the result of peace negotiations that had been ongoing between Britain, the Republic of Ireland, and republicans and nationalists in Northern Ireland for the past nine years. The announcement of the Anglo-Irish Agreement (AIA) between Britain and the Republic of Ireland in 1985 is commonly seen to have kick-started the peace process proper. The AIA functioned to place the question of Northern Ireland within the domains of both the British and Irish governments, and, most importantly, it suggested that Britain was neutral on the question of Northern Ireland’s independence versus its continued membership in the United Kingdom. In 1986, Sinn Féin’s decision to recognize the Republic of Ireland as “the articulator of the interests of a 32-county nation” indicated that the party was moving towards a strategy that placed greater importance on the political path to Irish reunification and less importance on armed methods of resistance.<sup>12</sup> Peace negotiations between Britain and the IRA carried on in secret when Britain’s Northern Ireland Secretary authorized the opening of a “back channel” of communication with the paramilitaries in 1990; in 1993, the “back channel” talks culminated in the announcement of the Downing Street Declaration (DSD), which was publicly a joint effort between Britain and the Republic. The DSD reaffirmed the right of self-determination of the island of Ireland, and it was accepted by the IRA as evidence of Britain’s sincere commitment to peace talks and to the possibility of significant

<sup>11</sup> "Irish Republican Army Ceasefire Statement." On 13 October the loyalist paramilitaries followed suit. Acting as an umbrella body for the many loyalist paramilitary groups in the province, the Combined Loyalist Military Command (CLMC) released its own statement, declaring a “genuine hope that this peace [would] be permanent.” “Combined Loyalist Military Command Ceasefire Statement, 13 October 1994,” accessed 2 July 2013, CAIN, University of Ulster, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/clmc131094.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> Jonathan Tonge, “The Origins and Development of the Peace Process,” in *Peace and War? Understanding the Peace Process in Northern Ireland*, edited by Chris Gilligan and Jonathan Tonge, 6 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997). Sinn Féin was Northern Ireland’s most influential, hardline republican party. Although the party never officially acknowledged the connection, Sinn Féin was commonly understood to have been the political wing of the IRA. The vote to recognize the government of the Republic of Ireland as legitimate also signaled the opening of the “pan-nationalist front,” which brought all the major proponents of a united Ireland—the Republic of Ireland, Sinn Féin, and Northern Ireland’s more moderately nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)—on side to present a united front for the first time. The SDLP had always advocated for reunification through constitutional means, and so it had typically been at odds with Sinn Féin over the question of armed resistance.

constitutional change for Northern Ireland, thus yielding the political conditions under which the organization's leadership announced its landmark ceasefire the following year.<sup>13</sup> The IRA's statement was met with jubilation among nationalists, who understood it to mean that the end of the violent phase of the conflict in Northern Ireland was in sight, but the unionist community's reaction was more subdued and considerably more apprehensive.<sup>14</sup>

For many unionists, it seemed that since the signing of the AIA in 1985, Northern Ireland had been on a course that was leading the state down a one-way street to "Dublin Rule." The ubiquity of the phrase in unionist rhetoric throughout the peace process is telling: the term referred to unionist fears that the progression of a peace process controlled by Britain, Ireland, and Northern Ireland's republicans and nationalists would inevitably lead to a united Ireland. The phrase pointedly alluded to an earlier incarnation of a similar idea: during the debates over Irish Home Rule in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, unionists in the north of Ireland had coined the term "Rome Rule" to describe their conviction that the passing of Home Rule would give the Catholic Church political control over Ireland; politicians had deployed the term to stoke popular opposition to Home Rule within the unionist community, playing on unionist fears that Protestants would be marginalized and persecuted in a united Ireland. The same anxieties resonated for many unionists in the mid-1990s, who once again feared for the lot of Protestants in a united Ireland wherein a vast Catholic majority would hold almost complete political power.

While many unionists feared the loss of the political hegemony they had enjoyed since the establishment of the Northern Irish state—and the social and economic benefits that had come with it—Northern Ireland's nationalists stood only to gain from the advancement of the peace process. Catholic inequality in Ireland dated back to the Tudor and Stuart plantations and the establishment of the Protestant Ascendancy (which

<sup>13</sup> The Downing Street Declaration confirmed: "It is for the people of the island of Ireland alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given, North and South, to bring about a united Ireland, if that is their wish." *Joint Declaration 1993 (Downing St. Declaration)*, Section 4.

<sup>14</sup> David McKittrick and David McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict* (London: Penguin, 2001), 199.

solidified English rule on the island) in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; after 1920, the new state's Catholic minority continued to experience considerable institutionalized discrimination in what Northern Ireland's first Prime Minister had famously declared "a Protestant state."<sup>15</sup> Central to the Catholic community's marginalization had been the exclusion of nationalists from fair political representation, which had protected the uninterrupted unionist governance of the province.<sup>16</sup> Discrimination with regard to employment opportunities and public housing had been endemic.<sup>17</sup> Catholics were severely underrepresented in the state police force: the proportion of Catholic membership in the RUC had never exceeded 20 percent, and by the 1960s, the force was almost 90 percent Protestant.<sup>18</sup> Many in the nationalist community perceived the RUC to be a sectarian institution and a tool of the state's oppression of Catholics. The force was dogged by accusations of discriminatory policing, brutality, and torture, and of collusion with loyalist paramilitaries. State repression of nationalist political activity was underwritten by the *Special Powers Act (1922)*, which

<sup>15</sup> The Stormont Papers, "50 Years of Northern Ireland Parliamentary Debates Online," accessed 2 July 2013, Volume 16 (1933-34), 1095-1096, <http://stormontpapers.ahds.ac.uk/stormontpapers/pageview.html?volumeno=16&pageno=1095>. Although the term "Protestant Ascendancy" was not used until the eighteenth century, the phrase is useful in describing the building process that occurred throughout these earlier centuries and culminated in the Ascendancy's more official establishment later on.

<sup>16</sup> Gerrymandering was common practice in Northern Ireland during the Stormont Era; many majority-Catholic electoral districts were redrawn to ensure unionist victories where nationalists might have won out. In addition, the state did not have universal suffrage: only taxpayers were permitted to cast votes. Catholics were more likely to be unemployed, and thus less likely to pay taxes.

<sup>17</sup> By the 1960s and 1970s, Catholics were two and a half times more likely to be unemployed than Protestants. See Martin Melaugh, "Majority-Minority Differentials: Unemployment, Housing and Health," in *Facets of the Conflict in Northern Ireland*, edited by Seamus Dunn, (Hampshire, England: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1995), accessed 2 July 2013, CAIN, University of Ulster, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/discrimination/melaugh.htm>. Unionist-controlled municipal councils were responsible for the distribution of public housing; they often utilized methods of allocation that favoured Protestant applicants over their Catholic counterparts and sometimes misused their discretionary power to allocate newer and better homes to Protestants and to maintain unionist voting majorities in certain areas.

<sup>18</sup> See Chris Ryder, *The Fateful Split: Catholics and the Royal Ulster Constabulary* (London: Methuen, 2004).



had allowed the state to ban organizations, meetings, and parades, to impose curfews, and to restrict the flying of the Irish tricolour, a central symbol of Irish nationalism.<sup>19</sup>

But the Catholic minority's lot had been steadily improving since Britain had retaken direct control over Northern Ireland in 1972 in response to the widespread violence, protest, and civil unrest that had marked the beginning of the Troubles.<sup>20</sup> Nationalist political agitation via the Northern Ireland civil rights movement and constitutional nationalism—combined, undoubtedly, with the IRA's ongoing campaign of armed resistance to unionist and British rule in the state—saw Britain begin to roll back some of the inequities between Protestants and Catholics that had characterized Northern Irish society to that point.<sup>21</sup> After 1972, Catholics began to enjoy more equitable distribution of public housing, and some legislative policies were put in place to redress

<sup>19</sup> Although the language of the Act did not specifically target the nationalist/republican community, the state's enforcement of the Act was effectively anti-nationalist/republican. In 1971, the government went on to use the Special Powers Act to introduce internment without trial, detaining thousands of Catholic men and women who were suspected of republican paramilitary activity. Laura K. Dohoney, "Regulating Northern Ireland: The Special Powers Acts, 1922-1972," *The Historical Journal* 41, no. 4 (1998), 1093.

<sup>20</sup> The Troubles began in August 1969 after nationalist protestors and the RUC clashed at a Catholic civil rights march in the city of Derry. The RUC responded to the agitated demonstrators with what nationalists perceived to be extreme force. This response prompted nationalists in Belfast to riot in solidarity, where, again, the RUC came down with a heavy hand and was suspected to have colluded with loyalist paramilitaries in the quelling of the riots and in retribution against nationalists who had participated. After three days of conflict, the RUC had lost control over the situation in Derry and Belfast, and the British Army was sent in to regain control over the province.

<sup>21</sup> The Northern Ireland civil rights movement advocated for civil rights for Catholics. The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) began campaigning on behalf of the Catholic minority in 1968, inspired in particular by the student protests and strikes that had swept Paris in May of that year and the American Civil Rights Movement that was ramping up across the Atlantic. NICRA organized civil rights marches, sit-ins, and other acts of civil disobedience that were intended to pressure the state to address the organization's demands. For more on Northern Ireland's place in the global nexus of resistance and revolution that characterized the year 1968, see Simon Prince, *Northern Ireland's '68: Civil Rights, Global Revolt, and the Origins of the Troubles* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2007).

employment imbalance.<sup>22</sup> These trends threatened to accelerate in the context of the peace process. Perhaps most significantly, the process offered nationalists the prospect of fairer political representation and influence in Northern Ireland.

With unionists harbouring anxieties about the peace process and nationalists sensing an opportunity to improve their disadvantaged position in the state, the announcement of the IRA ceasefire in August 1994 prompted a mixed public reaction of eagerness among nationalists and distinct trepidation among unionists. The conflict over the Drumcree parade that erupted less than a year later acted as a lightning rod for the communal anxieties, fears, and tensions being brought on state-wide by the acceleration of the peace process. As such, it is one of the spaces at which the public conversation and debate about the process is most accessible, making it a significant and appropriate site of study in the project of examining some of the multitudinous ways in which the Northern Irish public was attempting to make sense of the political, social, and economic changes that characterized the 1990s. This thesis will tap into those public conversations to show that Drumcree was indeed a significant theatre in which people, organizations, and institutions were beginning to attempt to make sense of the peace process and of the changing sectarian divide that accompanied it. I have chosen to examine a diverse range of texts, including letters to the editor, information packs, histories, posters, flyers, government and NGO reports, and pieces of satire that acted as manifestations of those conversations and articulated several competing interpretations of the Drumcree dispute as it raged on through the mid-to-late-1990s and into the 2000s.

This thesis draws heavily upon the theory and methodology of discourse analysis in its treatment of these sources, which are of vastly different types and provenances, but which all act as windows into the manifold ways in which Drumcree was being

<sup>22</sup> In 1976, government initiatives made it illegal for employers to discriminate based on religion, and in 1989, limited affirmative action policies were put in place to redress employment imbalance. As a result, Catholic participation in the labour force rose steadily throughout the 1990s, and employment growth increased more quickly among Catholics than Protestants during this time (although Catholics remained on the whole underrepresented). Christopher McCrudden, Robert Ford, and Anthony Heath, "Legal Regulation of Affirmative Action in Northern Ireland: An Empirical Assessment," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 24, vol. 3 (2004): 366.

negotiated by its participants and audiences. James Gee succinctly defines discourse analysis as “the study of language at use in the world, not just to say things, but to do things.”<sup>23</sup> The potential of language to influence how the conflict would be understood, both contemporaneously and in posterity, meant that the public conversation about Drumcree featured a variety of attempts to define the dispute in conflicting ways. I analyze the ways in which people, organizations, and institutions spoke and wrote about Drumcree in order not only to illuminate the social dynamics of the dispute itself, but also to argue that when participants and observers articulated their perceptions of Drumcree and challenged conflicting perceptions, they were also addressing the ongoing, hotly contested peace process. They often used historical and literary narratives to help make sense of Drumcree, and in turn used narratives of Drumcree to make sense of the peace process. Signs, symbols, and narratives were sometimes deployed and read subversively as they were adapted to the particular historical context of the 1990s. Keeping in mind the central role of narrative in the discourse around the dispute, I have chosen to privilege Mariana Valverde’s particular style of discourse analysis, which makes use of literary analysis to define and read systems of knowledge.<sup>24</sup> Finally, discourse analysis offers the opportunity to analyze how power functions through language.<sup>25</sup> This thesis will show that historical shifts in the balance of power between Catholics and Protestants are traceable through the examination of language.

For indeed, the debate over Drumcree saw Protestants and Catholics beginning to try to come to terms with the changing power dynamic between them that was a central characteristic of Northern Ireland’s politics and society during this time period. In the context of his work on sectarian riots in nineteenth-century Ulster, Sean Farrell notes that most of the conflicts he examined constituted struggles over the balance of power and control in the north of Ireland: Protestants wanted to maintain their ascendant position in Ulster society while Catholics desired equal status, and “when either group

<sup>23</sup> James Paul Gee, *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, second edition (New York: Routledge, 2005), 1.

<sup>24</sup> Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008). Valverde’s approach to discourse analysis will be elucidated in more detail in the following chapter.

<sup>25</sup> For more on the relationship between knowledge, language, and power, see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction* (New York: Random House, 1978).

perceived that changes might occur in local, regional, or national power relations, they responded by taking to the streets, asserting their strength in ritual-laden public performances” such as riots and parading disputes.<sup>26</sup> The perception of changing power relations had a similar effect in triggering and exacerbating the conflict between Portadown District, the GRRC, and their supporters a century later, bearing out Farrell’s argument that these types of conflicts tended to emerge during times of transition. I will argue that the fractious nature of the public conversation about Drumcree led various participant entities to undertake attempts to create information and knowledge about the dispute that, each entity hoped, would influence the broader public’s perception of it. (This became especially important as public sympathy for and investment in the dispute decreased in negative correlation with the yearly increase in violence and unrest associated with Drumcree.) Finally, this thesis will also suggest that the context of the peace process, and the perceived potential of Drumcree to act as a disruption to that process, led to considerable dissent and disagreement *within* Northern Ireland’s two major religious and political communities as well as between them, marking a significant moment wherein a changing historical, social, and political context prompted some individuals to push back against the binary sectarian identity categories that were assumed to define them.

Some unionists identified the Drumcree parade as a potential site of resistance to the peace process as early as 1985. Eric Kaufmann has pointed out that the peace negotiations between Britain and the Republic that were publicly initiated in late January of that year prompted some Orangemen to express the idea of a “clear link between the local [Orange Order] march [in Portadown] and the course of politics in the province.”<sup>27</sup> As those peace talks continued, July 1985 saw a major confrontation between the Orangemen of Portadown District and the nationalist residents of the Obins Street area of Portadown, who protested the passing of the Drumcree parade under the Obins Street tunnel, which the residents considered to be a nationalist area where the parade was not welcome. In the face of increasing tensions between unionists and nationalists in the town, the RUC made the decision to permanently re-route the parade away from

<sup>26</sup> Sean Farrell, *Rituals and Riots: Sectarian Violence and Political Culture in Ulster, 1784-1886* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 7.

<sup>27</sup> Kauffman, *The Orange Order*, 156.

Obins Street. Kaufmann quotes from a flyer authored by two local Orangemen that demonstrates the connection these men saw between Drumcree and peace process politics: "The re-routing was a first step towards a United Ireland. If we do not register our outright rejection...we can be certain that the outcome of the Anglo-Irish Talks will be...further steps towards a United Ireland."<sup>28</sup> For like-minded Orangemen and unionists, this warning was borne out and legitimated when the AIA was introduced that November.

A letter to the editor that appeared in the *Belfast Telegraph* within a week of Portadown District's standoff at Drumcree a decade later argued that a perceived connection continued to exist between the mounting unionist fears with regard to the peace process and the parading dispute. The writer asserted that unionists felt that Northern Ireland stood at a crossroads and that the very existence of the state may be at stake:

The British Government no longer believe [in Northern Ireland's inherent Britishness], evidenced first in the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 and more recently the Downing Street Declaration.... This leaves the unionist community with the stark reality that within 40 years Northern Ireland may cease to exist. Who can blame them for feeling as they do, a people betrayed, misplaced, and frustrated? Drumcree symbolizes those feelings.<sup>29</sup>

Another letter-writer declared that "Drumcree was a means whereby unionists in general and Protestants in particular were able to demonstrate that they had reached the end of their tether" with regards to Britain's perceived appeasement of Sinn Féin in the peace process.<sup>30</sup>

Unionist politicians attempted to capitalize on and encourage a popular sense among unionists that there was a relationship between Drumcree and the peace process. On the evening of 10 July 1995, the second day of the first Drumcree standoff,

<sup>28</sup> Circular from United Ulster Loyalist Front, 24 July 1985, quoted in Kaufmann, *The Orange Order*, 156.

<sup>29</sup> Gordon Jackson, "Not worth wrecking the peace over 800 metres," *Belfast Telegraph*, 18 July 1995, 12.

<sup>30</sup> Alan Reavie, "Frustration led to standoff," *Belfast Telegraph*, 25 July 1996, 15.

the Reverend Ian Paisley, one of the many politicians who had traveled to Portadown immediately after the standoff had begun, stepped up to address a crowd of thousands who had turned out to support the Orangemen in the past 24 hours. The status of the parade held implications not only for the future of Protestant families, Paisley argued, but also for the future of the Northern Irish state itself:

We are here tonight because we have to establish the right of the Protestant people to march down the Garvaghy Road and [the right of] our brethren of the Orange Institution...to attend their place of worship and leave that place of worship and return to their homes. That is the issue we are dealing with tonight and it is a very serious issue because it lies at the very heart and foundation of our heritage. It lies at the very heart and foundation of our spiritual life and it lies at the very foundation of the future of our families and of this province that we love. If we cannot go to our place of worship and we cannot walk back from our place of worship then all that the Reformation brought to us and all that the martyrs died for and all that our forefathers gave their lives for is lost to us forever. So there can be no turning back.<sup>31</sup>

Of the many men who spoke at the rally that night, Paisley received the loudest applause.<sup>32</sup>

Other unionists identified nationalist residents' protests of certain Orange parades as means through which republicans were attempting to attack Protestants and the Union. In 1996, a letter to the *Telegraph* written by one Reverend H. Heatley proclaimed that "the present campaign against Orange marches is only one thrust of a concerted campaign to drive Protestants out of Northern Ireland."<sup>33</sup> Echoing the minister's suspicion, a 1998 press release by the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland (the Order's governing body) stated explicitly the Order's belief that "attacks" by nationalist residents' groups on Orange parades were "part of the republican strategy to remove the British presence from Northern Ireland."<sup>34</sup> For many unionists who agreed with that

<sup>31</sup> Ian Paisley, Portadown, "Speech made on 10 July 1995," Dr. Dominic Bryan's private collection, located at the Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University Belfast.

<sup>32</sup> Dominic Bryan, *Orange Parades: The Politics of Ritual, Tradition, and Control* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 2.

<sup>33</sup> H. Heatley (Rev), "Concerted campaign," *Belfast Telegraph*, 19 July 1996, 10.

<sup>34</sup> Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, "An Open Letter to the People of Northern Ireland, 2 July 1998," accessed 2 July 2013, CAIN, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/parade/docs/goli2798.htm>.

assessment, ensuring the continuance of Orange parades constituted a method of expressing opposition to and resisting Irish reunification.

Unionists and nationalists saw Drumcree as a particularly significant Orange parade for two reasons: first, they observed, it was the oldest traditional parade route still utilized by the Orange Order as part of its annual Twelfth of July celebrations; and second, it was *Portadown's* Twelfth of July parade. The town has long stood as a symbol of unflinching unionism.<sup>35</sup> It was the place at which the Orange Order was founded, and the place at which the Order held its first parade. Portadown's reputation as "The Orange Citadel" meant that there was a significant symbolic subtext running beneath the Drumcree dispute that suggested that if the parade in Portadown was re-routed away from the Garvaghy Road, it may be the death knell of Orangeism—and of Protestant supremacy—in Northern Ireland. Beyond this, Portadown's reputation as the definitive stronghold of unionism meant that defeat at Drumcree might signal an impending defeat of unionism through the peace process. Speaking to these anxieties, some Portadown unionists and loyalists described Drumcree using terms such as "our Alamo," "Custer's last stand," and "waiting for Armageddon."<sup>36</sup> In 1999, a number of Garvaghy Road residents echoed the same sense of drama and finality about the dispute in Portadown, proclaiming of the Orange parading tradition: "It started here. It will end here."<sup>37</sup> Indeed, some nationalists believed that Drumcree offered the opportunity to issue a fatal blow to Orangeism in the "new" Northern Ireland.

It was for these reasons that the Orangemen of Portadown were loath to back down from the RUC cordon that blocked them from the Garvaghy Road on the evening of 9 July 1995. The standoff concluded after two tense days when, in the face of intense pressure from the Orange Order and its supporters, the RUC finally relented and allowed Portadown District to conclude the parade along the Garvaghy Road. The exercise was repeated in 1996 when the GRRC again mounted an organized protest against the parade; once again, the RUC attempted to re-route the parade due to the threat of civil

<sup>35</sup> This connection will be explored further in Chapter 1.

<sup>36</sup> "John" and Connie Tedford, quoted in Susan McKay, *Northern Protestants: An Unsettled People* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 2000), 119, 154.

<sup>37</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Garvaghy: A Community under Siege* (Belfast: Beyond the Pale Publications, 1999), back cover.

unrest, but capitulated to pressure from the unionist community after five days. July 1997 heralded “Drumcree III”; that year, the increasingly serious rioting and violence associated with the dispute caused the RUC to allow the parade after a little more than 24 hours. The disorder that Drumcree prompted each July was not limited to Portadown: Belfast in particular also saw extensive disturbances during the Drumcree standoffs, and each year supporters of the Orange protest erected road blocks on motorways and other major routes around the province.

Tellingly, the peace process and the Drumcree dispute both climaxed in 1998. April of that year had seen the signing of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) by Britain, the Republic of Ireland, and almost all political parties in Northern Ireland. The GFA was a significant milestone in the peace process. It was reflective of its unprecedented multilateral composition, acknowledging that the majority of the people of Northern Ireland wished to remain within the United Kingdom, but also that a “substantial section” of the people of Northern Ireland, and a majority of people on the island of Ireland as a whole, wished to see a united Ireland that was completely independent from Britain.<sup>38</sup> Importantly, it recognized both positions as legitimate. It provided for the establishment of a devolved power-sharing government within Northern Ireland that would ensure a more equitable balance of political authority between nationalist and unionist parties. Ian Paisley’s hardline Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) was the only major party in Northern Ireland to stand against the Agreement; as such, it was the sole representative of the segment of the unionist and loyalist population that continued to vehemently oppose the progression of the peace process, and it saw its popular support and political capital rise as many anti-Agreement unionists and loyalists abandoned the pro-Agreement UUP in varying degrees of disgust. The question of whether to ratify the GFA was put to a

<sup>38</sup> The full text of the Agreement is available online at “Northern Ireland Peace Agreement (The Good Friday Agreement),” accessed 2 July 2013, United Nations Peacemaker, <http://peacemaker.un.org/node/1697>.



popular vote, and after months of heated debate between the “Yes” and “No” camps, it passed with a healthy majority of 71 percent on 22 May 1998.<sup>39</sup>

But despite the approval of most of the Northern Irish public, the passing of the GFA prompted widespread outcry and concern on the part of those unionists and loyalists—most of them now DUP voters—who opposed any form of power-sharing governance and any agreement on Northern Ireland that included input from the Republic. The increasingly acute anxieties of this vocal minority found expression that summer at Drumcree IV. In July 1998, the annual dispute over the parade finally climaxed with the most severe rioting and civil conflict Northern Ireland had seen since the 1994 ceasefire. A total of 2,561 public order incidents were recorded by the RUC in connection with Drumcree, including: 632 petrol bombs thrown and a further 2,250 petrol bombs recovered by security forces; 837 plastic baton rounds fired by the RUC; 615 attacks on members of the security forces, including 24 shooting incidents and 45 blast bombs; 284 people arrested; 178 vehicles hijacked; 144 houses damaged in attacks; and 76 police officers injured.<sup>40</sup>

Tensions came to a head in the early hours of Sunday, 12 July 1998, when Jason, Mark, and Richard Quinn, aged eight, nine, and twelve respectively, burned to death after their home was fire-bombed by loyalists in what the RUC quickly identified as

<sup>39</sup> Northern Ireland Elections, “The 1998 Referendums,” accessed 2 July 2013, <http://www.ark.ac.uk/elections/fref98.htm>. Voter turnout was an extremely high 81 percent. The Republic of Ireland voted 95 percent “Yes” on the question of whether to ratify the GFA via an amendment to the Republic’s constitution. “Referendum Results 1937-2011,” accessed 2 July 2013, Department of the Environment, Community, and Local Government, Republic of Ireland, <http://www.environ.ie/en/LocalGovernment/Voting/Referenda/PublicationsDocuments/FileDownload,1894,en.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup> “Developments at Drumcree, 1995-2000,” accessed 2 July 2013, CAIN, University of Ulster, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/parade/develop.htm>.

a sectarian attack.<sup>41</sup> The murders of the young brothers were affecting and significant enough to serve as a breaking point for the Drumcree stalemate. The incident prompted unequivocal censure by politicians of all political persuasions, and various calls were issued, even from individuals within the Orange fold, to cease the protest against the re-routing of the parade immediately.<sup>42</sup> Although Portadown District refused to do so (triggering a public relations nightmare for the Order), the number of protesting Orangemen and supporters on the hill adjacent the church dwindled considerably throughout the day of the Twelfth as the more moderately minded among them bowed out in the face of violence that was too extreme to countenance or justify.<sup>43</sup>

The loss of much of the Order's active support among the wider unionist community in the wake of the murders was a substantial blow; that year, for the first time, the RUC upheld the decision banning the parade from the Garvaghy Road.<sup>44</sup> Likewise, the passing of the GFA earlier that year indicated a rapidly declining public appetite for sectarian conflict. In 1999, 2000, and 2001, the Portadown Orangemen were able to mount smaller yet still sizable protests against the parade's re-routing, but these were ultimately unsuccessful, and Portadown District never again enjoyed the levels of public support that it saw between 1995 and 1998.

<sup>41</sup> Coming as it did on the heels of a night of particularly intense rioting, the crime was immediately linked to Drumcree even though it took place in Ballymoney, Co. Antrim. The boys were identified in the media and among the public as Catholics because their mother was a Catholic, although the family lived with her (Protestant) partner in a Protestant estate, and the boys attended a Protestant school. Ian Paisley made a rather unseemly effort to emphasize the boys' Protestant connections in his reaction to the murders. Many Protestants and Catholics alike viewed cross-community or "mixed" marriages as abhorrent; as in the case of the Quinn boys, cross-community families were sometimes the subjects of especial intimidation on the part of paramilitary organizations or disapproving neighbours.

<sup>42</sup> Portadown District's own Chaplain, William Bingham, issued a plea for the District to call off the protest. Deaglan de Breadun, "Drumcree protest to go on despite pleas by political and church leaders," *Irish Times*, 13 July 1998.

<sup>43</sup> Joe, in *Community under Siege*, 7.

<sup>44</sup> The year 1998 also saw the British government establish the controversial Parades Commission, which assumed the responsibility of ruling on parading conflicts and relieved the RUC of the duty, leaving the police only to enforce the commission's decisions. The Orange Order vehemently contested the legitimacy of the Parades Commission, citing the fact that those serving on the commission had not been democratically elected (they were, rather, appointed by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland) and publicly alleging that the commission would be unduly sympathetic to the nationalists' cause.

## Literature

This thesis is situated within a growing body of literature on Orange parading that itself seems to be linked at least in part to the political significance of parading disputes in the mid-to-late 1990s. Some of the earliest academic work undertaken with regard to Drumcree, notably the interpretations of anthropologists Dr. Dominic Bryan and Dr. Neil Jarman, were communicated to the public in the form of short, accessible reports, and thus entered into the popular discourse around the dispute. Then working as Research Officers at the Centre for the Study of Conflict at the University of Ulster, Bryan and Jarman published discussion pieces and reports on Drumcree that were released by the university concurrent to the dispute itself.<sup>45</sup> Both, however, also went on to produce monographs that have become seminal texts in the study of contemporary Orange parades.

Jarman's *Material Conflicts* was published in 1997—contemporaneous to the third battle over Drumcree—and explores the role of both nationalist and unionist images and rituals (like parading) in shaping the sectarian divide.<sup>46</sup> Three years later, Bryan's *Orange Parades* (2000) broke significant ground as the first anthropological monograph to concentrate solely on the Orange Order.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly, considering their collaborative academic relationship, the two make some complementary arguments that help to elucidate our understanding of the nature and function of contemporary Orange parades.

In *Material Conflicts*, Jarman argues that the apparently fixed nature of rituals such as Orange parades disguises an inherent dynamism of meaning within each

<sup>45</sup> In fact, the Centre's first publication on contemporary Orange parading disputes in Portadown actually pre-dated and anticipated the first standoff over Drumcree by a number of months. See Dominic Bryan, T.G. Fraser, and Seamus Dunn, *Political Rituals: Loyalist Parades in Portadown* (Coleraine: University of Ulster, 1995) as well as Neil Jarman and Dominic Bryan, *Parade and Protest: A Discussion of Parading Disputes in Northern Ireland* (Coleraine: University of Ulster, 1996) and Neil Jarman and Dominic Bryan, *From Riots to Rights: Nationalist Parades in the North of Ireland* (Coleraine: University of Ulster, 1998).

<sup>46</sup> Neil Jarman, *Material Conflicts: Parades and Visual Displays in Northern Ireland* (Oxford: Berg, 1997).

<sup>47</sup> Bryan, *Orange Parades*.

reiteration.<sup>48</sup> He suggests that the repetition of and the alterations to these rituals (in meaning, if not in form) were important methods through which Northern Ireland's unionist and nationalist communities attempted to make sense of the past. This thesis suggests that the ritual of Orange parading proved equally important in the process of helping individuals in Northern Ireland to make sense of a tumultuous present and an uncertain future. Likewise, Bryan's *Orange Parades* shows that the seemingly static, traditional ritual of Orange parading was actually a site of dynamic change wherein participants and observers could negotiate and renegotiate social relationships and identities, such as we will see occurring throughout the peace process. Bryan also suggests that Orange parades were consistently and fundamentally about demonstrating political power and asserting social hegemony on the part of the Protestant-unionist community—another pattern that re-emerged at Drumcree.

In the course of their work on Orange parading, Jarman and Bryan have both emphasized that divisions and complexities exist within the Protestant community. Jarman argues that the unity popularly ascribed to the community, particularly during the marching season, was in fact a tenuous harmony based only on the artificial absence or invisibility of an external “other” or of internal dissenters. Bryan's work explores the ways in which these often “invisible” internal dissenters negotiated the Orange parading ritual, demonstrating that the parade was not only a space for the reaffirmation (or reassurance) of Protestant hegemony over Catholics, but also a space wherein some Protestants, often those of the working class, could contest the implementation of *internal* hegemonic discourses.

Both underplay the importance of the ways in which external observers make sense of Orange parades, however. Jarman considers Catholic and Protestant methods of constructing understandings of the past separately, and Catholic or other external observers do not play a major role in Jarman's considerations of how meanings were made of Orange parades. And although Bryan locates Orange parades as a site in which scholars can study the relationship between the Protestant and Catholic

<sup>48</sup> In recent years, similar arguments about the dynamic and adaptive nature of ritual, collective memory, and commemoration have emerged out of the field of cultural memory studies. See Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney, eds., *Mediation, Remediation, and the Dynamics of Cultural Memory* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009).

communities in Ireland, his treatment of contemporary Catholic experiences of and reactions to these parades is underdeveloped. This thesis will suggest that the meanings attributed to Orange parades by outsiders were as important as the meanings attached to them by Protestants—although the latter was no more simple or confirmatory than the former—because all of these players were in conversation with each other as they grappled with making sense of the peace process through the medium of the parading conflict.

This thesis will consider the Drumcree parade as a site where historians can access the understandings and meanings ascribed to Orange parades by Protestants, Catholics, and other participants and audiences. It will locate Drumcree as a moment wherein external others *and* internal dissenters ceased to be invisible, and subversive voices within each community became audible. Indeed, it was a moment when these voices often inhabited the same contested spaces and directly confronted the contemporary meanings of the Orange parade in attempts to understand where the tradition would fit in a Northern Ireland where the Protestant-unionist community no longer held the same political dominance it once enjoyed.

Although studies of contemporary Orange parades have largely been undertaken by anthropologists, parading disputes in the north of Ireland were in no way unique features of the latter twentieth century. Sean Farrell's *Rituals and Riots* (2000) focuses on the origins of parading disputes in nineteenth-century Ulster. Farrell builds on the seminal work of Frank Wright, who suggested that the latter half of the nineteenth century was a crucial period in the development of separate political traditions in Ulster.<sup>49</sup> Wright's work made use of the concept of "pan-Protestantism," denoting a form of political rhetoric that focused on building a sense of unity among Protestants through anti-Catholic sentiment. Pan-Protestantism was often deployed by Ulster's Protestant political elite in order to rouse the support of working class Protestants during this period. According to Wright, the proliferation of pan-Protestant rhetoric in Ulster's political realm helped stoke the development of the antagonistic, denominational political traditions of Protestant unionism and Catholic nationalism in the province.

<sup>49</sup> Frank Wright, *Two Lands on One Soil: Ulster Politics before Home Rule* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).

As a representative embodiment of the Protestant political elite, the Orange Order was a central source of pan-Protestant rhetoric.<sup>50</sup> Farrell notes that although the Orange Order did not count a majority of Protestant adult men as members until the last 25 years of the nineteenth century, its brand of pan-Protestantism “resonate[d] with...depth and vitality” among the wider Protestant community in the years prior to majority membership. Although it is made with regards to the latter half of the nineteenth century, the observation bears relevance to the political situation in Northern Ireland in the 1990s—as does the thesis he presents. Farrell argues that the ritual practice of sectarian confrontation that was performed by a minority of Catholics and Protestants in Ulster throughout the nineteenth century was a significant contributor to the “unmatched power of the pan-Protestant message.”<sup>51</sup> These ritualized and habitual conflicts allowed for the construction, maintenance, reinforcement, and continual renewal of the sectarian metanarratives and symbols so prevalent in Ulster’s political culture that helped to define that culture as fundamentally antagonistic.<sup>52</sup>

This thesis will show that many of these same processes were taking place during Northern Ireland’s peace process, when yet another iteration of a clash between Protestants and Catholics over an Orange parade allowed the Order the opportunity to take advantage of unionist myths in its attempts to encourage Protestant opposition to the peace process. As a consequence of its modern context, the contemporary Order’s pan-Protestant message was less overtly anti-Catholic and focused more on anti-nationalism and anti-republicanism; however, the strong association between nationalism and Catholicism meant that this rhetoric still situated Protestants and Catholics in opposition to one another (and hinted at a persisting, though now more coded, anti-Catholicism among some segments of the unionist population). I will argue that nationalists also utilized myths and metanarratives of past sectarian conflicts in a similar way with regard to advancing certain understandings of Drumcree. And, in response to the unique political context of the peace process, both sides also attempted to appropriate the tropes and symbols once exclusively owned by the other side. This

<sup>50</sup> See Farrell, *Rituals and Riots*, Chapter Two.

<sup>51</sup> Farrell, *Rituals and Riots*, 6-7.

<sup>52</sup> Farrell, *Rituals and Riots*, 7.

shift reflected the changes that were occurring with regard to the power dynamic between Protestants and Catholics in the province.

Farrell's emphasis on the fact that it was a *minority* of Catholics and Protestants actually participating in sectarian violence is significant. Like in the case of Ulster's nineteenth-century riots, a minority of Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland actively engaged in the conflict over Drumcree. Indeed, the notion that the individuals and organizations who were involved in the sectarian violence were a "vocal minority" that did not represent the majority of unionists or nationalists in Northern Ireland was quite commonly expressed in public forums such as letters to the editor. But, as in the case of Farrell's study, although a small minority of the population was physically participating, the existence of violent conflict was enough to allow the Order, the GRRC, and their respective hardline supporters to appeal to deep-seated sectarian antagonisms and anxieties that long pre-dated the Drumcree dispute of the 1990s.

This vocal minority attempted to connect the parading dispute to the highly contentious progression of the peace process in convincing the wider public of what was at stake in the re-routing or allowance of the Orange Order's annual Twelfth of July parade in Portadown. The Order had some success in casting Drumcree as a conflict whose outcome held significance for the future of Northern Ireland as a British and Protestant state; it saw its membership numbers increase in the months following Drumcree I, for example, and saw similar spikes following RUC crackdowns on parading protests and other peace-process related developments in the years that followed.<sup>53</sup> Significantly (and encouragingly), however, this kind of sectarian rhetoric was not met with ubiquitous approval within either the nationalist community or the unionist community. This was also an effect of the peace process context, as the public's appetite for continuing intercommunal conflict waned after thirty years of violence—which saw thousands of deaths—in the face of what was potentially a workable peace settlement that could see an end to that violence.

<sup>53</sup> Darwin Templeton, "Surge to join Orange Order after Drumcree," *Belfast Telegraph*, 28 July 1995, Suzanne Breen, "The views from Drumcree," *Irish Times*, 28 December 1996, 7, and Cal McCrystal, "Upsurge in 'Orangeism' after police crackdown," *The Observer* (London), 8 June 1997.

Public acceptance of what each side saw as the correct understanding of Drumcree held serious implications for both Protestants and Catholics. With the peace process moving slowly but apparently steadily forward by the mid-1990s, power relationships between the two groups were undoubtedly shifting. Beneath the Orange Order's vehement defense of the Garvaghy Road parade route was a fundamental insecurity about the lot of Protestants in the "new" Northern Ireland; the loss of traditional parade routes were seen by many Orangemen as evidence that the state was moving in the direction of a unified Ireland in which Protestants would comprise a tiny minority and would be at the mercy of the Catholic population that had been discriminated against since plantation. Meanwhile, the residents of the Garvaghy Road argued that, as a pillar of institutionalized sectarianism, the Orange Order was at best archaic and irrelevant to a Northern Ireland that was no longer dominated by a Protestant Ascendancy. The re-routing of the Drumcree parade would serve to lend weight to these ideas.

The final interjection this thesis will make is a historiographical one. Until recently, historians have often interpreted Northern Irish history through the framework of the "two communities" model, which is summed up succinctly by Kerby Miller as the notion that Ireland has been and will always be made up of "two separate ethno-religious groups with distinct historical experiences and sharply conflicting interests, outlooks, and political cultures. One is Gaelic, Catholic, nationalist, and 'Irish'; the other is English and Scottish, Protestant, unionist or loyalist, and 'British.'"<sup>54</sup> As Sean Farrell has recently pointed out, the proliferation of this notion has meant that sectarianism has historically been understood as something natural, atavistic, ahistorical, and thus inevitable.<sup>55</sup> Farrell suggests that sectarianism must be understood as a historically contingent and dynamic phenomenon. Taking up this call, this thesis argues that the peace process was a specific moment wherein the sectarian divide was shifting in response to significant changes in the balance of power between Protestants and Catholics in the state,

<sup>54</sup> Kerby Miller, "Ulster Presbyterians and the 'Two Traditions' in Ireland and America," in *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, edited by J. J. Lee and Marion Casey (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 255.

<sup>55</sup> Sean Farrell, "Ulster Sectarianism and the Lessons of South Asian Historiography," *History Compass* 8, no. 9 (September 2010): 1023-1035.



throwing into sharp relief the ultimately mutable nature of sectarianism in Northern Ireland.

In Chapter 1, I will show that the discourse surrounding Drumcree demonstrates that the nature of Northern Ireland's sectarian divide was changing during the mid-1990s to reflect Catholics' increasing power within the state and society; nationalist and unionist participants and observers of the dispute utilized established sectarian language and symbols in new and unprecedented ways to articulate and advance their particular understandings and characterizations of the dispute.

But despite what was undoubtedly a shifting sectarian divide, the public conversation about Drumcree also reflected a persisting dichotomous division between the Catholic and Protestant communities in Northern Ireland, with many unionists and loyalists generally supporting the Orange Order's protest in principle, if not always in practice, and many nationalists backing the GRRC's demands to have the parade re-routed. Chapter 2 will turn to examine the place of individual experience within a public discourse that was saturated with symbols and metanarratives. It will argue that, alongside deploying symbolic language, many individuals presented what Joan Scott calls the "evidence of experience" (a prioritization that Scott challenges) as another means through which to voice particular understandings of what Drumcree was about and to establish the authority to influence how the public should understand the dispute.<sup>56</sup>

I will conclude in Chapter 3 by examining expressions and negotiation of dissent at Drumcree, wherein the evidence of experience sometimes played a significant role as well. Just as there were individuals and organizations who partook in attempts to create authoritative, dichotomous renderings of the dispute, there were also those who used experience and cited their own religious or political identities in order to challenge such understandings of Drumcree. The Church of Ireland made a different kind of attempt to challenge the GRRC and Orange narratives by distancing itself from Drumcree and presenting its own version of the conflict that held that the parading dispute and

<sup>56</sup> Joan W. Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 4 (Summer 1991): 773-797.

associated Orange protests had nothing to do with the Church, despite the central role of the Drumcree Parish Church building. The Church's attempt to dissociate itself with Drumcree peaked in 1999, following the extreme violence that had marked Drumcree IV the previous July. The social tensions that had been steadily rising each summer since 1995 had also prompted satirists to simultaneously offer biting critical commentary that lambasted both sides of the dispute as well as a sense of release through humour for Drumcree's beleaguered and increasingly unsympathetic public audience.

## Chapter 1.

### Re-making Myths: The Deployment of Tropes at Drumcree

About a month before the first standoff over Drumcree began, the Lower Ormeau Residents' Action Group, which was then protesting the procession of an Orange parade from Ballynafeigh through the majority-nationalist Lower Ormeau area of Belfast, came into possession of an anonymously-produced pamphlet. The pamphlet contained a passage from the Old Testament of the Bible, which the authors declared should be "read in the context of current events in Ulster," referring to the parading dispute that was then ongoing between the Ormeau residents and the local chapter of the Orange Order.<sup>1</sup> The cited verses, from the Book of Numbers, referred to Moses' request to King Sihon that he be permitted to lead the Israelites through the land of the Amorites on the most direct route to the Promised Land. King Sihon refused. According to the authors of the pamphlet, Moses' appeal was "similar to that of the Ballynafeigh Orangemen," while "the Amorites, like the Nationalists and Republicans of the Ormeau Road, refused this reasonable request."<sup>2</sup> At the end of the story, the Israelites seized power over the land of the Amorites "with the edge of the sword."<sup>3</sup> The authors of the pamphlet declared, "You have just read what God's word tells us happened as a result" of the refusal of the Amorites to let the Israelites pass.<sup>4</sup>

The authors used the story from Numbers as an allegory through which to understand what was happening in the debate over the Ormeau Road. This chapter will show that Drumcree's participants and observers also sought to make sense of and

<sup>1</sup> "Banning and Re-Routing Orange Parades: What Saith the Scriptures?," 1995, Dr. Dominic Bryan's private collection.

<sup>2</sup> "What Saith the Scriptures?"

<sup>3</sup> "What Saith the Scriptures?"

<sup>4</sup> "What Saith the Scriptures?"

articulate the conflict in terms of symbolic language. In doing so, they often drew upon Northern Ireland's particular and extensive lexicon of historical symbols and tropes, but sometimes (as in the example presented above) invoked literary and religious tropes that themselves had histories and pre-existing meanings in Northern Ireland.<sup>5</sup>

It is at the level of symbolic language that the dynamic nature of Northern Ireland's apparently timeless sectarian conflict becomes clear. Neil Jarman has argued that although the *form* of ritual performances such as Orange parades stays the same, the meanings of those rituals are always changing, depending on their contemporary social, political, and economic contexts. The apparent continuity of form serves to "hide changes in meaning," Jarman argues, suggesting that "if a ritual remains central to [the] social life of a community it is because of this paradox: that it is at once unchanging and yet ever changeable."<sup>6</sup> This chapter will argue that the same dynamism of meaning existed in the public conversation surrounding the Orange parading ritual at Drumcree. I will show that although the language of Northern Irish sectarianism often appears to be fixed and unchanging, in the 1990s it was being used as a means of making sense of a changing balance of power between Catholics and Protestants. Significantly, these symbolic renderings of Drumcree often also functioned as critiques of the peace process as it unfolded alongside the parading dispute.

To better understand the processes that worked upon and through these symbols in the project of forging meanings of Drumcree, I will draw upon the brand of discourse analysis used in studies of narrative and symbolic language by historians like Hayden White and Mariana Valverde. Building on White's notion of narrative, Valverde conceptualizes discourse as a "symbolic universe" populated by words, images, symbols, metaphors, and allegories that can be arranged in a multitude of ways to

<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the equation of the Northern Irish Protestant community and the Biblical Israelites has its own long history. See Anthony D. Buckley and Mary Catherine Kenney, *Negotiating Identity: Rhetoric, Metaphor, and Social Drama in Northern Ireland* (London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), Chapter 11.

<sup>6</sup> Jarman, *Material Conflicts*, 10.

communicate certain ideas about the world.<sup>7</sup> The symbols and tropes that participants were using to articulate Drumcree were long-established points of cultural reference drawn from Northern Ireland's symbolic universe, and it was the conscious and often jarring appropriations, juxtapositions, and alterations of the ways in which these symbols were arranged and presented that gave them particular and unique meanings within the context of the parading disputes of the 1990s. The potential of this rhetoric to affect public understandings of Drumcree depended upon the dispute's audiences making connections between the established meanings of these symbols and the unusual ways in which the symbols were being presented. Although it is impossible to say how all the individuals who made up Drumcree's audiences interpreted these symbolic renderings of the conflict, it is safe to say that the majority of people in Northern Ireland would have understood the established meanings that were being played upon and disrupted by those who were choosing to articulate the dispute in these ways.

Indeed, many of the tropes being utilized at Drumcree were connected to and drew upon events in Northern Ireland's history of which the public was well aware and which have in many cases become sites of memory in their own right. Anthony Buckley has pointed out the ubiquity of the connection between symbols and history in Northern Ireland, suggesting that in many cases, "It is not the symbol so much as the historical narrative [it represents] which is relevant to present realities."<sup>8</sup> Jarman concurs in the context of symbolic ritual, arguing that "many rituals do more than just imply a vague continuity with past events: they explicitly link the present with the past [and help to] explain the present in terms of the past."<sup>9</sup> Through the use of historical narratives,

<sup>7</sup> Valverde, *Light, Soap, and Water*, 41. In the 1970s and 1980s, Hayden White argued convincingly that historians must understand the process of doing history to be a discursive and narrative process, rather than a neutral, objective practice that exists outside of literary, human, and authorial subjectivities. White's work prompted many historians, like Valverde, to turn towards literary criticism as a means of understanding and creating meaningful interpretations of history. For a selection of White's work spanning the breadth of his career, see Hayden White, "The Burden of History," *History and Theory* 5, no. 2 (1966): 111-134; *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); and *The Content of Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

<sup>8</sup> Anthony D. Buckley, ed., *Symbols in Northern Ireland* (Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University Belfast, 1998), 9.

<sup>9</sup> Jarman, *Material Conflicts*, 9.

individuals attempt to “grasp and express new and significant truths about their individual identities and about the world.”<sup>10</sup> This was the case at Drumcree. Residents of Portadown and members of the wider unionist and nationalist communities used symbols linked with established historical narratives, such as the siege of Derry, in order to make sense of what the Drumcree dispute meant in the context of the 1990s, and in turn used narratives of Drumcree as means through which to make sense of and debate the ongoing peace process.

Mary Catherine Kenney notes that there have long existed processes of “cross-fertilization” and borrowing between Protestant and Catholic symbols in Northern Ireland.<sup>11</sup> During the Drumcree dispute, entire symbolic narratives that had traditionally belonged to one community or the other were often exchanged and adapted in the project of characterizing and making sense of the dispute. These processes reflected the shift in power relationships between the unionist and nationalist communities that was precipitated by increasing political representation and social equality for nationalists and Catholics in the state. As the dispute’s major organizational combatants, Portadown District and the GRRRC made particularly swift work of deploying this symbolic language when presenting their cases for either the allowance or the banning of the parade. The GRRRC took advantage of the often striking effect that was achieved through the appropriation of fundamentally unionist symbols to describe the nationalist experience of Drumcree; Portadown District likewise adapted nationalist symbols in explaining the dispute. Further, we will see that individual participants and observers also partook in the pointed appropriation of symbols that had been under the exclusive ownership of the “other” community until the 1990s.

<sup>10</sup> Buckley, *Symbols*, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Mary Catherine Kenney, “The Phoenix and the Lark: Revolutionary Mythology and Iconographic Creativity in Belfast’s Republican Districts,” in *Symbols*, 153.

## The Orange Citadel and the Siege of Drumcree

The discourse surrounding Drumcree was saturated with two significant tropes that represented Portadown as a symbol and icon of Orange history and culture.<sup>12</sup> “Under Siege” and “The Orange Citadel” were not tropes that were original to the Drumcree dispute or to the 1990s; in fact, both had long-established histories and connotations in Northern Ireland, and both sides of the dispute tapped into these pre-existing meanings in order to establish Drumcree as a parading dispute of particular significance.

Drawing on Portadown’s well-established history as a symbol of unflinching unionism, Portadown District and its supporters within the unionist community were quick to pair these tropes in the processes of making sense of the conflict and articulating the crucial significance of the continuation of the parade. Unionist politicians had made similar use of Portadown as a symbol during other times of perceived crisis, such as the Home Rule movement. Particular to the 1990s, however, was the turning of these symbols of defiance against moderate unionist politicians as a means of protesting unionist participation in a peace settlement with nationalist politicians and republican paramilitaries. As the UUP moved towards cooperation with Britain, Ireland, and Sinn Féin on the peace process throughout the early- to mid-1990s, discontent and outrage grew among many more hardline and vocal unionists and loyalists who saw these moves as betrayals of unionism. Drumcree provided a theatre in which to voice these concerns, with the protest against the re-routing of the parade representing a larger scale protest against the peace process itself.

Perhaps even more striking was the nationalist community’s appropriation of these traditionally unionist symbols in the context of Drumcree, which will be examined

<sup>12</sup> The town of Portadown has a long and storied history that makes it a very significant symbol within Orange and unionist culture. In 1641, Catholic Irish rebels mounted an uprising against English rule, during which rebels in Portadown drove a number of Protestant planter families into the River Bann to drown. The events of 1641 passed quickly into the Protestant community’s collective memory as a “massacre,” and the incident has since become an important memory site and symbol within the community. In 1795 the Orange Order was founded near Portadown, and in 1796 the town played host to the Order’s first parade in celebration of the Twelfth of July.

in the next section of this chapter. These significant changes in how the rhetoric of “siege” and “citadel” were being deployed demonstrates the new ways in which this old symbolic language was being used to describe a very context-specific 1990s sectarian dispute.

The siege of Derry is one of unionism’s most significant and well-known symbols.<sup>13</sup> Rooted in seventeenth-century Protestant has maintained an intense resonance within unionist politics throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; as Belfast-born journalist David McKittrick remarked, “In three centuries [the siege] has never lost its potency and immediacy as a symbol for unionists, for they believe that the enemy is forever at the gate, waiting for the sentry to fall asleep.”<sup>14</sup> The term “siege mentality” has become shorthand for the notion that the Ulster Protestant community believes itself to be in a state of constant threat from outsiders, whether it be the nationalist community, the British state, or some other adversary.<sup>15</sup> Likewise, “No Surrender,” a phrase that refers to the now-fabled response of the Protestant population of Derry to King James’s forces during the siege, has come to symbolize the Protestant community’s continuing dedication to resistance against its perceived enemies.

At Drumcree, Portadown’s Orangemen and their supporters understood Orange tradition and culture (and, by extension, the Protestant community itself) to be under attack once more. Once again, the siege of Derry was called into use as “a parable and

<sup>13</sup> The standard narrative of the siege is as follows: after producing a Catholic heir and drawing the ire of those among England’s political and religious elite who favored Protestantism, King James II was forced to abandon his throne in 1688. He fled to Ireland, where he attempted to raise an army in hopes of recovering the Crown. In 1689, James’s forces launched an attack on the walled city of Derry in Ulster, then a primarily Protestant settlement. The fabled response of the city’s defense forces was “No Surrender,” a battle cry which has itself become iconic in the unionist tradition. The inhabitants of the city successfully withstood 105 days of siege before the arrival of the Protestant King William III’s navy, which swiftly dispatched the Jacobite army and commenced the relief of the city.

<sup>14</sup> David McKittrick, *Despatches from Belfast* (Belfast: O’Donaghue Books, 1989), 29. A regularly-maintained mural in one of the last remaining majority-loyalist estates in the majority-nationalist Bogside area of Derry proclaims, “Londonderry West Bank Loyalists Still Under Siege / No Surrender,” evidence of the persistence of the language of siege and defiance to the present day.

<sup>15</sup> Anthony D. Buckley and Mary Catherine Kenney, eds., *Negotiating Identity: Rhetoric, Metaphor, and Social Drama in Northern Ireland* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 41.



a vocabulary for describing the Ulster Protestant condition,” this time in the context of a modern-day parading dispute.<sup>16</sup> Portadown District began using the term “siege” to describe the events of 9-11 July 1995 within days of the conclusion of the standoff.<sup>17</sup> In late 1995, the Grand Lodge produced a pamphlet intended to “better inform” the public about the Orange parading tradition that included an unattributed poem titled “The Siege of Drumcree,” a narrative of the first standoff.<sup>18</sup> In 1996 Portadown District released a history of Orangeism in the district that included a chapter called “The Siege of Drumcree”; this account was couched in terms of a military engagement, with chapter subtitles like “The Siege Begins” and “The Orangemen Consolidate Their Position” punctuating the narrative.<sup>19</sup>

The “under siege” trope was utilized not only by the Orange Order in its official publications, but also by some in the wider community of unionists, loyalists, and Orange supporters in Portadown and around the province. After 1997, when the *Portadown Times* began running its Letters to the Editor page with some regularity, the paper began receiving letters relating to the Drumcree dispute that were written anonymously by multiple authors under the nom-de-plume “No Surrender”; in claiming this slogan as a cover under which to safely express their opinions of the Drumcree dispute (and often their support for the Orange position), these authors made clear a perceived connection between the siege of Derry and Drumcree.<sup>20</sup> Likewise, the song “Derry’s Walls” was a staple for the flute bands that participated in each year’s standoff, its chorus recalling the

<sup>16</sup> Brian Lacey, *Siege City: The Story of Derry and Londonderry* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1990), 137.

<sup>17</sup> “Drumcree medal call,” *Portadown Times*, 21 July 1995, 8.

<sup>18</sup> G.W. Montgomery and J. Richard Whitten, *The Order on Parade* (Belfast: Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland Education Committee, 1995), 38.

<sup>19</sup> R. David Jones, James S. Kane, Robert Wallace, Douglas Sloan, and Brian Courtney, *The Orange Citadel: A History of Orangeism in Portadown District* (Portadown: Portadown Cultural Heritage Committee, 1996).

<sup>20</sup> See for example “Mowlam sadly out of touch,” *Portadown Times*, 30 May 1997, 16, “Nothing has changed,” *Portadown Times*, 27 June 1997, 27, “Peaceful protest indeed!,” *Portadown Times*, 11 July 1997, 27, and “Ceasefire could end at the drop of a hat,” *Portadown Times*, 1 August 1997, 28. Although it is uncertain how many different individuals were using the “No Surrender” mantle, based on a difference in location in two of the letters (not all letters included the writer’s location), we can conclude that at least more than one person was utilizing the pseudonym. Indeed, the sheer number of “No Surrender” letters and the differences in style, subject matter, and tone imply that many individuals within the unionist community were doing so.

siege and implying the continuing need to “guard the walls” in defense of the Protestant community with regard to the parading dispute:

We'll fight and don't surrender,  
But come when duty calls,  
With heart and hand and sword and shield,  
We'll guard old Derry's walls.<sup>21</sup>

In September 1999, loyalist muralists painted a mural on the Doagh Road in Belfast which read, “Drumcree, No Surrender,” the slogan surrounded by emblems of a number of loyalist paramilitary organizations.<sup>22</sup>

The presence of the siege trope in the discourse around Drumcree can be read as evidence of a feeling of insecurity on the part of supporters of the Orange parading tradition. Historically, “under siege” has been invoked particularly often in instances when the unionist community has perceived Northern Ireland’s connection with Britain to be under attack. The metaphor operated on two levels with regard to the parading conflict: the attempted re-routing of the parade was one instance of “siege,” but at the time that Drumcree boiled over in 1995, many unionists also perceived the community to be under attack in a larger sense at the hands of the peace process. In this broader context, the state’s attempted re-routing of the Drumcree parade was rendered as a “siege” on Orange tradition and culture, and Portadown was in turn cast as a “citadel,” a fortress meant to withstand siege.

There is historical precedent for the combination of the symbols of siege and citadel with regard to Portadown, with unionist politicians often using the town as a metonym for the idea of unflinching unionism. In 1863, Member of Parliament (MP) and Orangeman Sir William Verner called on a Portadown legacy in warning that “unless Protestants remain in an attitude of watchfulness, many Diamonds will have to be fought ere treason is trampled out of the land and they are permitted to enjoy the freedom and

<sup>21</sup> The lyrics of the song are fairly standard; this version comes from “Derry’s Walls,” accessed 2 July 2013, Loyalist Lyrics, <http://www.loyalistlyrics.com/lyrics-D/index.html>.

<sup>22</sup> Mural Directory, “Album 5,” accessed 2 July 2013, CAIN, University of Ulster, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/mccormick/album5.htm>.

protection a Protestant paternal government should secure to them.”<sup>23</sup> Verner was speaking at a time when the revolutionary Irish Republican Brotherhood and its brother organization, the Fenian Brotherhood, had recently been founded, and during which more moderate Irish politicians were increasingly discussing the possibility of Home Rule for Ireland.<sup>24</sup> His was a call for constant vigilance on the part of Ulster’s Protestants, lest they once more have to stand in defense of their faith and values, as their forebears were understood to have done at the Battle of the Diamond in 1795. Then in 1893, during the debate over Prime Minister William Gladstone’s Second Home Rule Bill, Edward Saunderson, Unionist Party MP for North Armagh, declared in parliament that “Home Rule may pass this house, but it will never pass the bridge at Portadown.”<sup>25</sup> With his rhetoric, Saunderson set Portadown apart, establishing it as an extraordinary stronghold of unionism that would fight against Home Rule to the last, even if the rest of Ulster were to submit.

At Drumcree, the constellation of the “under siege” and “citadel” tropes drew upon each symbol’s established rhetorical connotations to link Portadown’s parading dispute to contemporary threats to the Union, thereby raising the stakes of Drumcree considerably among those in the unionist community who believed that the peace process was indeed a threat to Northern Ireland’s status as a constituent state in the United Kingdom. The Orange Order and its historians made this linkage overt in their early publications on Drumcree. In 1995’s *The Order on Parade*, the Grand Lodge declared that, “coming as it did in the bi-centenary year [of the founding of the Order] in a town which is in the heartland of Orangeism..., the Drumcree episode had great

<sup>23</sup> Sir William Verner, as quoted in McKay, *Northern Protestants*, 133. The Battle of the Diamond was fought in 1795 between rival societies, the Protestant Peep O’ Day Boys and the Catholic Defenders, in a large field near Loughgall, a short distance away from Portadown. Though conflicts such as these (which were not uncommon in the 1790s) were born out of agrarian tensions, they often occurred with a sectarian flavour in Ulster. The Peep O’ Day Boys had won the battle handily, and victors quickly gathered at a nearby cottage, where the Orange Order was founded with the mandate of continuing to defend Protestantism.

<sup>24</sup> The Irish Republican Brotherhood and the Fenian Brotherhood had been founded in 1858 in Ireland and the United States, respectively, and were dedicated to achieving Irish independence from England by force.

<sup>25</sup> Edward Saunderson, as quoted in McKay, *Northern Protestants*, 134. A statue of Saunderson now stands at the top of High Street in Portadown; each Twelfth of July, Orangemen from Portadown District drape an Orange collarette around the statue’s neck.

symbolic significance.”<sup>26</sup> Alluding to the political circumstances in which the RUC’s attempted re-routing had been defeated, the narrative asserted: “[Drumcree] helped restore confidence to the wider Protestant community at a time of suspicion and uncertainty over the political situation.”<sup>27</sup> The “time of suspicion and uncertainty” referred to a number of milestones in the peace process, including the signing of the AIA in 1985, the Downing Street Declaration in 1993, and the introduction of the Frameworks Document in 1995, which outlined how the principles put forth in the Downing Street Declaration would be implemented.

In 1996’s *Stand-off!*, a public history of the first and second conflicts over Drumcree, Orange historian Gordon Lucy retrospectively linked the AIA to the 1985 conflict over the Drumcree parade, which had resulted in the parade being banned from part of its route along the majority-nationalist Obins Street: “In the folk-memory there was a clear and unambiguous relationship between the manner in which the Orange in Portadown was ‘faced down’ and the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.”<sup>28</sup> According to Lucy, at stake in the protest against the further re-routing of the parade in 1995 and 1996 were both the honour of the Order and the further progression of the peace process: “[At Drumcree,] Orangemen and unionists were determined that a decade later there should be no repetition of either the humiliation inflicted upon the Orange Order [in 1985] or encouragement for Thatcher’s successor [John Major] to embark upon further reckless and impossible ventures,” by which he meant continued peace negotiations with republicans and nationalists.<sup>29</sup> In his characterization of the dispute, Lucy insisted that, for unionists, it was of the utmost importance that the Drumcree parade be allowed to continue along the Garvaghy Road, lest Northern Ireland travel even further along the road to Dublin Rule.

As demonstrated by Lucy’s warning, the Orange Order cast the peace process developments that had occurred since 1985 as a prologue for what occurred in Portadown in July 1995 and each July thereafter. The chapter on Drumcree in

<sup>26</sup> Montgomery and Whitten, *The Order on Parade*, 31.

<sup>27</sup> Montgomery and Whitten, *The Order on Parade*, 31.

<sup>28</sup> Gordon Lucy, *Stand-off! Drumcree: July 1995 and 1996* (Lurgan, Co. Armagh: Ulster Society Publications, 1996), 58.

<sup>29</sup> Lucy, *Stand-off!*, 58.

Portadown District's *The Orange Citadel* (1995), written in commemoration of the district's bicentennial anniversary, opened by declaring, "Even as this history of Orangeism in Portadown District was being written, momentous events were beginning to unfold in the province."<sup>30</sup> The authors, themselves all local Orangemen, referred specifically to two such events: one was the 1994 ceasefire and the other was the "Siege of Drumcree," which the authors described as "an event which would reaffirm, if that was necessary, Portadown's place as the Orange Citadel," again making the connection between a "siege" upon Orange and Protestant culture and the crucial significance of Portadown as the Orange citadel, the place at which both traditions must be most vociferously defended.<sup>31</sup>

In fact, with the peace process progressing after the recent announcement of the IRA ceasefire, the affirmation of Portadown's enduring status as the stronghold of Orangeism was necessary; indeed, it was central to the District's rendering of Drumcree. Following a narrative of Drumcree I, the chapter concluded by asserting that the continued "safeguarding of the principles of the Order" remained the responsibility of "each individual member."<sup>32</sup> The authors recalled the important symbolic connotations of Portadown's history, insisting that, in the face of contemporary threats to the Union, the survival of the Orange Order and its traditions was as important as ever: "They [the founders of the Order] could hardly have foreseen that today, as in 1795, the cultural identity, heritage, and faith of the Ulster Protestant would still be under threat and that the Orange Institution would still be needed to defend civil and religious liberty two hundred years later."<sup>33</sup>

Similarly, the Orange rhetoric of high stakes, individual responsibility, and the potential implications of the re-routing of the parade was echoed by some individuals and informal groupings of individuals who were supporters of the Order's position. An anonymous letter-writer to the *Telegraph* in 1995 declared that Drumcree I "was a watershed in Ulster's history" that the parties involved in the peace process would do

<sup>30</sup> Jones, , *The Orange Citadel*, 62. This history will be analyzed in more depth in Chapter 2.

<sup>31</sup> Jones, , *The Orange Citadel*, 62.

<sup>32</sup> Jones, , *The Orange Citadel*, 70.

<sup>33</sup> Jones, , *The Orange Citadel*, 70.

well to recognize: “The peace they [the British and Irish governments, the Catholic Church, and the IRA] want is one of surrender. That is a price that no law-abiding citizen is prepared to pay,” the writer concluded, presenting the Orange Order’s success at Drumcree I as evidence of the unionist community’s continuing dedication to the attitude of “no surrender.”<sup>34</sup> In a 1997 letter to the *Portadown Times*, a group calling itself the “Concerned Protestant Committee” criticized the inclusion of Sinn Féin in the ongoing peace talks: “The talks farce at Stormont, where unrepentant terrorists are lauded and applauded as statesmen, can never produce anything resembling normality, peace, or democracy.”<sup>35</sup> The authors segued directly from this peace process commentary into a discussion about Drumcree, calling on the Portadown area’s symbolic connotations as they urged the local unionist population to hold fast in opposing the re-routing of the parade:

Throughout the ages, the ordinary people of this area have not only been willing to sacrifice, but have taken the lead in the defense of faith and firesides. The then-Rector of [nearby] Seagoe parish played a role in the Siege of Derry, Dan Winter’s Cottage [where the Orange Order was founded] lies but a short distance away, and Home Rule has never passed the bridge at Portadown. Regardless of the injustices others may accept, or the limits beyond which some may not go, the people of Mid-Ulster will not disgrace their inheritance or fail in their duty.<sup>36</sup>

These calls for vigilance on the part of the Order’s members and supporters drew upon the siege and citadel tropes to link the parading dispute to the considerably higher stakes of the ongoing peace process.

It was in this vein that some members of the unionist community began to declare “No Surrender” in response to decisions being made by *unionist* politicians, in particular members of the UUP who supported engaging in negotiations with republicans in the context of the process. This represented a break from past usages of the trope, which had generally cast Catholics, the nationalist community, and/or the British state as

<sup>34</sup> “Not Beguiled,” “Garvaghy Road ‘a watershed,’” *Belfast Telegraph*, 25 July 1995.

<sup>35</sup> “Fully aware of the danger,” *Portadown Times*, 31 October 1997, 26. The Concerned Protestant Committee is suspected to have been linked to loyalist paramilitaries in the Portadown area.

<sup>36</sup> “Fully aware of the danger.”

the enemy that must be resisted. As the leader of the UUP, David Trimble became a scapegoat for this criticism. In October 1997, an author writing to the *Portadown Times* under the pseudonym “No Surrender” upbraided Trimble, who had been heralded locally and across the state as a champion for the unionist community as a result of the high-profile role he had played in the conclusion of Drumcree I.<sup>37</sup> Criticizing Trimble’s handling of the recent Markethill Bombing, the writer declared that “David Trimble and company have broken the Unionist agreement to stand together.”<sup>38</sup> Another letter written under the “No Surrender” mantle in the lead-up to the 1998 referendum on the Good Friday Agreement labeled Trimble a “yes man,” criticizing him for “sitting with Gerry Adams and similar types” and “doing Dublin’s bidding.”<sup>39</sup> Here, “yes man” acted as a double entendre, referring both to the traditional meaning of the idiom and also to Trimble’s “yes” vote in the Good Friday Agreement.

In the course of an interview with the *Belfast Telegraph* at Drumcree VI in 2000, an Orangeman named Jackie told reporter Patsy McGarry, “I call him [Trimble] Billy Lundy,” Jackie referring to Robert Lundy, who was the Governor of Derry when the city came under siege in 1689; the unionist narrative of the siege of Derry casts Lundy as a traitor to the Protestant citizens of the city.<sup>40</sup> According to this version of events, Lundy,

<sup>37</sup> “Unionist promises broken,” *Portadown Times*, 17 October 1997, 12. Trimble had been very publicly present and involved in the rallies and negotiations on the Orange side throughout the first standoff. When at last the Orangemen were allowed to conclude the parade along the Garvaghy Road on 11 July, Trimble and Ian Paisley famously marched into Portadown’s town centre with hands clasped high above their heads in what appeared to be a gesture of triumph. While this prompted outrage among the residents, who felt that they had compromised to allow the parade to continue, the scene was celebrated by many in the unionist community. Trimble was one of five men who were invited to Portadown by the Order to receive “Siege of Drumcree” medals in a special ceremony in recognition of their roles in the successful outcome of the standoff. His high-profile role in the dispute was the catalyst that vaulted him unexpectedly to the position of UUP party leader in September 1995.

<sup>38</sup> “Unionist promises broken.” On 16 September 1997, the Continuity IRA, a republican splinter group, exploded a bomb outside an RUC police barracks in the town of Markethill, Co. Armagh (about 20 minutes southwest of Portadown).

<sup>39</sup> “Trimble a yes man and a puppet,” *Portadown Times*, 8 May 1998, 16. Gerry Adams is the leader of Sinn Fein.

<sup>40</sup> Patsy McGarry, “Booming lambegs are dominant in ‘Portadin,’” *Belfast Telegraph*, 13 July 2000, 6. The addition of “Billy” to the nickname “Lundy” may have been a reference to Trimble’s rapid transition from unionist hero to traitor to the “No”-leaning unionist and loyalist community in the three years between Drumcree I and the signing of the GFA; in the Northern Irish context “Billy” is generally a reference to King William of Orange.

whether by malice or incompetence, compromised the city's defense forces and abandoned a force of Protestants when they came upon enemy troops outside the city in April 1689.<sup>41</sup> Trimble was often branded a "Lundy" in the years following his participation in all-party talks.<sup>42</sup> In May 1999, Trimble, in his capacity as Northern Ireland's First Minister in the new power-sharing Assembly, met with the GRRC's spokesman Breandán Mac Cionnaith for the first time to discuss Drumcree. The meeting was held in the Portadown area's local civic centre, and a crowd of 30 loyalists, which later swelled to 100, chanted "traitor," "Lundy," "Sinn Féin lover," and "no deal" at Trimble as he walked past them on his way into the hall.<sup>43</sup>

In instances like these, the "No Surrender" battle cry and other siege-related symbols denoting Protestant and unionist resistance were being turned on the UUP, which had formerly been Northern Ireland's biggest unionist party, but which by the mid-1990s was losing ground to the DUP as a result of its policies on the peace process and particularly its support of the GFA. The peace process was inspiring a return to the much-older rhetoric of siege, citadel, and "no surrender," but the unprecedented political circumstances that heralded it saw unionists and loyalists who were critical of the process using that rhetoric in new ways to mount critiques of those who were perceived as unionism's new enemies *inside* the gates.

## Nationalists under Siege

Even more striking, however, was the nationalist appropriation of these symbols at Drumcree. It is here that we see just how much the context of the peace process was

<sup>41</sup> Robert Lundy remains a much-reviled figure in contemporary unionist culture, and is burned in effigy during each year's celebrations commemorating the closing of Derry's gates at the beginning of the siege in 1688. The term "Lundy" has become a colloquialism meaning "traitor" in Northern Ireland.

<sup>42</sup> See Ciaran McKeown, "The heart may be wiser than the head: The Stormont talks are under way—but two unionist leaders are missing," *Belfast News Letter*, 16 October 1997, 6; "Ireland's peace is worth the candle," *The Independent* (London), 11 April 1998, 20; "Pressure likely to widen divisions in run-up to Assembly election," *Irish Times*, 25 May 1998, 54; John Mullin, "Mandelson's ordeal on Orange frontline," *The Guardian* (London), 25 November 1999, 8; and Susan McKay, "Ulster's fault lines; they march, I have moved on," *Washington Post*, 16 July 2000, B01.

<sup>43</sup> John Mullin, "Mandelson's ordeal."



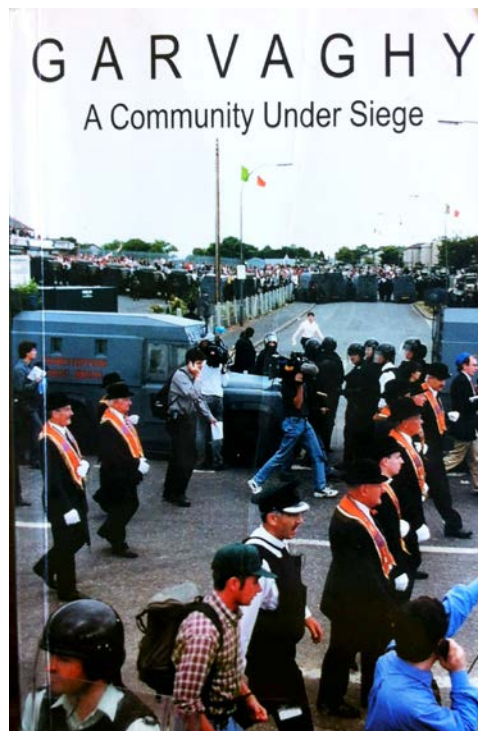
changing the ways in which individuals in Northern Ireland were articulating their experiences of sectarian conflicts such as the dispute over the Drumcree parade. Breandán Mac Cionnaith contested Portadown District's assertion that they had been under siege during the 1995 standoff swiftly and vehemently.<sup>44</sup> As we will see later in the chapter, there was power and public sympathy to be gained in assuming the role of victim, so it was imperative for the Garvaghy residents that they deny the Portadown Orangemen uncontested ownership over the siege trope with regard to Drumcree.

In 1999, an authorship group called "Garvaghy Residents" released a book of testimonies, titled *Garvaghy: A Community under Siege*, which constituted their most explicit and deliberate effort to appropriate the "under siege" trope from its traditional owner, the unionist community.<sup>45</sup> In its title, front and back cover designs, editorial preamble, and content, the book was intended to communicate that the Garvaghy community was an oppressed group under attack at the hands of the Order, the RUC, and British forces. The photograph chosen to adorn the front cover is particularly telling, communicating the idea of a siege through a visual affirmation of the declarative title of the book (see Figure 1.1). Taken during the 1997 standoff, the photo captures a perspective in which the marchers appear to be protected by the RUC policemen, whose backs are to the Orangemen and whose riot masks and shields face the residents. In the background, the Garvaghy resident protestors are being held away from the parade by a long line of police Land Rovers, a state presence that is itself a symbol of nationalist oppression in Northern Ireland. A number of Irish tricolours are visible behind the Land Rovers, signifying that the area beyond the police line is a nationalist neighbourhood. The image's composition implies that the resident protestors are hemmed into their own area; in this rendering of Drumcree III, the residents appear to be the target of police restraint.

<sup>44</sup> "Medal the symbol of a myth, say the Garvaghy residents," *Portadown Times*, 15 September 1995, 19.

<sup>45</sup> The "Garvaghy Residents" group was nominally a separate entity from the GRRC, although the group made use of the GRRC files during the research for the editorial sections of the book, and most contributors seemed to be active members or at least supporters of the GRRC.

The description of the photo that appeared in the book's front matter reinforced what was communicated visually through the photo itself: "In the background, Garvaghy residents are imprisoned by a wall of British army and RUC vehicles and riot squads, while the Garvaghy Road is cleared for the Orangemen to return from Drumcree Church."<sup>46</sup> The photo constitutes a pointed visual appropriation of the "under siege" trope and introduces the reader to the argument being advanced by the book as a whole, namely that, contrary to Orange rhetoric, the *residents* were in fact the ones under siege and were, by extension, deserving of public sympathy and support.



**Figure 1.1. "Community under Siege"**

The testimonies given within the book acted as further evidence that Garvaghy was indeed "a community under siege." Resident Labhras described how a sense of siege mentality formed among the Garvaghy residents during each year's standoff:

When you are stuck behind barricades you start to think the whole of the North is under siege, and if anything happens you are on your own. The siege mentality takes over.... We hear [Orange leaders] calling for

<sup>46</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, front matter.

Orangemen to come in their thousands and help the Portadown brethren who are under siege; but they are not under siege. We are the ones under siege.<sup>47</sup>

Labhras' observance reveals an intentional appropriation of the unionist community's siege rhetoric and symbolism.<sup>48</sup> The year 1998, during which the testimonies were recorded, saw a particularly heightened sense of siege among the residents. In the lead-up to Drumcree IV, the British army built a large barricade on the road that linked Drumcree church with the Garvaghy Road and dug a trench through adjoining fields that was then lined with barbed wire.<sup>49</sup> These were preventative measures, intended to keep the Orange Order's supporters from breaching the security cordon as they had attempted to do in years past. The barricade became known as the "ring of steel" and became a physical manifestation of the concept of the Garvaghy community being under siege, standing in as the "walls" of the *nationalist* citadel of the Garvaghy Road.<sup>50</sup> For resident Rose, the 1998 dispute began when on 3 July the "ring of steel was erected at every road leading into our community."<sup>51</sup> For her, this signified that "the fourth siege of Drumcree had begun." A contributor named Pauline expressed a similar feeling, writing on the day the "ring of steel" was erected: "We are now under siege. If the Orangemen strike medals this year to commemorate the Siege of Drumcree '98, I hope they send us some."<sup>52</sup>

Indeed, the Drumcree dispute was characterized by many residents as "the Siege of Drumcree," echoing exactly the phrasing of the Orange Order's characterization of the dispute and thereby making a pointed attempt to claim the phrase and the sympathetic "victimhood status" it implied. For the contributors of *Community under Siege*, the term referred to the two-week period each July during which the actual standoff took place, the Orange Order held widespread protests, and RUC and British

<sup>47</sup> Labhras, in *Community under Siege*, 38.

<sup>48</sup> My emphasis.

<sup>49</sup> "Developments at Drumcree, 1995-2000," CAIN, University of Ulster.

<sup>50</sup> Joe and Pauline, in *Community under Siege*, 6 and 19.

<sup>51</sup> Rose, in *Community under Siege*, 60.

<sup>52</sup> Pauline, in *Community under Siege*, 19. Pauline referred to the medals that Portadown District had struck after the conclusion of Drumcree I, commemorating the "Siege of Drumcree," which will be examined further in the following chapter.

army forces were stationed in Portadown. There was, however, a different sense of siege that was remarked upon by the contributors as they played on the traditionally unionist symbol. This was the sense that the Catholic community in the city was in fact “under siege” at all times as a result of the continuing political and economic inequality and oppression of Catholics in Northern Ireland. Referring to the denouement from each year’s standoff, resident Claire wrote, “The thousands might have left Drumcree. The siege, to the outside world, may seem over, but not for us. We are living mentally under siege!”<sup>53</sup> Labhras declared, “We, the nationalist people, are under siege every day of the year, confined to a nationalist enclave, no amenities in our area, no cash point machines, no medical centre. All amenities...are in the loyalist areas.”<sup>54</sup> Here the resident authors transferred the siege symbol to apply to everyday concerns that they claimed dogged the Catholic citizens of Portadown; readers in Northern Ireland would have noted the irony of the symbol that represented the unionist community’s persecution being turned around to describe the nationalist community’s oppression at the hands of unionists. This striking and provocative reversal would have served to make the authors’ overall argument quite clear.

As in the rhetoric espoused by the Order and its supporters, the Garvaghy residents linked the tropes of “under siege” and “Orange citadel” for the purpose of communicating the symbolic significance of the outcome of the Drumcree dispute and, as a function of this, to inspire support for the re-routing of the parade. The editorial introduction to *Community under Siege* declared, “It is no accident that this life and death struggle has been taking place in Portadown.”<sup>55</sup> The introduction went on to relate the story of the founding of the Orange Order near Portadown in 1795, and asserted that “ever since, Portadown District has proven to be the most hardline of the Orange lodges in asserting their ‘right to dominate,’” a spin on the implications of Portadown as “Orange citadel” that was unique to the residents’ use of the trope.<sup>56</sup> This nationalist version of the narrative of Portadown as a special city hinted at a sense of poetic justice: “[I]t started here: it will end here,” the authors concluded, referring not only to the implicitly

<sup>53</sup> Claire, in *Community under Siege*, 47.

<sup>54</sup> Labhras, in *Community under Siege*, 40.

<sup>55</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, *xiii*.

<sup>56</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, *xiii*.

anticipated demise of the Orange Order following the successful conclusion of the peace process, but also to the wider legacy of triumphalism, sectarianism, and oppression that the Order symbolized for the nationalist community.<sup>57</sup>

## **Claiming Victimhood: Orange Narratives of Civil Rights and Oppression**

As in the contest over which side was “under siege,” both Portadown District and the Garvaghy residents attempted to lay explicit claims to the role of victim at Drumcree. The residents did so by attempting to connect their experiences in protesting the parade to a long history of Catholic oppression in Northern Ireland, most often drawing upon tropes and symbols from the Troubles to show that, in spite of the progress of peace talks, in the mid-1990s Northern Irish Catholics remained an oppressed minority whose interests needed to be protected. Conversely, Portadown District claimed that *it* was the victim of the combined efforts of the British state and the nationalist community to infringe on Orange and Protestant culture. Mary Catherine Kenney expresses a commonly held notion in Northern Ireland in pointing out that “Ulster Protestants have been rather less able [than their Catholic and nationalist counterparts] to accomplish...effective communication with the outside world during the past 30 years and, partly for this reason, lack significant outside recognition and support for their cause.”<sup>58</sup> Portadown District seemed to be aware that theirs was not the side that prompted the most public sympathy among non-unionist audiences at Drumcree. With a mind to increasing public support for the protest against the re-routing of the parade, the District attempted to wrest the role of victim from its traditional “owners,” the Catholic and nationalist communities, by appropriating the language of civil rights, victimhood, and oppression that nationalist activists had wielded so effectively for many decades in the push for political, economic, and social equality for Catholics in the province.

The Catholic community had held a *de facto* monopoly over the role of victim in Northern Irish political discourse from partition up to the 1970s, when nationalist activism

<sup>57</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, *xiii*.

<sup>58</sup> Kenney, in *Symbols*, 166.

in the civil rights movement provoked changes that saw the Catholic population begin to enjoy more equitable employment opportunities and distribution of housing and benefits, as well as improved voting rights. Unequal access to employment had been a major point of agitation for NICRA and the wider civil rights movement in the later 1960s and early 1970s, when Catholics were two and a half times more likely to be unemployed than Protestants.<sup>59</sup> Because the state did not have universal suffrage until after the dissolution of the Stormont government in 1972, greater unemployment numbers among Catholics meant that fewer Catholics had historically enjoyed voting privileges in Northern Ireland, as they were less likely to be taxpayers. By 1976, four years after the British state's having assumed direct control over Northern Ireland, government initiatives had made it illegal for employers to discriminate based on religion, and by 1989, limited affirmative action policies were put in place to redress employment imbalance.<sup>60</sup> As a result, Catholic participation in the labour force rose steadily throughout the 1990s, and employment growth increased more quickly among Catholics than Protestants during this time (although Catholics remained on the whole under-represented).<sup>61</sup>

Housing had also been a contentious and politically loaded issue in Northern Ireland. A Housing Executive had been established in 1971 in the wake of complaints that public housing was being allocated in a discriminatory way, favoring Protestants over Catholics, by the local councils who then controlled it. Again, as in the case of employment equality, the British government took steps to ensure that state housing was being distributed fairly and evenly among Catholics and Protestants in the population.<sup>62</sup>

The social anxieties prompted by these changes found voice at Drumcree. At the time the dispute boiled over, jobs were in short supply in Portadown (as they were in many places across the state), amplifying the feelings of counter-discrimination that

<sup>59</sup> Melaugh, "Majority-Minority Differentials: Unemployment, Housing and Health."

<sup>60</sup> *Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act (1976), Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act (1989).*

<sup>61</sup> McCrudden, Ford, and Heath, "Legal Regulation of Affirmative Action in Northern Ireland: An Empirical Assessment."

<sup>62</sup> There are other religious groups in Northern Ireland—including Jewish, Muslim, Bahá'í, and Hindu communities—but their presence is often marginalized by the powerful narrative of Catholic versus Protestant sectarianism.

were being expressed by many Protestant workers. Journalist Susan McKay visited Portadown during the 1998 standoff and held interviews with a number of the Orange supporters whom she met during her time in town. Local business owner Lorraine moved directly from McKay's questions about the parade to the issue of jobs: "A thousand jobs there recently came into Portadown and not one of them went to a Protestant. Your name has to be Seamus or Eamon now."<sup>63</sup> A 1998 letter to the *Portadown Times* made a similar complaint: "I am sick and tired of listening to the same old cry of some nationalist people in Portadown.... More nationalists are getting jobs in Portadown than Protestants."<sup>64</sup> Another of McKay's interviewees expressed a perception of uneven allocation of state health and housing services, which she believed favoured Catholics: "We don't get anything. Them ones gets it all. See if one of my young ones is sick, the doctor won't come out. If one of theirs sneezes, the doctor's out. The Housing Executive and everything."<sup>65</sup>

Some unionists commented on what they saw as the propensity of nationalists to live off the system they protested against. A Portadown Orangeman named John recounted bitterly: "I laugh at these ones, these nationalist ones gets their brew sent out every Wednesday. They don't want the British but they'll carry it in their pocket."<sup>66</sup> An "angry Protestant mother" submitted a letter to the *Times* in the lead-up to Drumcree III that complained, "The Garvaghy Road residents do not want the parade to go down their area as they are not British. But they do not refuse British money!"<sup>67</sup> "Annoyed" expressed a not-uncommon sentiment in a letter to the *Belfast Telegraph* in 1998, suggesting, "Since the Garvaghy Road community have aligned themselves to the

<sup>63</sup> Here Lorraine referred to two stereotypically "Catholic" names. McKay, *Northern Protestants*, 153.

<sup>64</sup> "A concerned Protestant," "Sick and tired of the same old cry of some," *Portadown Times*, 24 April 1998, 14.

<sup>65</sup> McKay, *Northern Protestants*, 155.

<sup>66</sup> McKay, *Northern Protestants*, 122. The "brew" refers to state benefits such as unemployment and housing benefits.

<sup>67</sup> "An angry Protestant mother," "They don't refuse cash!," *Portadown Times*, 20 June 1997, 45.

Republic [as nationalists]...I believe it would now be appropriate for [British Prime Minister Tony] Blair to ask the Republic to pay the residents their state benefits.”<sup>68</sup>

It was in light of these simmering social tensions between Catholics and Protestants in Portadown and elsewhere that Portadown District was able to begin to claim the role of victim with regard to Drumcree. It cast the residents’ protest against the parade as a nationalist assault on Orange and Protestant culture that was part of a larger project dedicated to the dissolution of the Northern Irish state—the peace process itself. This rendering of the dispute called upon historic unionist anxieties about the future of the Protestant community in a united Ireland wherein it was perceived that Catholics would comprise a vast and hostile majority. Portadown District and its supporters attempted to capitalize on growing feelings of Protestant victimhood by deploying what had previously been the fundamentally nationalist language of civil rights and oppression in advocating for the allowance of the Drumcree parade and for the importance of the Orange parading tradition in general. This language was often pointedly drawn from the nationalist political rhetoric of the Troubles.

The claim that the continuation of the Drumcree parade was a matter of “civil rights and religious liberty” was central to the Order’s rhetoric around the dispute. The phrase appeared in official publications and press releases with an almost unparalleled ubiquity, and was often capitalized for maximum effect. The tone of these statements was often exceedingly humble and seemed to come from a place of powerlessness, implicitly communicating the Order’s role as victim in the dispute. A 1996 press release from Portadown District stated that the local Orangemen “merely seek that others will respect their rights.”<sup>69</sup> Indeed, allowing the parade to continue was a matter of “allowing the Orange Order to express its civil rights and religious liberties.”<sup>70</sup> A 1997 statement declared, “The Orange Order believes in Civil and Religious Liberty for all,” implicitly

<sup>68</sup> “Annoyed,” “Foreign aid,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 17 July 1998. The author listed his location as “Londonderry,” suggesting an identification with a unionist or loyalist political identity.

<sup>69</sup> Portadown District Loyal Orange Lodge (LOL) No. 1, “Press Statement – 1<sup>st</sup> July 1996,” accessed 2 July 2013, <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/ps01-07-1996.htm>.

<sup>70</sup> Portadown District LOL No. 1, “Portadown District press statement,” accessed 2 July 2013, <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/09-06-2000.htm>.



indicting the Garvaghy residents whose protest of the parade constituted, Portadown District believed, a denial of the Orangemen's civil rights.<sup>71</sup>

In the contemporary Northern Irish context, the term "civil rights" harkens back specifically to the Catholic civil rights movement, and this was a connection that the Order's Northern Irish audience would have made as it heard the Order's rhetoric around Drumcree.<sup>72</sup> The Order took advantage of this rhetorical connection to communicate the idea that in the face of increasing nationalist criticism of Orange parading in the 1990s, the Orangemen were now the ones whose rights were in question. This in turn spoke to a broader belief on the part of the Orange Order and many others in the unionist community that the British government was in effect catering to the demands of republican terrorists and allowing itself to be bullied by the minority nationalist community in the context of the peace process. The Garvaghy residents' protest of the Drumcree parade was implicitly cast as a microcosm of that larger political situation.

Portadown District's argument that the allowance of the Drumcree parade was a matter of civil rights was one of the most frequently echoed sentiments about Drumcree among much of the wider unionist public in Northern Ireland. An early letter to the editor on the subject of Drumcree declared, "The heart of it all [the parading tradition] is civil and religious liberty."<sup>73</sup> Another letter writer referred to "the clear and undisputable fact that this Government and its predecessors over the past two decades have always abdicated their sovereign responsibility with regard to loyalist civil rights" in parading disputes.<sup>74</sup> "B.E." perceived the Orangemen's right to march on a public highway to be a

<sup>71</sup> Portadown District LOL No. 1, "Press Statement – 6<sup>th</sup> June 1997," accessed 2 July 2013, <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/ps06-06-1997.htm>.

<sup>72</sup> The term has a history in unionist political rhetoric as well; Dominic Bryan has shown that Orange parading has long been held by unionists as a means through which to defend the civil rights and religious liberties available under a British Protestant constitutional monarchy as opposed to a dictatorial Roman Catholic papacy. Dominic Bryan, "The Right to March" in *Divided Europeans: Understanding Ethnicities in Conflict*, ed. Tim Allen and John Eade (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1999), 181. Unionists who signed the Ulster Covenant to register their opposition to Home Rule in 1912 believed that Irish self-government would endanger their civil rights as British subjects. In the context of Drumcree, and in the interest of establishing Orange victimhood in parades disputes, however, the Order played specifically upon the more modern connotations associated with term.

<sup>73</sup> H. McAleely, "Heritage is entwined with the past," *Belfast Telegraph*, 18 July 1995, 12.

<sup>74</sup> D. McIntyre, "No need to watch," *Belfast Telegraph*, 17 July 1998.

“basic fundamental right.”<sup>75</sup> A man named Christopher Stalford wrote the *Telegraph* in 1999 to urge the Portadown Orangemen not to enter into talks with the GRRC, equating such an action to “negotiating their civil rights.”<sup>76</sup> The perception of Drumcree as a civil rights issue sometimes found voice even among individuals who did not necessarily agree with the often violent nature of the protests associated with the dispute: “Although I am neither a royalist nor religious I am at Drumcree to show support and solidarity with the Orange Order in [its] stand for civil and religious liberty for all.”<sup>77</sup>

Portadown District tapped into broader unionist panic with regards to the peace process in its portrayal of the GRRC as the would-be suppressor of Orange rights should the Drumcree parade be re-routed away from the Garvaghy Road. The district referred implicitly to the Garvaghy residents when it expressed “regret that there are those who consider Protestants walking to and from Church to be ‘sectarian,’” continuing, “This speaks volumes of their attitude to our community whose Faith, Culture, and Traditions they would deny.”<sup>78</sup> In a 1998 statement, the district declared that the residents’ opposition to the parade was evidence of “republican intolerance and hostility towards our Orange tradition and culture” and that re-routing would constitute “cultural apartheid in Northern Ireland.”<sup>79</sup> Playing on “apartheid” as a mid-1990s buzzword that referenced South Africa’s recent process of democratization and played on the common nationalist trope of oppression of the majority by the minority, Portadown District continued: “Segregation did not work in South Africa or in the United States and it must not be

<sup>75</sup> “B.E.,” “Unacceptable decision,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 22 July 1998.

<sup>76</sup> Christopher Stalford, “Ask ‘right’ questions for desired answers,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 2 July 1999, 14.

<sup>77</sup> V. Crombie, “Prepared to die,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 11 July 1996, 14.

<sup>78</sup> Portadown District LOL No. 1, “Press Statement – 1<sup>st</sup> July 1996.”

<sup>79</sup> Portadown District LOL No. 1, “Press Statement – 6<sup>th</sup> July 1998,” accessed 2 July 2013, <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/ps06-07-1998.htm>.

allowed to work in the United Kingdom.”<sup>80</sup> Here the Orangemen aligned themselves with internationally acknowledged oppressed groups.<sup>81</sup> At Drumcree, Portadown District claimed, “loyal British citizens” were being “intimidated and threatened by their nationalist neighbours.”<sup>82</sup> The press statement concluded: “It would appear that [the Garvaghy residents] are unable to accommodate the fact that a culture other than theirs exists and their sole intent and actions prove that they simply do not wish anyone who identifies themselves with a Unionist/British culture to have access through ‘their’ [the nationalist] area.”<sup>83</sup>

Some letter writers emulated this likening of the residents’ protests of the Drumcree parade to South African apartheid in the pages of the *Portadown Times* and the *Belfast Telegraph*. One Portadown man who identified as a former Orangeman criticized the notion that Orange parades should occur only in Protestant areas, arguing: “The Afrikaner tried this approach: each community stayed in its own area, celebrated its own culture, and minded its own business. This approach was called apartheid.”<sup>84</sup> A “Concerned Unionist” presented the same argument for the allowance of the Drumcree parade, insisting that groups that advocated for re-routing were “effectively using the ideology of the supporters of apartheid in South Africa by objecting to the use of a road.”<sup>85</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Portadown District LOL No. 1, “Press Statement – 6<sup>th</sup> July 1998.” Interestingly, many reporters who covered the dispute in British and international newspapers also used apartheid as a frame of reference for understanding the Drumcree conflict, but usually cast the Orangemen in the role of the Afrikaners and the nationalists in the role of black South Africans. Nelson Mandela’s visit to London in July 1996 in particular prompted many such articles. See Audrey Gillan, “Rattling the cages: Clockwork Orangemen,” *Scotland on Sunday*, 14 July 1996, 18; Simon Jenkins, “Zulu lessons for Ulster,” *The Times* (London), 17 July 1996; Bill Schiller, “Ulster’s dead end,” *Toronto Star*, 21 July 1996, F1; and Simon Jenkins, “Democracy the only way to peace,” *The Australian*, 23 July 1996, 11.

<sup>81</sup> Identification and the expression of solidarity with other oppressed groups around the world was a common tactic in republican political rhetoric.

<sup>82</sup> Portadown District LOL No. 1, “Press Statement – 6<sup>th</sup> July 1998.”

<sup>83</sup> Portadown District LOL No. 1, “Press Statement – 14<sup>th</sup> January 1997,” accessed 2 July 2013, <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/ps14-01-1997.htm> and “Press Statement – 6<sup>th</sup> June 1997.”

<sup>84</sup> Graham G.W. Montgomery, “‘Apartheid’ not an answer,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 26 July 1995.

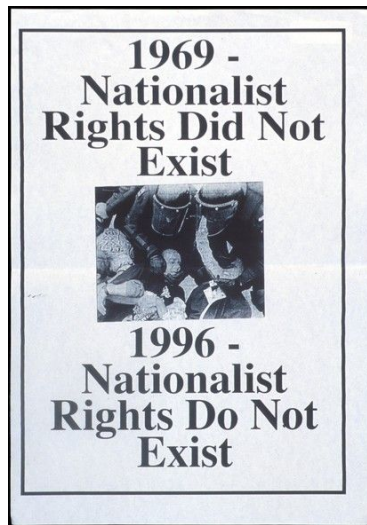
<sup>85</sup> “Concerned Unionist,” “Following apartheid path,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 2 July 1999, 14.

## Nationalist Discourses of Victimhood at Drumcree

In light of the new social circumstances in which Portadown District saw itself able to plausibly claim victimhood at Drumcree, local nationalists made equally conscious efforts to maintain their hold over prime victimhood status. Like Portadown District, the GRRC utilized rhetoric and images that referenced the nationalist activism of the Catholic civil rights movement of the late 1960s and the Troubles Era. During 1996's tumultuous parading season (which climaxed with Drumcree II), Sinn Féin produced a poster that is telling of the very conscious nature of these connections (see Figure 1.2). The poster features a photograph of a man being held on the ground by two security forces officers clad in riot gear; the officers have their hands around the man's neck and appear to be forcibly restraining him. They are faceless, their riot masks obscuring any human element of their forms; clad entirely in black, they loom over the man in the image as archetypal villains. The Northern Irish viewer would have understood the man to be a Catholic; he is shown being pulled away from another person with whom he is arm in arm in what looks to be a sit-in protest, a tactic of civil disobedience that nationalist activists had long utilized. The man does not appear to be resisting. The slogan constitutes a powerful indictment of the situation in Northern Ireland in the summer of 1996. It reads: "1969: Nationalist Rights Did Not Exist / 1996: Nationalist Rights Do Not Exist."<sup>86</sup> The image itself could well have dated either to 1969 or to 1996, which underscored the very point Sinn Féin was trying to communicate.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Sinn Féin, "1969: Nationalist Rights Did Not Exist," PPO0267, Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast.

<sup>87</sup> In July 1996, a sit-in protest of a local Orange parade by the residents of the Ormeau Road in Belfast was dispersed by force by the RUC; it is likely that this image was taken during that operation.



**Figure 1.2. "1969/1996"**

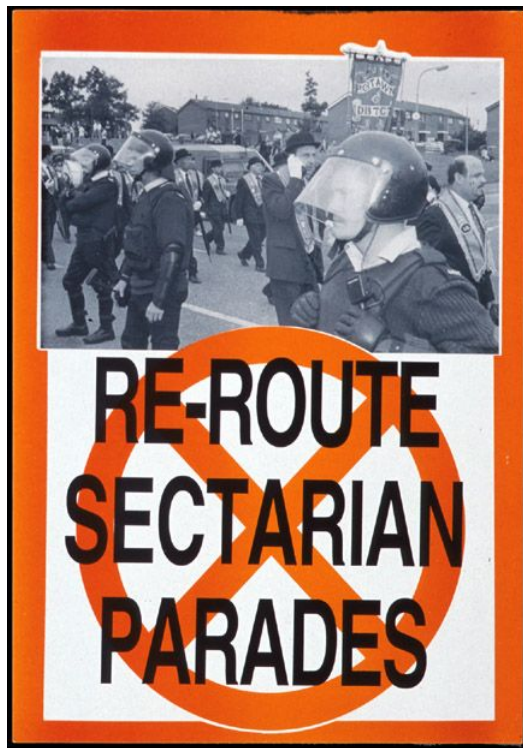
Through this image and slogan, the party contended that discriminatory policing and wanton violence on the part of the RUC had not improved since the early days of Northern Ireland's civil rights movement, presenting the clashes between nationalist residents and police at the parading disputes of the mid-1990s as evidence. For the GRRC and its supporters (including Sinn Féin), the expression of local nationalists' distrust of the RUC and the drawing of connections between the Portadown nationalists' struggle at Drumcree and the civil rights movements of the 1960s was central to the project of protecting nationalists' claim to victimhood with regard to the parading dispute.

In nationalist rhetoric, the image of the policeman in riot gear was a quintessential symbol of prejudicial policing and police brutality against Catholics. It recalled the often violent Troubles-era conflicts between the security forces and the nationalist community that began with the Battle of the Bogside in 1969. The image on the Sinn Féin poster represented a nationalist perception of Northern Ireland as a police state wherein Catholics' rights were denied, their movements were limited, and their political activities were monitored and suppressed. By mobilizing the archetype of the vicious RUC man in their renderings of Drumcree, the GRRC and its supporters were making the implicit point that although the peace process was progressing towards greater equality for Catholics and more equitable political representation for nationalists, Northern Ireland remained a state wherein Catholics were an oppressed minority. Viewers and readers were intended to conclude, then, that the state should actually be

held responsible for the active protection of Catholics' rights; with regard to Drumcree, this meant the re-routing and control of certain Orange parades.

Nationalist activists' perception and portrayal of the RUC as an instrument of the state oppression of Catholics had a long history in Northern Ireland, and the GRRC made concerted efforts to allude and connect to this legacy. In 1996, it produced a poster that featured a photograph from the 1995 Drumcree parade, foregrounding security forces officers clad in riot gear who appear to be protecting the Orange marchers in the background: the officers are shown standing casually with their face shields lifted and their backs to the Orangemen, implying amity between the RUC and the Orange Order (see Figure 1.3).<sup>88</sup> The slogan underneath the image reads "Re-Route Sectarian Marches." The image contrasts with the above-mentioned Sinn Féin-produced poster from the same summer wherein security officers are shown in an apparently aggressive stance with their masks down over their faces as they pull at the man on the ground.

<sup>88</sup> GRRC, "Re-Route Sectarian Marches," PPO2520, Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast.



**Figure 1.3. “Re-Route Sectarian Marches”**

The residents’ 1999 publication *Community under Siege* featured 77 photographs taken during the first four disputes over the parade, 51 of which featured members of the RUC and/or the British Army using various degrees of aggression (and often physical violence) against the Garvaghy residents (see Figure 1.4 for some examples). The testimonies within the book provided the context in which the Garvaghy Residents authorship group intended for the photographs to be understood. Many contributors wrote about their feelings of distrust towards the RUC in its handling of Drumcree. For Portadown Catholics, there was an added element of immediacy in this distrust, in addition to the RUC’s historical legacy. In 1995, 1996, and 1997, the RUC had initially intended to re-route the Drumcree parade away from Garvaghy Road in the interest of preserving law and order, but each year it had yielded to the protests of the Order and its supporters, and had allowed Portadown District to march in spite of the residents’ protests. In light of the RUC’s history and its perception among nationalists as a sectarian force, this was considered by many residents to be a tacit show of support for the Orangemen by forces of the state.

These sentiments were made explicit in many of the testimonies. Chrissie panned the RUC as a “so-called loyal police force” and the “so-called neutral RUC,” expressing skepticism about the RUC’s dedication to the protection of Portadown’s nationalists.<sup>89</sup> Some contributors felt that the RUC “allowed” large crowds of Orangemen and their supporters to gather on the field next to Drumcree Church and to congregate in intimidating mobs each July.<sup>90</sup> “What I couldn’t understand was why the RUC was *letting them* gather in such large numbers,” wrote Bernie.<sup>91</sup> One eleven-year-old resident declared, “The RUC is on the Orangemen’s side and will probably help them do anything.”<sup>92</sup>

The RUC’s violent treatment of Catholic protesters during the Troubles framed public perceptions of its actions at Drumcree. In a July 1997 letter to the editor, an “ordinary Protestant” declared that, as a result of the loyalist violence that accompanied the 1996 and 1997 standoffs, “the RUC was forced to admit it could not defend the Catholic community against threats of unionist violence.”<sup>93</sup> The writer went on to warn that such a perception among nationalists would only strengthen the resolve of the IRA, which “[saw] itself as defending Catholic areas.”<sup>94</sup> The idea of the IRA as the defender of Northern Ireland’s Catholic minority came out of a particularly highly-charged historical context with which Northern Irish readers would have made a connection upon reading this letter to the editor. After the events of August 1969 had seen many nationalists in Belfast and Derry become the victims of sectarian attacks and intimidation by loyalists who sometimes worked in concert with the RUC, there was a widely-held public perception that the IRA had been discredited and disgraced due to its inability to defend and protect Catholics from these attacks.<sup>95</sup> In the fallout of 1969, the IRA had split, with one group advocating adopting a policy of political resistance, and the other lobbying to

<sup>89</sup> Chrissie, in *Community under Siege*, 33 and 36.

<sup>90</sup> Chrissie, Phil, and Moya, in *Community under Siege*, 35, 56, and 70

<sup>91</sup> Bernie, in *Community under Siege*, 79. My emphasis.

<sup>92</sup> Meg, in *Community under Siege*, 64.

<sup>93</sup> “A.J.C.,” “Decommissioning died at Drumcree,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 15 July 1997, 12.

<sup>94</sup> “A.J.C.,” “Decommissioning died at Drumcree.”

<sup>95</sup> The attacks by loyalists and police were made in response to nationalist rioting in protest of the state’s suppression of Catholic civil rights demonstrations. The IRA had been caught unprepared to defend the province’s nationalists due to a lack of arms and organization.



ramp up the paramilitary's efforts of resistance by force, "angered" at the failure of the organization to defend Catholic areas.<sup>96</sup> The members of the executive who came down on the side of using force argued that the IRA must never again fail in its duty to protect the nationalist community, and it was this faction that would eventually take control over the main branch of the IRA.<sup>97</sup> It was this legacy to which A.J.C. alluded in his or her letter to the *Telegraph*, warning readers that the RUC's failure to protect Portadown's nationalist community from the rioting and violence associated with Drumcree III would recall this problematic relationship between nationalists and the police, and would in turn give the IRA pause in considering decommissioning its weapons (the major issue related to the peace process in the summer of 1997).

The authors of *Community under Siege* also understood the RUC's inaction at Drumcree in terms of its historical legacy of antagonism with Northern Ireland's nationalists. In 1997, the RUC had forcibly removed residents from a sit-in protest on the Garvaghy Road, and Chrissie noted that the "residents were very angry at the way Garvaghy Road residents were beaten and treated by the police" and that "as a result of what happened that night, the residents lost all remaining faith in the RUC."<sup>98</sup> Writing about the lead-up to Drumcree IV in 1998, Phil wrote: "Everyone is expecting a slaughtering match from the RUC. People are saying that it will only be after nationalist coffins are carried up the Garvaghy Road that the problem will be solved."<sup>99</sup> Phil recounted a moment wherein he heard a Catholic pensioner remark, "If that was us, we'd be dead by now," referencing Orange supporters who were throwing rocks at the RUC's Land Rovers that formed the barricade to the Garvaghy Road during the 1998 standoff.<sup>100</sup> Even a helicopter refueling was perceived as a show of tacit support for the Orangemen: "The Reverend [Ian] Paisley himself was addressing the crowd [when the

<sup>96</sup> Jonathan Tonge, *Northern Ireland: Conflict and Change* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006), 42.

<sup>97</sup> This faction became known as the Provisional IRA (PIRA), or "Provos"; references to "the IRA" since 1969 generally refer to the PIRA. The group that advocated a Marxist-inspired political campaign to end British rule in Ireland became known as the Official IRA (OIRA).

<sup>98</sup> Chrissie, in *Community under Siege*, 34.

<sup>99</sup> Phil, in *Community under Siege*, 52.

<sup>100</sup> Phil, in *Community under Siege*, 57.

noise from the helicopters overhead went away]. Strangely, the helicopter returned when he finished speaking. Their timing for a refueling stop was impeccable.”<sup>101</sup>

*Community under Siege* was intended to connect with the historical legacy of nationalist oppression in Northern Ireland as part of the project of establishing the residents' claim to victimhood status at Drumcree. One letter to the editor that appeared in the *Belfast Telegraph* pointed out as early as 1997 that the perception of heavy-handedness on the part of the RUC at Drumcree III would influence public perception of the dispute in a way that favoured the residents' cause; a woman named Mary Douglas wrote: “Heavy policing will have established the residents in the eyes of the world as innocent victims and, by putting the pressure on the authorities, the Orangemen will have established themselves as the bullies.”<sup>102</sup> The GRRC hoped to capitalize on this potential for increased public sympathy by deploying tropes of the civil rights movement.

The GRRC and its supporters also attempted to connect the residents' protest to the American civil rights movement in an effort to link Portadown's nationalist community with the American black community's indisputable status as an oppressed group. There was historical precedent for the linking of nationalist struggles in Northern Ireland and the American civil rights movement. NICRA had made extensive use of American civil rights movement's tactics, rhetoric, slogans, and songs during the Troubles. It had adopted “We Shall Overcome”—one of the American civil rights movement's most famous anthems—as its slogan and used it in the title of its organizational autobiography in 1978; the song itself had been a staple at many NICRA-organized marches and protests throughout the late 1960s and into the 1970s.<sup>103</sup> Symbols of the American civil rights movement, such as images of prominent activists like Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and Rosa Parks, were used in some republican wall murals. In a 1985 speech at the University of Massachusetts, SDLP leader John Hume went so far as to

<sup>101</sup> Bernie, in *Community under Siege*, 78.

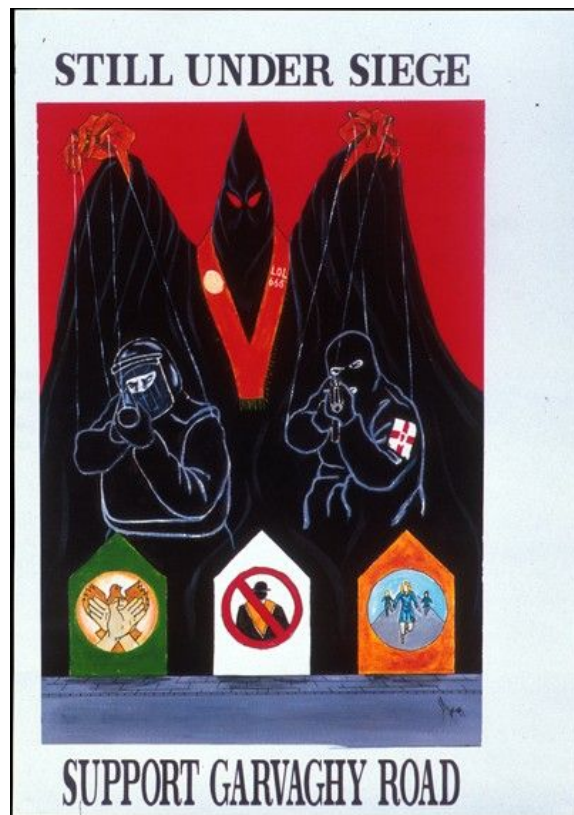
<sup>102</sup> Mary E.V. Douglas, “Restraint could confound enemies' hopes,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 1 July 1997, 11.

<sup>103</sup> Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association, *We Shall Overcome: The History of the Struggle for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland, 1968-1978* (Belfast: Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association, 1978). Full-text of the book is available online at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/crights/nicra/nicra78.htm>.

say, “The American civil rights movement gave birth to ours. The songs of your movement were ours also.”<sup>104</sup>

The GRRC and its supporters capitalized on the nationalist community’s legacy of identification with the struggles of black Americans as part of its effort to reassert its monopoly over the status of victim at Drumcree. In 1999, Sinn Féin produced a symbolically complex poster under the slogan “Still under Siege / Support Garvaghy Road” (see Figure 1.5). The poster featured two figures, one a security forces officer in riot gear and the other a loyalist paramilitary member, pointing guns towards the viewer—both a play on the “masked gunman” archetype common in paramilitary murals and an allusion to a perceived connection between the security forces and loyalist paramilitaries that was commonly held among nationalists. Beneath the two figures are renderings of houses in the Garvaghy Road estates, recognizable due to the three murals pictured, which actually existed on the gable-ends of three terraced houses in the estates. The Orange Order looms large in the background of the image; it is represented by a figure cloaked in a black version of the Ku Klux Klan’s (KKK) infamous and immediately-recognizable regalia. His collarette marks him as an Orangeman (the figure hails from the fictional LOL No. 666).

<sup>104</sup> As quoted in Brian Dooley, *Black and Green: The Fight for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland and Black America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 117.



**Figure 1.4. “Still under Siege”**

The GRRC made similar—and often even more explicit—equations between the Orange Order and the KKK as a means of explaining the residents’ position on Drumcree. In a “fact sheet” on Orange marching, the GRRC declared that Orange marches that ran through predominantly nationalist areas were “considered to be akin to Ku Klux Klan marches through coloured communities in the United States.”<sup>105</sup> Similarly, a “guidebook” produced for American observers’ groups that traveled to Portadown to observe each year’s Drumcree parade starting in 1997 explained the situation thus:

<sup>105</sup> GRRC, “Portadown and the Marching Season: A Fact Sheet,” accessed 2 July 2013, Wayback Machine Internet Archive, <http://web.archive.org/web/20000819055831/http://garvaghyroad.org>. This document was accessed through an online caching service that saves and compiles defunct webpages. Though the precise date of its production is uncertain, the fact sheet mentions the death of GRRC solicitor Rosemary Nelson, which occurred on 15 March 1999 and was cached on the organization’s website on 23 August 2000, so it must have been created sometime between those dates. “Fact sheets” such as this one will be the focus of more extensive analysis in Chapter 2.

To get a clearer sense of the tensions [over Drumcree], imagine this scenario: the United States of America is controlled by a political party with extremely close ties to the Ku Klux Klan. In fact, the ruling party's top leaders are Klansfolk, a basic requirement for anyone who wants to rise in politics or civic life. Ever[y] summer, the Klan stages thousands of parades nationwide. A large number of these parades are through African-American and Jewish neighbourhoods. The marchers carry banners of heroes of the white-supremacist movement and sing racist and antisemitic songs. The local and state police do everything they can to ensure these parades take place, and why wouldn't they? Many of the marchers are police. When African-American and Jewish residents in those communities try to stop the marches with non-violence and other acts of peaceful civil disobedience, the police club them off the streets. It's the local residents who are arrested, not the marchers.<sup>106</sup>

By likening the Orange Order to the KKK in ways such as these, and by presenting KKK triumphalism as a compelling framework through which to understand Drumcree, the GRRC and its supporters made the point that the Garvaghy residents should be understood as Northern Ireland's version of black Americans.<sup>107</sup> This rendering of the dispute saw the Orangemen placed squarely in the role of oppressor and the residents in the role of the oppressed.

Many letters to the editor that appeared in the *Telegraph* made mention of the KKK in connection with Drumcree, indicating that this understanding of the Orange Order's role in the dispute extended beyond publications associated with the GRRC.

<sup>106</sup> Irish Parades Emergency Committee (IPEC), "Parade Observers Guide Book" (1997), Dr. Dominic Bryan's private collection. The IPEC was founded in 1997 and was based in New York; it continued to monitor parades and produce reports at the conclusion of each parading season until 2007. See IPEC, "IPEC Home," <http://www.freewebs.com/ipec/> (last updated 2007). The IPEC's publications revealed it to be extremely sympathetic to nationalist residents' groups like the GRRC; the organization may even have worked or had a relationship with the GRRC during its time as a watchdog group for Orange parading disputes.

<sup>107</sup> Certain black Americans appeared to make this connection as well. In July 1999, two self-identified African-American members of Congress wrote the *Irish Times* to demand that the Orange Order stop utilizing the language of civil rights to defend its position on Orange marches: "As African-American members of the United States Congress, we would like to register our profound objections to the appropriation of the language and symbols of the American civil rights movement by organizers of the 'Long March' in their attempts to support Orange Order marches through nationalist neighbourhoods. These marches have been symbols of intimidation and oppression for Northern Ireland's Catholic minority for over 100 years; to characterize them as 'civil rights marches' now is particularly grotesque." Donald M. Payne and Albert R. Wynn, "Long March to Drumcree," *Irish Times*, 1 July 1999.

One man was prompted to send a letter in response to Orange Order Grand Master Martin Smyth's assertion that Orange parades should be considered a tourist attraction, remarking sarcastically: "If in fact [Smyth] is correct, perhaps the United States government, in an effort to similarly encourage tourism, might encourage the Ku Klux Klan to parade through the streets of Washington."<sup>108</sup> Another writer conveyed a similar sense of sarcasm when evaluating Portadown District's assertions that Orange culture should be preserved and respected: "We must always respect diverse traditions. For example, nobody would deny organizations in the southern states of the USA, who...have developed the right to congregate in masses, burn effigies, and generally intimidate those they see as their opponents."<sup>109</sup> A Northern Irish man living in the United States recounted the approach he took in explaining Drumcree to Americans, framing the dispute in terms of the relationship between the KKK and black Americans: "When asked by Americans to explain the events of the last few days in Northern Ireland, I can only respond with the following: if the Ku Klux Klan want to march in deepest Montana, that's one thing; if they want to march in Harlem, that's something else."<sup>110</sup>

Despite the residents' and their supporters' insistence that the Catholic community remained the truly oppressed group in the Drumcree situation, however, the mid-1990s were ushering in a new set of social, political, and economic circumstances. The lot of Northern Ireland's Catholics was improving, and it was in this context that the nationalist community began to see its former monopoly over victimhood status be challenged by the Orange Order at Drumcree and in other parading disputes. Indeed, the changes brought on by the new social circumstances of Peace Process Era Northern Ireland altered the ways in which nationalists *and* unionists understood and expressed the experience and nature of sectarianism. The different ways that Drumcree's participant organizations and individuals deployed symbolic language in communicating their particular understandings of the dispute underlines the dynamic and historically-contingent nature of Northern Ireland's sectarian divide. Although well-established (and sometimes ancient) symbols and historical narratives were often invoked, such as the siege of Derry and the language of civil rights, they were being used in new ways that

<sup>108</sup> Pdraig Caughey, "Port blockade off-putting to tourists," *Belfast Telegraph*, 18 July 1995, 12.

<sup>109</sup> Andy Maguire, untitled letter to the editor, *Belfast Telegraph*, 24 July 1995.

<sup>110</sup> Michael Hanna, "Confusing response," *Belfast Telegraph*, 11 July 1997, 11.

reflected the shift in power relationships that was then occurring in the province. In this new political climate, Portadown's nationalists attempted to appropriate the fundamentally unionist symbol of siege, while Orangemen began to claim the mantle of victim and the identity of an oppressed group that had formerly been the exclusive territory of the state's Catholic and nationalist communities. These appropriations did not always go unchallenged, however. Contests were occurring between the GRRC and the Orange Order as well as its organizational and individual supporters about who had been "under siege" at Drumcree and which side had the right to claim to be the victim in the situation. Often these contests hinged on the evidence of experience. In the next chapter, we will turn to examining the ways in which the authority of experience was wielded by both sides at Drumcree.

## Chapter 2.

### The Authority of Experience and the Creation of Information

A mere ten days after the conclusion of Drumcree I, Portadown District resolved to strike a medal to commemorate its victory. The medals were designed in the military tradition, emblazoned with the phrase “The Siege of Drumcree,” constituting one of the Order’s earliest efforts to deploy the “siege” narrative in its rendering of the dispute. A spokesman for the district anticipated “tremendous” demand for the medals, citing the desire of Orangemen and Orangewomen all over Northern Ireland to hold onto a piece of what was already seen as a new landmark of Orange history: “Most of the 800 Orangemen who paraded to Drumcree on the Sunday will want to buy the medal, but there were thousands of other Orangemen, Orangewomen, and loyalists generally, from all parts of Northern Ireland who were at Drumcree during the siege, and we feel they will want a medal as a reminder of a famous event in the history of Irish Orangeism.”<sup>1</sup>

Soon after the medals went on sale, the spokesman for the Garvaghy residents, Breandán Mac Cionnaith, publicly contested the understanding of Drumcree that was being advanced by the medals. Mac Cionnaith disputed the use of the term “siege,” arguing that the Orangemen were never surrounded during their tenure on the hill adjacent to the Drumcree Parish Church and had in fact enjoyed freedom of movement to come and go at their leisure. “At no time were they ever under a state of siege,” he concluded.<sup>2</sup> It was the Orangemen who were the aggressors, he countered, and the

<sup>1</sup> *Portadown Times*, “Medal to mark Drumcree event,” 18 August 1995, 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Portadown Times*, “Medal the symbol of a myth say the Garvaghy residents,” 15 September 1995, 19.



residents who had weathered the Orange storm with discipline, resilience, and calm. The medals, he said, were “an attempt to turn reality into fiction and myth.”<sup>3</sup>

Competing notions of truth and reality with regard to Drumcree quickly came to characterize much of the public debate over the dispute. The attempts that individuals on both sides made to establish authority over Drumcree, and over how it was popularly understood, often hinged on what Joan Scott calls the “evidence of experience.” Scott argues that when experience is used as self-referential evidence, it serves to reify and naturalize identity categories such as male and female, heterosexual and homosexual, and white and black, and precludes questions about how these categories are constructed. It establishes “a realm of reality outside discourse,” authorizing and privileging the individual who apparently has access to this reality.<sup>4</sup>

Instead, Scott argues, experience is not unassailable truth; it is discursive, political, and contested. Her argument critiques the way in which many historians of difference use experience as evidence in the often well-intentioned project of restoring marginalized groups to the historical record. Scott’s elucidation of the flaws of this approach, historiographically speaking, also illuminates the reasons why the evidence of experience played such an important role in the public discourse over Drumcree. Indeed, despite Scott’s focus on the misuse of evidentiary experience within academia, her argument also helps us to understand how the evidence of experience is very powerful in creating “knowledge” outside the academy as well, where experience is so often reified without reflection upon the discursive identity or identities through which it has been filtered.

The individuals and organizations claiming this experiential knowledge deployed the categories of “Protestant,” “Catholic,” “unionist,” “loyalist,” and “nationalist” strategically as part of a larger attempt to influence popular conceptions about Drumcree. The competing notions of truth that these participants presented were predicated on the notion that there was a reality outside discourse, a true and correct understanding of Drumcree. Various individuals and groups claimed ownership over an

<sup>3</sup> *Portadown Times*, “Medal the symbol of a myth.”

<sup>4</sup> Scott, “Evidence of Experience,” 790.

authentic version Drumcree, presenting their own experience to nullify the claims of others. This tension had implications for power relationships between groups and individuals in Northern Ireland at a time when power relationships between Catholics and Protestants were shifting throughout the province as the peace process progressed. Drumcree acted as a small theatre wherein opposing groups began verbally and physically to contest and to discursively make sense of these changes.

It is important to note that this chapter focuses on this process as it was happening among those individuals and organizations who were aiming to reinforce the oppositional “two communities” paradigm in order to further their own aims with regard to Drumcree (most notably to have the parade either re-routed from or allowed to continue along the Garvaghy Road). There were also those who attempted to challenge the imposition of this unyielding, binary rendering of the dispute; some of these dissenting voices will be explored further in the following chapter. The giving of testimony was a significant strategy that participants used to establish their side’s authority over the dispute. The authenticity of these testimonies was based on the evidence of experience presented by the individuals giving them. Although many of these individuals suggested in various ways, as we shall see, that their particular testimony reflected the truth of Drumcree, each of these testimonies was filtered through the discursively-created identities to which the person subscribed. Through the strategy of wielding experience as evidence, individuals on both sides ultimately attempted to influence, whether consciously or unconsciously, how the conflict would be understood by the broader public.

## **Giving Testimony**

In “The Evidence of Experience,” Scott alludes to the unquestionably compelling nature of testimony when wielded as evidence: “What could be truer, after all, than a subject’s own account of what he or she lived through?”<sup>5</sup> Although Scott’s intention was to problematize this notion as part of her larger attempt to interrogate the way that academics tended to detach experience from discourse, the question, as posed, rings

<sup>5</sup> Scott, “Evidence of Experience,” 777.

true at a common-sense level. Indeed, such is the power of experience when used as evidence to create knowledge outside the academy as well. This philosophy was enthusiastically subscribed to by participants in the Drumcree dispute, who made efforts to take advantage of the persuasive effect of testimony to create particular versions of the truth.

Individuals often utilized the letter to the editor as a vehicle through which to present and authorize their own input into the debates about Drumcree and how it should be understood by the public. The value of the content of each letter was often predicated on the apparent authenticity of the writer's personal experiences. Those who were inclined to submit pieces of writing used the Letters pages of the *Portadown Times*, the *Belfast Telegraph*, and other publications as forums for discussion of the parade, and although editorial decisions were made about which letters were published, the selected authors represented both the local nationalist and unionist communities (as well as sections of the population that did not subscribe to either side on the matter of Drumcree, as Chapter 3 will demonstrate). By examining a selection of the letters that were sent in by individuals who were in some way invested in the dispute, we will see that people were appealing to personal experience in various ways to stake claims of ownership over the correct understanding of Drumcree.

The discursive phenomenon of rival truth claims and competing authoritative voices came to the fore particularly when letter writers called into question the veracity of others' accounts of Drumcree, sometimes coming into direct conversation with one another. We might take two examples from June and July 1997 as illustrative of the types of exchanges that took place, sometimes over a matter of weeks with many different writers contributing. These conversations can be read as skirmishes for the control of the Drumcree story in both immediate popular opinion of the dispute and, ultimately, posterity.

On 30 May 1997, the *Times* featured an editorial that concluded with a nostalgic recollection of the Garvaghy Road in times gone by. It began with an important qualifier: "One or two of us [*Times* reporters] were actually brought up at Garvaghy Road." <sup>6</sup> In

<sup>6</sup> *Portadown Times*, "Lessons from the council elections," 30 May 1997, 35.

appealing to the experiences of members of the staff who were “actually” raised in the area, the editorial declared the authority of the staff to speak in regards to Garvaghy’s past. In imagining this past, the writers invoked a very romanticized, pastoral place; but in presenting personal experience as evidence of this past, the *Times* staff established that these were memories of a *real* place that had existed as they remembered it and were representing it in the editorial. Vaguely alluding to some past decade, the *Times* eulogized that the Garvaghy Road was once “famous for its roses”—the home of renowned rose-breeder Sam McGredy and headquarters of his operations.<sup>7</sup> The editorial remarked dolefully that one of McGredy’s best-selling roses was a “delicate, beautifully-scented, white hybrid tea variety [that] bore the proud name ‘PEACE’ and was exported and nurtured throughout the world.”<sup>8</sup> The editorial team looked ahead to the impending third standoff over Drumcree, which by late May seemed unavoidable with no prospect of talks on the horizon. The team “wondered whether the roots of that fair rose had been buried forever, with the McGredy fields having long since given way to housing, or whether down there in the soil there [were] still a few roots trying to force their way to the surface.”<sup>9</sup>

The demise of Sam McGredy’s roses served as a metaphor through which the *Times* reporters expressed regret that this small-town idyll had been destroyed both literally and figuratively by the 1990s. The (perhaps unconsciously) implied cause of this destruction was the nationalist community that had begun moving into the area in large numbers when low-income housing was first erected there in the 1980s. The editorial evoked an air of mourning for the wide-open fields that were now covered in concrete to accommodate the increasing population density.

The past to which the editorial referred was “a time when—like much of Portadown—[Garvaghy] was a peaceful, integrated district.”<sup>10</sup> It was a commonly-held notion among local unionists that Protestants and Catholics had once lived side by side on the Garvaghy Road with nary a worry about the Orange parade that “meandered

<sup>7</sup> *Portadown Times*, “Lessons.”

<sup>8</sup> *Portadown Times*, “Lessons.” All-capitals in original.

<sup>9</sup> *Portadown Times*, “Lessons.”

<sup>10</sup> *Portadown Times*, “Lessons.”

through, scarcely noticed” once per year.<sup>11</sup> However, the unionist thinking went, once nationalists came to comprise a vast majority of the residents in the district, they began imagining it as “their area.”<sup>12</sup> In this understanding of Garvaghy’s past, that was the moment when Protestant residents began moving out of the area, further exacerbating the problem and increasing segregation and communal polarization in Portadown. According to this rendering of the area’s history, it was also when the trouble over parades began. These memories of an apparently real past when the nationalist residents of the area did not care or notice the annual Orange parade served to challenge the legitimacy of the contemporary nationalist residents’ vehement opposition to Drumcree.<sup>13</sup> Figuratively, too, the editorial’s romantic incarnation of the area was destroyed by Drumcree. In the eyes of the *Times* editorial staff, Garvaghy, once internationally renowned for its “Peace” roses, now stood as an embarrassing symbol of local tribalism and intransigence.

On 6 June 1997, a number of individuals who identified themselves as residents of the Garvaghy Road wrote to the *Times* to register their displeasure with the editorial. An “Authentic Garvaghy Road Resident” was particularly irritated by the *Times*’ poetic recollection of the Garvaghy Road of old.<sup>14</sup> The nom-de-plume implied that the writer was a more “authentic” resident than the two *Times* journalists mentioned in the editorial, suggesting that current residency denoted greater authority over the truth about the Garvaghy Road than former residency. This form of one-upmanship in terms of whose experience was more immediate, and therefore more valid, was intended to strengthen the truth claims that ensued in the letter.

<sup>11</sup> *Portadown Times*, “Lessons.” This notion was later lampooned by a local satirist in the online periodical *The Portadown News*; this publication will be the subject of further analysis in the next chapter.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Lucy, *Stand-off!*, 3, and Portadown District LOL No. 1, “Press Statement – 14<sup>th</sup> January 1997,” and “Press Statement – 6<sup>th</sup> June 1997.”

<sup>13</sup> Oral historian Anna Bryson has noted a propensity among some Protestants to remember the 1950s and early 1960s as a kind of golden age of Orange parading when no Catholic opposition to marches existed (although, as Bryson notes, this understanding of Northern Ireland’s postwar period glossed over nationalist resistance and opposition that was present despite its being low-key compared to the parading disputes of the 1980s and 1990s). See Anna Bryson, “‘Whatever You Say, Say Nothing’: Researching Memory and Identity in Mid-Ulster, 1945-1969,” *Oral History* 35, no. 2 (Autumn 2007): 45-56.

<sup>14</sup> “Authentic Garvaghy Resident,” “Don’t drag up the past to bury the future,” *Portadown Times*, 6 June 1997, 12.

The letter claimed that the editorial had deliberately misrepresented the area's past in order to malign the contemporary nationalist community. The resident resented the "culture of distortion directed at the Garvaghy area" in the context of Drumcree, implying that the editorial somehow altered or twisted Garvaghy's real history.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, the offending piece "merely confounded [the writer's] conviction that [*The Times* was] actively engaged in manipulating the Garvaghy area's past in order to besmirch its present."<sup>16</sup> Portadown's past had been "plagiarized" and falsely imagined, the writer argued, presented "as if it [was] once a romantic vision of middle England" in an act of "brutalization" against the contemporary nationalist Garvaghy Road community.<sup>17</sup> The author took issue with the sense of pastoral nostalgia evoked by the image of McGredy's rose fields—fields that were eventually paved over with hard concrete to accommodate the people who now populated the Garvaghy area. He or she read this interpretation as a dishonest and violent act, a misappropriation of history for nefarious purposes on the part of the editorial staff.

"Authentic Garvaghy Resident" chose to describe this romanticized imagining of Garvaghy's past as an act of plagiarism, connoting an act of taking someone else's intellectual property—usually an idea or a piece of writing, but in this case a neighbourhood's history—and passing it off as one's own. This word choice betrays a sense of ownership over Garvaghy's history on the part of the author. By declaring him- or herself the truly "authentic" resident in this exchange, and by accusing the *Times* reporters of misappropriating the area's past, "Authentic Garvaghy Resident" claimed the area and its history on behalf of the contemporary nationalist community. "Authentic Garvaghy Resident" implied that the *Times*' "middle England" vision of the area's past was not a reflection of reality. The writer wished to correct this false rendering and replace it with a supposedly truer version of Garvaghy's past and present, namely through an acknowledgement that the Garvaghy Road area was in fact a burgeoning and still-vibrant community. Indeed, a contest was taking place here between this writer and the *Times* editorial staff as to whose version of Garvaghy's past was the *real* version. Once that was determined, the groundwork would presumably be laid for the

<sup>15</sup> "Authentic Garvaghy Resident," "Don't drag up the past."

<sup>16</sup> "Authentic Garvaghy Resident," "Don't drag up the past."

<sup>17</sup> "Authentic Garvaghy Resident," "Don't drag up the past."

authorized party's understandings of the area and, by extension, the Drumcree dispute to gain wider public acceptance and sympathy.

These types of exchanges continued throughout the lead-up to Drumcree III. On 27 June 1997, "Garvaghy" submitted a letter that commented acerbically that the violence and siege mentality of the Orangemen at Drumcree I and II "displays exactly to what extent the Orange Order respects the rights and liberties of Nationalists in Portadown."<sup>18</sup> Here "Garvaghy" called into question one of the fundamental elements of the Orange Order's argument that the parade should be allowed: that it was not meant to offend or disrespect the local Catholic community. He or she did this with a number of examples throughout the letter, each of which referred back to the experiences that "Garvaghy" and his or her fellow residents had had during previous parading disputes. "Garvaghy" wrote in a way that privileged the evidence of sensory experience. Referring to the previous year's standoff, "Garvaghy" noted that "plumes of smoke...were visible" rising out of the churchyard where the Orange protestors had gathered.<sup>19</sup> After dark, the Garvaghy residents could "plainly hear" the sound of police baton rounds being discharged; on many occasions, "the sky was illuminated" by fireworks that were thrown by the loyalist "mobs" towards RUC officers.<sup>20</sup> Although the Orange Order claimed that participating flute bands did not play sectarian songs during the parade or the ensuing protest, "Garvaghy" countered that Orange songs like "'The Sash [My Father Wore' and] even 'Derry's Walls'...appear to be popular numbers" for the marchers at Drumcree.<sup>21</sup> "Garvaghy" communicated a sense that for the residents, the Garvaghy Road was like a warzone, a very threatening environment indeed, with the menace of a "rampaging

<sup>18</sup> "Garvaghy," "Now is the time to talk and come to a solution," *Portadown Times*, 27 June 1997, 27.

<sup>19</sup> "Garvaghy," "Now is the time to talk."

<sup>20</sup> "Garvaghy," "Now is the time to talk."

<sup>21</sup> "The Sash My Father Wore" and "Derry's Walls" were (and are) perennial favourites for the flute bands that often accompanied Orange Order parades (but which were not themselves officially part of the Order). Often, the accompanying bands provoked significant nationalist opposition to Orange parades, as they were wont to play songs that nationalists perceived as sectarian and were commonly accused of playing more loudly outside of Catholic churches in order to provoke local nationalists. As a result of their composition and style as a military-inspired marching band featuring many flutes and big, booming drums, these companies were often referred to as 'blood and thunder' bands; the perceived anti-Catholic nature of much of their musical repertoire earned them the nickname "Kick-the-Pope" bands.

loyalist mob” a short distance away.<sup>22</sup> The author presented his or her experience of Drumcree in terms of things that the residents had seen, heard, and felt—an example of the use of the most empirical of evidentiary experience to advocate for a certain conception of Drumcree.

Perhaps a testament to its affecting prose, “Garvaghy’s” letter prompted a number of replies in the following weeks. “Concerned British Citizen,” a Portadown resident whose pseudonym implied a unionist political affiliation, charged that the letter from “Garvaghy” was “rubbish...pure lies.”<sup>23</sup> Following this unequivocal charge of deceit, “Concerned British Citizen” challenged a number of episodes that “Garvaghy” claimed to have directly witnessed, countering that all flute bands present had played only hymns and that the plumes of smoke “Garvaghy” attributed to loyalist protesters had probably come from a nearby nationalist riot. The letter writer ultimately argued that “Garvaghy’s” report was explicitly false and that this account of how nationalists were experiencing Drumcree was not to be trusted. For “Garvaghy” and “Concerned British Citizen,” the same music and the same plumes of smoke were experienced through the filters of discursively created ethnic identities, contributing to the writers’ very different assumptions about and interpretations of these experiences and leading each to accuse the other of falsifying his or her memories of Drumcree II.

Similarly, “Portadown Orangeman” urged “Garvaghy” to “get his facts right” and disputed the portrait of Drumcree that “Garvaghy” had presented.<sup>24</sup> Attempting to add weight to his version of events, the author appealed to his years of experience as a local member of the Order, stating that he personally had “never heard the bands playing *The Sash* or *Derry’s Walls*” and had also “never seen members of the bands or the Orange Order shouting abuse at anyone paying respect at their loved ones’ graves.”<sup>25</sup> Readers who were following this conversation were left to consider opposing positions that were

<sup>22</sup> “Garvaghy,” “Now is the time to talk.”

<sup>23</sup> “Concerned British Citizen,” “Garvaghy letter is simply ‘pure lies,’” *Portadown Times*, 4 July 1997, 34.

<sup>24</sup> “Portadown Orangeman,” “Get the facts right!,” *Portadown Times*, 4 July 1997, 34.

<sup>25</sup> “Portadown Orangeman,” “Get the facts right!” The latter comment was in reply to “Garvaghy’s” assertion that the bands played more loudly and Orangemen jeered as they passed a local Catholic church and graveyard.



each presented as fact, a status gained from the direct experiences of the writers. These two sets of truth claims rivaled each other directly, a testament to the extremely contentious nature of the dispute and of how it would be understood and remembered by the public.

With violence levels and public outcry increasing each year that Drumcree continued, and with the peace process progressing, the stakes of the conflict got higher, and the Garvaghy residents in particular began to use experience as evidence ever more strategically. Personal testimony had long been a significant political tool for Northern Ireland's nationalist community as it agitated for equality in the province. In 1969, prominent Catholic civil rights activist Bernadette Devlin had authored *The Price of My Soul*, which told of the economic, social, and political discrimination against Catholics in Northern Ireland through the lens of Devlin's life and daily experiences.<sup>26</sup> In 1982, Gerry Adams, soon to become president of a growing Sinn Féin party, had published *Falls Memories*, a history of the nationalist Falls Road area of Belfast, told in conjunction with stories and memories of Adams's life growing up there.<sup>27</sup> Adams had subtitled the book "A Belfast Life," emphasizing autobiography as an effective tool for understanding the nationalist experience of Troubles-era Northern Ireland. Bobby Sands, yet another of republicanism's most influential figures, had become a martyr and hero in the nationalist community in 1981 when he died on hunger strike, part of a contingent of incarcerated IRA men who were demanding political prisoner status. An autobiographical piece that was attributed to Sands had been published in 1983, written on the sixty-sixth day of his hunger strike at Long Kesh prison and documenting a day in the life of the incarcerated Sands.<sup>28</sup>

The effect of narratives like these was to create an idea of "the Catholic experience" of Northern Ireland, one that Joan Scott would argue reified "Catholic" as a homogenous category and marginalized differing experiences of other Catholics. The notion of "the Catholic experience," presented as one of oppression, was nonetheless politically effective as activists like Devlin, Adams, and Sands took on the Northern Irish

<sup>26</sup> Bernadette Devlin, *The Price of My Soul* (New York: Knopf, 1969).

<sup>27</sup> Gerry Adams, *Falls Memories: A Belfast Life* (Dingle, Co. Kerry: Brandon, 1982).

<sup>28</sup> Bobby Sands, *One Day in My Life* (Dublin: Mercier Press, 1983).

unionists and the British government, and often looked to potentially sympathetic international audiences, particularly the United States, for moral support and financial and political assistance.<sup>29</sup>

Public and international support and sympathy was significant in similar ways for the Garvaghy Road residents. In the fallout of the extreme violence and public disorder prompted by Drumcree in 1997 and 1998, the conflict became a tremendous liability for any individual or organization deemed to be responsible in the court of Northern Irish public and international opinion. Both sides of the dispute made efforts to distance themselves from that blame. One of the ways the Garvaghy residents did this was through the publication *Community under Siege* (1999), which has already been analyzed in terms of its use of the tropes of siege and civil rights in Chapter 1 of this thesis. The book was comprised of a collection of “testimonies” written by residents of the Garvaghy Road during the 1998 dispute. A “testimony” is commonly understood as a declaration of truth or fact; it is centered on the act of witnessing, and as such, the authority of testimony depends upon the evidence of experience. The editorial decision to describe the contributing authors’ submissions in this way played upon these connotations in order to assert the inherent veracity of the accounts of Drumcree the contributors were presenting.

Fifteen testimonies were included in the volume, with each piece constituting its own chapter or section. Drawing on an oft-used trope in Northern Ireland, the testimonies were characterized as the stories of “ordinary decent people caught up in an extraordinary situation.”<sup>30</sup> The editors privileged and offered personal experience as the

<sup>29</sup> The Irish Diaspora in the United States, made up mostly of Catholic Irish, has traditionally been sympathetic to the nationalist cause. But, of course, support for Irish nationalists was not ubiquitous among the American Irish. For a complex examination of the Irish Diaspora in the United States, see Lee and Casey, eds., *Making the Irish American*.

<sup>30</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, xv. The deployment of the term “ordinary decent people” has a long history in Northern Ireland. Most often, it has been used to create the impression that the speaker or author is separate from partisan politicians and militant republicans or loyalists and their paramilitaries. It implies that the author’s viewpoint represents the common man or woman and often connotes a sense of moderation on the part of the speaker or author. The tongue-in-cheek phrase “ordinary decent criminal” came in vogue during the Troubles to distinguish prisoners who had been incarcerated for nonpolitical crimes, such as robbery, from prisoners who had been convicted of or were being held on suspicion of paramilitary activity.

best way through which readers could come to understand Drumcree. The book's back-cover description invited the reader to place him- or herself into the shoes of the Garvaghy residents and to learn "what it was like" to live through Drumcree as a Catholic nationalist:

What is it like to live in the 'Orange Citadel,' not knowing where the violence will come from next, or when it will strike? What do you do when soldiers prevent you from walking to church? What hope is there of a job when you are from "the [Garvaghy] Road?" How do you deal with workmates or shopkeepers who refuse to talk to you? Or what do you say to sick and frightened children when you can't afford to send them out of the area?<sup>31</sup>

The editorial paragraph implied that the testimonies presented in the book provided answers to these questions, that they would function as a vehicle for understanding through which one could imagine oneself experiencing Drumcree as the residents experienced it, thereby gaining insight into the truth of the conflict.

Each testimony was written from a first-person perspective and gave the reader a sense of a given resident's experience of Drumcree. Some took the form of diary or journal entries, giving day-by-day accounts of Drumcree IV as experienced through the author's eyes. These were often affecting, as they gave the reader a sense of events occurring in real time and compellingly recreated the emotions of the writer as he or she lived through the 1998 standoff. On the night of 9 July, for example, resident Pauline listened to the raucous crowds of Orange supporters that had gathered nearby her home, and had recorded her visceral reaction. Her prose impresses upon the reader a feeling of a very present danger: "I'm terrified; Steve's out again...The noise and flashes have become too much. I get Steve's shotgun. God forgive me, but if they come with petrol bombs to burn my house or hurt my kids, I'll shoot them."<sup>32</sup> Narratives like Pauline's, characterized as it was by fear and desperation, served to underscore the book's overarching argument that the residents, not the Orangemen, were the real victims at Drumcree.

<sup>31</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, back cover.

<sup>32</sup> Pauline, in *Community under Siege*, 22.

The scope of the testimonies often extended beyond the period of time that surrounded the standoff itself, treating the parading dispute as symptomatic of a larger culture of nationalist oppression in majority-unionist Portadown. As this thesis suggested in Chapter 1, this was an important element in establishing nationalist victimhood at Drumcree. In these instances, the authority of experience was also extended, authorizing the contributors to speak about not only what it was like to live through Drumcree, but also what it was like to be a nationalist in Portadown. Local nationalists understood the town centre to be a Protestant area where Catholics were not welcome or safe, and many residents' testimonies presented personal experiences of abuse in the town centre as evidence of rampant sectarianism and virulent anti-Catholic sentiment among local Protestants. Marie drew upon her lifetime of experience in Portadown when she wrote:

I have spent all my life in my hometown of Portadown. As a child, my life was restricted by the Orange Order. As a teenager, I witnessed verbal abuse in my workplace because of the Orange Order marches.... For many years I have rarely gone shopping in the town centre. I shop via catalogue for clothes, and everything else I can get along the Garvaghy Road. Now, I refuse to allow my younger sister and her young family to travel alone into the town centre, in case she is met with verbal or physical abuse.... [I]t is dangerous to be a Catholic in Portadown!<sup>33</sup>

Claire recounted what had happened to her in the past when she *had* ventured into town: "I have been verbally abused [while shopping] because I am a Catholic from the Garvaghy Road. When I go shopping, I suffer from panic attacks. We cannot go to the local swimming pool for a family outing."<sup>34</sup> The book's youngest contributor, Meg, declared: "I am only 11 years old and have already been chased and verbally abused out of the town centre"; she contended that this kind of sectarianism was indicative of Catholics' second-class status in the town, asking, "How many 11-year-old Protestant girls could say the same?"<sup>35</sup> Like many of her fellow contributors, Meg linked this

<sup>33</sup> Marie, in *Community under Siege*, 49.

<sup>34</sup> Claire, in *Community under Siege*, 47. The public swimming pool was a common point of reference for *Community under Siege* contributors, as it was a noteworthy amenity that was perceived to be inside one of the Protestant areas of Portadown, and thus inaccessible to Catholics.

<sup>35</sup> Meg, in *Community under Siege*, 65.

experience with Drumcree, concluding that “If...the Orangemen were more sensitive and caring, they would...choose a different road for their march.”<sup>36</sup>

In one particularly affecting testimony, Garvaghy resident Marie Therese recounted the experiences of her young son in an essay titled “Drumcree Reminds me of Darren.”<sup>37</sup> Marie Therese opened the account by noting that the events of Drumcree II in July 1996 had had a profound effect on her two eldest children, who had difficulty accepting the images of that year’s rioting and the injured persons who had appeared on the nightly news reports.<sup>38</sup> Before the start of the 1998 school year, Marie Therese wrote, Darren had informed her that he had purchased a “body alarm” to protect him from the Protestant boys in town; when his mother asked him to elaborate, Darren told her that “the Protestant boys called him a ‘Fenian nigger’ when he went to the swimming pool in town.”<sup>39</sup> Darren’s indirectly-recounted experience as a Catholic in Portadown ended tragically when he was knocked down and killed by a van the following October; in her testimony, Marie Therese explained that he had been running away from Protestant children when he was struck. Though Darren’s death was not in any way directly related to the Orange Order, Marie Therese noted that the accident had happened “50 yards from [Portadown’s] Orange hall” and characterized her son’s death as having been “for the Drumcree cause,” thereby equating the Order’s Drumcree protest with her family’s experience of Protestant aggression towards Catholics in Portadown.<sup>40</sup>

Basing its authority upon the implied truth of testimony, *Community under Siege* was part of what Scott calls an “ideological construction” of a notion of experience that makes “individuals the starting point of knowledge” about a given event.<sup>41</sup> It privileged and authorized the Garvaghy residents to communicate the true version of Drumcree

<sup>36</sup> Meg, in *Community under Siege*, 65.

<sup>37</sup> Marie Therese, in *Community under Siege*, 85.

<sup>38</sup> Marie Therese, in *Community under Siege*, 86.

<sup>39</sup> Marie Therese, in *Community under Siege*, 87. Marie Therese noted that Darren’s father was black. A “body alarm” was a small handheld device that would emit a loud noise when triggered by the owner.

<sup>40</sup> Marie Therese, in *Community under Siege*, 88.

<sup>41</sup> Scott, “Evidence of Experience,” 782.

based on personal experience. The testimonies included in the book were intended to communicate to the reader *the nationalist experience* of Drumcree and of Portadown. And as part of the project of persuading readers to accept the residents' interpretation, this local experience was linked with the notion of an overarching history of Catholic oppression in Ireland at the hands of the English (and later British) state and of the Protestant Ascendancy. In their acknowledgments, the authors implied that there were many more voices that had not been heard or could not be included in the volume; perhaps more significantly, they referred to prior generations of similarly oppressed nationalists and Catholics who had never had the chance to speak: "We are most indebted to all of you whose testimonies we were not able to include, and to the generations before us who never got to tell their stories."<sup>42</sup>

This strategy may have served to essentialize the categories of "nationalist" or "Catholic" with regards to Drumcree by promulgating the idea of the existence and reality of "a nationalist experience" of the dispute. It also served to further entrench the rigid and overly simplistic discourse of Protestant dominance and Catholic oppression in Ireland. Nonetheless, these subject categories, authorized by the personal experience of the authors who claimed them, could thereafter be considered by the reader as "reliable sources of a knowledge that comes from access to the real by means of their experience."<sup>43</sup> In this process, the evidence of experience was the starting point of the creation of information and knowledge about the dispute. The discursive identities of "Catholic" and "nationalist" acted as filters through which this knowledge was being created, producing a particular identity-based interpretation of Drumcree.

## Writing Histories

In this context of individual skirmishes for control over popular perceptions of Drumcree, Portadown District and the GRRRC, the dispute's primary opponents, embarked on processes of knowledge production that aimed to influence how the conflict was understood by the public. In the case of Portadown District, one of the

<sup>42</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, Acknowledgements.

<sup>43</sup> Scott, "Evidence of Experience," 782.

earliest incarnations of this project was the creation of historical narratives of Drumcree. Some years later, the GRRRC produced a competing history of Orange marches in Portadown. Each of these histories was intended to shore up that side's argument for either the allowance or the re-routing of the Drumcree parade.

History as a genre used to hold as one of its fundamental characteristics the notion of objectivity: the potential to provide a neutral account of what actually happened in the past. This understanding of history was disrupted within the academy, however, by theoreticians like Hayden White, whose *Metahistory* (1973) argued that, in fact, all history is narrative: historians arrange events into coherent and understandable narratives through subjective processes such as the inclusion and exclusion of certain events, the ordering of events, and the asking of certain questions and not of others. The notion that all historians are storytellers whose own discursive identities shape the histories they make is now commonly accepted within the academy. But despite the overwhelming influence that these developments have had on history as a discipline, in the public sphere history continues to hold power that is derived from the perception of its infallibility as a written form. The histories into which Portadown District and then the GRRRC molded Drumcree afforded these narratives of the dispute the appearance of neutrality, of an impartial relation of the facts of what had happened. It was on the persisting authority of history as a genre, then, that these adversaries were able to communicate to sympathetic audiences their understandings of Drumcree as fact, as a reflection of the reality of the situation.

Portadown District and its supporters articulated a sense of the historical magnitude of Drumcree directly following the conclusion of the first standoff. Just ten days later, a spokesman for Portadown District referred to the successful protest against the re-routing as “a famous event in the history of Orangeism.”<sup>44</sup> The story of Drumcree became the fodder of Orange historians with remarkable immediacy. Within a year of the first standoff, Portadown District had published *The Orange Citadel* (1996) as a history of Orangeism that carried its readers right up to the present day, concluding, as we have seen, with a section on the “Siege of Drumcree.”

<sup>44</sup> “Drumcree medal call,” *Portadown Times*, 21 July 1995, 8.

The narrative of Drumcree that was presented in *The Orange Citadel* situated the dispute as the most recent in a long list of moments in history wherein Portadown District had played a role in the defense of the Union and of Orangeism in the two hundred years since its founding. Explications of the district's role in suppressing the spread of the nationalist United Irishmen rebellion (1798) to Armagh, its resistance to the *Party Processions Act* (1850) that had attempted to curtail sectarian parading in Ireland, its vehement opposition to Home Rule (starting around the 1880s), and its resistance to the RUC's attempts to re-route the local parade in 1985 moved seamlessly into a narrative of the events of the 1995 standoff, creating the impression that Drumcree was the latest chapter in an unbroken legacy of particularly staunch and irreproachable unionism. Indeed, as a post-script to the chapter on Drumcree, the authors concluded: "This episode will surely go down in history alongside the other famous stands for Civil Rights and Religious Liberty made by the loyalist people of Ulster."<sup>45</sup> By positioning Drumcree firmly within this tradition, the authors intended to derive legitimacy for Orangeism and to cast the parading conflict as one in which all individuals who counted themselves unionists had a stake.

This aim ran as a subtext throughout *The Orange Citadel*, but the support was made particularly overt in the chapters that dealt with the local parading disputes of the 1980s and 1990s. Offering an "analysis of the re-routing problem" intended to "help [readers in] appreciating the overall situation," the authors explained that, in advocating for the continuance of local Orange parades,

[t]he Orange Order, viewed as the protector of Protestantism, sought to uphold its tradition of walking the Queen's highway in a dignified and disciplined manner, without the slightest intention of causing offense to anyone.<sup>46</sup>

They commented on the "irony" of "the complaint by Roman Catholic representatives [presumably, GRRRC activists]...that they are in a virtual siege during the day of the

<sup>45</sup> Jones et al., *The Orange Citadel*, 70.

<sup>46</sup> Jones et al., *The Orange Citadel*, 55.



parades [when] the Orange parade takes less than six minutes to pass along the Garvaghy Road,” and declared that “only the intransigent dogma in which republicanism is entrenched could view these parades as triumphalist.”<sup>47</sup> Tracing the Drumcree route to its nineteenth-century origins, the authors echoed the Order’s argument that when the parade began in 1807, the Garvaghy area had not been an exclusively nationalist area, and so the contemporary Drumcree parade should not be understood as a purposeful affront to the local nationalist community.<sup>48</sup> Further, they insisted, “very few houses directly opened onto” the Garvaghy Road.<sup>49</sup> In the space of just over 20 pages of text, the parade was referred to as “traditional,” perhaps the ultimate Orange watchword regarding Drumcree, about 20 times.<sup>50</sup> Portadown District’s protest against the re-routing of the parade was characterized as a “stand for Civil and Religious Liberty,” the capitalization of the phrase in many press releases reflecting the emphasis the Orange Order wished to place upon the phrase.<sup>51</sup> Finally, the authors reproduced in full the first statement of Portadown District on the attempted re-routing, which, of course, communicated the main tenets of the Order’s argument on the issue.<sup>52</sup>

*The Orange Citadel* was intended to communicate and prompt sympathy for Portadown District’s case on Drumcree by embedding its narrative of the dispute within a written history of the region, capitalizing on the authority and neutrality often popularly ascribed to works of history. Indeed, Portadown District Master Harold Gracey, who penned the forward to *The Orange Citadel*, expressed hope that “reading this history may assist [those readers who were not members of the Order] to gain a more broadly based understanding of Orangeism and Orange culture which may in turn dispel some of their previously held misconceptions and misunderstandings.”<sup>53</sup>

Competing versions of Drumcree’s history soon emerged, however. The Garvaghy Residents authorship group included in *Community under Siege* a history of

<sup>47</sup> Jones et al., *The Orange Citadel*, 56.

<sup>48</sup> Jones et al., *The Orange Citadel*, 46-7.

<sup>49</sup> Jones et al., *The Orange Citadel*, 53.

<sup>50</sup> Jones et al., *The Orange Citadel*, 47-70.

<sup>51</sup> Jones et al., *The Orange Citadel*, 61, 67.

<sup>52</sup> Jones et al., *The Orange Citadel*, 64.

<sup>53</sup> Jones et al., *The Orange Citadel*, Forward.

Orangeism in Portadown “from a nationalist perspective” that was intended to provide historical context for the testimonies contained within the book.<sup>54</sup> The authorship group expressed its goals in writing its history of Drumcree at the outset of the narrative: “We hope to present the case why it is reasonable for the vast majority of residents of the area to demand a partial re-routing of Orange parades away from the area.”<sup>55</sup> The narrative was intended to legitimize the GRRC’s protest of the parade and to advocate for Drumcree’s re-routing, communicating the main pillars of the GRRC’s platform in much the same way that Portadown District’s history had done for its competing interpretation of the dispute. And just as in Portadown District’s narrative, the Garvaghy Residents viewed Drumcree as a kind of climax in the town’s history. Unlike the Orange narratives, however, the Garvaghy Residents cast it as the culmination of a history of Catholic oppression in the town.

The Garvaghy Residents authorship group prefaced its history of Orange parades in Portadown with a reassertion of the major points of the GRRC’s case for the re-routing of the contemporary Drumcree parade: it argued that Orange parading was “blatantly insensitive to the feelings, dignity, and rights of the minority [nationalist] community” and that it constituted “an attempt by the majority to stamp their influence, and indeed, their supremacy upon the minority”; that the Order’s claims that it was a purely religious ritual “rang hollow” on nationalist ears, as the Order’s “direct ties with, and influences on, the political forces of unionism were all too evident both historically and at present”; and that over the past two centuries since the Orange parading tradition had begun, “the RUC were shown to be using extreme force to defend the right of the Loyal Orders to parade along very contentious routes.”<sup>56</sup>

The book’s historical narrative opened with an indictment of Portadown as a place of inequity for nationalists: “While Portadown is a relatively wealthy and industrialized town, the nationalist area is one of chronic social and economic deprivation and impoverishment.”<sup>57</sup> The text implied that the town’s unionists enjoyed a

<sup>54</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, 111.

<sup>55</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, 113.

<sup>56</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, 113-14, 135.

<sup>57</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, 111.

disproportionate share of the town's prosperity and reinforced the GRRC's assertions that the nationalist community should be understood as an oppressed minority whose interests must be protected from Orange parading. The narrative then moved backwards in time to show a connection between the town's history of conflict between the Orange Order and local nationalists and the GRRC's current case against the Drumcree parade route.

The narrative proceeded to address the issues of parades in a divided society, and the historical relationship between the Orange Order and the UUP (evidence, the Garvaghy Residents claimed, of the political—rather than religious—nature of Orange parades). The book listed a number of “violent clashes” over Orange parading in Portadown between 1795 and 1912, casting Catholics as the victims of violent aggression at the hands of local Orangemen, their supporters, or both.<sup>58</sup> By providing a history of parading disputes that extended over two centuries, the residents implicitly rejected the notion among some unionists that, prior to the Troubles and the peace process, Catholic nationalists in Northern Ireland had had no problem with Orange parades and oftentimes even turned out to watch them. In the context of the parading disputes of the 1990s, some unionists invoked this collective memory to delegitimize the GRRC's and other groups' protests of Orange parades as newly invented dissent. In fact, the residents' narrative argued, local Catholics had consistently been offended by Orange parades since the tradition began.

The narratives presented in *The Orange Citadel* and *Community under Siege* constituted competing versions of Portadown's history that supported each side's broader Drumcree narrative. Both interpretations drew upon the perceived authority of history as a genre to make different cases. Portadown District argued that the continuance of the Drumcree parade was a crucial aspect of Portadown's contemporary status as a stronghold of unionism in the context of the peace process, while, through the history written by the Garvaghy Residents authorship group, the GRRC advanced the argument that Orange parading was a triumphalist, objectionable practice and that the Drumcree parade must be re-routed away from the Garvaghy Road.

<sup>58</sup> Garvaghy Residents, *Community under Siege*, 116.

## “The Facts”

In addition to writing histories of Drumcree, Portadown District and the GRRC produced publications that were commonly called “information packs” and were aimed at keeping public support for and interest in the cause high. In contrast to the histories examined above, these information packs presented each side’s narrative of Drumcree in a more condensed format that often featured sections called “The Facts,” using certain stylistic conventions that would have conveyed a sense of scientific neutrality to the readers. “The Facts” were generally presented as a list of short, declarative statements. These were widely spaced to allow for easy readability while the reader scanned the page, and they often contained statistical data that was sometimes bolded for maximum impact. By presenting readers with just “the facts,” the producers hoped to guide the readers to intended conclusions: given these truths, surely the only way to handle the Drumcree parade was either to allow it or to ban it, depending on whose information one was reading.

In 1997, the GRRC released the first volume of its organizational newsletter, which included a feature titled “The Facts Tell the Story.”<sup>59</sup> The piece was comprised of a selective summary of the results of a survey conducted by the Review Body of the Parades Commission in the course of its research on the parades issue.<sup>60</sup> The “story” that these particular facts were intended to tell was that the GRRC was representative of the Garvaghy Road residents’ attitudes and wishes, and was therefore a legitimate body for representing their experiences. The article referenced the Order’s critiques of inauthenticity, arguing that “truth and reality shone through” following the publication of the Parades Commission’s survey.<sup>61</sup> Couched in the terms of “telling a story,” the newsletter implied that the truth of the matter of the GRRC’s legitimacy already existed—the story was already there—and “the facts” would serve simply to illustrate it.

<sup>59</sup> GRRC, “Garvaghy Residents Coalition, Vol. 1,” Portadown, March 1997, 2. Dr. Dominic Bryan’s private collection.

<sup>60</sup> The author’s efforts to locate a copy of the survey itself were unsuccessful, as no citations were provided in the GRRC newsletter and the survey was described only in vague terms.

<sup>61</sup> GRRC, “Vol. 1,” 2.

The results of the survey were represented as percentages of respondents who agreed or disagreed with a number of suppositions, and each percentage heralded its own explanatory paragraph in the article. Most of the cited figures fell in the 90s range; listed consecutively, these statistics told a story of a community united on the parades issue. Some of the survey results spoke directly to the question of the GRRC's representativeness: "93% of Catholics questioned locally stated that they were sympathetic" to the GRRC."<sup>62</sup> The perceptions of the remaining residents were not discussed. Other statistics measured residents' opinions on the issues that the GRRC was dealing with, and seemed to show an alignment of popular opinion with the GRRC's positions on these issues: "When asked if a parade should go through where the religious balance of an area is 10% Protestant and 90% Catholic (like the Garvaghy Road), NO Catholics were in favour of a march going ahead."<sup>63</sup> This information was intended to establish the authority of the organization to speak for the Garvaghy community. "The GRRC is clearly a representative and accurate reflection of the majority of the people of this area," the article concluded.<sup>64</sup> This "reality" was simply being brought to light through "the facts." It is important to note that as much as these "facts" were intended to minimize Orange Order allegations that the GRRC did not represent most Garvaghy residents, they may also have been presented in response to the dissenting views on Drumcree that some local nationalists were expressing in the pages of the *Portadown Times* and elsewhere. In a context wherein the GRRC's ability to claim a mandate to act on behalf of the Garvaghy community was of central importance in gaining and maintaining support for the re-routing of the Drumcree parade, the minimization of any opposition from within the community was crucial.

The GRRC produced a similar document, "Portadown and the Marching Season: A Fact Sheet," sometime between late March 1999 and August 2000.<sup>65</sup> This version of "the facts" of Drumcree communicated the GRRC's version of the dispute even more explicitly. It reasserted the arguments made in the earlier "The Facts Tell the Story", declaring unreservedly that, as opposed to Orange and unionist misinformation, "the

<sup>62</sup> GRRC, "Vol. 1," 2.

<sup>63</sup> GRRC, "Vol. 1," 2. All-capitals in original.

<sup>64</sup> GRRC, "Vol. 1," 2.

<sup>65</sup> GRRC, "Portadown and the Marching Season: A Fact Sheet."

above official statistics” proved that the GRRC was representative of the local nationalist community, and again presented statistics as irreproachable evidence of the reality of the situation.<sup>66</sup> The British Army and the RUC were presented as sectarian security forces; the fact sheet characterized their actions in Portadown as efforts “to ensure the passage of” the Drumcree parade along the Garvaghy Road and to “subjugate” the nationalist residents in what amounted to “the imposition of martial law” in the area.<sup>67</sup> The document established Portadown as a “predominantly unionist/Protestant town,” stating that of a total local population of 28,000, only 6,000 were nationalists; as a result, the fact sheet went on to argue, “in Portadown, Catholics/nationalists only feel secure within their own areas.”<sup>68</sup> This assertion supported the GRRC’s arguments that the Drumcree parade constituted a hostile incursion by a group representing the Protestant majority into what was one of the only safe spaces for nationalists in the town, and should thus be re-routed.

The “Marching Season” fact sheet deployed a number of situational comparisons that once again positioned the nationalists as the oppressed minority and the Orangemen as part of a cruel and oppressive majority. It declared that Orange parades “are considered akin to Ku Klux Klan marches through coloured communities in the United States or by neo-Nazi organizations through Jewish or ethnic communities in Europe”; without specifying who viewed the marches this way, the sheet led the reader to understand that this was a generally accepted characterization of Orange parades.<sup>69</sup> It also referred to the murder of local Catholic Robert Hamill by a “lynch mob,” evoking for American readers the emotionally charged connotation of the lynching of black Americans in the United States.<sup>70</sup> Characteristic of the conventions of “The Facts” as a literary device, these statements were presented as a bulleted list, each statement exceedingly declarative so as not to invite any notion that differing interpretations might exist.

<sup>66</sup> GRRC, “Portadown and the Marching Season.”

<sup>67</sup> GRRC, “Portadown and the Marching Season.”

<sup>68</sup> GRRC, “Portadown and the Marching Season.”

<sup>69</sup> GRRC, “Portadown and the Marching Season.”

<sup>70</sup> GRRC, “Portadown and the Marching Season.” Hamill’s murder will be explored further in the next chapter.

In the fallout of the Parades Commission's decision to ban the parade from the Garvaghy Road in 1998 (the first year the Orangemen were actually prevented from completing the parade), the County Armagh Grand Orange Lodge, representing Portadown District, released its own "Information Pack on the Drumcree Parades."<sup>71</sup> The title itself implying objectivity, the material was presented under the premise of discovering who was *really* correct about Drumcree. The pamphlet opened with two questions that demonstrate the central importance of the notions of truth, fact, and the authority of experience at an organizational level: "Who is correct?," the authors asked, and "Is it not reasonable to pose the question [of] who has the greater understanding of what is really happening in relation to the situation in Portadown?"<sup>72</sup> This rhetoric alluded to a reality beyond discourse, a real "happening" that only the Orange Order, and not the Parades Commission, should be authorized to communicate. Four separate lists of facts appeared directly following these potent questions, acting as implied answers. Given their deliberate placement within the discursive conventions of "The Facts," these lists functioned specifically to appear as unquestionable, objective information, thus reinforcing Portadown District's argument that it possessed the true understanding of what was really happening at Drumcree.

The first two lists of facts in the information pack concerned the Garvaghy Road and what were pointedly termed the "Estates *off* the Garvaghy Road."<sup>73</sup> The scope of the presented facts ranged from wide to narrow as the reader continued down the page (see Figure 2.1). There were "approximately **900** houses along the disputed 600-metre stretch of the Garvaghy Road," the facts told the reader, but of those, "only **66 houses** face[d] directly onto the Garvaghy Road."<sup>74</sup> As the reader's eye traveled downward, the bolded numbers continued to grow smaller: "[Fewer] than **10** houses (less than **1%**) have addresses actually on the Garvaghy Road."<sup>75</sup> The reader was left to conclude that, as a matter of fact, only one percent of residents in the Garvaghy Area could reasonably

<sup>71</sup> County Armagh Grand Orange Lodge, "Information Pack on the Drumcree Parades," 1999, P10397, Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

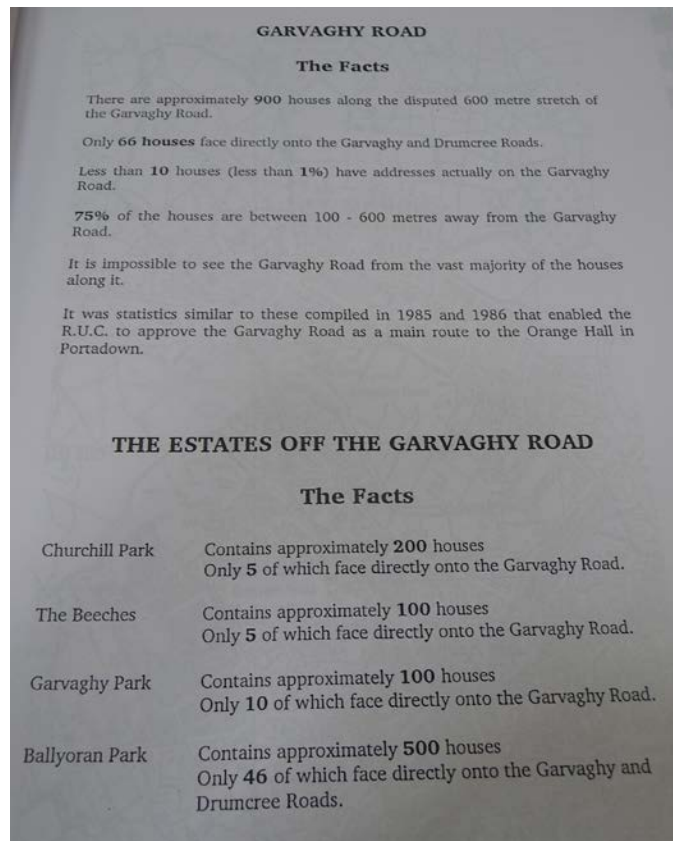
<sup>72</sup> Portadown District, "Information Pack," 1.

<sup>73</sup> Portadown District, "Information Pack," 2. My emphasis.

<sup>74</sup> Portadown District, "Information Pack," 2. Bolded text in original.

<sup>75</sup> Portadown District, "Information Pack," 2. Bolded text in original.

claim to be directly affected—and offended—by the parade. In the following lines of facts, the scope broadened once more to confirm these intended conclusions. Indeed, Portadown District continued, “**75%** of the houses [were] between 100–600 metres away from the Garvaghy Road” and “it [was] impossible to see the Garvaghy Road from the vast majority of the houses along it.”<sup>76</sup>



**Figure 2.1. “Estates off the Garvaghy Road”**

These facts read as an attempt to counter residents’ claims to experiential knowledge, which by 1999 were being advanced in the book *Community under Siege* as well as in the competing information packs that were being produced by the residents and their supporters. In complete contradiction to the picture of community solidarity advanced by the GRRC’s facts, Portadown District’s facts attempted to represent the number of nationalists who were legitimately opposed to the parade as very small,

<sup>76</sup> Portadown District, “Information Pack,” 2. Bolded text in original.



thereby undercutting public perception of a unified community that was offended by the parade.

## Maps

A second central feature of what we might call the “information pack” genre was the inclusion of one or more maps, which were intended to function as explanatory devices for the reader in his or her attempt to make sense of Drumcree. However, as Benedict Anderson has pointed out, maps do not simply reflect understandings of geographic space, but also help to create those understandings.<sup>77</sup> In this way, they serve as a prime example of the project of knowledge production that was happening around Drumcree from the very first days of the dispute in 1995. As we have seen, the debate over Drumcree was rife with competing assertions of truth and reality. In this contest, maps assumed an apparent objectivity as conduits of information and as reflections of reality with regard to the situation in Portadown; they also functioned to lay competing claims to a contested space—the Drumcree parade route and its surrounding communities—on the part of Portadown District and the GRRC.

In 1997, PeaceWatch Ireland, an American organization that had a close affinity with nationalist residents’ groups in Northern Ireland, sent volunteers to Portadown to observe the third standoff over the Drumcree parade. Later that year, the group released an observers’ report ominously titled “Looking into the Abyss.”<sup>78</sup> The report included a series of maps showing geographic spaces in varying scales that were relevant to the dispute. The maps were presented without commentary as an aid for the report’s intended international audience, which would be less familiar than local audiences with the dispute’s spatial context. Following Anderson’s argument, these maps had the capacity to influence and create the reader’s understanding of the spaces in question; PeaceWatch Ireland’s strongly nationalist sympathies created an image of the dispute

<sup>77</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, esp. Chapter 10. New Edition. (London: Verso, 2006).

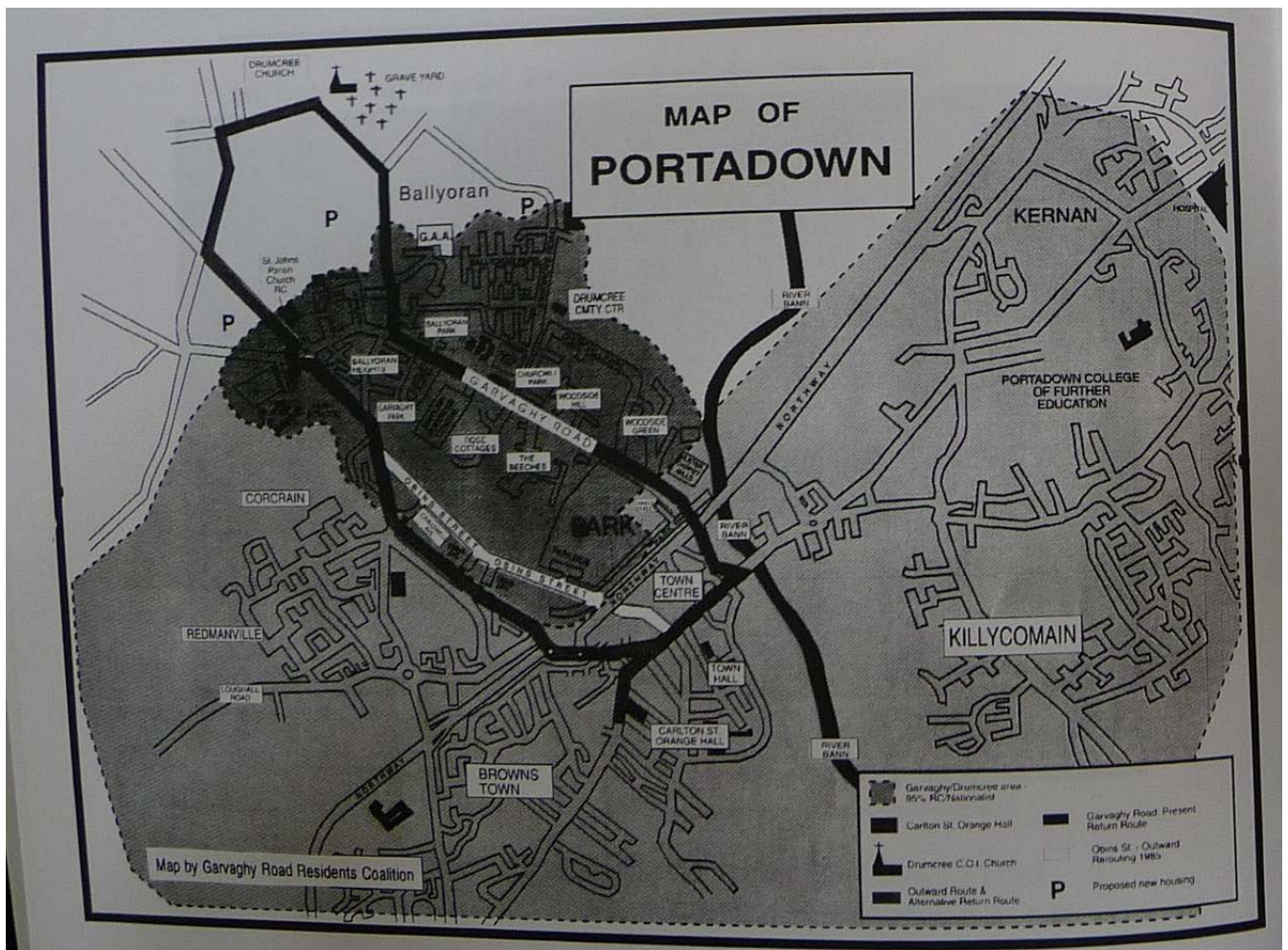
<sup>78</sup> PeaceWatch Ireland, “Looking into the Abyss: Witnesses’ Report from Garvaghy Road, July 4-6, 1997,” 1997, P13327, Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast.

that acted as a model for understanding Drumcree rather than as a mere rendering of the geographic space in which the conflict was taking place.

Following an initial map that showed the island of Ireland with major cities labeled in relation to Portadown, the second map was of Portadown itself, and had been created by the GRRC for inclusion in PeaceWatch Ireland's report.<sup>79</sup> The map presented the Garvaghy area as a nationalist island through two visual strategies: it was shaded more darkly than the rest of Portadown, and its boundaries were marked by a broken black line (see Figure 2.2). The shaded area was labeled "Garvaghy/Drumcree area—95% RC/Nationalist."<sup>80</sup> This representation of the area served to reaffirm the GRRC's oft-repeated argument that Garvaghy was a small safe haven for nationalists in a town dominated by unionists and that the procession of an Orange parade through the area constituted a threat. (Of course, the discrepancy between the article "The Facts Tell the Story," which characterized the area as 90 percent Catholic in the same year, points to the mutable nature of these supposedly authoritative statistics.) The map included in its "Garvaghy/Drumcree area" a number of housing estates inhabited mostly by Protestant residents, such as the Rose Cottages, the Beeches, and Woodside Green. However, beneath the dark grey shading and the blanket categorization of the area as "95% RC/Nationalist," these Protestant residents disappeared from the map's imagining of the spaces relevant to the dispute, becoming a negligible 5 percent that needed not be remarked upon. Further, the presence of dissenting voices *within* the Catholic and nationalist traditions were similarly marginalized by such a labeling of the community. By effectively erasing the potential for conflicting voices from its visual representation of the neighbourhood, the GRRC (through PeaceWatch Ireland) shored up its argument that the Garvaghy Road area was uniform and united in its opposition to the Orange Order parade passing through.

<sup>79</sup> The same map was reproduced in a 1999 "information pack" released by Friends of the Garvaghy Road, an organization closely allied to the GRRC. See Friends of the Garvaghy Road, "Lift the Siege Now!: Information Pack," 1999, P13327, Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast, 19.

<sup>80</sup> "RC" is an abbreviation for "Roman Catholic." PeaceWatch Ireland, "Looking into the Abyss," 14 and Friends of the Garvaghy Road, "Lift the Siege Now!: Information Pack," 19.



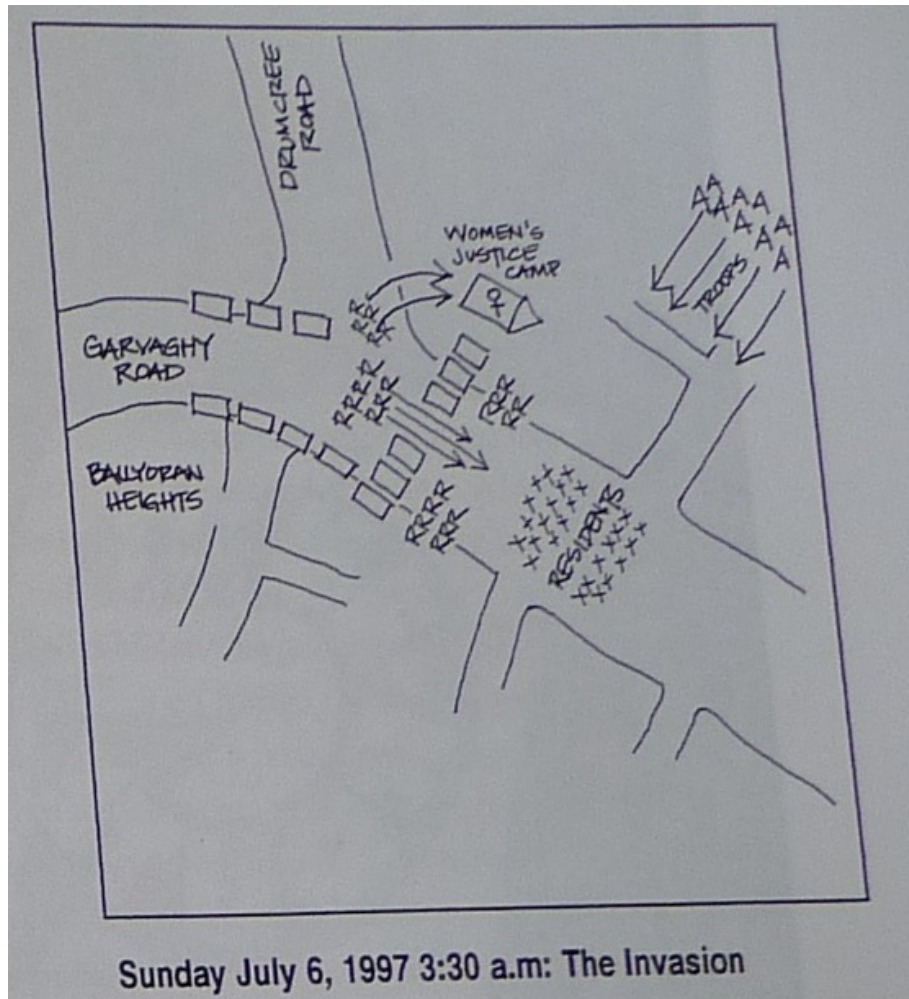
**Figure 2.2. “95% RC/Nationalist”**

The final maps presented in “Looking into the Abyss” were a set of three hand-drawn, stylized maps that described the events of the 1997 standoff through spatial and temporal representation. The first map, called “The Garvagh Road,” was a small-scale view of the road that identified proximate housing estates as well as landmarks such as St. John’s Parish Church.<sup>81</sup> The second map was titled “Sunday July 6, 1997 3:30am: The Invasion,” (see Figure 2.3).<sup>82</sup> At that time, protesting Garvagh residents had been participating in a sit-in on the Road when they were forcibly removed by members of the RUC. The residents were indicated on the map as a small grouping of ‘X’ markings; several lines of ‘Rs,’ representing the RUC, were shown moving in from two directions to

<sup>81</sup> PeaceWatch Ireland, “Looking into the Abyss,” 15.

<sup>82</sup> PeaceWatch Ireland, “Looking into the Abyss,” 15.

confront the residents head-on, while several lines of 'As,' representing the British Army, approached from a side-road. The movement inherent in the scene—characterized as an “invasion”— was represented by a series of arrows pointing towards the residents. RUC Land Rovers, represented as rectangles, lined the streets on either side and created a barrier at the top of the Garvagh Road (opposite the residents' protest) that blocked the Drumcree parade from the road.



**Figure 2.3. “The Invasion”**

The map corresponded directly to a section of the PeaceWatch Ireland report that had likewise been called “Sunday July 6, 1997 3:30am: The Invasion,” making the intended link between the map and the text overt.<sup>83</sup> Comparing the narrative and spatial-

<sup>83</sup> PeaceWatch Ireland, “Looking into the Abyss,” 20.

visual versions of events throws into sharp relief the discursive nature of the maps that were being created not to neutrally describe the Drumcree dispute, but to present it in a particular way. The text served to reinforce the sense of invasion that the map attempted to communicate. The event occurred “in full darkness,” the narrative pointed out, setting a tone of fear and uncertainty.<sup>84</sup> The security forces that were tasked with removing the residents from the road were described as wearing “body armour, riot shields and [wielding] batons” as they “invaded” the majority-Catholic Ballyoran Heights housing estate.<sup>85</sup> As Chapter 1 demonstrated, the image of RUC officers and British Army forces clad in riot gear would have jogged recent memories of the often discriminatory and violent relationship between the Catholic community and the RUC during the Troubles. The RUC vehicles, small rectangles on the map, were described in the narrative as daunting “rows of armoured Land Rovers moving onto Garvaghy Road at high speed, taking up position six abreast.”<sup>86</sup> The text cited witnesses who described a “sudden onset of noise and panic as people began screaming in terror, the pervasive smell of diesel fumes, and the surrounding road of military vehicles,” a visceral and experiential description of the scene not entirely encompassed by the map.<sup>87</sup>

The narrative form also better communicated the perceived violence of the event, a dimension not well-served by the map format:

The security forces fired plastic bullets not only on the road, but at bystanders who were watching but not sitting on the road as part of the nonviolent protest.... A line in front pushed residents roughly off the road with their plastic shields and beat them with batons, while immediately behind them marched troops armed with plastic bullet guns. They started...shooting indiscriminately down the road.<sup>88</sup>

The text reinforced one of PeaceWatch Ireland’s central points—that the residents had been engaged in a nonviolent protest when they were removed from the road—and decisively cast the residents as victims of brutality at the hands of the police and British

<sup>84</sup> PeaceWatch Ireland, “Looking into the Abyss,” 20.

<sup>85</sup> PeaceWatch Ireland, “Looking into the Abyss,” 20.

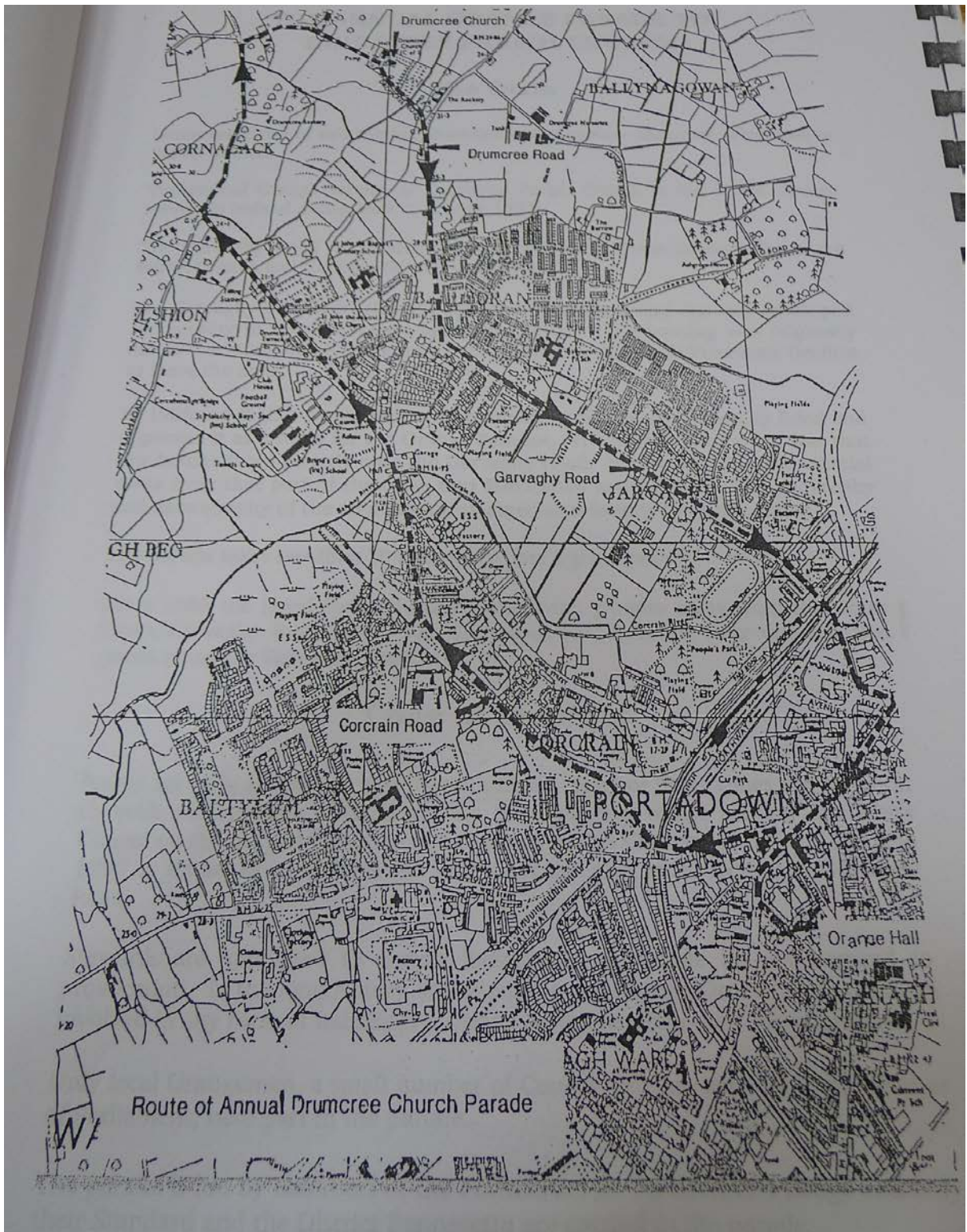
<sup>86</sup> PeaceWatch Ireland, “Looking into the Abyss,” 20-21.

<sup>87</sup> PeaceWatch Ireland, “Looking into the Abyss,” 21.

<sup>88</sup> PeaceWatch Ireland, “Looking into the Abyss,” 21.

Army. Together, the maps and narrative helped to advance the aims of PeaceWatch Ireland and the GRRC: to inspire sympathy for the residents' cause.

The Order's 1999 "Information Pack" also included a map of Portadown. The central feature of this map was the full Drumcree parade loop (including the contested section of the Garvagh Road), indicated by a broken black line with arrows that showed the direction in which the Orangemen walked (see Figure 2.4). While this map did not include quite as much textual commentary as did the examples of the residents' maps listed above, there remained some aspect of narrative within the image that endeavored to characterize Drumcree in a particular way, most notably, as the map's title suggests, as a "church parade." Significantly, while the map produced by the GRRC identified the Garvagh Road area as "95% RC/Nationalist" and marked it with a darker shade of grey to signify this distinct political identity, the Orange Order's map did not ascribe a political or religious identity to the area in any way. In this image, then, the "RC/Nationalist" Garvagh community did not appear to have any particular claim to the road that ran through it, an implicit undermining of the GRRC's argument that the contested Orange parade should not be permitted to travel through a nationalist area where it was not wanted.



**Figure 2.4. "Route of the Annual Drumcree Church Parade"**

Like histories and facts, a map is a form of seemingly objective data. Both sides of the Drumcree dispute attempted to use these vehicles of information to advocate a certain understanding of the dispute. But while both sides were attempting to reflect what they understood to be the realities of Drumcree, they were actually generating new information about the conflict through fundamentally discursive processes of knowledge production. The concerted efforts of Portadown District and the GRRRC to influence public perception of what Drumcree was about, and who was to blame for the violence and disorder with which it was associated, betrays the presence of critical and dissenting understandings of Drumcree in the public conversation around the dispute. The final chapter of this thesis will turn to examine those among Drumcree's audiences, and even those among its participants, who attempted to express and register experiences and opinions on Drumcree that moved outside of Portadown District's and the GRRRC's binary, "two-communities" rendering of the conflict.



## Chapter 3.

### Negotiating Dissent: Drumcree's Discontents

Importantly, the tyranny of the narratives of authoritative experience explored in Chapter 2 often acted to minimize alternative readings of experience in the public discourse around Drumcree, not just between the two communities, but also from within the same community. This process of the marginalization of dissent became an important part of both the process of entrenching sectarian identities within the dispute and the attempts made by the major combatants of each side to establish publicly accepted metanarratives of Drumcree. However, there were moments when individuals within both communities broke with these narratives to express doubt, fear, exasperation, abhorrence, and sometimes even indifference with regard to the dispute. At times, these individuals also made use of sectarian identity categories in order to establish themselves firmly within one of the two communities before venturing to criticize Drumcree in order to underscore the importance of what they were attempting to communicate about the conflict. In self-identifying as "Protestants," "Catholics," "unionists," "loyalists," "nationalists," or any number of other sectarian identity markers, the experiences of Drumcree presented by these dissenting voices demonstrates how, in contrast to those who presented the authority of experience to *support* either Portadown District's or the GRRC's divisive renderings, some people in Northern Ireland were also using experience to authorize alternative understandings of the conflict. These instances hint at the persisting ability of individuals to challenge metanarratives and to negotiate even the most reified of identity categories.

Other kinds of dissent were present in the public conversation around Drumcree as well. The Church of Ireland stands as a particularly prominent example, as it made concerted attempts to distance itself from the dispute, using many of the same strategies as did Portadown District and the GRRC in their efforts to produce knowledge about and

thus influence popular perceptions of the dispute. And finally, this chapter will show that satirical renderings of Drumcree offered both critical public commentary on the dispute as well as relief and catharsis for the dispute's beleaguered audiences.

## **Negotiating Identity under the Tyranny of Narrative**

The letters and testimonies recounted in Chapter 2 told stories of Drumcree according to individuals in Portadown who were invested in the oppositional, two-communities rendering of the dispute, including Orangemen, Garvaghy residents, and supporters of either side who were active in the debate over the parade. The experiences they recounted lined up fairly well with the versions of Drumcree being advanced simultaneously by the Orange Order and the GRRC. However, there were many individuals in Portadown, sometimes even among Orangemen and Garvaghy residents themselves, whose experiences of Drumcree did not line up with either of the official party lines. Voices of dissent were expressed with some regularity in the pages of the *Belfast Telegraph* as well, which received submissions from individuals across the state who were less likely to be directly involved or invested in the dispute over Portadown District's parade. Often these individuals attempted to authorize their own opinions of the dispute by framing their letters within the identity categories of "Protestant," "Catholic," "unionist," "loyalist," or "nationalist" in ways that were similar to the tactics taken by Drumcree's more invested participants. By examining some of these non-conforming interpretations of Drumcree, it becomes clear that there existed a multiplicity of experiences of the dispute and that, despite a privileging of certain identity categories within the public conversation about the conflict, the crystallization of identities was not absolute: individuals resisted, challenged, and negotiated these identity boundaries in their responses to the conflict.

Within days of the conclusion of Drumcree I, individuals who identified as part of the Protestant, unionist, and/or loyalist communities began submitting letters to Northern Ireland's periodicals that expressed their disapproval of the unrest connected with Drumcree, often voicing a desire to disassociate themselves from the conflict. These explicit efforts suggest a concern among these letter writers that all Protestants would be seen as complicit in Portadown District's protest. Although the strength and tone of their

opposition varied, their self-identification as Protestants, unionists, loyalists, and sometimes even as former Orangemen was intended to authorize the expressions of dissent that followed.

The day after Drumcree I had concluded with Portadown District successfully completing the parade down the Garvaghy Road, “Hopeful” wrote: “As a Protestant, I would appeal to members of the Orange Order to have a change of heart about using sensitive areas for their marches.”<sup>1</sup> This identification as Protestant lent the authority and amity of a co-religionist to the voice that was proffering advice to the Orangemen. The descriptor also would have given pause to readers who were more used to hearing those who identified as Protestant express solidarity with the Orange Order; this was perhaps an effect that “Hopeful” was consciously playing upon to strengthen his or her case against the continuance of Orange parades through nationalist areas. In 1996, a similar criticism entered the debate: “I am a Protestant and deeply ashamed of the Orange Order.... Do the majority of Protestants really support these people who are bullies?”<sup>2</sup> “As an Ulster loyalist,” another letter writer began, “I am becoming increasingly ashamed of my fellow loyalists” as a result of the burning of cars and buses, the erection of road blocks, the adverse effects on local trade, and the intimidation of Catholic families that took place during Drumcree II—all “in the name of the Orange Order.”<sup>3</sup> Again, the self-identification “As an Ulster loyalist” underscored the author’s rebuke of the Order-led protests against re-routing. These kinds of appeals to a shared identity gave the writer the authority to criticize: in an oppositional context such as Drumcree, criticisms of the Orange Order from individuals who themselves identified as Protestants, unionists, loyalists, or members of the Orange Order held more weight in unionist circles than did criticisms that emanated from onlookers who identified as Catholic or nationalist, whose opinions could more easily be dismissed as republican prejudice.

Some writers did not include explicit statements of identity in the body of their letters themselves, but allowed their chosen pseudonyms to stand as a similar framework through which to understand their opinions and experiences of Drumcree and

<sup>1</sup> “Hopeful,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 12 July 1995, 12.

<sup>2</sup> P.W., “Not set in stone,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 11 July 1996, 14.

<sup>3</sup> “Ubique,” “Element ever ready for a fight,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 17 July 1996, 14.

other ongoing Orange parading disputes. One witness recounted his or her experience of watching the Order parade during the controversial Ormeau route in Belfast in July 1995 with a tangible sense of repugnance:

For the first time in many years I went to see an Orange parade.... What I witnessed left me sickened and angry. It was an orgy of bigotry and bullying.... What I saw was naked triumphalism and it was disgusting.<sup>4</sup>

The anonymous writer chose to identify him- or herself simply as “Protestant,” the moniker creating an intriguing irony: his or her use of terms like “bigotry” and “triumphalism” were more akin to nationalist experiences of the marching tradition than unionist understandings of it. The connecting of a Protestant identity with criticism of the Orange parading tradition suggests a desire on the part of the author to situate him- or herself outside of any perceived homogeneity of opinion among Protestants on the issue of parading disputes.

Some authors chose to add descriptors to their identity-centered pseudonyms that communicated how they felt about Drumcree. An “Ashamed Protestant” took a hard line in blaming Orange and unionist leadership for the conflict that erupted at Drumcree I: “There can be no excuses: the Orange Order and loyalist leaders Smyth [the Order’s Grand Master], Trimble, and Paisley etc. are responsible for the anarchy surrounding Drumcree.”<sup>5</sup> The chosen nom-de-plume made clear that although he or she was a Protestant, the author stood in direct opposition to Portadown District’s claims that it was not responsible for the unrest and violence perpetrated by independent supporters of its stand against Drumcree’s re-routing. The spectacle of the protest caused the writer to feel ashamed of his or her Protestant identity.

In the same issue of the *Telegraph*, a “True Loyalist” expressed “disgust” at the actions of the individuals participating in the Drumcree II standoff and erecting road blocks; the writer identified these individuals as “‘loyalist’ thugs,” using the quotation marks to imply that these individuals were not *bona fide* loyalists (as evidenced, the

<sup>4</sup> “Protestant,” “Orgy of bigotry and bullying,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 17 July 1995.

<sup>5</sup> “Ashamed Protestant,” “Leadership responsible for anarchy on the streets,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 12 July 1996, 14.

author suggested, by their participation in illegal protesting).<sup>6</sup> The writer, by contrast, was a “true loyalist” whose non-participation in and critical opinion of the illegal aspects of the Drumcree protests were more in line with his or her perception of what loyalism meant. Dominic Bryan has pointed out the discourse of “respectable Orangeism” that operates within Orange and unionist culture; this discourse of respectability was developed, he argues, by those among the ranks of the Orange Order whose interests were to maintain an ascendant position not only above Catholics, but above working-class Protestants as well.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Bryan argues, “respectable Orangeism” is a class-coded term that distinguishes middle-class Orangeism from the rougher, more vulgar Orangeism of the working class.<sup>8</sup> The discourse of respectability certainly ran as a subtext beneath many unionist and even loyalist criticisms of the Drumcree protest; “True Loyalist’s” labeling of *certain* Drumcree protesters—those who erected roadblocks or otherwise disturbed the rule of law and order—as “loyalist’ thugs” acted to disassociate these protestors and their activities from mainstream Orange values and respectable loyalism. Among individuals who made similar kinds of criticisms of the Drumcree protests, it was commonly assumed that the men and women who partook in those types of activities were of the loyalist working classes.

Some letter writers emphasized their identities as Orangemen or Orangewomen before going on to criticize the Order’s protest. An “Ex-Orangeman” noted in 1995 that it was “as a former member of the Orange Order” that he urged the Order to revise its stance against the re-routing of parades: “The Orange Order must accept that times have changed, areas have changed, and the fragile peace we have enjoyed for almost a year has changed attitudes.”<sup>9</sup> He expressed a belief that the Order’s stubborn refusal to allow the alteration of certain flashpoint parade routes was out of step with the social and political context of the 1990s, wherein the majority of the Northern Irish population was beginning to adjust to peace in place of perpetual intercommunal conflict. In the lead-up to the 1997 standoff, the *Portadown Times* received a letter from a “Moderate

<sup>6</sup> “True Loyalist,” “Contradiction in terms,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 12 July 1996, 14.

<sup>7</sup> Bryan, *Orange Parades*, 8.

<sup>8</sup> Bryan, *Orange Parades*, 8.

<sup>9</sup> “Ex-Orangeman,” “Orangemen have no right to cause offense,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 26 July 1995.

Orangeman with no hope.”<sup>10</sup> The opening of his letter confirmed his sense of despair about the situation in Portadown:

I, as an Orangeman, have written to my [Member of Parliament] and [to] Orange leaders, and have taken part in prayer meetings about the Drumcree situation. We are told that the answer to the problem is for moderate Catholic and Protestant people to get together and talk. As I see it this will not do anything unless we get both [official] sides round the table. The way things are going attitudes are getting harder and harder.<sup>11</sup>

The Orangeman expressed frustration that these more extreme views on Drumcree seemed to be winning out among the public, asking: “What hope is there for moderate people in this country?”<sup>12</sup> In the even edgier atmosphere leading up to Drumcree IV, Irene Cree (who chose to identify herself by name in her letter to the *Telegraph*) wrote: “I am a past Worshipful Mistress...and I appeal, in God’s name, to the men of Portadown, not to confront the police on [Drumcree] Sunday.”<sup>13</sup> Cree urged Portadown District to give the new power-sharing Assembly “a chance to fight for our civil and religious liberties and rights in another way,” situating herself as a former leader of a local women’s lodge who opposed the Order’s highly critical stance on the GFA and the new system of governance it had yielded earlier in the year.<sup>14</sup> These letters indicate that, just as there was a range of opinion among Protestants on the issue of Drumcree, so too was there dissent among some Orangemen and Orangemen themselves.

The Northern Ireland Women’s Coalition, a small but effective cross-community political party, also attempted to subvert the official narratives of Drumcree being promoted by the Order and the GRRRC, specifically with regard to the stakes of the

<sup>10</sup> “Moderate Orangeman with no hope,” “What hope for moderate folk?,” *Portadown Times*, 4 July 1997, 35.

<sup>11</sup> “Moderate Orangeman,” “What hope for moderate folk?”

<sup>12</sup> “Moderate Orangeman,” “What hope for moderate folk?”

<sup>13</sup> Irene R. Cree, “For God’s sake turn the other cheek,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 2 July 1998, 11. A Worshipful Mistress acts as leader of a local branch of the Association of Loyal Orangewomen of Ireland; women are not permitted membership in the Orange Order itself.

<sup>14</sup> Cree, “For God’s sake.”

dispute.<sup>15</sup> At the climax of the second standoff over the parade in 1996, Coalition spokeswoman Kate Fearon publicly argued: “The future of Ulster does not depend on what happens at Drumcree.... It lies at multi-party talks where unionists will be well represented.”<sup>16</sup> Here Fearon undermined the Order’s position that Drumcree was of the utmost significance to the unionist community’s future, suggesting instead that unionist participation in the ongoing peace talks was the most significant determining factor in setting a course for the future. Following a Portadown town meeting on the issue of parades in 1997, Coalition member and local resident Chris Moffatt disputed the very foundations of the Order’s official line on Drumcree in a letter to the *Portadown Times*:

For better or worse, Portadown is widely accepted to be a loyalist town. Protestants are in a majority here; their identity is not in doubt. Thus complaints about threats to their culture are just not credible. [Proposals of compromise with Garvaghy residents] cannot be seen as undermining of the Protestant identity or the civil rights of Orangemen in Portadown.<sup>17</sup>

Moffatt encouraged Portadown’s Protestant community to use its “privileged position” as the majority to reach out and establish consensus on Drumcree, concluding optimistically that, beyond even the issue of parades, “the unionist/Protestant community as a whole could show that it is willing, here in Portadown, to begin the task of rebuilding trust.”<sup>18</sup>

Many young people and pensioners also expressed exasperation and dismay with Drumcree, situating their opinions of Drumcree relative to their age or generational identity rather than to any particular religious or political identity category. Emily Young, 15 years old at the time of writing, expressed frustration with what she saw as the

<sup>15</sup> The Northern Ireland Women’s Coalition was formed in 1996 to campaign for election to the Northern Ireland Forum, which was the body in which the all-party negotiations that led to the GFA took place. The Coalition was nonpartisan and did not endorse any position on the question of Northern Ireland’s status within the United Kingdom.

<sup>16</sup> Suzanne Breen, “Women’s coalition appeals for return to all-party talks,” *Irish Times*, 11 July 1996. In this statement, Fearon urged the unionist parties to join the peace talks despite the presence of Sinn Fein at the negotiating table.

<sup>17</sup> Chris Moffatt, “Meeting not a waste of time,” *Portadown Times*, 20 June 1997, 45.

<sup>18</sup> Moffatt, “Meeting not a waste of time.”

stubbornness of Portadown's adults in a letter to the *Times*.<sup>19</sup> Young opened by pointing out her fairly generation-specific experience of attending a cross-community school to establish the foundations of her opinion piece: "I have grown up to have friends from both sides of the community, and I have been brought up to believe that everyone is the same no matter what colour, gender, and in this case religion."<sup>20</sup> She went on to register her disapproval with the lack of progress on the parades issue as the third standoff drew closer and threatened increased levels of violence: "Drumcree is coming very near, and still no compromise has been made. I fear the whole situation will be worse than the past two years put together, because of stubborn people who have a point to make."<sup>21</sup> Like the spokeswoman for the Women's Coalition, Young played down the significance of the parading dispute, running counter to the rhetoric of high stakes constantly being articulated by Portadown District and the GRRC. Assuming the role of spokesperson for her generation, she concluded: "All we [young people] know is that we want peace. It is our future these people are playing with.... Children are suffering because adults won't accommodate each other."<sup>22</sup>

Yet apparently not all children were embracing peace. Following the conclusion of the 1997 standoff, which indeed saw the most violence to date and ended in the RUC's overturning of the Drumcree ban for the third consecutive year, a "Worried Pensioner," evidently an older member of Portadown's nationalist community, urged the residents to compromise in the hopes of avoiding further violence and the radicalization of the next generation of nationalists:

<sup>19</sup> Emily Young, "Children are suffering because adults will not accommodate each other," *Portadown Times*, 4 July 1997, 34.

<sup>20</sup> Young, "Children are suffering." Before the 1990s, integrated education was very rare (and, in fact, it is still relatively rare today); most children attended either Catholic or Protestant schools.

<sup>21</sup> Young, "Children are suffering."

<sup>22</sup> Young, "Children are suffering." It is important to note that some young people expressed more sectarian viewpoints when they wrote the *Times*. In the same month that Young's letter appeared in the paper, there was an exchange over three editions of the *Times* between a letter-writer who called herself "Angry Catholic Girl" and another whose pseudonym was "Protestant Boy." The argument between the two youths was rife with the type of rhetoric espoused by the GRRC and the Orange Order. See *Portadown Times*, "How do you describe the people who took Robert Hamill's life?," 4 July 1997, 34, "Province's flag is not green, white, and gold," 11 July 1997, 27, and "Protest for equality," 25 July 1997, 20.



Drumcree Three is over. Drumcree Four must not take place. I have seen my grandchildren with a [GRRRC] “re-route” poster in their hands and two days later they had bricks. I fear for their future. If the Orangemen will not talk to the residents’ coalition because of its composition then we must offer them an acceptable committee before our children end up in serious trouble.... Both communities have made mistakes but now we must do all we can to prevent further pain and death.<sup>23</sup>

Portadown District’s refusal to enter talks with the GRRRC was a significant point of agitation for many nationalists who were invested in protesting the parade. “Worried Pensioner’s” suggestion that the residents adapt to the district’s demands implicitly challenged the GRRRC’s official stance that the residents held the irreproachable moral high ground in the dispute, and placed some of the responsibility for the rectification of the situation on the GRRRC.

At times during the dispute, a number of letter writers to the *Times* explicitly eschewed *any* association with religious or political identity categories. This, more than anything else, was a sign that despite the powerful narratives of “the Orange side” and “the nationalist side” being propagated by the Order and the GRRRC, individuals continued to challenge prescribed identity categories. Throughout 1997, there was an ongoing dispute in Portadown with regard to the painting of kerbstones and the erecting of flags in certain estates to identify them as nationalist or unionist/loyalist, during which a number of individuals wrote to the *Times* to register their displeasure at being labeled with a certain political identity without their assent.<sup>24</sup> The first letter was published in early July under the pseudonym “Disgruntled”:

With what has now become an annual escapade in Portadown, the Drumcree unrest is looming. There is much tension, particularly in the area in which I live, an area which has already declined badly in the last few months with Union Jack flags appearing in all...parts of the town. This ‘nocturnal’ phenomenon has recently occurred on a lamppost outside my

<sup>23</sup> “Worried Pensioner,” “Fears for the future,” *Portadown Times*, 25 July 1997, 20.

<sup>24</sup> These were commonly-used territorial markers in Northern Ireland’s towns and cities; estates with kerbstones painted green, white, and orange that displayed tricolours and other republican flags were supposedly “nationalist areas,” while estates with kerbstones painted red, white, and blue that displayed Union Jacks and other loyalist flags were “unionist (or loyalist) areas.”

house.... [It] severely invades my privacy and automatically labels me as a so-called loyalist. I have no religious or political affiliation whatsoever.<sup>25</sup>

Despite living in an estate that would to the onlooker appear to be home to a politically homogenous community of unionists and loyalists, "Disgruntled" insisted that he or she did not subscribe to the identity categories of "Protestant" and "loyalist," as denoted by the Union Jack on the nearby lamppost. This letter constituted a refusal to be fit into either of the "two communities." The following month, a "Frightened pensioner" in Killicomaine, a predominantly loyalist housing estate in Portadown, described the kerbstones and flags around the estate as a "horrible red, white, and blue prison," expressing a similar dissociation with the political identity category automatically ascribed to the families whose homes fell within the demarcated boundaries of the painted kerbs.<sup>26</sup> In an article about the contentious territorialisation of space with painted kerbs and flags, a resident of the supposedly loyalist Broomhill estate was quoted as saying that "the colours and the cause those colours purport to represent don't matter to me."<sup>27</sup>

Locals who *did* feel themselves to be part of the loyalist community wrote responses to these individuals, often making clear attempts to quash or marginalize the voices of dissent communicated in the original letters. Another "Broomhill resident" wrote: "In response to the article in last week's *Times* regarding the flying of Union flags in the Broomhill estate, I wish to make it known that the vast majority of residents...are 100 percent behind the displaying of our national flag. Broomhill is a 100 percent Protestant area and always has been."<sup>28</sup> Responding to "Frightened pensioner's" assertion that Killicomaine had become a slum, "Loyalist Killicomaine" reaffirmed the

<sup>25</sup> "Disgruntled," "Concern at flags issue and apathy," *Portadown Times*, 4 July 1997, 35.

<sup>26</sup> "Frightened Pensioner," "Seeing red over paint," *Portadown Times*, 15 August 1997, 25.

<sup>27</sup> *Portadown Times*, "Flags display has residents in a flap," 22 August 1997, 19.

<sup>28</sup> "Broomhill Resident," "Broomhill will always fly the flag," *Portadown Times*, 29 August 1997, 14.

area's loyalist identity and declared, "I myself... am very proud to...keep my blinds open to look at 'the red, white, and blue prison' as you have described it."<sup>29</sup>

Similar contests occurred among local nationalists. When a letter from "Nationalist with a small 'n'" suggested that "We, the nationalist people, must now [after Drumcree III] realize that our spokesman in the negotiations [Mac Cionnaith] was the wrong choice," another individual retorted, "As a Garvaghy Road resident....I find your views ill-informed in the extreme, unhelpful to our cause, and utterly offensive.... I know I speak for the community when I say that we are behind...Mac Cionnaith and the Garvaghy Road Residents Coalition 100 percent."<sup>30</sup> But despite this kind of pressure, individuals continued to express opposition and levy challenges to the apparently self-evident identities of "Protestant," "loyalist," "Catholic," and "nationalist" when it came to Drumcree.

Beyond simply expressing dissenting opinions on Drumcree, it was also not uncommon for letters to the editor to declare outright a perceived sense of stubbornness and stupidity on the part of both sides in Portadown.<sup>31</sup> These letters demonstrated the wider public's awareness that the world's eyes were upon Portadown and Northern Ireland each July, with many individuals expressing a corresponding sense of embarrassment about the potential of Drumcree to negatively affect world opinion of Northern Ireland. "The spectacle we present to the world [at Drumcree] is shameful," one woman declared.<sup>32</sup> Another commenter expressed regret that, "Unfortunately, this turn of events [Drumcree I] will be viewed around the world in a negative way."<sup>33</sup> At the conclusion of Drumcree II, letter-writer Bill Andrews remarked disappointedly that "Once again, the world is left to look on, bemused by the tribal feudalism that is so intrinsically

<sup>29</sup> "Loyalist Killicomaine," "Seeing red, white, and blue – and proud of it!," *Portadown Times*, 25 August 1997, 14.

<sup>30</sup> *Portadown Times*, "Garvaghy residents deserve a better spokesman," 25 July 1997, 20, and "Garvaghy Residents' Coalition is the voice of our community," 8 August 1997, 26.

<sup>31</sup> One letter writer suggested jokingly that NASA's Mars Pathfinder, which had been launched in December 1996, would be put to better use searching for signs of intelligent life in Portadown. B. Andrews, "Time to explore earthly mysteries," *Belfast Telegraph*, 11 July 1997, 11.

<sup>32</sup> "RUC Mum," untitled letter to the editor, *Belfast Telegraph*, 17 July 1995.

<sup>33</sup> "Disbeliever," "Presenting a negative view," *Belfast Telegraph*, 17 July 1995.

linked to the symbolism and ritualism of the opposing factions.”<sup>34</sup> A week later, an anonymous cleric wrote the *Telegraph* to lambast both sides for the “disgraceful orgy of violence” that had just occurred and to lament the effect that the second standoff would have on “the good name” of Northern Ireland.<sup>35</sup>

## **Between a Rock and a Hard Place: The Church of Ireland Navigates Drumcree**

As the letters to the editor written by some uneasy and critical Protestants suggested, Drumcree had, in the eyes of some of the dispute’s audiences, cast Orangeism, Protestantism, and Northern Ireland itself in a negative light. The Church of Ireland was placed in a particularly precarious position with regard to the conflict—a position that became less and less tenable as the violence and unrest associated with the dispute, and in particular with the Orangemen and some of their more hardline loyalist supporters, increased with each passing year’s standoff.

The Church had been drawn unwillingly into Drumcree’s spotlight, embroiled in the dispute on a number of levels. One of the most significant and oft-repeated elements of the Orange Order’s arguments for the continuance of the parade was the fact that the parade hinged on Sunday service at the local Church of Ireland parish church, with the Order often spinning the Drumcree parade as a walk back to town from church; indeed, many Portadown Orangemen were members of the Church of Ireland. The Drumcree Parish Church building itself emerged as a physical and visual symbol of the dispute (to the consternation of Church of Ireland leadership); and, in his capacity as rector of the church, the Reverend John Pickering became a fairly prominent figure each year at

<sup>34</sup> Bill Andrews, “We must learn from Drumcree,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 12 July 1996, 14.

<sup>35</sup> “Concerned Cleric,” “One-side view taken by Cardinal Daly,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 18 July 1996, 16.

Drumcree and a *de facto* liaison between the Orangemen and the RUC during each year's standoff.<sup>36</sup>

In light of these apparent connections with Drumcree, the Church of Ireland attempted to distance itself from what was seen as an embarrassing and potentially damaging public relations nightmare. The Church presented a version of Drumcree that held that the parading protest had nothing to do with the Church of Ireland and very little to do with Protestantism, running directly counter to the Orange Order's characterization of the religious nature of the parading tradition and of the Drumcree dispute, and providing yet another understanding of the dispute for the public to consider.

The fact that many of the Orangemen involved in the conflict were themselves Anglicans placed the Church in the awkward position of having to negotiate a response to the sections of its leadership and membership who were critical of Drumcree as well as to those who were themselves participants in or supporters of the conflict. For indeed, many Church of Ireland members, particularly those who lived outside of Portadown, were uncomfortable with and embarrassed by the church's perceived involvement with Drumcree. In November 1995, for example, members of the GRRC traveled to the Republic to address a meeting of an organization called the Meath Peace Group as part of a series of public talks on the issue of Orange parades in Northern Ireland. An exchange between Joe Duffy of the GRRC and one Reverend John Clarke of Navan, County Meath, during the question period of the evening reveals an early sense of tension among Anglicans who were anxious to distance their Church from the dispute. In the context of answering a question from another audience member about the Drumcree parade route, Duffy criticized the Church of Ireland's role in the conflict:

The Orange Order marches out to the Church of Ireland church, with Archbishop Eames just a few miles down the road in Armagh [the Church of Ireland's headquarters in Northern Ireland], but they never make any comment.... The Church of Ireland seems to wash their hands of it...and

<sup>36</sup> Although the Archbishop of Armagh (the ecclesiastical head of the church), Dr. Robin Eames, was based in Armagh in Northern Ireland, much of the Church of Ireland leadership was based in Dublin, and its efforts to control the ways in which the Drumcree Parish Church was being utilized in Orange and unionist renderings of the dispute revealed a core-periphery tension between the Church's leadership and Pickering, leader of one of the church's northern outposts.

they've had something to do with it because it's their church [the Orangemen] are parading to.<sup>37</sup>

At this point, Clarke interjected to contest Duffy's characterization of the Church's involvement and to distance himself personally, as a member of the Church of Ireland, from any connection with his Orange co-religionists' activities at Drumcree:

I may not speak for Dr. Eames, but I'm quite sure he wouldn't be very excited by the fact that [the Orangemen] are using the church.... Somebody made the comment earlier on that the Orange Order was something to do with religion—I would have to deny that it has anything to do with my religion or indeed my perception of my denomination. I'm obviously a member of the Church of Ireland. I get by a full year perhaps never even thinking of the Orange Order and it does not have anything to do with my faith. Nothing whatsoever! [The Order is] to do with tradition; it's to do with bigotry; it's to do with triumphalism. It has got nothing whatever to do with Anglicanism or the Church of Ireland as I perceive it.<sup>38</sup>

Clarke's vehement denial of any significant connection between Anglicanism and the Orange Order was characteristic of the attitude towards Drumcree expressed by many Anglicans who were unsupportive of the Orangemen's protest and were moved or incited enough by the conflict to comment publicly on it.

In addition to criticism from the general membership, many Church of Ireland clergy in the Republic of Ireland were also critical, not only of Drumcree, but of the Church leadership's own response to the conflict. In the early years of the dispute, Church leadership declined to comment in an official capacity on Drumcree; in an editorial published a month after the second standoff in 1996, retired Church of Ireland Canon William Arlow criticized what he perceived to be a "strange silence" on the part of

<sup>37</sup> Meath Peace Group, *Orange Marches in Portadown: The Garvaghy Road Residents' Perspective*, Public Speakers' Series No. 19, 13 November 1995, official transcript, 23. Dr. Dominic Bryan's private collection.

<sup>38</sup> Meath Peace Group, *Orange Marches*, 24.

Church leaders with regard to dispute.<sup>39</sup> Arlow expressed concern that the physical church building had become “a symbol of insurrection” in the media following the standoffs of July 1995 and 1996, and he urged the Church of Ireland to “make it clear” to the Orangemen that, in 1997, they would not be welcome at Drumcree Parish Church on the day of the parade unless the Order was prepared to promise that the parade and any related protest would be held within the confines of the law.<sup>40</sup> Arlow’s greatest concern was that media reports on the parade had perpetuated “the impression that the Church of Ireland either fostered the insurrection or was too cowardly to stand up for law and order.”<sup>41</sup>

Some clergymen went even further than Arlow in their criticisms, calling for an unequivocal dissociation of the Church with the dispute. In 1996, Reverend John Neill, Bishop of Tuam (who later became Bishop of Dublin), stated that many clergy found the Church’s association with the events at Drumcree “deeply embarrassing and offensive.”<sup>42</sup> Addressing his diocesan synod that year, Neill explicitly undercut the Orange Order’s characterization of the parade in saying: “The threat of extreme violence, the use of church property by the Orange Order, the perpetuation of the myth that because a march is to a service of worship, it is a quasi-religious occasion, are features of recent events with which we cannot identify in any manner.”<sup>43</sup> Neill called on Church leadership to exhibit “radical and costly courage” in censuring the conflict.<sup>44</sup>

In response to the rising unease among its membership and clergy outside of Portadown, the Church of Ireland became increasingly public and vocal in its disapproval of Drumcree, with Archbishop Eames acting to voice the Church’s concerns in press statements, editorials, and synod meetings. Prompted by the events of the 1996

<sup>39</sup> William Arlow, “A church used as a symbol of insurrection,” *Irish Times*, 6 August 1996, and “‘We must grasp nettle,’ says cleric,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 8 August 1996. The printing of Arlow’s editorial in both the *Times* and the *Telegraph* signifies an audience for his opinion on both sides of the border.

<sup>40</sup> Arlow, “A church used as a symbol of insurrection.”

<sup>41</sup> Arlow, “A church used as a symbol of insurrection.”

<sup>42</sup> John Neill, quoted in Andy Pollak, “Drumcree C of I link ‘offensive,’” *Irish Times*, 30 September 1996, 9.

<sup>43</sup> Neill, quoted in Pollak, “Drumcree C of I link ‘offensive.’”

<sup>44</sup> Neill, quoted in Pollak, “Drumcree C of I link ‘offensive.’”

standoff, the Church of Ireland General Synod called for an investigation to be conducted into possible sectarianism within the church in April 1997.<sup>45</sup> The Archdeacon who tabled the motion noted the damage that conflicts like Drumcree were likely having on relations amongst its membership and on the church's public image: "The unity of our church is endangered; its standing nationally and internationally is demeaned...when we appear to accommodate to, or temporize with, sectarianism."<sup>46</sup> The Archdeacon who seconded the motion suggested that in certain circumstances, bishops (representing Church leadership) should be given constitutional authority over the use of church buildings, demonstrating the extent to which some clergymen felt that control had to be exerted over Drumcree Parish.<sup>47</sup>

The motion was passed at the General Synod in May 1997. Drumcree was the central topic of Archbishop Eames's presidential address during that meeting; Eames condemned the use of violence, intimidation, and threats in the context of Orange parading disputes, and restated the Church's opposition to sectarianism.<sup>48</sup> In an editorial summarizing and offering commentary on the presidential address, the Church of Ireland chaplain for the University of Ulster noted that the offensiveness of the violence associated with Drumcree was "much magnified" when the Orange and loyalist protesters' stated justification was "the inability to walk to and from Anglican public worship without unnecessary diversions."<sup>49</sup> During the standoff that ensued nonetheless

<sup>45</sup> "Deans will push debate on Drumcree Three at Synod," *Belfast Telegraph*, 26 April 1997.

<sup>46</sup> Patsy McGarry, "Rector opposes sectarianism inquiry," *Irish Times*, 14 May 1997, 8.

<sup>47</sup> At that time, local administration in each parish had authority over how church buildings were used. Pickering opposed the call and pleaded with the Synod to empathize with his proximity to the dispute and to the Orangemen involved, many of whom were regular parishioners at Drumcree Church. He continued over the years to counter criticisms of his perceived role in Drumcree as an ally of the Orangemen and criticisms of Drumcree Parish as a haven for sectarianism; he also maintained his position that no one would be turned away from his church services throughout the dispute; see "Life in a parish of unsought notoriety; Drumcree: The Countdown," *Belfast News Letter*, 5 July 1997, 5 and John Pickering, "It would be good if it were all over and all were agreeable," *Irish Times*, 5 July 1997, 13. Pickering retired in 2007. In 2009, he published a memoir of the dispute that was comprised of his memories and experiences as rector; the book constituted a final attempt to present his "side" of Drumcree to the public. John A. Pickering, *Drumcree* (Belfast: Ambassador, 2009).

<sup>48</sup> John Bach, "Why Eames had to walk a tightrope," *Belfast Telegraph*, 19 May 1997. Unfortunately, no archived transcript of the 1997 Presidential Address exists in physical or digital archives that were accessible to the author.

<sup>49</sup> Bach, "Why Eames had to walk a tightrope."



in July, Eames urged the Portadown Orangemen to show restraint as the days wore on. His words betrayed continuing concern about the Church's public image: "With the eyes of the world upon you at this time, I ask you to reflect the ethos of your culture with respect and dignity."<sup>50</sup>

Indeed, much of the criticism leveled at Drumcree and the Orangemen by clergymen and others associated with the Church of Ireland seemed to be equally as concerned about the potential of the dispute to tarnish the Church's image as it was with the conflict's effects on community relations in Portadown and Northern Ireland. This concern about the potential liability of any connection with Drumcree was greatly exacerbated by the extreme violence that characterized the 1998 standoff, which saw the murder of the young Quinn brothers, and marked the beginning of the decline of the Orange Order's popular support among more politically moderate people in its protest of the parade's re-routing.

In October of that year, Eames made a presidential address to the Diocesan Synod in Armagh (in whose catchment area Drumcree Parish fell), the central and stated theme of which was "perception."<sup>51</sup> Eames spoke in great detail about Drumcree. He began by asserting that the dispute had become prominent above all else in popular perceptions of the Church, both within Northern Ireland and internationally:

For many who read the headlines, watch television, or listen to the radio in this country and right across the world, the perception can be summed up in one word: Drumcree.... Across the world, images of Drumcree Church, its spire, its graveyard, its grounds, and its parish hall have been portrayed not in terms of Saint Patrick, not in terms of Christian ministry, not in terms of missionary outreach—not even in terms of the love of Jesus Christ—they have been portrayed as the scene of violence, sectarianism, mass gatherings, and disorder.<sup>52</sup>

He went on to give an explication of the dispute that included a pointed distancing of Drumcree Parish and its parishioners from the annual parading protest: "In the past few

<sup>50</sup> "Dignity appeal to Portadown Orangemen," *Belfast News Letter*, 7 July 1997, 9.

<sup>51</sup> Diocese of Armagh, "Diocesan Synod 1998: Presidential Address," P9570, Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast.

<sup>52</sup> Diocese of Armagh, "Presidential Address," 4-5.

years, the rector and people of Drumcree have found themselves hostage to a situation which has received global attention. They have been surrounded by many thousands of people who have nothing to do with the parish of Drumcree.”<sup>53</sup> In advancing this version, Eames attempted to dissociate the Church of Ireland from the Orange Order’s protest against the re-routing of the parade. This goal was underlined by a moment about halfway through the address, when Eames became quite explicit about the distinction between the Orange Order and the Church of Ireland:

We recognize that members of the Loyal Orders attend [Anglican] services across the province each year and in the vast number of cases, such events occur peacefully and without trouble. Nevertheless, it is important to state quite clearly a simple but important fact: irrespective of history, the Church of Ireland does not own the Orange Order; the Orange Order does not own the Church of Ireland.<sup>54</sup>

In the Church-published copy of the address, the final two clauses in this passage were bolded and isolated as bulleted points from the rest of the text, indicating that Eames had given them the utmost emphasis as he spoke.

In 1999, the Church’s attempts to distance itself from Drumcree culminated in the production of its own “media information” pack on the dispute, similar to those released by the Orange Order and the GRRC.<sup>55</sup> The packet reveals the “tightrope” that the Church of Ireland had to walk on the Drumcree question: it provided many of the major elements of the Orange Order’s version of Drumcree while at the same time issuing some of its strongest censure of Drumcree-related unrest and violence to date.<sup>56</sup> Ultimately, it stands as the point at which the Church became most proactive in attempting to shape media coverage of the dispute and public perceptions of how the Church was or was not connected to it. Although its circulation is unknown, as a “media information” pack, it was likely distributed and addressed to interested Northern Irish and international media outlets in advance of Drumcree V.

<sup>53</sup> Diocese of Armagh, “Presidential Address,” 6.

<sup>54</sup> Diocese of Armagh, “Presidential Address,” 11.

<sup>55</sup> Church of Ireland Press Office, “Media Information, Drumcree 1999,” P10398, Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast.

<sup>56</sup> John Bach, “Why Eames had to walk a tightrope.”

The packet opened with a summary of the Church of Ireland's efforts throughout 1998 and 1999 to bring the impasse between Portadown District and the GRRC to an end. During his presidential address at the Armagh Diocesan Synod in October 1998, Archbishop Eames had issued a call for Portadown District to endorse a set of three pledges with regard to the following July's expected protest: to avoid "any action before or after the service [preceding the Drumcree parade] which diminishes the sanctity of that worship"; to obey the law of the land before and after the service; and to respect the integrity of the Church of Ireland "by word and action and [by] the avoidance of the use of all church property" in any protests following the service.<sup>57</sup> At the General Synod in May 1999, the Church passed an official resolution endorsing Eames's pledges.<sup>58</sup>

The section that opened the media information pack, entitled "Efforts to Encourage Resolution," presented a bulleted, chronological list of the dialogue that had occurred between the Church of Ireland and Portadown District since Eames had issued the pledges; the list focused on proving the Church's sincere efforts to bring Drumcree to a close, which would have been crucial in ensuring that the media's coverage of the dispute did not represent the Church of Ireland as an antagonist in or an accessory to the conflict. The correspondence between the Church and the Portadown Orangemen on the matter of the pledges took place mostly in an exchange of letters between the two; each of these was included as an appendix in the media information packet, which suggests that the Church felt it necessary or advisable to include indisputable proof of the oppositional nature of the relationship between itself and the Order on the matter of Drumcree.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Diocese of Armagh, "Presidential Address," 10.

<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, the General Synod requested that, should Portadown District refuse to adopt the three pledges laid out for them, the lodge's standing invitation to participate in worship on the Sunday of Drumcree be withdrawn by Reverend Pickering, who remained extremely averse to the idea of denying any individual entrance to worship. Church of Ireland Press Office, "Media Information, Drumcree 1999," P10398, Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast.

<sup>59</sup> Church of Ireland Press Office, "Media Information," 6-11.

## **“In levity there is relief”: Satirical Interpretations of the Dispute**

The Church’s increasingly explicit efforts to absent itself from inclusion in Portadown District’s Drumcree narrative were prompted by the elevation in violence, rioting, and international attention that the dispute garnered with each passing year. Indeed, although the vast majority of people in Northern Ireland were not directly involved in Drumcree, by the late 1990s, the conflict was something that many in the broader public felt personally affected by in some way or other, most often through encountering road blocks on major motorways, rioting in the streets of Belfast, occasional curfews in flashpoint areas, and through the torrent of reports that headlined the nightly news during each standoff and throughout the year as circumstances dictated.

This upswing in intercommunal tension saw intermittent outbursts of violence connected with parading disputes around the state. Of course, the murder of the young Quinn brothers during Drumcree IV in 1998 marked this social fever pitch most sharply. However, the Quinn boys were not the only, or even the first, casualties directly associated with Drumcree. At the height of Drumcree II, Michael McGoldrick, a Catholic taxi driver, was shot in his car outside of Lurgan, near Portadown. The attack bore the hallmarks of a loyalist paramilitary killing, although no group claimed responsibility.<sup>60</sup> On 27 April 1997, Robert Hamill, a 25-year-old Catholic man who hailed from the Obins Street area, was severely beaten by a group of about 30 loyalists as he walked home from a function at St. Patrick’s Hall in the town centre. Hamill suffered a fractured skull;

<sup>60</sup> The murder occurred on 9 July 1996. Driving a taxi had been a dangerous job for Catholic men during the Troubles. Most taxi companies were known to be either Protestant or Catholic, and in the 1980s, loyalist paramilitaries began targeting Catholic firms by ringing for a taxi and then killing the driver in a practice known colloquially as “Dial-a-Taig.” (“Taig” is a derogatory term for Catholics.) In 2003, local loyalist Clifford McKeown was convicted of McGoldrick’s killing. He told the court that he had carried out the murder as a birthday gift for Billy Wright, then the leader of the local UVF brigade. “Loyalist guilty of taxi murder,” BBC News Website, 20 March 2003, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/northern\\_ireland/2868117.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/northern_ireland/2868117.stm), accessed 12 August 2013.

11 days later, he died of his injuries in hospital.<sup>61</sup> Many in the local nationalist community believed that the RUC had colluded in Hamill's death; this conviction further soured the already-uneasy relationship between nationalists and police in the area, and became an oft-repeated element of nationalist and GRRC discourse about Drumcree.<sup>62</sup> In March 1999, GRRC solicitor and well-known civil rights activist Rosemary Nelson was killed by a car bomb outside her home in Lurgan; the murder was claimed by the loyalist paramilitary group The Red Hand Defenders.<sup>63</sup> Nelson's death prompted its own accusations of collusion and calls for independent investigation among nationalists.<sup>64</sup>

These deaths occurred in a broader context wherein Northern Ireland was threatened with a regression back to the turbulent sectarian violence that had characterized the state throughout the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>65</sup> The notion that Drumcree in particular was pushing Northern Ireland—and, by 1999, the peace process itself—to “the

<sup>61</sup> Suzanne Breen, “Tensions rise after death of Catholic beaten by loyalist gang,” *Irish Times*, 9 May 1997.

<sup>62</sup> Two witnesses who had been walking home with Hamill asserted that there had been RUC officers stationed in view of the attack who had not gotten out of their patrol car to intervene or offer emergency medical attention. These accusations were quickly taken up by Hamill's parents, the GRRC's Breandán Mac Cionnaith, and the Republic of Ireland, all of whom demanded an inquiry into the murder. See “Murder probe; grieving fiancée slams police with death horror,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 9 May 1997, “Catholic dies after beating by loyalists,” *The Guardian*, 9 May 1997, and “Dublin demands inquiry into killing,” *The Independent* (London), 10 May 1997. A 2009 inquiry into Hamill's murder led to the prosecution of three people, including an RUC officer who was present at the scene. Gerry Moriarty, “Former RUC officer to be charged in Hamill case,” *Irish Times*, 22 December 2010.

<sup>63</sup> “Outrage; loyalist terror group claims lawyer's killing,” *Belfast News Letter*, 15 March 1999.

<sup>64</sup> Gerry Moriarty, “Nelson investigation a tough challenge for Flanagan and his force,” *Irish Times*, 17 March 1999. In 2011, a public inquiry found that there was no evidence of direct collusion on the part of security forces in Nelson's death. “Rosemary Nelson inquiry: ‘No collusion’ in murder,” BBC News Website, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-13500047>, accessed 12 August 2013. Nelson's family held that the report showed that the RUC had not responded adequately to previous threats against Nelson's life.

<sup>65</sup> In terms of republican violence, this trend was most infamously marked on 15 August 1998, when a bomb planted by the Real IRA in the town centre of Omagh, County Tyrone, killed 29 civilians and saw 220 others injured. The Real IRA was a splinter group that had broken away from the IRA in November 1997; its members believed that Sinn Féin's and the IRA leadership's support of the peace process constituted a betrayal of republicanism. The three warnings that had been called in by members of the Real IRA in advance of the bomb's detonation (as was the custom in many republican bombings) offered conflicting information, and led the police to inadvertently push shoppers *towards* the 500-pound car bomb at the bottom of Omagh's Market Street after clearing another area further up the street, resulting in the extraordinarily large death toll.

brink” was extremely common in regional and international media coverage of the conflict.<sup>66</sup> The prospect of a wholesale return to intercommunal violence prompted anxiety and frustration among those sections of the public that did not support either side at Drumcree.

Satire provided what was at once a forum for public criticism of the conflict and a significant relief valve that allowed for the dissipation of these social pressures through humour. Indeed, as historian Natalie Zemon Davis has recently noted, “In levity, there is relief.”<sup>67</sup> Satire of Drumcree offered a shared space—and the prospect of a shared catharsis—wherein people of both Catholic and Protestant backgrounds, as well as people who did not identify with either of the two communities, could feel united as an audience of insiders who understood and approved of the often biting and serious criticisms beneath the jokes, and were laughing along with the satirists as they offered up Drumcree’s participants for ridicule.

### ***Drumcree Holidays '97***

In advance of the third Drumcree standoff, a satirical flyer made the rounds in Portadown and other small towns nearby, advertising “Drumcree Holidays '97...Ireland’s only outdoor holiday camp!”<sup>68</sup> The flyer proclaimed that “Drumcree Holidays ” would bring a “[four- to five-] day break,” humorously referencing what was, in reality, the serious possibility that the threat of rioting and violence during the coming July’s standoff would shut down local businesses, schools, streets, and motorways for the duration of the dispute.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>66</sup> See, for example, Severin Carrell, “Ulster on the brink of mayhem,” *The Scotsman*, 10 July 1998, “A town in turmoil; Drumcree fall-out: Proximity talks must be reconvened as soon as possible,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 9 September 1998, Liam Clarke and Vincent Kearney, “On the brink,” *Sunday Times* (London), 27 June 1999, “Back to violence; Ulster deal teeters on the brink,” *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney), 7 July 1999, and “Drumcree pushing Ulster to brink of anarchy,” *Birmingham Post*, 12 July 2000.

<sup>67</sup> Natalie Zemon Davis, “‘Leo Africanus’ Discovers Comedy: Genre Intersection and its Aftermath,” keynote address, Canadian Historical Association annual conference, Victoria, British Columbia, 3 June 2013.

<sup>68</sup> Anonymous, “Drumcree Holidays '97,” author’s private collection.

<sup>69</sup> “Drumcree Holidays '97.”

The document was anonymously produced, and unfortunately yields no definitive answer as to its provenance, whether from within the local nationalist community or from the unionist fold. It came into the author's possession during a 2009 visit to "Diamond Dan's Cottage," an Orange museum in Loughgall; museum owner Hilda Winter had taken great delight in the flyer when it was first circulated, and had collected a few copies for the museum's small private archive.<sup>70</sup> Winter believed it had been produced by local unionists, and held it up as evidence that supporters of the Orangemen were taking the dispute in good stride and with good humour. As she glanced over the flyer, she had reminisced fondly about the early years of the dispute. She asserted that, prior to the extreme violence that had occurred in 1998, and in contrast to popular perceptions of Drumcree as another instance of Orange humourlessness, between 1995 and 1997, Drumcree had in fact been "a bit of good *craic*"—a welcome shot of excitement and camaraderie for Portadown's unionists each summer.<sup>71</sup> But although Winter believed that unionists had produced the flyer, there are a number of clues that suggest origins within the nationalist community, or perhaps the authorship of an observer outside both communities.

It took considerable liberties with some of the area's most dangerous loyalists in its tongue-in-cheek reference to the infamous "digger" episode. "New thrills!," the flyer proclaimed jovially, "Ride on the Big Orange Digger!"<sup>72</sup> The Orange side had come under fire in 1996 due to the presence of Billy Wright amongst the ranks of the Orangemen at the second standoff. Wright, then the leader of the local brigade of the UVF, was a polarizing, notoriously ruthless, sectarian, and hardline loyalist.<sup>73</sup> His attendance at Drumcree II had caused considerable controversy among the unionist and nationalist communities alike. Unionists who were critical of Wright's presence there felt

<sup>70</sup> Diamond Dan's Cottage is famous as the place where the Orange Order was founded in 1795.

<sup>71</sup> Hilda Winter, conversation with the author, Loughgall, Co. Armagh, 30 August 2009. "*Craic*," sometimes spelled "crack," is a colloquial term for fun, entertainment, enjoyable conversation, and a generally good social atmosphere. It is widely used by both Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland.

<sup>72</sup> "Drumcree Holidays '97."

<sup>73</sup> Wright went on to form his own splinter group, the Loyalist Volunteer Force, which quickly gained a reputation for exceeding brutality and wanton sectarian violence, and often came into conflict with the UVF.

that his association with the Drumcree protest reflected poorly on the Orange Order and its cause, while nationalists were outraged that UUP leader David Trimble had apparently met with Wright during the standoff while continuing to refuse to meet Sinn Féin in all-party talks because of the party's connections to the IRA. The flyer's reference to Wright's association with Drumcree would seem to have been something that nationalist satirists would recall in jest more readily than their unionist counterparts.

During the course of the standoff, Wright and a number of his associates had commandeered a heavy mechanical digger and a slurry pit—likely apprehended from a sympathetic farmer among the ranks of the Orangemen or their supporters—and drove the equipment onto the field next to Drumcree Church.<sup>74</sup> They reinforced the front of the digger with pieces of metal to make it armour plated, and intended to crash it through the barbed wire along the front of the barricade between the Orangemen and the Garvaghy Road. After the barricade had been breached, the men intended to use the slurry pit as a “mobile flame-thrower” to hurl a mixture of petrol and sugar towards the front of the police line.<sup>75</sup> Before the plan could be put into action, however, the RUC had decided to allow the 1996 parade to conclude along the Garvaghy Road.<sup>76</sup> The digger's advertisement as a “ride” at what would be Drumcree III poked fun at its ultimate inertness the previous summer, and perhaps also at the inherent silliness of the idea of riding a large, relatively slow-moving piece of farming machinery through a police barricade—which became even more pronounced when juxtaposed with the idea of the imposing UVF figures who had presumed to skipper it.

<sup>74</sup> The incident is recounted by freelance journalist Chris Anderson in *Billy Boys: The Life and Death of LVF Leader Billy Wright* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 2002), 52-3.

<sup>75</sup> Anderson, *Billy Boys*, 53. The tank's more traditional usage was to collect animal waste and convert it into fertilizer.

<sup>76</sup> Rumours circulated that it was the threat of the digger that had caused the police to concede to the Orangemen, although the RUC did not specifically cite the digger in any discussions of its decision. Anderson goes so far as to say that the presence of the digger and tanker on Drumcree field “was sufficient to make the RUC Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Annesley, re-assess his original decision to ban the Orange parade from the Garvaghy Road.” Anderson, *Billy Boys*, 53. On 14 July, three days after the conclusion of Drumcree II, the BBC conducted an interview with Annesley wherein Annesley explained the rationale behind the RUC's decision to allow the parade, citing the desire, above all else, to maintain law and order. The transcript of that interview is available online through the CAIN web service at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/parade/docs/bcowan.htm>.



Those who preferred a less arduous activity could take in a vintage car show of “All newly-burned cars!” By 1997, scenes of streets littered with cars that had been set ablaze by unruly protestors were common fixtures in Northern Ireland’s daily Drumcree news coverage. In the evenings, attendees were invited to witness “The Sky at Night...Portadown skyline lit up with spontaneous bonfires.”<sup>77</sup> Large bonfires are held on the night of 11 July every year in unionist and loyalist communities and neighbourhoods all over Northern Ireland as the central feature of the Eleventh Night celebrations. Stacked tall with wooden pallets and rubber tires, the spires can reach heights up to 30 feet and are sometimes adorned with tricolours or other nationalist symbols that are burned when the flames are ignited at midnight to mark the beginning of the Twelfth. Many nationalists perceive the tradition to be inherently threatening, sinister, and sectarian; the flyer’s reference to “bonfires” in connection with Drumcree-related rioting would have served as an implicit censure of what is often vehemently described by unionist supporters as a cultural, non-sectarian Protestant tradition—a suggestion that even more mainstream aspects of unionist political culture were implicated in the sectarian violence surrounding Drumcree

Drumcree Holidays revellers could also “Hear Reverend McRea sing ‘The Men behind the Wire.’”<sup>78</sup> Here the producers of the flyer juxtaposed to striking effect the republican protest song of the same name, written by Falls Road-born musician Paddy McGuigan, with the figure of William McRea, a DUP politician and minister in Ian Paisley’s Free Presbyterian Church who was a fixture each year on the rally platform at Drumcree.<sup>79</sup> McGuigan had penned the song in 1971 after the unionist government had introduced internment for individuals suspected of republican activity; the phrase “the men behind the wire” referred to Catholics who were incarcerated in Long Kesh, Magilligan, and Maidstone prisons.<sup>80</sup> By placing the lyrics of McGuigan’s song into the mouth of McRea, the flyer mockingly alluded to the Orange Order’s efforts to situate itself as the persecuted party in the context of Drumcree, and as Northern Ireland’s new

<sup>77</sup> “Drumcree Holidays ’97.” The Portadown area hosted an annual car rally for local enthusiasts each summer.

<sup>78</sup> “Drumcree Holidays ’97.”

<sup>79</sup> The Falls Road is a well-known Catholic neighbourhood in Belfast, and is in itself a symbol of Irish nationalism.

<sup>80</sup> Some republican women were interned as well, held at Armagh Jail.

oppressed group in the context of the peace process, which, as the flyer pointed out, the Order was attempting to accomplish through the appropriation of what were formerly Catholic and republican signs, symbols, and tropes.

The flyer advertised imaginary souvenirs in addition to attractions, tapping into the prolific material culture surrounding Drumcree (particularly on the Orange side) that had begun with the forging of the “Siege of Drumcree” medals in 1995, and since then had extended to include Drumcree-themed chocolate bars, miniature lambeg drums, weather vanes (in the form of an Orangeman whose legs spun around when it was windy), novelty t-shirts, and badges.<sup>81</sup> Inflatable dolls depicting two of Northern Ireland’s most prominent unionist politicians would be made available for purchase at Drumcree Holidays ’97: the David Trimble doll would cost £5, while the Ian Paisley doll would be £7, because, given the extremely tall and notoriously blustery politician who was its inspiration, “the Paisley doll [was] bigger and [held] more hot air.”<sup>82</sup>

Those who wished to imbibe would be able to purchase bottles of “Spirit of Drumcree” liquor, the branding playing on the name of the splinter group that was calling for the Orange Order to take an even more hardline stance in its refusal to allow for any parade re-routing.<sup>83</sup> The notion of that *liquor* was, in fact, the “spirit of Drumcree,” alluded to the well-known problem of drunkenness among certain “elements” of the

<sup>81</sup> Some of these items have been collected in the Northern Ireland Political Collection at Linen Hall Library, Belfast. See items PA0050, “Siege of Drumcree” medal; PA0062, “We demand the right to march” chocolate bar; PA0103, “Here we stand; we can do no other” miniature lambeg drum; PA0058, “Weather vane of walking Orangeman;” PA0068 and PA0069, t-shirts; and PA0268, “Three loyalist badges.”

<sup>82</sup> “Drumcree Holidays ’97.”

<sup>83</sup> The “Spirit of Drumcree” group was formed in fallout of Drumcree I under the leadership of Joel Patton, an Orangeman from County Armagh. The group enjoyed considerable support: its first rally hosted 1700 like-minded Orangemen at Ulster Hall in Belfast on 14 November 1995, where resolutions were passed that called for the resignation of the Order’s Grand Master, for greater democracy within the organization, and for the Order’s outright refusal to accept any re-routing of Orange parades. Spirit of Drumcree continued to pressure the Order to take a harder line on Drumcree in the years that followed. *Portadown Times*, “Orange split as pressure group calls for Smyth’s resignation,” 17 November 1995, 4.

unionist and loyalist crowds that gathered on Drumcree Hill each July.<sup>84</sup> Similarly, the flyer noted that the “Spirit of Drumcree” bottles were “non-returnable”—the local reader would assume that this was because, in all likelihood, they were to be thrown at the police when the third standoff had ramped up. There were also “Rubber Bullet Souvenirs,” although these would become available “only after the fourth day.”<sup>85</sup> On the fifth day of the 1996 standoff, the RUC had announced that the parade would be allowed down the Garvaghy Road for the second straight year; in response to the nationalist protests and riots that had followed the decision, police had begun firing rubber bullets into crowds of nationalist protesters along the Garvaghy Road as well as in North and West Belfast (predominantly nationalist parts of the city), Armagh City, and Derry, where over 1,000 rounds were fired at nationalist rioters.<sup>86</sup>

The “Drumcree Holidays” flyer offered sharp, often sardonic criticisms of the Orange participation at Drumcree, as well as criticisms of the police and unionist culture more generally. It is significant that Hilda Winter believed and asserted that unionists had created this piece of satire despite its likely nationalist or outsider provenance. Her reading of the flyer was one that helped her to envisage her fellow Orange supporters in a positive way—taking the dispute in stride and with good humour—and points to the potential for subversive readings and reception of all textual renderings of Drumcree.

### ***“Give My Head Peace”: The Hole in the Wall Gang***

On 26 May 1995, BBC Northern Ireland aired a two-hour comedy special called *Two Ceasefires and a Wedding*. The story parodied the “star-crossed lovers thwarted by the sectarian divide” trope that typified many dramas set in Northern Ireland at the time. It followed the characters of Billy, a Protestant RUC policeman, and Emer, a Catholic

<sup>84</sup> “Elements” was the term commonly used by Orangemen and other unionists to describe those supporters of the Drumcree protest who partook in rioting and violence, who got drunk, and who harassed and intimidated Catholics. The phrase functioned to cast these “elements” as a small minority of protesters who were separate from the majority of unionists who wished to gather and demonstrate peacefully, though vociferously, against the re-routing of the parade, and it tapped into hegemonic discourses of “respectability” functioning within Orangeism.

<sup>85</sup> “Drumcree Holidays '97.”

<sup>86</sup> “Developments at Drumcree, 1995-2000,” CAIN, University of Ulster. The RUC in Derry were responding to the approximately 1000 petrol bombs hurled by protesters.

woman whose father and brother were former IRA members, as Billy and Emer attempted to plan their wedding in the months following the 1994 ceasefires under the watchful eyes of their comically stereotypical family members.<sup>87</sup> Spoofing many of the conventions of Northern Irish theatre, film, and television, the program aired to enormous success, and the BBC commissioned its creators, the Hole in the Wall Gang, to write and produce a comedy series based on the characters introduced in *Two Ceasefires*.<sup>88</sup>

The troupe called the series *Give My Head Peace*, which was a Northern Irish colloquialism that meant “Leave me alone; be quiet.” The writing process began in the summer of 1997, during the height of the all-party negotiations that would culminate with the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998; the series’ title referenced popular frustration and fatigue with the halting nature of the peace process and the political maneuvering that characterized the negotiations for a Northern Ireland Assembly.<sup>89</sup> The series appealed to those members of the public who saw themselves as being outside of the sectarian politicking of the peace process and above the segments of the population who continued to engage in sectarian pettiness, conflict, and violence. It proved very popular, reaching a market share of about 59 percent in Northern Ireland.<sup>90</sup>

In the premiere episode of the series, the writers parodied the Orange parading disputes that, as exemplified by Drumcree, embodied some of the farcicalities of the peace process. “The Long Marching Season” was comprehensive and equal-opportunity in its skewering of both sides of the parades issue. The writers cast Emer’s father and brother, Da and Cal, as nationalist residents who went to outrageous lengths to be offended by Orange marches, while Billy’s Uncle Andy was one of the Order’s loyalist supporters who “[wasn’t] sectarian—[he] just [didn’t] like Taigs.”<sup>91</sup> Billy took part in the

<sup>87</sup> Tim McGarry, Michael McDowell, and Damon Quinn, *Give My Head Peace: The Book* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1999). Although no videotaped or DVD versions of the series are accessible to researchers, each script was reprinted in this publication.

<sup>88</sup> The Hole in the Wall Gang was a comedy troupe comprised of members Tim McGarry, Michael McDowell, and Damon Quinn, who all hailed from Belfast and collaborated in the writing process on all episodes of the *Give My Head Peace* series.

<sup>89</sup> Lance Pettitt, *Screening Ireland: Film and Television Representation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 198.

<sup>90</sup> Pettitt, *Screening Ireland*, 198.

<sup>91</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 63.

“impartial” decision-making on and policing of Orange parades through a process of rigged coin tosses and heavy-handed baton charges against nationalist protestors, and Emer and her mother, Ma, found themselves somewhere in the middle, hoping for a resolution.

McGarry, McDowell, and Quinn criticized unrelentingly what they understood to be the fundamental absurdities of parading disputes. In many places, the script parodied both residents’ groups and Orangemen by deploying the rhetoric of both—language that would have been instantly recognizable to the Northern Irish audience by the late 1990s. Likewise, the implicit criticisms levied against each side by the writers echoed many of the criticisms cited by either side in its arguments for or against the allowance of contested parades.

For example, the writers suggested that nationalist residents were going out of their way to be offended by Orange parades—which was a point the Orange Order made often. At the opening of the episode, Da and Cal, as “concerned residents of Divis Tower,” find themselves in need of an Orange parade to be offended by.<sup>92</sup> They have decided that the parade in Larne, which is approximately 35 kilometres from Belfast, will serve their purpose. When Ma pulls the duvet cover off a snoring Da on the morning of the parade, she reveals him fully clothed, wearing a “Re-route sectarian marches!” t-shirt and holding a placard in his arm.<sup>93</sup> The slogan was commonly used by the GRRC and its supporters, as well as by other residents’ groups, adorning items like posters and placards, pamphlets, and murals.<sup>94</sup> Once Da awakens, cursing the Orangemen for parading “at the strake of dawn” (the march is set to begin at 2 o’clock in the afternoon), he rouses his son out of bed, warning him that the march had started: “If you don’t get up now, you’re going to miss being offended!”<sup>95</sup> When Da and Cal are finally able to

<sup>92</sup> The Divis Towers are located in the nationalist Falls Road area of Belfast; no Orange parades pass through the area. It was common for nationalist residents’ groups, such as the GRRC, to style themselves “concerned residents” in their discussions of and publications about contested parades.

<sup>93</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 59.

<sup>94</sup> See for example PA0407, “Re-route sectarian marches”; PPO2513, “Re-route”; and PPO2520, “Re-route sectarian parades!,” Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast.

<sup>95</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 60.

“make out the Orange” in Larne with a telescope and a pair of binoculars, they shout angrily out the window of their flat that the faraway Orangemen are “coat-trailing bastards,” alluding to nationalist residents’ contentions that Orange parades were a triumphalist, and thus objectionable, practice.<sup>96</sup> Indeed, when Ma wishes Da a good morning, he retorts: “It is not a good morning. We, the concerned residents of Divis Tower, are being subjected to an outrageous display of sectarianism.”<sup>97</sup> “And just 20 miles from your doorstep,” Ma remarks sardonically; shaking her head, she asks Da why he does not just ignore the parades, acting as a voice for the many individuals in Northern Ireland who wondered the same.<sup>98</sup> Da replies in outrage: “Ignore it! That’s easy for you to say; it’s not staring you in the face. Just take a look down that telescope and tell me to ignore it.”<sup>99</sup>

Billy’s Uncle Andy represents the worst of the Orange side of the parades issue, standing as a thundering example of sectarianism and loyalist parochialism whose objective, in the end, *is* to offend—as groups like the GRRC so often observed in regards to the Orange Order itself. When Billy points out that the Orangemen are free to march through Protestant areas, Andy retorts, “What’s the point in that? An Orange march is no fun without fenians.”<sup>100</sup> As in the case of Da and Cal on the nationalist side, through the character of Uncle Andy, McGarry, McDowell, and Quinn use the Orange Order’s own rhetoric to lampoon its role in parading disputes. In the case of one contested parade, Uncle Andy rails against the RUC for “[trampling] on the rights of the loyalist people to march through a 100 percent Catholic town!”<sup>101</sup> When another parade is disallowed, Andy laments: “Disgraceful! The loyalist people not allowed to march on their own Queen’s highway.”<sup>102</sup> As we have seen, the notion of “the right to march” on “the Queen’s highway” was central to the Orange Order’s case for the continuance of all

<sup>96</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 61.

<sup>97</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 61.

<sup>98</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 61.

<sup>99</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 61.

<sup>100</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 67. “Fenians” is a derogatory term for Catholics.

<sup>101</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 64.

<sup>102</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 67.

parades along their traditional routes, regardless of whether contemporary residents along those routes approved.

Uncle Andy also exemplified what the writers portrayed as the hypocrisy behind the Orange and unionist protests against re-routing. Like many real-life Orange supporters, Andy criticized nationalist residents' groups, declaring them to be "nothing but a bunch of fenians with no respect for the rule of law," threatening Billy and the RUC in the same breath with a riot if a certain parade is re-routed: "I'm warning you, Billy—if that march doesn't go through, we'll wreck the place."<sup>103</sup> Through the character of Andy, the Hole in the Wall writers situated in immediate proximity to one another what they saw as two irreconcilable positions: first, that the Orange Order championed respect for law and order; and, second, that if certain parades were re-routed, the supporters of the Orange side would protest by *disrupting* law and order. When the march in question goes through, Andy praises the RUC for "impartially upholding the law and sticking it to the fenians."<sup>104</sup> But when the RUC makes the decision to re-route another contested march, Andy laments the fact that the Orangemen's civil rights have been impeded; "And when they try to have a dignified riot," he continues, "they are brutally batoned off the street by the Sinn Féin/IRA-loving RUC."<sup>105</sup> Again, the paradoxical idea of a "dignified riot" suggested Orange and loyalist irrationality on the parades issue and challenged the Order's insistence that its members conducted themselves with unswerving dignity in situations like Drumcree.

Incensed by the re-routing of a number of parades over the course of the first half of the episode, Uncle Andy decides to hold his own parade in what he deems to be the most provocative possible place—somewhere "hiving with fenians."<sup>106</sup> In a moment of intertextuality, Andy chooses the fictional town of Ballykissangel in the Republic of Ireland (the setting of the eponymous BBC Northern Ireland drama that portrays an English priest trying to settle into a quintessential small-town Irish life). Andy's plan prompts Da and Cal to follow him with the intention of starting their own Ballykissangel

<sup>103</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 64.

<sup>104</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 66.

<sup>105</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 67.

<sup>106</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 70.

residents' group; their intent to do so without regard for whether the Ballykissangel residents *wanted* to oppose the parade spoke to the common unionist criticism that nationalist residents' groups that opposed Orange parades were merely puppet organizations for Sinn Féin, and were unrepresentative of the majority of nationalists living along contested routes. When the characters travel into the Republic, the program turns to reflect upon and, of course, to mock larger themes in the public conversation around the peace process in Northern Ireland, implicitly making a connection between parading disputes and peace process politics in much the same way that Drumcree's participants had attempted to do—but to much different ends.

The writers ridiculed the sense among hardline unionists and loyalists that they had been betrayed by the UUP in the course of the peace negotiations. Uncle Andy enters the realm of pointed hyperbole when he declares to his friend Mervyn, "The loyalist people have been betrayed by the British government, the RUC, the unionist parties, [and] the loyal institutions."<sup>107</sup> Mervyn's clarification—"So the loyalist people have been betrayed by the loyalist people?"—underlines the inherent irrationality of the position.<sup>108</sup> Although Andy's litany of blame is a slight exaggeration, his belief that loyalists had been betrayed by the unionist parties was, as we have seen, not at all uncommon by 1997.

Andy also gives voice to fears harboured among some unionists about the lot of Protestants in a united Ireland. As he and Mervyn attempt to cross the border to the Republic, Andy insists that the Irish border officer search the car, reprimanding him for lackadaisical border security. When the unflappable officer finally complies, offering a cursory glance of the car, Andy finds his fears confirmed: "See what I mean? We've hardly crossed the border and we're being harassed. It's a fenian police state.... Not safe for Protestants."<sup>109</sup> Then, when in the process of preparing to march, Andy and Mervyn are approached by a member of the *Garda Síochána*, the Republic's police force, who compliments them on their Orange collarettes. Andy reacts with hostility: "Don't you be taking the Mick. I suppose you've come to tell us we're not allowed to march on our own

<sup>107</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 70.

<sup>108</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 70.

<sup>109</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 71.



Queen's highway.... Well we will not be dictated to by the pan-nationalist front."<sup>110</sup> As it turns out, the policeman has only come to suggest that they hold their parade earlier in the day. But the Orangemen have a response for this suggestion as well; Andy retorts: "The loyalist people will not be told they can march whenever, wherever they want by some stooge of the dirty Dublin dictat."<sup>111</sup> In this exchange, the writers emphasized the comically contrarian nature of the Orange Order with regards to the parades issue. They suggested that Orange and unionist fears about life in a united Ireland were, perhaps, unfounded and even that Orange parades may be welcomed more readily in the Republic than they were in Northern Ireland.

Meanwhile, when Da and Cal, former IRA members, attempt to cross the border, they find themselves surrounded by a large number of heavily armed Irish Army troops, and are subjected to a three-hour strip search—although they are only too happy to comply, giving the troops a cheerful "*Go raibh maith agaith*" ("thank you" in Irish).<sup>112</sup> The irony of Andy and Mervyn's warm welcome into the Republic, in contrast with Da and Cal's harsh treatment as a result of their past IRA activity, would have challenged audience members to complicate their assumptions about how the process of Irish reunification would work out if it ever came to pass. After they've been released, Cal produces a map and intends to act as navigator for Da, who is driving. Da demands that Cal rid himself of the map immediately, for "the true Gael does not need maps.... We...intuitively have an intimate knowledge of our native land."<sup>113</sup> The writers quickly disabuse the two characters of the notion that Northern Irish Catholics would find themselves immediately and naturally in tune with life in the independent Republic, as they immediately become lost and arrive late for Andy's parade.

When the two marchers finally meet Da and Cal at a bridge in town, a standoff of four ensues. Despite its extremely small scale and apparent unimportance, the international press quickly descends upon the town to cover the dispute. Here the writers alluded to the frenzied nature of the press coverage of parading disputes and what

<sup>110</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 81.

<sup>111</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 81.

<sup>112</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 73. In Northern Ireland, the speaking of the Irish language symbolizes Irish nationalism and resistance.

<sup>113</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 75.

seems to be a macabre international fascination with conflict and violence in Northern Ireland, as one anchor apologizes that there has been no violence in the Ballykissangel standoff yet, and assures his audience that the network is “hoping to bring you some disturbing images in time for the three o’clock bulletin.”<sup>114</sup>

In the end, there is no riot. After the Garda and the media lose interest, the temperature drops, the men grow hungry, and the rain begins to fall, Uncle Andy picks up a phone to contact Da, the head of the Concerned Residents of Ballykissangel. In another reference to Orange rhetoric, Andy makes sure to note that he is “not negotiating with Sinn Féin/IRA about anything to do with our right to march” before he suggests that they continue the standoff in a neutral and dry venue.

In penning “The Long Marching Season,” the writers of *Give My Head Peace* roundly mocked both sides of the parading dispute to reveal what they believed to be the fundamental absurdities of conflicts like Drumcree, undercutting the Orange Order and the GRRC’s apocalyptic rhetoric about the stakes of the parade route along the Garvaghy Road.

### ***The Portadown News***

In March 2001, an individual from Portadown began publishing a satirical newspaper called *The Portadown News*; the online paper presented spoof articles in the irreverent style of *The Onion*, which had recently come to international prominence with the rapidly rising popularity of the Internet.<sup>115</sup> Steeped in local vernacular, and parodying regional idiosyncrasies and stereotypes in addition to covering broader political events in Northern Ireland, the *News* quickly became an “institution among locals,” and by December 2001, it was receiving 1,000 hits per day.<sup>116</sup> The paper lampooned both sides

<sup>114</sup> McGarry et al., *Give My Head Peace*, 83.

<sup>115</sup> Founded in 1988, but limited to distribution in a small number of towns and cities in the United States prior to launching its website in 1996, *The Onion* is one of the world’s most successful and widely-read satire news publications.

<sup>116</sup> Jonathan Duffy, “That’s all, jokes,” BBC News Website, 29 August 2005, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/magazine/4189048.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/4189048.stm), and Henry McDonald, “Outed net satirist is forced to quit job,” *The Guardian*, 30 December 2001, online version, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2001/dec/30/northernireland>.

of the sectarian divide with equal fervor. Writing under the protection of anonymity afforded by the Internet, the editor dealt with Drumcree at length and with particular delight. The dispute featured often in the *Portadown News* (which ran bi-weekly), with Portadown District and the Garvaghy residents often serving as characters in fictional news stories that depicted Drumcree as a farce that was simultaneously symptomatic of the ludicrousness of sectarian politics in the state as well as a serious and real impediment to progress towards peace and normalcy.

The paper's editor and sole writer felt that he had to publish anonymously, because, as he said later in an interview with *The Guardian*, "In a place like Portadown, it was dangerous to be identified in the papers [as the creator of the *Portadown News*], especially since I had sent up the Orange Order so much on the [website]."<sup>117</sup> Indeed, despite its widespread popularity, the *Portadown News*' sardonic renderings of contentious issues like Drumcree were not well received by certain organizations and segments of the population, particularly those who felt they were being ridiculed. In December 2001, the *Andersontown News*, a republican newspaper based in Belfast, identified Newton Emerson as the editor and sole writer behind the *Portadown News*. Emerson was a 30-year-old Portadown man who worked as a technical writer at a local computer company and identified politically as a "liberal unionist."<sup>118</sup> The exposé mentioned Emerson's name twelve times and also named the company for which he worked, which Emerson believed to be an attempt to put his job in jeopardy.<sup>119</sup> When the *Andersontown News* complained to his employer that he was engaging in online correspondence during the workday, in violation of the terms of his employment, Emerson resigned his post. Shortly after, he declared, "What they [the republican editors at the *Andersontown News*] couldn't handle was satire" of their politics, suggesting a belief that his brand of news satire had the potential to destabilize traditional media coverage that tended to be divided along sectarian lines and to perpetuate Northern Ireland's entrenched, antagonistic politics.<sup>120</sup> He also alluded to the potential of satire to act as a cathartic outlet for readers who found themselves caught up in the gravity of the

<sup>117</sup> McDonald, "Outed net satirist is forced to quit job."

<sup>118</sup> McDonald, "Outed net satirist is forced to quit job."

<sup>119</sup> McDonald, "Outed net satirist is forced to quit job."

<sup>120</sup> McDonald, "Outed net satirist is forced to quit job,"

peace process: “Everything [in Northern Ireland] is earnest and deadly serious, so there has to be something to counter that, to make light of all that nonsense.” This mandate was perhaps most evident in Emerson’s ongoing coverage of Drumcree.

Like the Hole in the Wall Gang, Emerson tapped into the tropes that underwrote the major Orange and nationalist residents’ narratives of Drumcree to comic effect, presenting their real-life rhetoric about Drumcree in hyperbolic fashion, thus casting the dispute as a juvenile sectarian skirmish and encouraging his readers to take the same view. Mocking the ongoing contest between the Order and the GRRC as to which side should be understood as the victim at Drumcree, one headline from the *News*’ 2001 Drumcree Special read: “Orange Order awarded victimhood status.”<sup>121</sup> The story, authored by “our victimhood correspondent, Sue Mone,” chronicled the fictitious “*Guardian* Victimhood Awards” in London. The article drew attention to what Emerson saw as the Order’s hypocrisy in attempting to claim the role of victim from the nationalist community. It quoted the presenter of the award, who noted that although “for many years the Orange Order spurned the idea of victimhood, associating it with moaning fenians going on and on about every tiny little thing like it was the end of the world...the Orange Order’s standing in society is now so low that we feel obliged to award it victimhood status anyway.”<sup>122</sup> In Emerson’s estimation, at Drumcree, the Orangemen were not victims of republican attempts to marginalize their culture, but instead were “victim[s] of [their] own stupidity” for their role in a parading dispute that was serving to tarnish the Order’s public image.<sup>123</sup>

Two weeks later, the leading story in the *News* ran with the headline, “‘We’re black,’ say Orangemen”; a second punchline accompanied the article’s byline: “‘No, we’re black,’ say residents.”<sup>124</sup> Chapter 1 of this thesis showed that both sides attempted to make connections with internationally-recognized oppressed groups, with the Orange Order claiming that re-routing parades was akin to apartheid, and the GRRC insisting that the KKK was a useful and appropriate allegory for understanding the Orange Order.

<sup>121</sup> Newton Emerson, “Orange Order awarded victimhood status,” *Portadown News*, 6 July 2001.

<sup>122</sup> Emerson, “Orange Order awarded victimhood status.”

<sup>123</sup> Emerson, “Orange Order awarded victimhood status.”

<sup>124</sup> Newton Emerson, “‘We’re black,’ say Orangemen,” *Portadown News*, 20 July 2001.

The *News* story quoted Orange Order “Grand Wizard” Robert Saulters as saying, “We are the victims of cultural apartheid,” while a fictionalized Breandán Mac Cionnaith retorted, “The Orange Order is marching through our area just like the Ku Klux Klan.”<sup>125</sup> In presenting these quotations, the story lent a tongue-in-cheek legitimacy to both positions: the term “Grand Wizard” was used to identify the leader of the KKK during the Reconstruction Era, while “Grand Master” is the correct term for the leader of the Orange Order, and the notion that certain areas belonged to certain population groups was a central feature of South African apartheid.

The *Portadown News* also treated the rioting and violence associated with Drumcree, implicitly panning it as an exercise in wanton destruction and characterizing it as nonsensical. “Historic victory for Edgarstown rioters,” a June 2001 headline proclaimed; under the guise of “Drumcree correspondent Will March,” Emerson reported sarcastically that “the Union has been secured forever thanks to this week’s rioting in Edgarstown.”<sup>126</sup> According to the story, the rioters had also prompted Tony Blair to announce that the Good Friday Agreement would be dismantled immediately, and had caused the IRA to disband. Here Emerson mocked the notion that rioting over the Drumcree parade might have any serious effect on the progress of the peace process or the maintenance of the Union.

The *News* drew attention to the ironies that underwrote the violence over Drumcree on both sides of the conflict in a story entitled, “Queen, Pope, appeal for violence.”<sup>127</sup> The headline was a play on the common wording of Drumcree-related headlines, which were more likely to have read something like: “Queen, Pope, appeal for peace.” The story that accompanied the sardonic headline made fun not only of Drumcree, but also of what Emerson cast as a broader sectarian mindset that was stuck in the past. In her “appeal for violence,” the Queen notes, “The politics of the 16<sup>th</sup> century remain close to our hearts,” the declaration implicitly teasing unionists and loyalists who harked back to the events of these long-past centuries (such as the Battle of the Boyne

<sup>125</sup> Emerson, “We’re black.”

<sup>126</sup> Emerson, “Historic victory for Edgarstown rioters,” *Portadown News*, 6 June 2001. Edgarstown was known as a loyalist housing estate in Portadown.

<sup>127</sup> Newton Emerson, “Queen, Pope, appeal for violence,” *Portadown News*, 6 July 2001.

and the Siege of Derry) in justifying contemporary sectarian politics, violence, or civil disorder. Meanwhile, nationalist demonstrators against Orange parades were skewered for what Emerson cast as the hypocrisy of violent resistance to British and unionist rule, as the Pope assures Northern Ireland's nationalists that "Christ's message is 'bomb your neighbour.'"<sup>128</sup>

The *News* spoofed media commentary on the dispute as well. The international media's fascination with Drumcree was a common source of material, with Emerson often focusing particular attention on American media coverage. One of the articles that appeared in the "Drumcree VII Special" told the story of local youngster Liam O'Farrell celebrating "a windfall...after *Boston Herald* reporter Brad Cheeseburger paid him £500 to pose for [an] incredibly clichéd Troubles-type photograph."<sup>129</sup> The photograph showed a young boy playing with a soccer ball while a line of British Army troops crouched in position a couple of feet away from him, the implication of the story being that the American media romanticized the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Portadown's local media was not immune to Emerson's disdain either. A section called "The Good Old Days" ran as an occasional special feature and was authored by a fictional reporter whom Emerson named "Courtney Rosetint," a nod to *Portadown Times* reporter Brian Courtney who authored a similar column in the *Times*. In Emerson's eyes, Courtney presented a selective interpretation of Portadown that cast the town's history in an excessively positive light. The 3 May 2001 installment of Emerson's "The Good Old Days" alluded to the sense among some local unionists that there had once been a time when the town's Catholics were not in opposition to Orange parades and had, in fact, often participated in Twelfth celebrations. As Chapter 2 of this thesis showed, while contested by invested nationalists, this collective memory was often invoked to delegitimize the Garvaghy residents' contemporary protest of the Drumcree parade. Emerson's Rosetint wrote: "Although many troublemakers will tell it otherwise, it's important to remember that Before the Troubles, Portadown's Catholic community enjoyed the Twelfth of July just as much as their Loyal, God-fearing [Protestant]

<sup>128</sup> Emerson, "Queen, Pope, appeal for violence."

<sup>129</sup> Newton Emerson, "Windfall for local boy," *Portadown News*, 6 July 2001.

neighbours.”<sup>130</sup> Rosetint contended that “it was then customary for a delegation of Catholics to march down Obins Street at the same time [as the Drumcree parade] carrying a large banner [that read] ‘No Hard Feelings’” before presenting the Portadown District Grand Master “with a letter congratulating the Protestants on their victory at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.”<sup>131</sup> Emerson’s comedic exaggeration of the narrative conveyed the argument that these kinds of stories about an ill-defined golden age of cross-community unity with regards to Orange marching were nonsensical and were deployed to suit current unionist arguments for the allowance of the Drumcree parade.

*The Portadown News*’ immediate popularity in Portadown suggests that the editor’s interpretation of Drumcree resonated among a local population that was perhaps, by 2001, especially war-weary from enduring the annual onslaught of communal tension, violence, and unrest that Drumcree had heralded each July since 1995. Indeed, the many satirical and humorous renderings of the dispute that emerged over the course of its most active years hinted at a broader public appetite for relief from the sectarian tensions and gravity of the dispute. These interpretations pointed towards a popular desire among some segments of the population to challenge or subvert the Orange and nationalist metanarratives of the dispute, both of which were unyielding in their insistence that Drumcree was of the utmost importance not only in terms of the status of Orange culture in an imagined post-peace process Northern Ireland, but also in terms of the progression of the peace process itself. In its examination of dissenting voices—of individuals, of the Church of Ireland, and of satirists—this chapter has demonstrated that although oppositional, two-communities-based interpretations of Drumcree were prominent in the public discourse about the conflict, and were being consciously created and advanced by the two major antagonists and their supporters, alternative voices entered the public conversation and registered their dissent. In doing so, they hint at the potential for individuals in Northern Ireland to unravel and move outside the limiting sectarian filters through which experience has been processed and politics have been dictated for so long in the state.

<sup>130</sup> Newton Emerson, “The Good Old Days,” *Portadown News*, 3 May 2001.

<sup>131</sup> Emerson, “The Good Old Days.”

## Conclusion

Throughout the mid-to-late 1990s, Drumcree was a lightning rod for the communal anxieties that were prompted by the shift in power relations between Protestants and Catholics that became a defining feature of the decade. We have seen evidence of that shift in the discourse that surrounded Drumcree, wherein unionists and nationalists used established symbolic language in new ways to describe the dispute and to engage with the peace process. Hardline unionists and loyalists turned the “under siege” trope against UUP politicians who supported the process or advocated compromise on the parades issue, while Orangemen and their supporters attempted to appropriate the language of civil rights from the nationalist community in establishing themselves as victims at Drumcree. At the same time, invested nationalists tried to maintain a firm grip on victimhood status, challenging unionist and loyalist assertions that Orange and Protestant culture were “under siege” at Drumcree by deploying the traditionally-unionist siege metaphor to describe the Garvaghy residents’ experiences of Drumcree.

In the peak years of the conflict, Drumcree was perceived by many in Northern Ireland to be a parading dispute of the highest stakes. Portadown’s symbolic significance led many unionists and loyalists to view Drumcree as a site of resistance to the peace process, while at the same time offering nationalists what they saw as an opportunity to issue a potentially fatal blow to the Orange Order in the “new” Northern Ireland, should the Order’s most important parade be delegitimized through re-routing. Due to its perceived importance, invested participants and observers attempted to wield the authority of experience in attempts to influence how the broader public in the state and international audiences alike understood Drumcree. Portadown District and the GRRC in particular attempted to tap into the perceived connection between Drumcree and the peace process in order to raise the stakes of the dispute among the broader public with the aim of having their respective goals for the parade realized. These entities, along with other organizations and institutions that supported them, attempted to create



knowledge in various forms in order to communicate and convince the public of their particular understandings of what Drumcree meant. The information they produced acted to shore up each side's argument about whether the Drumcree parade should be re-routed from the Garvaghy Road.

But despite these efforts, individuals and, in some cases, institutions demonstrated a continuing ability to negotiate imposed metanarratives of Drumcree and to express dissent in ways that challenged and de-centered dichotomous and sectarian understandings of the dispute. Ironically, it would be the perceived connection between Drumcree and the success of the peace process that would lead the public to become increasingly critical and unsupportive of the conflict as the years progressed. Indeed, the gradual rise in the frequency, degree, and variety of public criticisms of the dispute coincided with the advancement of the process. Throughout 1996, 1997, and 1998, it became clearer that a workable, diplomatic solution that would end the violent phase of the conflict in Northern Ireland was in sight, and thus more and more people began to urge Portadown District and the GRRC to compromise or yield on Drumcree in the interest of preserving the IRA and loyalist paramilitaries' ceasefires, and in order to avoid further communal violence.<sup>1</sup>

After 71 percent of the Northern Irish public voted to support the Good Friday Agreement, and thereby the peace process itself, in May 1998, public criticism of Drumcree became even more intense, as did calls for moderation and compromise. In early July 1998, with Drumcree IV on the horizon, an individual writing under the initials "C.M." urged the Portadown Orangemen to take the high road and "return [into town] the way [they] came...and the losers will be the objectors."<sup>2</sup> Another writer likewise urged the Garvaghy residents to take a more conciliatory stance on Drumcree that year,

<sup>1</sup> In the early months of 1996, the IRA had called off its 1994 ceasefire to demonstrate its dissatisfaction with the status of the peace negotiations; the bombing of Canary Wharf in London on 9 February, killing two people and causing millions of pounds worth of damage in one of London's central business districts, served as a notification of the resuming of republican violence. This renewed campaign continued until the IRA reinstated its ceasefire in July 1997. The Canary Wharf bombing demonstrated the fragility of the IRA's ceasefire and the importance of the success of the ongoing talks between Britain, Ireland, and Northern Ireland's political parties.

<sup>2</sup> "C.M.," "Order can still be winners," *Belfast Telegraph*, 2 July 1998, 11.

arguing that the public had sufficiently demonstrated its appetite for peace through the referendum on the GFA: “The politicians and the people have....shown their desire for peace.... To the Catholics of Garvaghy Road I ask, could you not stay in your houses an extra half hour or so on [Drumcree] Sunday morning for the sake of the peace which is desired greatly by people of all Ireland, north and south?”<sup>3</sup> “P.S.” urged both Portadown District and the GRRC to acknowledge the validity of its opponent’s view, and to settle the dispute at long last, “for the sake of the province.”<sup>4</sup>

Others framed criticisms of Portadown District and the GRRC explicitly within the context of recent political gains in the peace process. In a 1999 letter to the editor, one David Bleakley drew a causal connection between the resolution of Drumcree and the success of the process, reminding Drumcree’s belligerents: “Peace in the Assembly and on the streets goes together.”<sup>5</sup> Brian Mairs wrote the *Telegraph* to reprimand the Portadown Orangemen for favouring the outcome of a parading dispute over the prospect of “a stable future for themselves and future generations,” and went on to argue that the rioting and violence that accompanied Drumcree IV “[put] at risk all of the achievements of the last couple of years.”<sup>6</sup> Similarly, letter-writer T.J. Corbett voiced a perception that the Order’s hardline supporters were perpetuating violence and unrest during the marching season to the detriment of the peace process, proclaiming in the fallout of Drumcree IV: “For the first time in my life, there has been a very real chance to see peace in this province emerge, and that is what the good people (Catholic and Protestant) want.... Those who consider themselves unionists and loyalists should take a long, hard look at what it is they want.”<sup>7</sup> Approaching the issue from the other side, “A.A.” criticized the Garvaghy residents’ “intransigence [at] this hopeful time of détente and reconciliation” before going on to declare: “The people of Northern Ireland, in accepting the Agreement, have set their feet on a new road to a better future for

<sup>3</sup> James Gault, “Brady urged to give strong leadership,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 4 July 1998, 16.

<sup>4</sup> “P.S.,” “Reconcile differences,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 17 July 1998, 12.

<sup>5</sup> David Bleakley, “Shared alternative to strife,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 1 July 1999, 10. Bleakley referred to the new devolved power-sharing assembly that resulted from the GFA and returned the responsibility of governance to Northern Ireland’s own political parties.

<sup>6</sup> Brian Mairs, “Achievements put at risk,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 19 July 1998, 16.

<sup>7</sup> T.J. Corbett, “Look hard,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 22 July 1998, 10.

themselves and their children. We must not let any group, on either side of the divide, destroy the promise of a better tomorrow in Northern Ireland.”<sup>8</sup>

By 1998, then, individuals had begun in increasing numbers to view Drumcree negatively as a threat to the resolution of sectarian political violence in Northern Ireland. The extreme violence that marked Drumcree IV in July of that year only served to underscore this notion, and Portadown District saw its popular support drop off sharply after the murders of the Quinn brothers on 12 July. Nonetheless, Drumcree continued to function as a theatre in which organizations, institutions, and individuals in Northern Ireland have continued to debate, contest, and to try to make sense of the societal transitions that the peace process has heralded. After 1998, the iconic parading dispute became a locus of anti-Agreement unionists’ resistance to the progress of a peace process that they felt would lead Northern Ireland away from the Union with Britain and towards a united Ireland wherein Protestants would constitute a small minority, devoid of any substantial political influence. At the same time, Drumcree symbolized the unprecedented opportunity that some nationalists felt that the peace process afforded their community, and to that end, organizations like the GRRRC pointed to what they held up as examples of Orange obstinacy, such as Drumcree, in their attempts to cast the Orange Order as a sectarian institution dedicated to maintaining Protestant supremacy—at best an anachronism, and at worst a destructive force, in a post-peace process Northern Ireland.

After 2001, when the Orangemen had successfully been turned away from the Garvaghy Road for the fourth year in a row, the annual protests over Drumcree became much smaller in scale and steadily less politically explosive. Portadown District’s and the Garvaghy Road nationalists’ understandings of the dispute have continued to conflict; when asked to comment on the status of the dispute in 2006, Breandán Mac Cionnaith declared, “In the eyes of Portadown nationalists, Drumcree is a dead issue.”<sup>9</sup> For the Orange Order, however, Drumcree remains very much alive. Portadown District regards

<sup>8</sup> “A.A.,” “Hopes for future must not be ruined,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 10 July 1998, 16.

<sup>9</sup> “Drumcree parade passes peacefully,” BBC News Website, 9 July 2006, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/northern\\_ireland/5161652.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/northern_ireland/5161652.stm), accessed 10 August 2013.

the annual decisions made by the Parades Commission to re-route the parade to be illegitimate blockages of their rights that cannot be accepted as a permanent resolution in the dispute. The district continues to organize a Drumcree protest each year, although it now draws extremely small and mostly local crowds and tends to go fairly unremarked by Northern Ireland and international media, besides to note each July that another protest has ultimately passed off peacefully.

But despite Drumcree's decline, flashpoint Orange parades have continued to be a source of dogged resistance to the peace process among loyalists, and a trigger of enduring sectarian conflict in Northern Irish society, particularly among nationalist and loyalist youths in working-class areas of Belfast. Just as in the case of the flare-up over Drumcree in 1995, these conflicts tend to emerge in moments wherein the unionist community—though now, significantly, a much smaller and more marginalized subset of the loyalist community—feels threatened in its place in Northern Ireland and in wider British society.<sup>10</sup> By better understanding the causative role that social anxieties and perceptions of power—and, more specifically, of “losses” of power—play in Orange parading disputes, and by tracking these anxieties through symbolic language and public debate, we can begin to see that Northern Ireland's sectarian divide must be understood as a historical and dynamic phenomenon, rather than something that is natural, atavistic, and immovable. The public debate about Drumcree makes audible a specific moment wherein the sectarian divide was being rearticulated to reflect increased equity for Catholics and the beginning of the end of uncontested Protestant political, economic, and social hegemony in the state.

<sup>10</sup> The year 2013 saw a particularly turbulent marching season after Belfast City Council announced on 3 December 2012 that it would limit the days that the Union Flag flies over Belfast City Hall from 365 days a year to 18 designated occasions. Angry loyalist response to the decision climaxed in riots protesting the Parades Commission's decision to re-route an Orange parade away from the majority-nationalist Ardoyne area of the Crumlin Road in North Belfast.

# Bibliography

## Unpublished Primary Sources

### Dr. Dominic Bryan's Private Collection

"Banning and Re-Routing Orange Parades: What Saith the Scriptures?" Pamphlet. 1995.

Drumcree Faith and Justice Group. "DFJ News. Vol. 2, No. 2." 1994.

Garvaghy Road Residents Coalition. "Garvaghy Residents Coalition, Vol. 1." Newsletter. 1997.

Garvaghy Road Residents Coalition. "Residents' Attitudes to the North Commission Proposals." Report. 1997.

Irish Parades Emergency Committee. "Parade Observers Guide Book." 1997.

Meath Peace Group. *The Orange Order Today*. Public Speakers' Series No. 18. 16 October 1995. Official Transcript.

Meath Peace Group. *Orange Marches in Portadown: The Garvaghy Road Residents' Perspective*. Public Speakers' Series No. 19. 13 November 1995. Official Transcript.

Meath Peace Group. *Parading Disputes in Northern Ireland*. Public Speakers' Series No. 22. 1 October 1996. Official Transcript.

Meath Peace Group. "Letter to Independent Review Body on Parades." 14 November 1996.

Paisley, Ian. "Speech made on 10 July 1995." Portadown, Northern Ireland, 10 July 1995. Transcript.

### Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast

"But Thus Ye Shall Deal with Them." Flyer. 1998. PPO2511.

Campbell, Alan. "Five Things Every Ulster Protestant Needs to Know." Booklet. 1997. P7837.

Church of Ireland Press Office. "Media Information, Drumcree 1999." Information pack. 1999. P10398.

Cook, David S. "March Past/March Present." Transcript. 1997. PP7794.

County Armagh Grand Orange Lodge. "Information Pack on the Drumcree Parades." 1999. P10397.

"Crocodile Drumcree." T-shirt. Date unknown. PA0069.

Diocese of Armagh. "Diocesan Synod 1998: Presidential Address." Transcript. 1998. P9570.

"Drumcree 2000." Poster. 2000. PPO3145.

Falls Forum. "Break the Siege of the Garvaghy Road." Poster. 1999. PPO2503.

"*Feile na mBuithre*." Poster. 1997. PPO2956.

"Free from Sectarian Harassment?" Mural. 1999. PA0445.

Friends of the Garvaghy Road. "Lift the Siege Now!: Information Pack." Information pack. 1999. P13327.

Garvaghy Road Residents Coalition. "Re-Route Sectarian Marches." Poster. 1996. PPO2520.

———. "Stop walking, start talking." Poster. 1996. PPO2522.

———. "Re-route." Poster. 1998. PPO2513.

———. "Free from Sectarian Harassment?" Report. 1999. P13414.

"Garvaghy under Siege." Mural. 2000. PA0449.

"Here we stand; we can do no other." Miniature lambeg drum. 1999. PA0103.

"Loyalist Babies' Bibs." Bibs. Date unknown. PA0071.

"My Husband and I Demand the Right to March." Poster. 1999. PPO2916.

"No Dublin Interference / Irish Out!" Poster. 1996. PPO2526.

"Oh No! Not Drumcree Again!" Poster. 1999. PPO2915.

Portadown District LOL No. 1. "Here we stand; we can do no other." Flag. Date unknown. PA0237.

"Re-route All Garvaghy Road Residents out of Ulster." Poster. 1998. PPO2512.

"Re-route Sectarian Parades." Poster. 1996. PPO2520.

"Re-route Sectarian Marches." Mural. 1997. PA0407.

"Reservoir Prods." T-shirt. Date unknown. PA0068.

"Siege of Drumcree." Medal. 1995. PA0050.

Sinn Féin. "1969: Nationalist Rights Did Not Exist." Poster. 1996. PPO0267.

———. "Rosemary Nelson Campaign." Poster. 1999. PPO0974.

———. “Still under Siege.” Poster. 1999. PPO2970.

“Strike for Ulster.” Poster. 2000. PA0207.

“Three Loyalist Badges.” Badges. 2000. PA0268.

Ulster Card Company. “Belfast and Portadown Murals.” Postcard. 1997. PA0467.

“We Demand the Right to March.” Chocolate bar packaging. 1999. PA0062.

“We Support the Drumcree Orangemen.” Poster. 1999. PPO2914.

“Weathervane of walking Orangeman.” Weathervane. 1999. PA0058.

“Which road?” Poster. 1997. PPO2508.

### **Other Unpublished Primary Sources**

“Combined Loyalist Military Command Ceasefire Statement, 13 October 1994.”  
Accessed 2 July 2013. Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN), University of  
Ulster. <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/clmc131094.htm>.

“Drumcree Holidays '97.” Flyer. 1997. Author’s private collection.

“Drumcree. No Surrender.” Accessed 2 July 2013. CAIN Mural Directory, University of  
Ulster. Album 5. <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/mccormick/album5.htm>.

Garvaghy Road Residents Coalition. “Garvaghy Road: A History.” Accessed 2 July  
2013. Wayback Machine Internet Archive.  
[http://web.archive.org/web/2000819055831/http://garvaghyroad.org/background.  
htm](http://web.archive.org/web/2000819055831/http://garvaghyroad.org/background.htm).

———. “July 1998 as it Happened.” Accessed 2 July 2013. Wayback Machine Internet  
Archive.  
[http://web.archive.org/web/2000819055831/http://garvaghyroad.org/archives98.h  
tm](http://web.archive.org/web/2000819055831/http://garvaghyroad.org/archives98.htm).

———. “The Parades Commission.” Accessed 2 July 2013. Wayback Machine Internet  
Archive.  
[http://web.archive.org/web/2000819055831/http://garvaghyroad.org/the\\_parades  
\\_commission.htm](http://web.archive.org/web/2000819055831/http://garvaghyroad.org/the_parades_commission.htm).

———. “Poetry from the Women of the Garvaghy Road.” Accessed 2 July 2013.  
Wayback Machine Internet Archive.  
[http://web.archive.org/web/2000819055831/http://garvaghyroad.org/poetry\\_from\\_  
the\\_road.htm](http://web.archive.org/web/2000819055831/http://garvaghyroad.org/poetry_from_the_road.htm).

———. “Portadown and the Marching Season: A Fact Sheet.” Accessed 2 July 2013.  
Wayback Machine Internet Archive.  
<http://web.archive.org/web/2000819055831/http://garvaghyroad.org/fact-sheet>.

- Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland. "An Open Letter to the People of Northern Ireland, 2 July 1998." Accessed 2 July 2013. CAIN, University of Ulster. <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/parade/docs/goli2798.htm>.
- "Irish Republican Army Ceasefire Statement, 31 August 1994." Accessed 2 July 2013. CAIN, University of Ulster. <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ira31894.htm>.
- "Londonderry Westbank Loyalists Still under Siege. No Surrender." Accessed 2 July 2013. CAIN Mural Directory, University of Ulster. Album 32. <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/mccormick/album32.htm>.
- Loyalist Lyrics. "Derry's Walls." Accessed 2 July 2013. <http://www.loyalistlyrics.com/lyrics-D/index.html>.
- Portadown District Loyal Orange Lodge (LOL) No. 1. "Press Statement—1<sup>st</sup> July 1996." Accessed 2 July 2013. <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/ps01-07-1996.htm>.
- . "Press Statement—14<sup>th</sup> January 1997." Accessed 2 July 2013. <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/ps14-01-1997.htm>.
- . "Press Statement—6<sup>th</sup> June 1997." Accessed 2 July 2013. <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/ps06-06-1997.htm>.
- . "Press Statement—6<sup>th</sup> July 1998." Accessed 2 July 2013. <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/ps06-07-1998.htm>.
- . "Press Statement—15<sup>th</sup> August 1998." Accessed 2 July 2013. <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/ps15-08-1998.htm>.
- . "Portadown District Press Statement." Accessed 2 July 2013. <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/09-06-2000.htm>.
- . "Press Statement from Portadown District No. 1." Accessed 2 July 2013. <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/27-06-2000.htm>.
- . "Letters of Protest from Portadown District." Accessed 2 July 2013. <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/02-07-2000.htm>.
- . "Portadown District LOL No. 1 Press Release: Drumcree Protest—1000 Days." Accessed 2 July 2013. <http://www.portadowndistrictlolno1.co.uk/29-04-2001.htm>.
- The Stormont Papers. "50 Years of Northern Ireland Parliamentary Debates Online." Accessed 2 July 2013. Volume 16 (1933-34), 1095-1096. <http://stormontpapers.ahds.ac.uk/stormontpapers/pageview.html?volumeno=16&pageno=1095>.



## **Published Primary Sources**

### **Dr. Dominic Bryan's Private Collection**

- Coalition for Peace in Ireland/Information on Ireland Campaign. "Report for the Independent Canadian Delegation to Monitor Orange Marches in Northern Ireland." 1997.
- The Committee on the Administration of Justice. "A Submission from the Committee on the Administration of Justice to the Independent Review of Parades and Marches." 1996.
- Community Relations Council. "Submission to the Independent Review of Parades." 1996.
- Human Rights Watch/Helsinki. "To Serve without Favour: Policing, Human Rights, and Accountability in Northern Ireland." 1997.
- North, Peter, Fr. Oliver Crilly, and V. Rev. John Dunlop. *Independent Review of Parades and Marches (North Report)*. 1997.
- Northern Ireland Women's Coalition. "Submission to the Independent Review on Parades." 1996.
- Sinn Féin. "Submission the Review of Parades." 1996.
- Social Democratic and Labour Party. "Interim Submission by the Social Democratic and Labour Party to the Independent Review of Parades and Marches." 1996.
- Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights. "Submission by the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights to the Independent Review of Parades and Marches." 1996.
- Ulster Democratic Party. "Rights and Responsibilities (Submission to the Independent Review of Parades and Marches)." 1996.
- Ulster Unionist Party. "Ulster Unionist Party Submission to the Independent Review of Parades and Marches." 1996.

### **Northern Ireland Political Collection, Linen Hall Library, Belfast**

- PeaceWatch Ireland. "Looking into the Abyss: Witnesses' Report from Garvaghy Road, July 4-6, 1997." 1997. P13327.
- Pat Finucane Centre. "In the Line of Fire." Report. 1996. P7311.

### **Government Legislation**

*Act of Union (1801)*

*Government of Ireland Act (1920)*

*Special Powers Act (1922)*

*Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act (1976)*

*Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985)*

*Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act (1989)*

*Joint Declaration (1993) (Downing Street Declaration)*

*Good Friday Agreement (1998)*

### **Other Published Primary Sources**

Adams, Gerry. *Falls Memories: A Belfast Life*. Dingle, Co. Kerry: Brandon, 1982.

Department of the Environment, Community, and Local Government, Republic of Ireland. "Referendum Results 1937-2011." Accessed 2 July 2013.  
<http://www.environ.ie/en/LocalGovernment/Voting/Referenda/PublicationsDocuments/FileDownload,1894,en.pdf>.

Devlin, Bernadette. *The Price of My Soul*. New York: Knopf, 1969.

Garvaghy Residents. *Garvaghy: A Community under Siege*. Belfast: Beyond the Pale Publications, 1999.

Jones, R. David, James S. Kane, Robert Wallace, Douglas Sloan, and Brian Courtney. *The Orange Citadel: A History of Orangeism in Portadown District*. Portadown: Portadown Cultural Heritage Committee, 1996.

Lucy, Gordon. *Stand-off! Drumcree: July 1995 and 1996*. Lurgan, Co. Armagh: Ulster Society Publications, 1996.

McGarry, Tim, Michael McDowell, and Damon Quinn. *Give My Head Peace: The Book*. Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1999.

Montgomery, G.W. and J. Richard Whitten. *The Order on Parade*. Belfast: Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland Education Committee, 1995.

Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association. *We Shall Overcome: The History of the Struggle for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland, 1968-1978*. Belfast: Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association, 1978.

Northern Ireland Elections. "The 1998 Referendums." Accessed 2 July 2013.  
<http://www.ark.ac.uk/elections/fref98.htm>.

Pickering, John A. *Drumcree*. Belfast: Ambassador, 2009.

Sands, Bobby. *One Day in My Life*. Dublin: Mercier Press, 1983.

United Nations Peacemaker. "Northern Ireland Peace Agreement (The Good Friday Agreement)." Accessed 2 July 2013. <http://peacemaker.un.org/node/1697>.

## **Newspapers**

*The Australian*

*BBC News Website*

*Belfast News Letter*

*Belfast Telegraph*

*Birmingham Post*

*Daily Telegraph (Sydney)*

*The Guardian*

*The Independent (London)*

*Irish Times*

*The Journal (London)*

*The Observer (London)*

*Portadown News*

*Portadown Times*

*Scotland on Sunday*

*The Scotsman*

*The Sunday Times (London)*

*The Times (London)*

*Toronto Star*

*Washington Post*

## **Secondary Sources**

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New Edition. London: Verso, 2006.

Anderson, Chris. *Billy Boys: The Life and Death of LVF Leader Billy Wright*. Edinburgh: Mainstream, 2002.

Bell, Desmond. "Acts of Union: Youth Sub-Culture and Ethnic Identity among Protestants in Northern Ireland." *The British Journal of Sociology* 38, no. 2 (1987): 158-183.

Boal, Frederick W., and David N. Livingstone. "The Frontier in the City: Ethnonationalism in Belfast." *International Political Science Review/Revue Internationale de science politique* 5, no. 2 (1984): 161-179.

- Bryan, Dominic, T.G. Fraser, and Seamus Dunn. *Political Rituals: Loyalist Parades in Portadown*. Coleraine: University of Ulster, 1995.
- Bryan, Dominic. *Orange Parades: The Politics of Ritual, Tradition, and Control*. London: Pluto Press, 2000.
- . "The Right to March" in *Divided Europeans: Understanding Ethnicities in Conflict*, edited by Tim Allen and John Eade, 173-200. The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1999.
- Bryson, Anna. "'Whatever You Say, Say Nothing': Researching Memory and Identity in Mid-Ulster, 1945-1969." *Oral History* 35, no. 2 (Autumn 2007): 45-56.
- Bryson, Lucy, and Clem McCartney. *Clashing Symbols? A Report on the Use of Flags, Anthems, and Other National Symbols in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University Belfast, 1994.
- Buckley, Anthony D., ed. *Symbols in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University Belfast, 1998.
- Buckley, Anthony D., and Mary Catherine Kenney. *Negotiating Identity: Rhetoric, Metaphor, and Social Drama in Northern Ireland*. London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995.
- Cairns, David. "The Object of Sectarianism: The Material Reality of Sectarianism in Ulster Loyalism." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 6, no. 3 (2000): 437-452.
- Claydon, Tony, and Ian McBride. "The Trials of the Chosen Peoples: Recent Interpretations of Protestantism and National Identity in Britain and Ireland." In *Protestantism and National Identity: Britain and Ireland c.1650-1850*, edited by Tony Claydon and Ian McBride, 3-32. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Compton, P.A. "The Demographic Dimension of Integration and Division in Northern Ireland." In *Integration and Division*, edited by F.W. Boal and N.H. Douglas. London: Academic Press, 1982.
- Confino, Alon. "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method." *American Historical Review* 102, no. 5 (1997): 1386-1403.
- Crane, Susan A. "Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory." *American Historical Review* 102, no. 5 (1997): 1372-1385.
- "Developments at Drumcree, 1995-2000." Accessed 2 July 2013. CAIN, University of Ulster. <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/parade/develop.htm>.
- Doherty, Paul, and Michael A. Poole. "Ethnic Residential Segregation in Belfast, Northern Ireland, 1971-1991." *Geographical Review* 87, no. 4 (1997): 520-536.
- Dohonue, Laura K. "Regulating Northern Ireland: The Special Powers Acts, 1922-1972." *The Historical Journal* 41, no. 4 (1998): 1089-1120.

- Dooley, Brian. *Black and Green: The Fight for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland and Black America*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998.
- Dudley Edwards, Ruth. *The Faithful Tribe: An Intimate Portrait of the Loyal Institutions*. New edition. London: Harper Collins, 2000.
- Erl, Astrid, and Ann Rigney, eds. *Mediation, Remediation, and the Dynamics of Cultural Memory*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009.
- Farrell, Sean. *Rituals and Riots: Sectarian Violence and Political Culture in Ulster, 1784-1886*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2000.
- . "Ulster Sectarianism and the Lessons of South Asian Historiography." *History Compass* 8, no. 9 (September 2010): 1023-1035.
- Finnegan, Richard B., and Edward McCarron. *Ireland: Historical Echoes, Contemporary Politics*. Boulder: Westview Press, 2000.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*. New York: Random House, 1978.
- Fraser, T.G. *The Irish Parading Tradition: Following the Drum*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.
- Gee, James Paul. *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*. New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Glassberg, David. "Public History and the Study of Memory." *Public Historian* 18, no. 2 (1996): 7-23.
- Graham, B., and P. Shirlow, "The Battle of the Somme in Ulster Memory and Identity." *Political Geography* 21, no. 7 (2002): 881-904.
- Harrison, Simon. "Four Types of Symbolic Conflict." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 1, no. 2 (1995): 255-272.
- Jackson, Alvin. *Ireland 1798-1998: Politics and War*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.
- Jarman, Neil. *Material Conflicts: Parades and Visual Displays in Northern Ireland*. Oxford: Berg, 1997.
- . "The Orange Arch: Creating Tradition in Ulster." *Folklore* 112, no. 1 (2001): 1-21.
- Jarman, Neil, and Dominic Bryan. *Parade and Protest: A Discussion of Parading Disputes in Northern Ireland*. Coleraine: University of Ulster, 1996.
- . *From Riots to Rights: Nationalist Parades in the North of Ireland*. Coleraine: University of Ulster, 1998.
- Kauffman, Eric P. *The Orange Order: A Contemporary Northern Irish History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

- Kelly, James. "‘The glorious and immortal memory’: Commemoration and Protestant Identity in Ireland, 1660-1800." *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 94/C/2 (1994): 25-32.
- Kelly, William, ed. *The Sieges of Derry*. Dublin: Four Courts press, 2001.
- Kennaway, Brian. *The Orange Order: A Tradition Betrayed*. London: Methuen, 2006.
- Lacey, Brian. *Siege City: The Story of Derry and Londonderry*. Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1990.
- Lee, J.J., and Marion Casey, eds. *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States*. New York: New York University Press, 2007.
- Lisle, Debbie. "Local Symbols, Global Networks: Rereading the Murals of Belfast." *Alternatives* 31 (2006): 27-52.
- Lundy, Derek. *The Bloody Red Hand: A Journey through Truth, Myth, and Terror in Northern Ireland*. Toronto: Village Canada, 2007.
- McBride, Ian. *The Siege of Derry in Ulster Protestant Mythology*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997.
- . *History and Memory in Modern Ireland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- McCrudden, Christopher, Robert Ford, and Anthony Heath. "Legal Regulation of Affirmative Action in Northern Ireland: An Empirical Assessment." *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 24, vol. 3 (2004): 363-415.
- McEvoy, Siobhán. "Communities and Peace: Catholic Youth in Northern Ireland." *Journal of Peace Research* 37, no. 1 (2000): 85-103.
- McGaughey, Jane. *Ulster's Men: Protestant Unionist Masculinities and Militarization in the North of Ireland, 1912-1923*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012.
- McKay, Susan. *Northern Protestants: An Unsettled People*. Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 2000.
- McKittrick, David. *Despatches from Belfast*. Belfast: O'Donoghue Books, 1989.
- McKittrick, David, and David McVea. *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of the Northern Ireland Conflict*. London: Penguin, 2001.
- Melaugh, Martin. "Majority-Minority Differentials: Unemployment, Housing and Health." In *Facets of the Conflict in Northern Ireland*, edited by Seamus Dunn. Hampshire, England: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1995. Accessed 2 July 2013, CAIN, University of Ulster, <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/discrimination/melaugh.htm>.
- Miller, Kerby. "Ulster Presbyterians and the 'Two Traditions' in Ireland and America." In *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States*, edited by J. J. Lee and Marion Casey, 255-270. New York: New York University Press, 2007.

- Moody, T.W., and F.X. Martin. *The Course of Irish History*. Fourth edition. Lanham: Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 2001.
- Nic Craith. Máiréad. *Plural Identities, Singular Narratives: The Case of Northern Ireland*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2007.
- Patterson, Henry, and Eric Kauffman. *Unionism and Orangeism in Northern Ireland since 1945: The Decline of the Loyal Family*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.
- Pettitt, Lance. *Screening Ireland: Film and Television Representation*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.
- Prince, Simon. *Northern Ireland's '68: Civil Rights, Global Revolt, and the Origins of the Troubles*. Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2007.
- Rolston, Bill. *Politics and Painting*. London; Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1991.
- . *Drawing Support: Murals in the North of Ireland*. Belfast: Beyond the Pale, 1992.
- Ross, Marc Howard. "Psychocultural Interpretations and Dramas: Identity Dynamics in Ethnic Conflict." *Political Psychology* 22, no. 1 (2001): 157-178.
- Ryder, Chris, and Vincent Kearney. *Drumcree: The Orange Order's Last Stand*. London: Methuen, 2001.
- Ryder, Chris. *The Fateful Split: Catholics and the Royal Ulster Constabulary*. London: Methuen, 2004.
- Santino, Jack. "Public Protest and Popular Style: Resistance from the Right in Northern Ireland and South Boston." *American Anthropologist* 101, no. 3 (1999): 515-528.
- . *Signs of War and Peace*. New York: Palgrave, 2001.
- Tonge, Jonathan. "The Origins and Development of the Peace Process." In *Peace and War? Understanding the Peace Process in Northern Ireland*, edited by Chris Gilligan and Jonathan Tonge, 5-12. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997.
- . *Northern Ireland: Conflict and Change*. Cambridge: Polity, 2006.
- Valverde, Mariana. *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.
- Walker, Brian. "1641, 1689, 1690 and All That: The Unionist Sense of History." *The Irish Review* 12 (1992): 56-64.
- . "'Ancient Enmities' and Modern Conflict: History and Politics in Northern Ireland." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 13, no. 1 (2007): 103-128.
- White, Hayden. "The Burden of History." *History and Theory* 5, no. 2 (1966): 111-134.
- . *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973.

———. *The Content of Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.

Wright, Frank. *Two Lands on One Soil: Ulster Politics before Home Rule*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996.

Zemon Davis, Natalie. "Leo Africanus' Discovers Comedy: Genre Intersection and its Aftermath." Keynote address, Canadian Historical Association annual conference, Victoria, British Columbia, 3 June 2013.