Belfast a city divided? Community relations in Belfast

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Författare/ Writer: Ana Maria Panescu
Handledare/ Mentor : Niklas Håkansson
Ämne/ Subject: Statsvetenskap C Institutionen Samhälle och Hälsa
Högskolan i Halmstad/ Political Science level C, Institution Society and Health
University College of Halmstad
Abbreviations used in the thesis

Cain Conflict archive on the internet

IRA Irish Republican Army- paramilitary Irish group fighting for the Northern Ireland to be reunited with the Republic of Ireland

UUP Ulster Unionist Party- a moderate unionist party voters are mainly Protestants

S.D.L.P Social Democratic and Labour Party –a nationalist Irish party

UVF Ulster Volunteer Force Loyalist group in Northern Ireland, paramilitary group

UDA Ulster Defence Association loyalist paramilitary organization in Northern Ireland
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Abstract

A conflict known for being played out between Catholics and Protestants has affected Northern Ireland deeply as a country and society, leaving a divided and segregated society. A peace process was started in the early 90’s in Northern Ireland and the Belfast Agreement was reached in April 1998 aiming to create a devolved government in Belfast with shared power again after years of suspension and to take serious human rights in Northern Ireland. With this bachelor degree thesis I am writing about community relations in Belfast and if they changed after the Belfast Agreement in terms of segregation between Catholics and Protestants and in terms of attitudes between Catholics and Protestants. By researching segregation and attitudes I believe I will find out something about community relations in Belfast. By presenting information on this theme and as well taking into use, the zero sum theory and Lijphart’s consocial theory, there are pathways to the answer.
Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction, problem

Northern Ireland has lived for centuries in the shadow of a conflict dominated by the conflict between Catholics and Protestants. On my first visit in Belfast I was looking for the bus stop in Cregagh, an area mainly dominated by Protestants, when Graham a middle-aged Protestant man offered me a ride to the city. On our way to the city centre he told me about a Protestant and Catholic neighbourhood divided by a wall. The children in this neighbourhood used to come out and bombard each other with stones. My first encounter with Ireland and Northern Ireland first really started with my friend from the southern republic of Ireland, who told me stories about the conflict between Catholics and Protestants, which evoke a certain interest within me for the Northern Ireland conflict. As we know the conflict is famous for being played out between Catholics and Protestants. Northern Ireland of today is no longer shattered by war but does that mean that Catholics and Protestants manage to live peacefully together now in Northern Ireland? This thesis deals with community relations in Belfast between Catholics and Protestants, if the community relations between Catholics and Protestants have improved after the Belfast Agreement was signed in 1998. Segregation, hatred and violence between the two groups Catholics and Protestants is it still a harsh reality? The table below show death rates in Belfast and Northern Ireland connected to the Troubles. Numbers below gives evidence that violence related to the Northern Ireland have decreased dramatically the latest decade.

Tables showing decrease of deaths related to the Troubles in the capital Belfast and Northern Ireland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Deaths Belfast</th>
<th>Deaths Northern Ireland/outside Belfast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Deaths related to the Troubles in Belfast and Northern Ireland

The information above derives from Malcolm Sutton’s book “Index of deaths from the conflict in Ireland 1969-2003. The death rates increased and increased as the Troubles intensified. In 1976 18 people were killed in Belfast. The death rates were pretty high in the 1970’s 200-300 people were killed each year and mostly in Belfast in deaths related to the Troubles. In 1972, 479 people died from which 19 were killed outside Belfast. Most of them were killed in an anti- internment march in Derry on the Bogside. In 1980, 80 people were killed from which 34 were killed outside Belfast in other counties. But this negative development took a turn in the beginning of 1990, as the death rates started to decrease. 81 people were killed in Northern Ireland in 1990, 54 were killed outside Belfast and even outside in Germany, UK and the Netherlands in executions by the IRA on British officers or on people who were alleged informers. After year 2000 very few people were killed, in 2001 26 people were killed, 5 of them were killed in Belfast. 7 people were killed in Belfast in 2005 and in 2006 there were 4 cases of death cases related to sectarian violence outside Belfast. (Malcolm Sutton 1969 -2001/ Martin Melaugh 2002-2007) Counting the violence in a before and after time, there is a significant space of time- a post violence era and prior to peace era. The casualties decreased drastically in Belfast and all over Northern Ireland in the 1990’s and in 2006 there were almost no deaths in Belfast related to the Troubles. Was there any possibility that the decrease of violence had any impact on community relations in Belfast? Does a decrease in violence in Belfast automatically mean that community relations in Belfast should be improved? That remains to find out and research next.

One of my hypotheses is actually that division between groups in a deeply divided society can not be altered in a short time. My aim with this thesis is to research if community relations in a segregated and divided society like Belfast in Northern Ireland can change due after a peace agreement like Belfast Agreement. What can explain better or worse community relations between the Catholics and Protestants, if there can be any visible change in attitudes and geographical segregation in Belfast in comparison to past and present, before and after (1998 - 2006). The numbers presented earlier in this chapter, shows that violence connected to the conflict has decreased in Belfast and Northern Ireland. Which information and theories can offer a good explanation on why and how the attitudes between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast are better or worse today and if the geographical segregation of Catholics and Protestants is better or worse in Belfast? In order to find out more precisely about this problem and these questions and not make it to wide and imprecise I intend to use Belfast as a study case and I will also try to find out more about the problem between Catholics and Protestants, if the situation in terms of geographical segregation changed in Belfast after the Belfast Agreement by trying to answer these two questions:

1. Are the attitudes better or worse between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast than during the violence?

2. Is the geographical segregation bigger or smaller now in Belfast than during the violence? (the violence= The troubles)

With these two questions I intend to break down my chosen problem into two aspects which are easier to discern and research. I think that these questions will be guidelines for me to find out
how the situation in Belfast has changed in terms of attitudes and geographical segregation and how Northern Ireland can be described as society after the Belfast agreement. What explanation will we find to the answers at the end? Which theories can explain a static or dynamic change in Northern Ireland society in terms of geographical segregation and attitudes?

1.2 Discussing segregation- how can segregation be defined?

Segregation I believe, is part of community relations and is linked with attitudes which is also a part of community relations, therefore I am trying to deal both with geographical segregation and attitudes in this thesis to find out something about community relations in Northern Ireland, in Belfast. My wish is to clarify what I mean with the notion segregation and how I choose to define it in this thesis, but as well to create a comprehension on why I have chosen to use the notion segregation in one of the main questions in this thesis.

“Segregation and integration are used to describe the separation or unification of groups or communities, physically and/or socially.” (Cain Hamilton, McCartney, Finn 1990) This is how Hamilton, McCartney and Finn describe segregation. The Cain website chooses to take segregation and put it in the context of Northern Ireland. “Since the Plantation of Ulster in the early 17th century many aspects of life in the region have been segregated on the basis of religious denomination. Each period of conflict has increased the level of segregation and the most recent 'Troubles' has seen, for example, residential segregation increased to new levels. In addition to where people choose - or are forced - to live, segregation is also experienced in education, business, commerce, sport, leisure activities, etc. Many people in Northern Ireland conduct their entire lives within their own community with little opportunity - or no desire - to meet members of the opposite tradition. The term has also been used within the context of the prison system. Here it is used to describe the demand that those serving sentences on paramilitary-related charges should be completely separated from those associated with opposing paramilitary groups.” (Cain Glossary –Segregation)

The reason for choosing these two ways of viewing segregation is because I more or less agree with how it is defined by Cain and Hamilton, McCartney and Finn and will use the notion when discussing segregation in this thesis. Hamilton, McCartney and Finn describe segregation as separation of communities or groups which is exactly how I regard this notion in the first place and according to how the glossary of Cain translates segregation. Segregation permeates several parts of society, not only living areas but also schools, business, sport centres and for example commerce. Segregation in Northern Ireland, according to Cain, has been connected to periods of increasing conflict, which makes people to live more separately. People don’t share the same living areas, leisure centres, schools or do their shopping in the same supermarkets. Every area is possessed by either Catholics or Protestants and is for example divided by walls or marked by flags, banners or propagandistic graffiti. (Cain Glossary –Segregation) In addition, segregation I think, can also be linked to social classes. I believe that the poorer people are, the more they tend to live in more homogenised areas with crime and violence. In question number two “is the geographical segregation bigger or smaller now than during the violence?, I have chosen to use the notion segregation together with the word geographical because I want to know something
about how community relations work between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast in the present time. Segregation is a part of the notion community relations because it says something about how Protestants and Catholics are managing to live with each other in Belfast today, which might lead us to a greater understanding of the community relations in Belfast in present time.

1.3 Translating attitudes

This thesis deals with community relations between Catholics and Protestants and attitudes are as I earlier argued a part of community relations. I want to give my perspective on what I mean when I say attitudes since the word can be used in very many ways, in this case attitudes deals with the behaviour and perceptions Catholics and Protestants have towards each other, whilst geographical segregation deals only with the physical segregation. I believe the notion attitude is a part of “community relations” as well as the notion segregation is, because they interact together and create a certain type of community relation. Attitudes I belive, create segregation and shapes community relations. In my search for a definition of this term attitude I searched internet and found some interesting information from some psychology books (Adapted from Liska; Handbook of Social Psychology [The cognitive perspective]; Michener et al; Myers; Social Psychology, edited by Arnold Kahn; "A new look at dissonance theory"; Ajzen and Fishbein piece in Contemporary Issues in Social Psychology; Rich Williams's dissertation)

Definition  Attitude = a favourable or unfavourable evaluative reaction toward something or someone, exhibited in ones beliefs, feelings, or intended behaviour (Myers, p. 36). It is a social orientation - an underlying inclination to respond to something either favourably or unfavourably.

Components of attitudes

a. Cognitive - our thoughts, beliefs, and ideas about something. When a human being is the object of an attitude, the cognitive component is frequently a stereotype, e.g. "welfare recipients are lazy"

b. Affective - feelings or emotions that something evokes. e.g. fear, sympathy, hate. May dislike welfare recipients.

c. Conative, or behavioural - tendency or disposition to act in certain ways toward something. Might want to keep welfare recipients out of our neighbourhood. Emphasis is on the tendency to act, not the actual acting; what we intend and what we do may be quite different.

This way attitude is portrayed above by Myers, Liska and Michener is quite interesting to me as it discusses not only the reaction people might have to each other, but also what it leads to responding to something in a certain way. Nevertheless, the most important thing to me is to be able to this models way of translating the notion attitude in the context of the theme my thesis – community relations in Belfast. In a) cognitive - our thoughts, beliefs, and ideas about something. When a human being is the object of an attitude, the cognitive component is frequently a stereotype, e.g. "welfare recipients are lazy". In this thesis this can be translated into
Catholics and Protestants in Belfast regarding each other in stereotypical ways as the “bad “, the enemy” a counterpart which by all means has to be avoided. In the context of Belfast and the Northern Ireland conflict, this way of regarding each other can lead to verbal abuse between Catholics and Protestants or sectarian attacks, because people regard each other in stereotypes and live in fear and suspicion of each other. I think this could also be connected to people not wishing to pass each other areas or to travel far to avoid the other community. If relations are good between Catholics and Protestants it can be translated into more positive stereotypes, such as Catholics are friendly, Protestants work hard. In b) Affective - feelings or emotions that something evokes e.g. fear, sympathy, hate - may dislike welfare recipients. I choose to translate this into attitudes in terms of Catholic’s and Protestant’s negative feelings towards each other such as hatred. Can lead to low social interaction between Catholics and Protestants c) Conative, or behavioural - tendency or disposition to act in certain ways toward something. Might want to keep welfare recipients out of our neighbourhood. Emphasis is on the tendency to act, not the actual acting; what we intend and what we do may be quite different. This part could be translated into attitudes between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast leading to a refusal to live in mixed areas or that they won’t pass each others areas. Sometimes Catholics and Protestants might not even act out openly what they actually feel for each other. With the notion attitudes I want to bring about an answer, how the community relations functions between Catholics and Protestants work in Belfast in present time (2006 (Adapted from Liska; Handbook of Social Psychology [The cognitive perspective]; Michener et al; Myers; Social Psychology, edited by Arnold Kahn; "A new look at dissonance theory"; Ajzen and Fishbein piece in Contemporary Issues in Social Psychology; Rich Williams's dissertation)

1.4 Belfast Agreement

The agreement was signed in Belfast on the Good Friday in April in 1998, and is called either the Good Friday Agreement or the Belfast Agreement, but I have chosen to refer to it as the Belfast Agreement. “The agreement’s significance, it has been argued lay not only in institutional structures but also in addressing the legacy of history or even overcoming the burden of the past. It was supposed to be, in this grander sense an opening, a turning point, a new beginning an opening to the future.” (Aughey 2005: 2) According to Artur Aughey there has been a consensus for students of Northern Ireland politics that the Belfast Agreement which was closed on the 10th April 1998 marked the beginning of something new after the period which started with the civil rights campaign 1968 ( Aughey 2005). The Agreement was a solution to create a power-sharing parliament with 108 members. The Belfast Agreement is a political agreement between the government of Ireland and United Kingdom and had to be approved through a referendum by the people of Northern Ireland. It demands the disarmament of all paramilitary groups and respects the different rights of the two communities. The Belfast Agreement main task was to construct a new devolved government in Northern Ireland which included the 60-40-40 formula meaning an agreement that a majority of each party from each community and was accepted in referendum in May 1998. (Fey 2004)

The Agreement has been criticized for being a majority solution in the paper the trouble with Northern Ireland by Rick Wilford and Robin Wilson. They claim that the agreement only deals with the procedure for constitutional change briefly, which they consider sounds peculiar for a
society with two counterparts who haven’t been able to live together on the same soil. (Wilson/Wilford 2006) Wilson and Wilford would have preferred a value system embodied in institutions and procedures in Northern Ireland. Wilford/Wilford argue that the focus on constitutional change focuses on popular control type of democracy a majority which they mean consists of Protestants. Wilford/Wilford meant that the decision was mostly enforced by the Unionist Party. (Wilford/Wilson 2006) They probably refer to the part of the Agreement where it is stated that only a majority of the people of Northern Ireland can change the current status as a member of United Kingdom. Another problem with the Agreement could be the fact that it is an agreement on a high political level and can not reach the people—it is far from the communities in Belfast. The Belfast Agreement also discusses how to solve problems with human rights and equity by stating that a Human Rights Commission outside government would be established in Northern Ireland to reflect community balance, to promote awareness of human rights. The Agreement also insists of remaking the police service in Northern Ireland and to release prisoners who have been involved in violent acts during the Troubles. (Website of Northern Ireland government, The Belfast Agreement. PDF)

To compare past with present I have chosen to look back at years from 1968-1998 for past and 1998-2006 for present, based on the year of the Belfast Agreement and when the Troubles started. The only problem is that I lack statistics and information for all these years 1968-1998 therefore I will focus mostly on the 1980’s and 1990’s. I have decided to use the Belfast Agreement to divide time in then and now, because Belfast Agreement is the last agreement signed in a row of attempts to find a functioning peace agreement. The agreement has both good and bad sides, and was probably designed to open doors for a better future for Northern Ireland, making way for a devolved government to be shared by Catholics and Protestants, respecting different cultural and religious rights of the two communities, a discrimination free government. Although the Belfast Agreement offered positive incentives for a better future for Northern Ireland, there were no clear promises and the agreement was. According to Aughey politics in Northern Ireland has been affected by historical past and by blaming each other, taking no responsibility instead of finding compromises. Both sides have managed to allocate their grievances rather than finding compromises. The nationalists claiming they have been wronged politically and unionists justifying their struggle through history. (Aughey 2005) We don’t know yet if the Belfast Agreement had an impact on the geographical segregation between Catholics and Protestants, or the attitudes between Catholics and Protestants. Therefore I have also chosen the Agreement as a before and after time of the conflict to see if the situation between Catholics and Protestants improved after 1998. My aim is not to analyse the Belfast Agreement but to use it as a tool of measurement in time. I wonder if the Agreement really changed something in Northern Ireland in Belfast referring to geographical segregation and attitudes between Catholics and Protestants, therefore I intend to use it as measurement of what happened before and after the Agreement.
1.5 My hypothesis

My hypothesis is that a deeply divided society can’t change too easily and that not even due to political arrangements. People’s attitudes in a divided society, I believe can not change, if people have lived separately and have suffered from each other’s violence, death and have lived in a segregated society. My hypotheses are:
1) A divided society can not change to easily and not even through political arrangements
2) The segregation, the division between Protestants and Catholics has not decreased in Belfast
3) The attitudes between Protestants and Catholics in Belfast have not improved.

In that case the Agreement should be able to meet and challenge segregation and deeply deal with all the problematic segments of society. The Agreement points out that the two ethnic groups will be respected but doesn’t point out how this change can be realized practically, and doesn’t deal with the problem of segregation. It is also a majority solution and doesn’t match the needs of the minority the Catholics. By pointing on that the majority will still have most to say it still creates a division which will still make people regard each other in a “we and them” perspective or will only decrease the feeling of victimisation in some communities in Belfast. The Belfast Agreement did perhaps change society in Northern Ireland or perhaps not. The Agreement was not entirely negative or positive. I am not insinuating on forehand that the Agreement didn’t help to change society, but that remains to see in this thesis. I will use the Belfast Agreement as division between past and present because I think the agreement could have made an impact on society bad or good, which I hope to discover in this thesis. The core focus in this thesis is to see if Northern Ireland really changed in terms of geographical segregation and attitudes between Catholics and Protestants, after the Belfast Agreement.
Chapter 2, about theories

2.1 Theories

Zero-sum theory

The zero sum theory belongs to game theory and claims which participant's gain or loss is exactly balanced by the losses or gains of the other participant(s). It is so named because when the total gains of the participants are added up, and the total losses are subtracted, they will sum to zero. Zero-sum can be thought of more generally as constant sum where the benefits and losses to all players sum to the same value. Cutting a cake is zero- or constant-sum because taking a larger piece reduces the amount of cake available for others. In contrast, non-zero-sum describes a situation in which the interacting parties' aggregate gains and losses is either less than or more than zero (Wikipedia.org, Zero sum theory) The zero sum theory might be appropriate to try on this thesis because it offers the aspect of two parts winning or losing. The more a party gains the more the other will lose. In zero sum theory there can’t be two winners, you either win or lose. The Northern Ireland conflict has been played out between two sides Catholics and Protestants which politically has taken the form as nationalists, republicans and unionists and loyalism. The war and political game has often been played out as if only one winner can exist. In the Northern Ireland conflict there can’t be two winners from the perspective of Catholics and Protestants as each claim rights which can’t be compatible. The nationalists wish to be united with Ireland while unionist wish to retain their relationship with United Kingdom. If we will discern at the end of this thesis that Northern Ireland is still a very segregated place this theory could perhaps help us an understanding of the current situation. I have chosen the zero–sum theory because it can serve as a tool to give an understanding of the behaviour of Protestants and Catholics in Belfast concerning segregation and attitudes. This theory can serve as a tool so we can perhaps find an understanding of the behaviour of Catholics and Protestant and how they perceive the conflict.

Lijpharts consocial theory

I believe that Northern Ireland is a deeply divided society. Shattered by an internal conflict for years, between the two ethnic groups Protestants and Catholics, the protracted conflict created a societal division, between the two ethnic groups Catholics and Protestants. I also believe that a deeply divided society can not be changed very easily. I am not sure if a peace agreement or political settlement can change a much divided society very quickly. Arend Lijphart’s consocial theory renders how countries with big different social, ethnical and cultural differences and a lot of political parties still could be stable, calm and stabile democracies. Lijphart meant that Belgium, Holland and Switzerland are countries which are quite stable democracies although they are countries with a lot of cultures and languages. As we know by now, is unfortunately not the case for the Northern Ireland as a society. Lijphart meant that the way a country works, depends on the political elites and the construction of the political institutions. In homogenised countries elites such as party leaders afford to appear as clear alternatives, but this was not the case for more culturally and ethnical divided countries where leaders clearly needed to
collaborate and political institutions needed to be able to handle conflicts and form compromises. The different minorities should have the power to influence through proportional representation in political organs. Lijphart speaks about two democracy models - the majority democracy where the majority is permitted to rule as much as possible and another type of democracy where the minority is permitted to rule as much as possible. (Lindahl 2004:15) In Northern Ireland majority rule is the normal as there are more Protestants than Catholics.

Lijphart’s consocial theory I think, is a good explanation model to discover if The Belfast Agreement matched the Northern Irish society and did help to change it. Lijphart meant the way a country works depends on the political elites and the construction of the political institutions. In homogenised countries elites such as party leaders afford to appear as clear alternatives, but this is not the case for more culturally and ethnical divided countries where leaders clearly needed to collaborate and political institutions needed to be able to handle conflicts and form compromises. The different minorities should have the power to influence through proportional representation in political organs. (Utländska politiska system Rutger Lindahl, 2004) If Belfast changed after 1998 in terms of segregation, community relations, between Catholics and Protestants maybe the Belfast Agreement was a good settlement with appropriate arrangements suitable for the problems of Northern Ireland. Lijphart’s consocial theory can I believe, be used as an explanation model to discover and compare to which extent the Belfast Agreement matched the consocial theory. How did the political elites act and was there any room for the minority (in this case Catholics) within this agreement? If Northern Ireland remained unchanged after this political settlement in 1998 the consocial theory could be good be a good explanation model to understand the development. However the trouble with this agreement is that it was arranged on a high political level far away from “the little people “in the communities. It was also in some ways a settlement which better suited the majority. It could have changed something or maybe not. It is in generally considered to be one of the most crucial moves in the Peace Process in Northern Ireland.

2.2 Methodology

In the previous part I discussed if the peace has had any impact on the Northern Ireland society in the past few years and chose the Belfast Agreement to divide past and present to compare community relations in Belfast now and previous years. I decided to use the Belfast agreement to divide between past and present because the Belfast agreement is considered to be the biggest and most crucial peace agreement signed to create peace in Northern Ireland. I also decided to use Belfast as a study case, as I consider it to be to difficult to research the whole Northern Ireland. My methodology will be based on using previously made research around this subject, not only literature but also death statistics and other information by researchers to find evidence of and make comparison to discover changes in Belfast. I will use 12 interviews I conducted in Belfast in June 2006, by recording them on a Dictaphone. I went on my own initiative to Belfast and interviewed politicians and community workers to get a perspective of the situation of a Belfast in 2006. The reason why I decided to do these interviews was because statistics and books give information but we don’t know if this statistics or information can be old or wrong. With my interviews I wanted to dig into Belfast and listen to what people in present time have to say about their life in Belfast. I interviewed Catholics and Protestants, city council politicians on the highest ranks such as the party leader of the UUP, the Mayor of Belfast, x- loyalist fighters, community
workers living in the poorer and segregated parts of Belfast and some people with more extreme views which actually were too afraid to tell them when I was taping but by drinking huge amounts of coffee with them and tea after the interviews. I got to witness some alarming points of view sometimes, but also more personal and deeper thoughts about life in Belfast. (Knowing this might be a bit unprofessional I want to add that -when I turned off the tape- a person was not quite so politically correct and open minded like when I taped the interview...? She freely expressed some of her anger and bitterness against the other group and had a very simplified one sided view of the conflict. I particularly remember how she said…”yes in the -------areas it is awful….how mothers walk around with their buggies being called whores and all that by the ----- ---” and it is horrible how mean they are etc, etc….I found her to be quite extremist in her way of thinking, a bit scary I ´ll say. ) I will however not use any information in my thesis which has been communicated to me when I wasn’t taping. My wish and purpose is to use these interviews together with the information from the literature and statistics such as polls and enquiries.

2.3 Using interviews as material

When writing a thesis, scientifically, a qualitative method, such as interviews can sometimes provide both researcher and the reader with more information than when only using quantitative material such as diagrams or other type of statistics. According to Metodpraktikan by Esaiasson, Giljam, Oscarsson and Wängnerud (2004) a Swedish guide for students advising how to write a thesis, interviews can be regarded as a source for spontaneous and unplanned answers. According to Metodpraktikan (chapter 14), interviews are good when researching a subject which there is not much information about. When I started to look for material for my thesis I realised that although there is a lot of material like books regarding the Northern Ireland conflict, there is not much research which has been conducted recently about the attitudes in the Northern Ireland society. I had a feeling statistics couldn’t give me all that important information I really required to fully answer my questions. Through my interviews I got to know very important things about Belfast and Northern Ireland, which were at times quite surprising to me. When I prepared my questions for my interviews I used Metodpraktikan as a handbook to make the questions as methodologically correct as possible, trying not to make them look to unprofessional or confusing for the interviewees. According to Metodpraktikan using interviews in a research material can be of importance when trying to try out a theory i.e. to try see how people really think an act if the research is about complicated assumptions about peoples way of behaving or acting. (Esaiasson/ Gilljam/ Oscarsson & Wängnerud 2004: 283)

According to Metodpraktikan you should let the interviewees know that they are interviewed for a scientific research and follow wish to remain anonymous or if they do not wish to participate which is exactly what I did. I interviewed 12 people and informed them participation is voluntarily, and if they wished they could remain anonymous which all of them declined and wanted to tell their profession and name openly. I also followed the advice to conduct the interview in an relaxed environment such as a table where we could sit and drink tea or coffee chatting more freely around the questions posed, but without, stepping to much outside the subject. I also permitted them to discuss more freely not stopping them when wanting to say their own opinions or feeling about the situation in Belfast. We even continued our conversation after the interview so that I wouldn’t leave them with a feeling of not having said everything they wished to say. I didn’t however use any of that information for my thesis. I simply wanted them
to feel more relaxed and told them we could talk more after the interview so they wouldn’t get out of the topic when I interviewed them, as they knew they could say other things afterwards. Another important point with the interview is according to Metodpraktikan, is to write on beforehand notes on what the information from the interviews gives you except the information given in the literature decided to use. My questions posed to the interviewees were:

**Do you think the attitudes are better or worse between Catholics and Protestants than during the violence?**

**Do you think the geographical segregation is bigger or smaller now than during the violence?** (Belfast...the violence=The troubles).

I used violence as a term for the Troubles, the violence in Northern Ireland caused due to the conflict between Protestants and Catholics, this may be regarded as methodologically wrong but I thought the Troubles as notion could sound a bit upsetting to use, too sensitive. I asked about attitudes and geographical segregation, as that could be two key words to discern patterns in the actual life of Belfast in 2006 and could let the interviewee develop a story about the Belfast of today (i.e. the Belfast of 2006 when I interviewed them.)

### 2.4 Literature and critical aspects on my material

This thesis is on a bachelor degree level and a part of its methodology is, as I have been informed to be based on information on earlier research. My material chosen for this thesis consists of written books and reports from writers familiar with the Northern Ireland dilemma and research published on the web such as Cain. Cain is a database on the internet from University if Ulster which has collected parts from books and writings about the Northern Ireland conflict. Cain has been a very useful source to me, because I found very useful material about the Troubles. CAIN is a website which belongs to the University of Ulster and holds information on the Northern Ireland Conflict from 1968 and onwards, like important parts of books, articles and reports concerning the issue “The troubles”. The material is research made by professors and researchers like John Darby, Martin Melaugh, Valerie Smyth and others about the Northern Ireland conflict from the 1970’s to present time. I have also found papers and reports about my subject which have been written in different projects. When I initially started thinking of writing this thesis I was filled with anxiety when hit by the thought that there wouldn’t be enough material on this subject but was surprised of the number of material published on the INTERNET, the result of different research projects conducted by different institutes and professors at various Universities who are writing on this theme. Peter Shirlow works at the University of Ulster, and is a senior lecturer in policy studies and has published numerous amounts of articles and reports and other material on segregation between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland.
Reliability

Metodpraktikan asks if we can believe the source from which we extract our information from, to write a material. To confirm a story, a statement is used which has another origin. If two independent sources from example, two different newspapers render the same information, the source becomes more reliable. The literature I have chosen for this thesis is mostly extracted from the database Cain from the University of Ulster and also a lot of material from Peter Shirlow who is a well known researcher in the field of community relations in Northern Ireland and also works at University of Ulster. When I first chose which material to use like books, information from Cain or papers I noticed that they gave me the same information about community relations in Belfast so I felt the material was very reliable and useful to me. Aspect number two deals with the distance between the teller and the story. Primary sources like a person who tells about an event with his / hers own words are more reliable than secondary sources such as several people rendering the same story which has been described to them by others. I think that the interviews I conducted in Belfast in June 2006 have in a way been like a primary source to me. People told me in their own words about the situation of 2006 in Belfast with segregation and division. Their shared stories were nevertheless quite similar with facts I found in Cain, books, papers or articles. The third aspect deals with the level of dependence of the writer. A credible story should be told by an independent writer, the story shouldn’t be affected by another person or by external circumstances. The writer must estimate if the writer of the sources he/she is using has been affected by some outer threat, force or expectation. In reality there is no writer or source which hasn’t been affected to some extent by certain circumstances or persons. I must meet this aspect by saying that most of my chosen writers Artur Aughey, Peter Shirlow, Brendan Murtaugh or Caroline Kennedy Pipe are well known in their field and most of them are from Northern Ireland and has grown up with the problems and conflict there and generally write about issues related to Northern Ireland. However, there is not a writer or source which is a hundred percent reliable, but it is impossible to me to know everything about every writer and exactly why they are saying something if somebody in their life or some other circumstances has affected them to write something in a certain context. (Esaiasson/ Gilljam/ Oscarsson & Wängnerud 2004: 309-310)

Tendency

The criteria of tendency when writing a material, helps us the writers to systematically consider in which circumstances a story has been created. The tendency of a story is not the most important thing, but the tendency of a writer. The truthfulness of a story can be decided by analysing the tendency of the writer. According to Metodpraktikan the main rule to use in this case is to never believe on a single tendentious source but two verify with two different sources. If the Svenskt Näringsliv, the Swedish industrial economic association and the Socialdemocratic Party two sources with opposite tendencies, expresses the same opinion about a matter, then the credibility of this opinion is more valuable, rather than if only one of the parties had claimed the same. In this case I will defend my choice of material and if the material is tendentious by saying that I think my material and my interviews which I conducted in Belfast in June 2006, gave me
the same result about community relations in Belfast segregation and attitudes, although both the interviewees and the writers of my material are both Catholic and Protestant and men and women. I believe that, because most of the writers as well as some articles from a newspaper I found delivered quite the same information about community relations in Belfast that they were not to tendentious. (Esaiasson/ Gilljam/ Oscarsson & Wängnerud 2004:312)

My hopes for this thesis have been not use information based on sources which in any way can be regarded as fictitious or tendentious or not being able to demonstrate where from they have abstracted the sources are abstracted. The most problematic to me in this thesis was to find an adequate interpretation or translation of the notion attitude. I must admit I have passed the boundary to see if a material is tendentious or reliable for example with the part of translating attitudes because I liked how they were translated on the webpage I found, and couldn’t find a better explanation of the notion attitudes in any other books. Even though I am aware that this can be methodologically wrong, I have used the model presented on a webpage extracted from psychology books but I am prepared to change it if needed, but I also think that the final result in the thesis won’t be affected to much by this. Finding an adequate definition of the notion attitudes has really been problematic to me.

2.5 The conflict in Northern Ireland-background facts/ history

The conflict between Catholics and Protestants dates back as long as about three centuries ago or even more when the British crown decided to give land to Protestant Scottish and British settlers in Catholic Ireland. This was not the first time in the history the island had been invaded by settlers from its neighbouring island. Ireland is an island which for centuries had been subjected to conquest and the threat often came from its neighbouring island. In 1171 Henry II of England intruded with a massive army, and conquered most parts of the island by 1175. But the problem was really fuelled when settlers from the neighbouring island began to inhabit Ireland, and when different economical and religious interest between Catholics and Protestants clashed with each other. The new Protestant settlers took place as an elite group in the society, wealthy and powerful and were supported politically by England. (Kennedy- Pipe 1997)

A battle led by Wolfe Tone 1798 led to the integration of Ireland with England in 1801. By 1880 a Catholic nationalism had grown and was quickly politicised. The Protestants who politically went under the name unionists, wished to be ruled from Westminster, London and preserve their relationship with the British mainland, while the Irish nationalists demanded independence. Home Rule was a Catholic demand from the nationalists, which Protestants considered as a threat to their own interests. Regarding their own region as economically superior, Protestants did not desire to be a part and minority of a Catholic state. Catholics all over the island suffered of deep poverty and discrimination and struck back by forming resistance forces as Irish Republican Brotherhood in the 19th century and later on Irish volunteer force 1913 which absorbed Irish Brotherhood, ready to fight for their cause with violence. Home rule was accepted in 1912 and Ireland gained independence in 1921-expect from the northern six counties in the north where a majority of the population was Protestant and wished to continue to belong to the United Kingdom. Two governments were established in north and south in 1921. (Kennedy- Pipe 1997)
2.6 What are the Troubles really about?

The troubles what is that really about? Northern Ireland is internationally known for the endemic violence which went on for decades, the conflict between Catholics and Protestants. Northern Ireland is situated on the northern part of Ireland and consists of the counties Antrim, Armagh, Down, Down, Fermanagh, and Tyrone and has in all a population of 1,641,700 people. The capital Belfast is the largest city. (Cain Geography) The population consist of 45 % Catholics and 55 % Protestants. From the moment Ireland gained its independency in 1921 from United Kingdom, these six counties still remained within the United Kingdom following the wish of the majority of the Protestants in this area. The devolved government established in Belfast was ultimately ruled from Westminster, London which ultimately had the last say. Catholics and Protestants were politically divided in nationalists and unionists. Nationalist saw the future of Northern Ireland within a reunion with Ireland, while unionists wished to remain within United Kingdom. The political institutions were under Protestant (unionist) control and Catholics were discriminated both politically as well as on other levels for example by the police system, job market and in the education system. During the 1960’s a civil rights campaign started. NICRA organised civil rights marches to demand equity for Catholics. Unionist met these protests with suspicion, which led to violent clashes between the police and the protest marchers. When the government from Westminster deployed the British army in Northern Ireland to control the situation, IRA the paramilitary wing of the republican Sinn Fein arose after being quiet for decades. The situation became uncontrollable with unionist and loyalist paramilitary forces such as UDA and UVF back lashing, transforming Northern Ireland into an endemic war. The situation was so infected that the Westminster administration in London closed down the government in Stormont, Belfast in 1972. The direct wounds of 25 years of endemic rioting such as shooting, car bombs or attack on property, was directly a high number of deaths but also a great division between the two communities in society. Polarisation and segregation grew and deepened the gap between Catholics and Protestants and caused personal tragedies and grievances. (Cain -Darby 2003)

2.7 Beginning of a peace process

The British government attempted during several occasions to reach a political settlement in the 1970’s, by for example letting the unionists and republicans share power, but these attempts were brutally turned down by both sides. IRA was at this time initiating to dislocate its paramilitary violence from Northern Ireland planting terror attacks in England. The preface to the peace process was built during the 1980s and 1990s by for example the Anglo-Irish agreement Gerry Adams, the new party leader for the Republican Party, Sinn Fein in 1983 and the S.D.L.P leader John Hume started to communicate which seemed to have initiated the peace process. Hume, Adams, an Irish –American minority and the Irish government, turned the violent conflict from only violent to a peace process. (Cain Darby 2003) In September 1993, Gerry Adams the president of Sinn Fein was seen to visit the S.D.L.P party leader John Hume in his home in Derry. The two party leaders came to present the Hume/ Adam statement welcomed by IRA, almost parallel with a IRA attack on October 4th. Later a bomb detonated in Shankill, a Protestant area of Belfast killing 10 people. The British minister John Mayor, and the Irish Prime Minister John Reynolds issued a joint statement after a meeting. The following year Bill Clinton gave Jerry Adams VISA to go to USA to attend a peace conference in 1994, the same year as
UVF killed six Catholics and one Protestant in a bar in Loghlinistand in County Derry. Amongst the most important events was the IRA’s ceasefire on Wednesday 31 August 1994 followed by the loyalist paramilitary ceasefire declared by the Combined Loyalist Military Command.

Wednesday 10 May 1995 Michael Ancram, the Political Development Minister at the Northern Ireland Office (NIO), met with Martin McGuinness, the Vice-President of Sinn Fein (SF), for talks at Stormont. This was the first official meeting between SF and the British Government in 23 years. (Cain Darby 2003)

The foreplay to the Belfast Agreement started perhaps when Tony Blair in 1997 took the seat as the new Labour Party leader and prime minister of United Kingdom. He immediately started to take Sinn Fein into the political process even if IRA refused a ceasefire and talks started on 9th September. There was however issues during the talks- the unionists refused to be present during the same time as Sinn Fein. The chairman of the talks George Mitchell decided the date of 9th April for an agreement and a referendum in May. There was worry and dissent between the parties about power sharing. UUP and SDLP held different views about power sharing and Sinn Fein didn’t participate significantly in the talks. A referendum was held on the 22 May on the agreement and was ratified with 71 % of the votes (Cain Darby 2003)
Chapter 3 Geographical segregation, attitudes, community relations

3.1 Past and present -attitudes

Information about segregation and attitudes in Belfast Catholics and Protestants

This chapter presents information in order to answer the two main questions of this thesis 1. “Is the geographical segregation bigger or smaller now in Belfast than during the violence” are the attitudes better or worse between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast than during the violence? I want to know if the Belfast Agreement signed in 1998, had any impact on Belfast and Northern Ireland society therefore we must know something about segregation and attitudes before and after 1998, to be able to compare past and present.

Attitudes in Northern Ireland -Are the attitudes better or worse between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast than during the violence?

Are the attitudes better or worse between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast than during the violence? How can the attitudes between Catholics and Protestants be described before 1998? When I mention attitudes I refer to the notion attitudes I mean attitudes as I chose to refer to it in the model in first chapter.. a) Cognitive - our thoughts, beliefs, and ideas about something. When a human being is the object of an attitude, the cognitive component is frequently a stereotype, e.g. "welfare recipients are lazy" b. Affective - feelings or emotions that something evokes. E.g. fear, sympathy, hate. May dislike welfare recipients. c. Conative, or behavioural - tendency or disposition to act in certain ways toward something. Might want to keep welfare recipients out of our neighbourhood. Emphasis is on the tendency to act, not the actual acting; what we intend and what we do may be quite different.(Myers, Liska ,Michener ,Kahn) Attitudes according to a, b and and c, are in sum thoughts and beliefs which makes us think in a certain way about someone or about something and also act in a certain way. Interpreting the concept “attitude” in the context of this thesis for example can be as I discussed in the first chapter Catholics and Protestants in Belfast regarding each other as stereotypical ways as the “enemy” the “bad”, which leads to more division and segregation or to sectarian attacks or verbal abuse. B) can be interpreted that there is a low interaction between Catholics and Protestants for example.

3.2 Segregation in Belfast before the Belfast Agreement in 1998

By the 1990’s Northern Belfast was composed of segregated Catholic or Protestant communities confining to or surrounded by each other, and who at times exposed each other to sectarian attacks. Segregation was initially caused by private housing and public housing. Sectarian violence used to be very common in these public housing areas. Segregation appeared to be a class related problem. People within these segregated communities had very close relationships to each other and their lives were tightly linked to each other. An attack or insult towards a member of this community could be understood as an attack towards the entire community and could immediately be retaliated. Segregated areas were also a self regulating policy as people chose to live in areas were they felt safe and which were religiously homogenous. (Cain -Hamilton, McCartney, Anderson, Finn 1993) This way of life gave birth to taboos such as the impossibility
of Catholic and Protestant mixed couples to move to any homogenised neighbourhood because of fear of sectarian violence and threats (Cain-Morgan, Smyth, Robinson & Fraser 1996) The years before the Agreement Catholcs and Protestants seemed to feel threatened by each other and chose to live in homogenised areas. Mixed couples of two different religions, were not able to live in religiously homogenous areas which means that people regarded each other in a very negative light and lived in fear of each other. We cannot yet answer the question of attitudes between Catholics and Protestants, but know that both communities had difficulties interacting with each other and chose to live separately from each other. This can be a sign of holding bad attitudes towards each other as I earlier argued according to the model in chapter one that attitudes are thoughts, beliefs which can lead to certain actions or viewing each other in stereotypes.

3.3 Belfast - attitudes between Catholics and Protestants after 1998

According to a survey conducted in 2004 there has been very low interaction between people in the communities. There was hardly any cultural, economic or social contact between Protestants and Catholics. Shirlow and Murtaugh also witnesses of how people refuse to pass each others communities to do food shopping or use any other facilities. The situation is the worst in communities surrounded by a community from the opposite religion –in this areas people travel even farther than people in other communities to do their shopping. 75 percent of the people questioned refused to use a facility because it was in “the wrong area” and only 1 in 8 people worked in an area dominated by the other community. (Shirlow/ Murtaugh 2006) One of my interviewees Pat Convery, is a councillor for the nationalist Party SDLP in Belfast and works in a very deprived area. He is a quite fascinating person in the way he speaks and tells me everything I want to know in details. I don’t even have to pose the questions about the geographical segregation in Belfast when he tells me that there are about 20 walls dividing different communities in Belfast. Pat thinks that the situation between Catholics and Protestants is improving, but he still admits nobody will start talking first to you if you won’t start. Mr Convery says that you can’t forget the past and that there is a lot of hurt there. (Interview with Pat Convery June 2006)

3.4 Summary of the interviews attitudes

Do you think the attitudes between Protestants and Catholics are better or worse now than during the violence?

To sum up the answers from the interviews, many of the interviewees meant that there was still separation and division because there is still so much grief and hurt left from the Troubles. The interviewees told me that Catholics and Protestants live separated from each other and don’t have contact with each other and walls separate their communities, although there are some interviewees who mention that things are improving. The Lord Mayor of Belfast told me a story about a Protestant couple who buy their groceries at Curly in a Catholic area but when they go home they put their groceries in a Tesco bag to avoid problems. Paula Bradshaw told me that in her
Protestant community “a lot of the still the old bitterness and hatred and suspicion and scepticism of Catholics, also I think that a lot of that prejudice is continuing, and I am not convinced that it has changed very much at all in the last ten years…” Many interviewees reminded me often that the problems often manifest themselves in poorer areas like working class areas. A person mentions that situation is improving but still mentions the past is still there and that without integrated schools nothing will change. I got a lot of answers like that-the past and the hurt still left people being suspicious of one another. (Interviews Belfast June 2006)

3.5 Shopping secretly at Curly

The answers from the interviews, actually matches the facts. A lot of resent, suspicion and grief keeps Catholics and Protestants away from each other. More than half of the respondents in Murtaugh’s and Shirlow’s survey admitted that they travel very far to use facilities and do shopping in areas where people from the same religion live or which are perhaps neutral. Some of them dared to pass the boundaries and even interact with other people, or do shopping in other areas but in fear of attack or because of shame, they kept this secretly. Some people described how they had friendships in the other community but would never dare to tell anyone because of fear and shame. A Protestant couple tells how they go to a Catholic neighbourhood to buy food at Curly’s because it is cheaper and nobody there can see if they are Catholics or Protestants. They usually bring Tesco bags and change the bags when they arrive in their own neighbourhood and throw away the Curly bag safely somewhere, and then places the Tesco bags in the bin instead. Funny enough, I heard the same story from the Lord Mayor of Belfast. A man from Belfast says that if he knew his friends had bought furniture from the neighbourhood where people from the other religion lives, he would break their bones. People don’t only avoid to mix with people from the other religion just because they don’t want to, they are afraid of being attacked by members of their own community if that would be revealed. Much of the violence in communities occurs in the marching season when the Orange parade walks through Catholic areas. (Shirlow / Murtaugh 2006)

Pat Convery told me a very sad story about a sectarian attack. His colleague was walking home one Sunday night and was severely beaten, because he walked through the wrong area. Mr Convery thinks the solution for reducing segregation is to make political arrangements for integrated living, but he thinks that whenever people meet to discuss such things because they are too full of hurt from the intimidations they have been subjected to, that they can’t really discuss the problem. He reminds me of how a friend of his said that she would never live in a mixed community. She said never! When Mr Convery asked her why, she said that her best friend threw her out from her own home ten years ago. (Interview with Pat Convery Belfast June 2006)

The movement of people and the violence in Belfast has been the largest in a city in a Western country since the World War II. In 2003, IRA threatened a female Protestant activist, who worked in the forum for Peace and Reconciliation. A pregnant woman was helped to walk home by a Catholic community worker from a crèche the two women were threatened by UDA (Ulster Defence Army), the Protestant woman that she and her family would be forced out from her neighbourhood Glenbryn estate. The paramilitaries remain in the neighbourhoods, because people feel protected by them, but the paramilitaries disturb the process of peace and communication. (Russell, 2004)
3.6 Community relations worsened

66 per cent of respondents in a survey from 2003 said that they thought community relations had worsened compared to 52 per cent from a survey in 1998. In 2003, 69 percent from unionist / loyalist communities agreed on this and the corresponding number for republican / nationalist communities was 61 per cent (Shirlow & Murtaugh 2006) As I earlier argued, segregation and attitudes are a part of community relations. Attitudes are thoughts and beliefs about something or someone and can result in people taking certain actions or behaving in certain ways. The attitudes Catholics and Protestants have towards each other, the tendency to act in certain ways might lead to the separation between them, low social interaction or that they subject each other to sectarian attacks. The gap between the two communities Protestants and Catholics in Belfast seem to have grown in recent years. This clearly confirms what the interviewees told me about attitudes, that people still stay way from each other and that there is a lot of hurt there from the past. Paula Bradshaw told me that in her Protestant community “a lot of the still the old bitterness and hatred and suspicion and scepticism of Catholics, also I think that a lot of that prejudice is continuing, and I am not convinced that it has changed very much at all in the last ten years…” Both attitudes and the geographical segregation has not become for the better, but for the worse in Belfast. What can explain this negative trend? Statistics in first chapter demonstrates that violence has diminished, there is no longer an endemic war on the streets of Belfast but the segregation is still growing and community relations worsening. The Belfast Agreement will soon turn a decade since it was closed, but why are things not improving in Belfast? What could the underlying problem to this development be? Attitudes as I translated them in the context of this thesis, in the context of Belfast, Catholics and Protestants attitudes of each other, unfortunately seem to stretch to an unwilling to interact with each other, can transform into sectarian attacks, threats or fear of passing each others areas. In terms of attitudes as I chose to refer to this notion in this thesis it appears like, the attitudes of the two communities remained undoubtedly negative and resulted in separation, sectarian attacks and other forms of hateful actions.

3.7 Violence and other offences

In the first chapter I was asking myself some questions; was there any possibility that the decrease of violence had any impact on community relations in Belfast? Can better or worse community relations be connected to the Belfast Agreement? Unfortunately it seems like the first question must be answered that a decrease in violence didn’t have an impact on community relations in Belfast. In 2002 there was less interaction between Catholics and Protestants than 10 years earlier, especially among young people, a conclusion contracted after making surveys in areas in Belfast by Peter Shirlow. 68 per cent of the interviewed 18-25 year olds never had a relevant conversation or any colloquial contact with youth from the other group. Six of ten persons claimed that since the first ceasefire in 1994, they had been victims of verbal abuse. After conducting a survey among 40000 jobs in Belfast, Mr Shirlow concluded that most workforces were still segregated. Only 5 percent of the Catholics worked in Protestant workforces and 8 per cent of the Protestants worked in Catholic areas. 63 percent of the citizens in Belfast lived in areas totally segregated in 1991 -90 percent Catholic or 90 percent Protestant. This number was 66 per cent in 2002; segregation had increased with 3 percent. Elderly people were more likely to
cross peace lines because they had contacts in the other community prior to the Troubles. Murders had decreased steadily at this time but other types of sectarian intimidations such as violent attacks had increased. In 2002, 68 percent of 18- to 25-year-olds living in Belfast has never had a meaningful conversation with anyone from the other community. According to some research by Shirlow 72 per cent of all age groups refuse to use health centres located in communities dominated by the other religion. Only 22 per cent will shop in areas dominated by the other religion. 62% have been the victims of physical or verbal abuse since 1994 and 62% believe community relations have worsened since 1994 (The Guardian 4 January 2002 Paul Brown)

Although murders and deaths decreased significantly after 1998, evidence shows signs of a much divided Belfast after 1998. A report from 2005 by Neil Jarman gives evidence of sectarian attacks which were very common in Belfast. Sectarian violence is a problem for many people in their home environment, and for others it is a problem in the workplace. However, much of the sectarian violence takes place in the street and involves attacks on people, on property, on public transport. Furthermore, the boundaries between sectarian violence and ‘ordinary’ forms of violence – criminal damage, anti-social behaviour - are often shadowed, because it is different it’s difficult to quantify and record sectarian violence, it’s not always possible to determine what the motivation or the impact might be. According to police figures between 1996 and 2004 there were 376 cases of rioting and 1,014 disturbances in interface areas of North Belfast. Over the same period there were 3,864 cases of criminal damage and 1,327 assaults in the areas. More than one in four young people have experienced sectarian verbal abuse in the previous year. Young people are more likely to experience sectarian harassment and violence than older age groups. A high percentage of young people feel threatened or intimidated by murals and other visual displays, especially those of the other community. More than half of young people do not feel safe when passing areas dominated by the other community, but nearly half of young males had to travel to or walk through such areas at least once a week. Young people favour to a great extent a segregated living, schooling and working environment. (Jarman 2005)

…”they murdered Catholics; they picked them up on the street late at night and murdered them you know what I mean just wrong...” (Francis Stone)

Mr Convery thinks the solution for reducing segregation is to make political arrangements for integrated living but he thinks that whenever people meet to discuss such things, they are so full of hurt from the intimidations they have been subjected to, so they can’t really discuss the problem. He reminds me of how a friend of his who said that she would never live in a mixed community. She said never! When Mr Convery asked her why, she said that her best friend threw her out from her own home ten years ago. (Interview with Pat Convery June 2006)

Francis Stone Catholic community worker tells me” You know what I mean….ohm you know what I mean we suffer the same deprivation….you know, so ohm on a personal level, yeah even then we did get on, that ok..the war was on…you know and that is a lot more difficult, I would say…ohm and I’ll say it was a lot more difficult for anybody from our city town because, the war as we thought was a political war ,you know ohm war the Irish Republican Army were attacking, military targets, were attacking economic targets, ohm whereas people from the loyalist community attacked Catholics…they murdered Catholics, they picked them up on the street late...
at night and murdered them you know what I mean just wrong… (Interview with Francis Stone Belfast June 2006)

3.8 Sectarian attacks in Belfast 2002

Violence has diminished greatly lately, but in 2002 there were riots in some parts of Belfast due to paramilitary activities caused by the loyalist UVF. Peter Shirlow, of the University of Ulster in Coleraine, announced at the annual conference of the Royal Geographical Society, that a survey in Belfast demonstrated that Good Friday agreement had not changed the division between Protestants and Catholics in Belfast. Between 2001 -2002 there were different sectarian attacks in Belfast, such as three Australians being attacked by 20 youngsters throwing iron bars at them in May 2001 and in July 2001 mobs were clashing and shots were fired. In May 2002, Protestant residents demanded that "peace line" barriers separating the Short Strand from communities on the Newtownards Road should be extended after the police were bombarded with petrol and acid bombs. In June 2002 eight people were injured by gunfire after four nights of rioting around the Short Strand (The Guardian Wednesday June 5 2002 Owen Bowcott and Henry McDonald)

3.9 Summary: are the attitudes better or worse between Catholics and Protestants than during the violence?

This question must unfortunately be answered that they are worse or maybe quite unchanged. Unfortunately people have not stopped to be suspicious of each other which at time cause the eruption of violent sectarian clashes or other types of intimidations. Catholics and Protestants rarely interact with each other socially in Belfast, surveys show that a lot of young people have not had a normal conversation with someone from the opposite community. An explanation to this negative trend could be found both in consocial theory and zero-sum theory. The Belfast Agreement didn’t have any arrangements to match a very problematic and divided society like Northern Ireland. Glancing at Lijpharts consocial theory, the Belfast Agreement doesn’t really fulfil Lijphart’s theory which talks about leaders collaborating and political institutions finding compromises. The Agreement is a majority solution pushed through by the unionists not really respecting Catholics as a minority and does not deal with the problem of the segregated communities in Northern Ireland and in Belfast, which has left Belfast divided and segregated. The attitudes between Catholics and Protestants towards each other are very negative, people are afraid of each other and do not interact, do not hold any colloquial contact between the communities because of what they know and think about each other, and because they are afraid of vindication from their own community. Too keep cross-community contact with somebody from the other community can mean revenge and threat from members of your own community or paramilitary groups. The agreement has done nothing to deal with these problems. The Belfast Agreement is an agreement on a top political level and doesn’t touch the “little people”. Therefore, the Agreement seems no to have changed anything and it doesn’t match the consocial theory talking about compromises and making the minority population a part of democracy, by for example claiming that Northern Ireland can only be reunited with Ireland if a majority of the population wishes to. A majority of the population means Protestants which mean they will still always have the last say in this matter. The zero-sum theory on the other hand, explains how the more a party gains the other one looses more. In the context of the Northern Ireland, conflicts this
can explain why people, even tough violence has decreased choose to stay away from each other to regard each other in terms of bad attitudes to each other. The conflict has been played out between Catholics/ nationalists and Protestants/ unionists has been a lot about not taking responsibility and not making compromises. Each party regards their wounds as the biggest and refer to history to point out how they have been wronged. Only one party can win so the other side is always a looser and there can be no cooperation for example between the communities. This results in division and segregation in Belfast, an unchanged condition. (Wikipedia Zero sum theory)
Chapter 4 Segregation, housing

4.1 Housing in Northern Ireland connected with the Troubles

Housing was and is a core issue in the Northern Irish society, because it used to be sectarian and discriminatory towards Catholics. The Civil Rights movement in the 60’s was based upon Catholics feelings of being discriminated in housing and other areas. A problem with the discriminatory housing procedures was the local councils which were conservative and didn’t engage in the idea of public housing. Councils controlled the local public housing. After 1945 the Northern Ireland Housing Trust was established which automatically turned into a threat to the local councils and it came under severe criticism. The troubles were not merely created by the violence but also by problems with housing, Catholics felt discriminated which might have led to Catholics not having been able to choose where to live but remained in homogenised Catholic areas. Many Catholic households didn’t have a bathroom and running water in the 1960’s. A major complication was the high costs of public housing and that people mostly Catholics, who really were in need for housing were discriminated. This was one of the reasons for Catholics to revolt and demand political justice. After 1972 Northern Ireland Housing Executive was established in 1972. From 1981 to 1996 housing Policy changed due to privatisation and a voluntary sector of housing associations, a change which came to life after the reformation of Stormont government 1972. (Cain -Melaugh 1994)

4.2 How was the geographical segregation in Belfast prior to the Belfast Agreement in 1998?

How does segregation look now in recent years in Belfast and how did it look prior to the Belfast Agreement? This is the way I have chosen to define segregation in this thesis, as a phenomenon influencing many parts of life in Northern Ireland not only residential segregation although segregation as a notion is mainly about division between groups. “In addition to where people choose - or are forced - to live, segregation is also experienced in education, business, commerce, sport, leisure activities, etc. Many people in Northern Ireland conduct their entire lives within their own community with little opportunity - or no desire - to meet members of the opposite tradition”. (Cain glossary segregation) “Segregation and integration are used to describe the separation or unification of groups or communities, physically and/or socially.” (Cain, Hamilton, McCartney, Finn 1990)

To find out more about geographical segregation I think we need to answer the question - how was the geographical segregation in Belfast prior to the Belfast Agreement in 1998? I will therefore present information from different sources about geographical segregation in Belfast in the 1980’s and 1990’s and also a bit from the 1970’s to answer the question about geographical segregation. A Poole and Paul Doherty (1995), maps ethnical segregation in Belfast, and claims that ethnical segregation in Belfast stretches out to schools, churches or other public facilities people attend, such as sport or leisure centres. In 1995, the segregation of Protestants and Catholics wasn’t restricted only to residential areas. Even public spaces such as supermarkets, were dominated by one religion. This means that Belfast was very segregated geographically in 1995 and that this segregation stretched out to all areas in society, not only housing areas but also
Leisure centres and supermarkets were dominated by a group from only one religion. The physical violence at this time took place in the central parts of Belfast but the conflicts between Protestants and Catholics took place where their residential areas confined to each other. Conflict between a religious group and the security forces often occurred in the main domains of an area belonging to a religious group. Catholics and Protestants chose to live their lives separately and there was hardly any interaction between them. In 1971-1991 Belfast’s inner areas, like Belfast local government area turned to be more Catholic while Protestants started to move out to the suburbs. Catholics tended to live in more mixed areas where they remained a minority. West Belfast was at time the most segregated part of the city. In the early 1970’s, Catholics in Belfast turned to become more isolated. Middleclass areas like South Belfast and Holywood had the lowest level of segregation. The conclusion of the two writers is that after 20 years the 2 groups Catholics and Protestants became more isolated from one another and didn’t interact at all but socialized within their own group and community.

In 1995 segregation had not changed, people fled to areas where they felt secure due to intimidation and as well because they were chased away. (CAIN, Poole, Boal 1995) How was the geographical segregation in Belfast prior to the Belfast Agreement in 1998? To sum up, the geographical segregation in Belfast seemed to be very high in Belfast from 1971-1995. The conflict and the intimidation people from the two communities were subjecting each other to, seemed to make people move away from each other to homogenised areas in order to feel safe.

### 4.3 Geographical segregation in Belfast after the Belfast Agreement in 1998

Is the geographical segregation bigger or smaller now in Belfast than during the violence?

To answer the question “is the geographical segregation bigger or smaller now in Belfast than during the violence,” we need some information about the segregation in Belfast after 1998 when the Belfast Agreement was closed. I decided to use the Belfast Agreement as a division of past and present, because the Belfast Agreement which was closed in 1998 could have changed Northern Ireland. By knowing something about the level of segregation after 1998, when the Belfast Agreement was signed, we can also understand if the agreement really changed something in Northern Ireland in order to test my hypotheses. In Belfast, segregation used also to be a part of the daily life and it decided where to go and do your food shopping, or which leisure centres to use. Every part of a persons life was divided into religious areas were Catholics and Protestants were allowed to pass. Mixed marriages between Catholics and Protestants were also rare. The post agreement time after 1998 after the Belfast Agreement was meant to be a time of change. The Belfast Agreement was an agreement to open the way, for a devolved government in Northern Ireland and gave importance to community balance and to promote awareness of human rights. The Belfast Agreement is a political arrangement between the government of United Kingdom and the government of Ireland, as well a settlement on a high political level and a majority adjustment. The Agreement acknowledges that the citizens can vote for a united Ireland, but underlines that only if a majority of the people wishes to. The problem is that Catholics are the majority while Protestants are the minority therefore this could never or in present time never be practically possible. The Belfast Agreement is a settlement on a high political level and doesn’t really deal with the problems at the bottom the communities, the segregation and what
happens in the communities. Therefore I believe that there is no guarantee that the Belfast Agreement could change the Northern Ireland society in terms of segregation and improve Catholics and Protestants attitudes of each other. Did the gap between Catholics and Protestants widen after 1998 or did it diminish? My main hypothesis concerning this subject is that a divided society can not be altered to quickly, but is that an adequate hypothesis for the society of Northern Ireland? Although the Belfast Agreement was followed by arrangements to bring the two communities closer to each other the, recent research has shown that segregation, the division between them seemed to grow wider after 1998.

4.4 Summary of interviews- geographical segregation

Do you think the geographical segregation is bigger or smaller now than during the violence? (Belfast…the violence= The troubles)

It is not very easy to make an exact and correct summary of the interviews I conducted in Belfast in June 2006. The question Do you think the geographical segregation is bigger or smaller now than during the violence? (Belfast…the violence= The troubles) was mostly answered that the geographical segregation has not diminished. An interviewee told me that most areas area marked by banners, peace lines and walls. Some of the interviewees told me that segregation is extended to schools and supermarkets. People know which areas to pass and which areas belong to them. A lot of the interviewees said that segregation is class related, most of the segregated areas in Belfast, Catholic or Protestant are usually working class areas, whereas more mixed areas are affluent, middle class areas. Some people told me that the city centre of Belfast is the place where Catholics and Protestants meet and some interviewees mentioned that Belfast is more polarized now. (Interviews Belfast June 2006)

4.5 Segregation

Segregation is, as I earlier argued a notion which says something about separation and division but permeates as well other parts of society as leisure centres or commerce and is a part of community relations. Segregation I think can also be based on social classes, maybe the poorer people are, the more they tend to live in more homogenised areas with crime and violence. In the past, segregation in Northern Ireland used to be connected to housing. In 1999, 71 percent of public sector housing was segregated. In 1999 and 2000 new peace walls were erected in Belfast as well as in Derry, due to an increase of intimidation and violence. According to Hughes and Donnelly voting behaviour was polarized at this time meaning that people tended to vote for more extreme religious parties. The Protestants and the Catholics also sought to get support and help like grants from CRC to explore their own cultural heritage and identities. (Hughes &Donnelly 2001)

“..at night I can hear children kidding from the Catholic community, kick the ball together and laughing and joking, but I can never see them, I probably never will see them.”/ Frank McCoubrey - unionist city councillor Belfast 2006)
Frank McCoubrey (unionist) who works in the city council doesn’t think segregation has changed at all. “There is no improvement”. He says there are some cross community projects going on there but people are still afraid, they don’t walk in wrong streets and no matter where you go within in my community there is a permanent reminder of the past, there is peace lines, there is brick walls, you know there is ohm iron walls, grange or whatever there’s a permanent reminders of the past, but I am totally starting breaking that down and taking those away. You know they will always be there and the children who is coming behind it, will always ask questions why that wall there who lived, across that wall you know, at night I can hear children kidding from the Catholic community, kick the ball together and laughing and joking, but I can never see them, I probably never will see them.” (Frank McCoubrey interviewed in Belfast June 2006)

“Belfast remains not as a city but as an assemblage of villages within which detachment from other places is crucial in terms of identity formation.” (Shirlow / Murtaugh 2006)

4.6 Growing gaps

In a recent written book Belfast Segregation, Violence and the City from by Peter Shirlow and Brendan Murtagh, (2006) write about the growing gaps in Belfast between Catholics and Protestants. They describe a city divided by interfaces- walls which separates communities from each other. “Belfast remains not as a city but as an assemblage of villages within which detachment from other places is crucial in terms of identity formation.” (Shirlow & Murtaugh 2006: 17) The two writers and researchers describe a very geographically segregated Belfast in 2006. In North Belfast peace lines have doubled, communities areas like Antrim Road and Cliftonville have become more republican/nationalist. New interface areas have been created between private housing and private space. White City and Whitewell are separated by interfaces and are new areas of sectarian violence. The violence there exists due to a growing nationalist/ republican community surrounding Whitewell while White City is still a loyalist/unionist community. Some interfaces are marked by flags and other symbols which demonstrate which community inhabits an area. To live and mix with people from the other community is also class related. According to Shirlow and Murtaugh middle class people tend to live in more mixed areas. (Shirlow & Murtaugh 2006) To compare these facts with the interviews, the interviewees also told me the same things. They talked about peace lines in Belfast, segregated communities walls dividing communities. A lot of the interviewees said that segregation is class related, most of the segregated areas in Belfast, Catholic or Protestant are usually working class areas, whereas more mixed areas are affluent, middle class areas. (Interviews Belfast June 2006)

Violence between Catholic and Protestant communities has created 27 peace lines in the city, which give the city a specific feature with wastelands, graffiti and destroyed areas which look quite deteriorated. Land is marked in different ways to mark to whom it belongs to, by for example a turn in the road, low level barriers used to close roads and entries, flags, murals, election posters or grills and bars to protect private property. If you don’t know the city you don’t see the local barriers, but the locals know exactly where to go and which roads not to pass. The ghettos in Belfast exist partly because of the sectarian and paramilitary cultures. 7500 families have moved to homogenised Catholic or Protestants communities between the years of 1968 - 2001 in order to feel safe and escape violence. 534 families moved around Belfast in 2003- 2004 to escape sectarian intimidation. 70 percent of the public owned properties in Belfast are 90 per cent Catholic or 90 per cent Protestant. There are however, some public places which are more
neutral such as the Belfast city centre of where Protestants and Catholics can meet. Interacting over community boundaries is still very difficult according to Russell. (Russell 2004)

4.7 Segregation - class related

To live and mix with people from the other community can be class related. According to Shirlow and Murtaugh middle class people tend to live in more mixed areas. (Shirlow & Murtaugh 2006) The wealthier an area is the less violence occur there. It is important to be aware that segregation is more frequent among working class areas. (Shirlow & Murtaugh 2006)

The interviewees I met and interviewed in June 2006 talked a lot about segregation as class related problem in Belfast. Tom Roberts who works in EPIC (Exprisoners Interpretative Centre) and is a former UVF prisoner says that in the city centre there has always been some interaction between Catholics and Protestants, but working class areas such as Shankill are very segregated.

The Lord Mayor of Belfast (Catholic) at the time Mr Pat McCartney tells me that many middleclass areas are mixed and they are more extreme with each other and get in physical fighting compared to working class areas. When I ask him if he knows any mixed areas in Belfast he tells me Ballynafeigh and Rosetta are mixed. The Lord Mayor says they can still hold extreme views in these areas but can not fight each other physically. Paula Bradshaw was at the time 25 years old and working in a Protestant area side by with Mr Bob Stoker - a city council politician who helped me to arrange all the interviews. She told me on the question of geographical segregation that in the wealthier parts of the city people live more mixed, are more integrated but in working class areas the situation had remained the same as before.

A lot of the interviewees mentioned working class areas when I asked about geographical segregation. Reg Empey, at the present time leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, admits that segregation is more common in poorer and deprived areas. He clarifies that the richer an area is the more people there tend to mix. Reg explains that people who have been involved in sectarian acts are often from the working class areas. He thinks segregation has remained quite the same as before because people feel safe in their own neighbourhoods and don’t want to move. Christina Black tells me she is centre manager of the Rodent Street community seldom goods. She calls herself Tina and says that “working class areas ohm or non working class areas but they’re all on benefits, working class are very much categorized either Catholic area or Protestant area. Ohm, Gardener Road and the Falls West Belfast –Catholic, then you have Shankill Road-Protestant and then you would have Ardoyne, which is Catholic. Most of the interviewees agreed that segregation is very much class related. Facts and information tell the same. Residential segregation was more common in poor and deprived areas while middleclass areas have turned to be more mixed. High levels of residential segregation have persisted in socio-economically deprived areas, while mixing in middle-class areas has increased. Segregation seems to be class related in Belfast- which clearly shows that the homogenised Catholic and Protestant communities are mainly working class, while more mixed communities belong to affluent people for example middleclass. (Interviews in Belfast June 2006)
4.8 Is the geographical segregation bigger or smaller now in Belfast than during the violence?

Could the reality be that although violence is not as frequent as in the past, that Catholics and Protestants see each others wounds and problems caused by the Troubles in terms of victimization? Aughey (2005) argues that both sides have politically deepened their problem by referring to history and taking no responsibility instead of finding compromises. Nationalists claiming they have been wronged politically and unionists justifying their struggle through history. (Aughey 2005) According to the zero-sum theory cutting a large piece of the cake for example leads that the other party gets less of the cake or nothing. The more one party eats the more the other loses its chance to get a big piece of the cake. Only one party takes home the game. The benefits and losses sums to the same value, which can explain why Catholics and Protestants choose to live their lives separated from each other. They only see a winner in this conflict, the enemies are always the other side and the one who takes the game wins it all. The question if the geographical segregation is bigger or smaller now than during the violence, can I think as well be answered in other ways. The Belfast Agreement or the Good Friday Agreement main task was to construct a new devolved government in Northern Ireland which included the 60-40-40 formula meaning an agreement that a majority of each party from each community and was accepted in referendum in May 1998. (Fey 2004)

The Agreement has been criticized for being a majority solution. Lijphart’s consocial theory I think, is a good explanation model to discover if the Belfast Agreement matched the Northern Irish society and did help to change it. Lijphart meant that the way a country works depends on the political elites and the construction of the political institutions. In homogenised countries elites such as party leaders afford to appear as clear alternatives but this was not the case for more culturally and ethnical divided countries where leaders clearly needed to collaborate and political institutions needed to be able to handle conflicts and form compromises. The different minorities should have the power to influence through proportional representation in political organs. (Lindahl, 2004) Northern Ireland is not a homogenised country, but a country with two groups Catholics and Protestants who have fought each other for decades and centuries. A heterogenic country like Northern Ireland should be able to find a peace agreement, a political settlement to match this heterogenic and as well problematic society, afflicted by a long conflict. Looking at Lijpharts consocial theory the Belfast Agreement doesn’t really fulfil Lijphart’s theory which talks about leaders collaborating and political institutions finding compromises, because the unionists pushed the Agreement to be a majority solution and politicians had troubles collaborating- Sinn Fein didn’t participate at all the negotiations. On the other hand, the Agreement stated that Human Rights would be taken seriously by establishing a Human Rights Commission outside government, release prisoners who were accused of have been involved in paramilitary actions for example and to remake the police service. The problem is that there is no paragraph in the Agreement stating how to practically deal with the community relations and problems such as segregation.

Talking about compromises, the unionists pushed the majority question to be referred in the agreement. The agreement doesn’t really match the consocial theory which also demonstrates that it didn’t meet the complex of the problems in Northern Ireland. The geographical segregations still exists, I believe, partially because of this. The agreement was on a high political level, didn’t
touch the problems of the communities in a practical way and didn’t find a minority democracy solution but a majority democracy solution which obviously doesn’t match the problems of Northern Ireland society and doesn’t deal with segregation in a realistic way and could explain Belfast is still so divided, why community relations between Catholics and Protestants are so bad.
Chapter 5 Results

5.1 Results and discussion

This thesis deals with community relations in Belfast between Catholics and Protestants, if the community relations between Catholics and Protestants have improved after the Belfast Agreement was signed in 1998. To find out more about this I posed two questions: 1. Are the attitudes better or worse between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast than during the violence? 2. Is the geographical segregation bigger or smaller now in Belfast than during the violence? Belfast as a city has not yet over passed the dreadful wounds caused by the violence conflict based on the clashing interests of Protestants and Catholics. In spite of a peace agreement, like the Belfast agreement and a decrease in violence Belfast still remains to quote Russell (2004) “Belfast is a microcosm of Northern Ireland.” (Russell 2004:1)

Geographical segregation of Protestants and Catholics is much extended in Belfast and is characterized by peace lines separating entire neighbourhoods into Catholic and Protestant areas. Flags, banners, graffiti mark to which group an area belong to, which basically answers question number two geographical segregation in Belfast of Catholics is rather the same or practically unchanged.

1. Are the attitudes better or worse between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast than during the violence? In 2002 Peter Shirlow interviewed people from the age group 18-25 years from which 68 per cent never had a meaningful conversation with somebody from the other community, many workplaces were segregated as well and a lot of people had been victims of verbal abuse since the first cease fire in 1994. Violent sectarian attacks on individuals and between communities have been frequent in the latest few years. (Paul, Brown, Guardian 4 January 2002) People refuse for example to use health centres located in the nearby community and few do their food shopping in the other community. In terms of attitudes Catholics and Protestants attitudes towards each other have not become better, in the contrary they have worsened although there is peace in Belfast, people still suffer from sectarian attacks, verbal abuse and do not interact with each other socially or in other ways. The interviews I conducted in Belfast in June 2006 also give me the same evidence as the facts I presented in this thesis. The interviewees told me that there is still that old resentment and prejudices in the communities and that Catholics and Protestants stay away from each other. Interviewee told me that one of his colleagues was beaten down because he walked in the wrong area. Attitudes I agreed earlier is a part of community relations. In terms of how I choose to refer to the notion attitudes in the model of attitudes in the first chapter as thoughts, beliefs, stereotypical ways of regarding other people which can result in certain actions like low interaction between communities because of negative attitudes, verbal abuse or sectarian attacks -the answer to question number 1 is yes, the attitudes between Catholics and Protestants haven’t changed or are even worse.

2. Is the geographical segregation bigger or smaller now in Belfast than during the violence? Earlier on in this thesis I portrayed segregation with help from Cain as a division between communities which not only stretches to residential areas but to other parts of society like education or commerce. Segregation I also concluded is a part of community relations. Like in question number one the answer is yes geographical segregation has remained unchanged or perhaps even worsened. According to the interviewees and the facts presented here the segregation in Belfast has increased the latest years. According to Shirlow and Murtaugh (2006) peace lines have doubled in Belfast, community areas like Antrim Road and
Cliftonville have become more republican/nationalist. New interface areas have been created between private housing and private space. White City and Whitewell are separated by interfaces. Some interfaces are marked by flags and banners or other symbols which demonstrate which community dominates an area. (Shirlow/ Murtaugh 2006)

The violence and war in Belfast has stopped, and a important peace agreement was signed in 1998 – The Belfast Agreement but segregation and attitudes between Catholics and Protestants have not changed which also confirm my hypotheses I presented in the first chapter: **A divided society can not change to easily and not even trough political arrangements 2) The segregation, the division between Protestants and Catholics has not decreased in Belfast 3) The attitudes between Protestants and Catholics not haven’t improved.** Segregation and attitudes are a part of community relations. The fact that segregation in Belfast remains unchanged or even worse and that attitudes between Catholics and Protestants are very negative gives us the conclusion that community relations between Catholics and Protestants are very bad or maybe unchanged compared to how they used to be before the Belfast Agreement.

The theoretical explanation to my answers to question one and two I discussed and argued earlier on in this thesis lies in Lijphart’s consocial theory as well as in zero sum theory. We know now that Belfast still remains very segregated and that attitudes between Catholics and Protestants are very bad-community relations are very bad. Geographical segregation and attitudes are a part of the notion community relations. The Belfast Agreement didn’t really change society because it was primarily constructed to open up a devolved government in Belfast and was an agreement on a high political level leaving out the “little people”. The segregation, the problems in the communities were not really dealt with even tough the agreement mentions human rights and things like that. Another problem is that it is stated in the agreement that only a majority of the people can decide if Northern Ireland should be reunited with Ireland. The Protestants are in majority in Northern Ireland which means that they will have the last say which is that they don’t desire to be united with Ireland, which could leave the Catholic feeling inferior and discriminated. The unionist pushed through this decision which is not really very democratic. This doesn’t correspond with Lijphart’s consocial theory. Lijphart meant that the way a country works depends on the political elites and the construction of the political institutions. In homogenised countries elites such as party leaders afford to appear as clear alternatives but this was not the case for more culturally and ethnical divided countries where leaders clearly needed to collaborate and political institutions needed to be able to handle conflicts and form compromises. The different minorities should have the power to influence through proportional representation in political organs. (Lindahl , 2004:15) The Belfast Agreement still leaves Catholics to be the minority which I think, can only increase suspicion and hate. At this time there was not a government in Belfast so there were no leaders to collaborate with each other and I don not know if they even wished to collaborate between the party lines. But the most problematic thing is I think is that the Belfast Agreement didn’t help to diminish segregation in Belfast. A divided society filled with hate, will not be able to lead the future of Belfast and Northern Ireland nowhere.

According to the zero- sum theory cutting a large piece of the cake for example leads that the other party gets less of the cake or nothing. The more one party eats the more the other loses its chance to get a big piece of the cake. Only one party takes home the game. The benefits and losses sums to the same value. (Wikipedia zero sum theory) This can explain why Catholics and Protestants choose to live their lives separated from each other, which gives us an explanation on why Belfast remain a divided and segregated city and why people in terms
of attitudes to each still view each other with suspicion and hatred and therefore act according to these feelings by for example living their lives totally separated from each other or subject each other to sectarian attacks. If we analyse the whole Northern Ireland conflict it has been politically been played out as either we win or you loose- conflict. Unionists and republicans have only seen their own grievances and have lived to fight each other in different ways. Both politics and other parts of society is very much divided into two sides Protestants or Catholics. There has not really been a middle way. At a top level as well as in the communities seem to have this way of thinking which gives birth to bad attitudes towards each other which further generates more segregation and division in society. There is only one winner-the winner takes it all, which can explain why the segregation and attitudes between Catholics and Protestants are still pretty unchanged or the same. This way of thinking could maybe found at all levels in society also in the communities which doesn’t really improve community relations between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast. Maybe there still something new to come for Belfast and Northern Ireland. Only the future can tell.
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Paula Bradshaw manager of the Community organisation South Belfast (Protestant)

Reg Empey Leader of Ulster Unionist Party (Protestant)

Pat Convery SDLP councillor (Catholic)

Pat McCartney Lord Mayor of Belfast 2006 (Catholic)

Ruth Paterson Depute Lord Mayor DLM (Protestant)

Francis Stone works at Drugs Protect Help (Catholic)

Tom Hartley, Sinn Fein councillor Belfast City Council (Catholic)

Tom Roberts director of EPIC Exproners Interpretative Centre (Protestant)
Tom Ekin  Belfast City councillor, The Alliance Party Northern Ireland (Catholic)

Frank McCoubrey The constituency of Accord Ward, which represent the Shankill Road (Protestant)

Christina Black Centre manager of the Rodent Street community selden goods (Catholic)

Pictures on the front page taken by writer Ana Maria Panescu in Belfast June 2006