

Bucknell in Northern Ireland
PSYC/SOCI 330 SECTARIAN CONFLICT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

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Magee College, University of Ulster, Derry, Northern Ireland
 May 18-June 10, 2003

SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This seminar is focused on the psychological and sociological causes, characteristics, and consequences of the sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland, and is the core seminar in the short-term study abroad program, Bucknell in Northern Ireland.

GOALS:

1. You will learn about the cultural, historical, political, religious, and socioeconomic roots of the sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland.
2. You will learn about the current status of the conflict, focusing on those psychological and sociological factors that continue to reinforce group differences between Catholics and Protestants, as well as efforts toward understanding, healing, reconciliation, and peace-building.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Reading:** You will be required to read the following *prior to May 18*:

A. Textbooks (available in the University Bookstore)

1. Deane, S. (1997). *Reading in the dark*. London: Vintage.
2. Fraser, T.G. (2000). *Ireland in conflict 1922-1998*. Routledge: London.
3. Morrissey, M., & Smyth, M. (2002). *Northern Ireland after the Good Friday Agreement: Victims, grievance and blame*. London: Pluto Press.

B. Recommended resources: You will also find the following web-based resources helpful as optional background material:

1. Fitzduff, M., & O'Hagan, L. (2000). *The Northern Ireland troubles: INCORE background paper*. Initiative on Conflict Resolution & Ethnicity (INCORE), University of Ulster and United Nations University: Derry.
<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/incorepaper.htm>
2. *Travel through the Ireland story* website: Includes comprehensive histories, geographies, maps, guides to organizations, results of recent elections, and much more. (<http://www.irelandstory.com/>)
3. BBC News: The search for peace
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/northern_ireland/understanding/default.stm
4. CAIN (Conflict Archive on the Internet) Web Service: <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/>
5. Background information on Northern Ireland society:
<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ni/index.html>

C. Seminar readings: Readings will be assigned prior to most seminar sessions, and distributed in class.

2. **Writing Assignment/Questions**: At the end of the second week of the program, you will submit a paper (8-10 pp., double-spaced) summarizing your current understanding of the sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland. This paper will be based on information that you have obtained in the readings, seminar sessions, panel discussions, excursions, and community organization placements. It will be written as a formal letter to a prospective member of next year's student group.

3. **Examinations**: There will be two essay examinations, a preliminary one based on the preparatory readings, and the final, a service-learning examination in which you will write questions based on your experiences in the program to date, and on material from the document, *A Shared Future* (2003), put the questions to a panel of Derry community leaders, and write up the results in an essay, to be shared with the panelists and with the Director of the Community Relations Unit, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, Stormont, Belfast. See PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION and FINAL EXAMINATION for further details.

4. **Participation**: You will be expected to read assigned materials in preparation for, and attend all, seminar sessions, and to participate actively in each by asking questions, raising points for discussion, and engaging in dialogue with the instructors, guest lecturers, panelists, and your fellow students.

EVALUATION: Your grade in this course will be based on evaluations of your writing, examinations, and seminar participation. Each of these three factors will be weighted equally, based on the following scheme:

Writing Assignment	= 100
Examinations	= 200 (two at 100 points each)
Participation	= 100

Thus, your final grade will be based on the percentage of points that you accumulate out of a possible total of 400. Resulting percentages will be converted to letter grades based on criteria in the current Bucknell University Catalog. The distribution of grades will not be curved, and there are no means of obtaining "extra credit" in this course.

Upon completion of the final examination, you will be asked to complete a standard University survey to appraise your experience in the course.

POLICIES: You will be expected to follow the code of academic conduct, as stipulated in the section on "Conduct Expectations and Regulations," in the current Bucknell University Catalog. Attendance at all seminar sessions, responsible behavior, and academic integrity will be expected. All scheduled activities will be subject to changes in dates/times.

SCHEDULE of SEMINAR SESSIONS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic/Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
<u>WEEK ONE</u>			
Sun 18 May	9.00pm	PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION	Somewhere over the Atlantic Ocean
Wed 21 May	9.15 – 11.05am	<i>Introduction to the issues</i> Prof. Tom Fraser READING TBA	Seminar Room (MI022), Aberfoyle House, Magee campus
	11.30am – 1.00pm	<i>Conflict Resolution</i> Prof. Mari Fitzduff READING TBA	Seminar Room, Magee
Fri 23 May	9:15 – 11:05am	<i>History of the Troubles</i> Prof. Paul Arthur READING TBA	Council Chamber, Magee
<u>WEEK TWO</u>			
Mon 26 May	10.00 – 11.05am	<i>Psychology of the Conflict</i> Prof. Ed Cairns READING TBA	Courtroom, Coleraine
Wed 28 May	2.00 – 3.30pm	<i>Religious Community Leaders</i> Bishop Daly (ret.) Bishop Mehaffey (ret.) READING TBA WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE	Council Chamber, Magee
Fri 30 May	9:15 – 11:05am	<i>Political Parties, Para-militaries, and Murals</i> Prof. Tom Fraser READING TBA	Council Chamber, Magee

3.00 – 5.00pm *The Catholic Civil Rights Movement* The Junction, Bishop St
 Mr. Ivan Cooper
 Mr. Eamon Deane
 Mr. Eamon McCann
 Ms. Bernadette Devlin/McAliskey

READING TBA

WEEK THREE

Mon 2 June 9.30am – 12.00pm *Surviving the Conflict* Council Chamber,
 Dr. Alex Bradley Magee

READING TBA

Wed 4 June 10:30 – 12:30pm *Belfast: Murals & identities* Shankill, Falls Road
 Dr. Neal Jarman Belfast

READING TBA

3.00 – 5.00pm *Prospects for the future* Boardroom, Belfast
 Mr. Quintin Oliver campus

READING TBA

Fri 6 June 9:15 – 11:05am *The peace process* Council Chamber,
 Prof. Paul Arthur Magee

READING TBA

PANEL QUESTIONS DUE

WEEK FOUR

Mon 9 June 2:00 – 4:30pm *A Shared Future* Council Chamber,
 Mr. Glen Barr Magee
 Mr. Eamon Deane
 Mr. John Hume
 Ms. Dymphna McGlade
 Dr.. Arthur Williamson

Tues 10 June 2.30pm **FINAL EXAMINATION WRITEUP** Somewhere over the
 Atlantic Ocean

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

Instructions: This examination is based on your reading of the three preparatory texts assigned for this seminar. You should not need to refer to the books to answer these questions adequately. Please choose two of the following three questions, and devote 2-3 handwritten pages to each. Your answers are due before we arrive at Heathrow Airport on May 19.

1. Deane, S. (1997). *Reading in the dark*. NY: Vintage.

What are the main themes of Deane's book about growing up Catholic in Derry during the 1950s?

2. Fraser, T.G. (2000). *Ireland in conflict 1922 – 1998*. London: Routledge.

Why was the country of Northern Ireland founded in 1922, and how did its existence lead to the civil rights movement of the 1960s and, eventually, to the peace process of the 1990s?

3. Morrissey, M., & Smyth, M. (2002). *Northern Ireland after the Good Friday agreement: Victims, grievance and blame*. London: Pluto Press.

What is the "victims' issue" in Northern Ireland, and how does it differ by age, identity, and location?

FINAL EXAMINATION

Instructions: For your final examination you must do two things.

1. In response to the Report, *A Shared Journey*, you must write out a minimum of three questions and turn them in by 5 p.m, Friday, June 6. **Keep one copy of your questions for yourself, so that you can ask them at the community panel meeting on Monday afternoon, June 9, at Magee.**

2. You must write an interpretive comment on responses to questions given by panelists, and you must turn it in before we arrive at Newark airport on June 10. Your question and your interpretive response will be read together, although each of them will be given a separate grade. If the panelists do not say anything useful about the questions you ask, you may comment on their responses to others' questions.

Preparation: The questions you ask should be based on your experiences in Northern Ireland and on reading the report. The community organization in which you work should supply you with some perspectives on issues raised in the report. During your field placement days, and during the lectures, you should ask people from Northern Ireland how they interpret the issues in the report, and what they think are the most difficult questions. Do not expect Northern Irish people to know about the report.

The following are some comments and questions your instructors have prepared to help you understand and think about the report. Draw on these comments as a guide to the questions you will ask of your field supervisors and others in Northern Ireland.

1. In the Introduction to the Report, examples of “clear evidence that deep divisions remain” are given (e.g., “levels of tolerance and respect for diversity with Protestant and Catholic communities ... have decreased recently,” “there is little change in the extent of inter-community friendship patterns,” “violence at interfaces between communities continues to affect lives, property, businesses and public services”). What kinds of examples of such “deep divisions” do you see or hear about?

2. What does “Return to Devolution” mean?

This refers to a return to government by the parliament in Stormont/Belfast, rather than the current arrangement where government is centralized and run from London/Westminster. Devolution is roughly equivalent to “decentralized” or “localized.”

3. The Report talks about the importance of reducing segregation in schools, residential areas, employment, and use of community services like shopping and recreation.

- Find out what the characteristics of this segregation are, so that you’ll know what to ask about it.
- Explore reasons that people in Northern Ireland seek segregation. How does self-segregation take place, and why?
- Where does integration occur in Northern Irish society? (some functions in the society are segregated, while others are integrated)
- What makes integration difficult? Think about psychological and social factors, in particular (e.g., what role does “identity” play?).
- Is there consensus in Northern Ireland that they need integration in order to achieve self-government?
- The phrase “a more shared but pluralist society” (p.7) seems to mean “Protestants and Catholics cooperating but accepting and working in terms of being separated.” Does this make sense to you?

4. Chapter 3 of the Report talks about the importance of “cross-government” (e.g., cooperation of parties across the sectarian divide) and support of community organizations and groups.
- Students in their experiences in Derry should pay attention to the ways that community groups are advanced and/or interfered with in their efforts to create a more peaceful society.
 - Think about how we in the U.S. think about how community groups in our society play a role in politics and influence government. (Do you know anything about the pluralist theory of democratic government that is supposed to play a central role in the American political process?)
 - In your placement, explore and ask how and whether community groups play a significant role in Northern Ireland’s government. There are barriers to political involvement for community groups. What are they?
 - Ask people in organizations you work with
 - Explore how community groups relate to government services like health care---is there a role for community groups and do sectarian politics have a presence?
 - Are politicians interested in being responsive to community groups (ask people about the difference between “representative democracy” and “participatory democracy”) Are community groups less involved in a representative democracy scheme? What is the significance of this difference for your community groups? Is the distinction something people know about?
 - How do funding issues and competition between community groups figure into this discussion? (That is, do you hear about such competition, and does it relate to the extent of government support for these groups?)
 - There is fear of funding cutbacks for community organizations. How will they (i.e., your organization) get resources in the future if there are cutbacks in their current funding?
 - One of the problems that prevents cross-community relations is lack of trust.
 - What are some examples of lack of trust?
 - What steps are being taken to increase trust? Are those steps working?
 - The Report suggests that separation of Catholics and Protestants will be a reality in Northern Ireland for the foreseeable future. Does this mean peace-building cannot happen? **We will hear diametrically opposed viewpoints on this. Who takes which position, and what are their arguments?**
 - In Chapter Four there is discussion of the roles local and regional governments can and should play in building community practices for peace. In your experience (in the experience you will have), do you find that government is a viable partner for community organizations? **Ask people! Think about what government is—the police force (PSNI) is a part of the government, for example.**
 - Some have said that community groups historically have not been supporters of the political leaders in Northern Ireland. They have formed closer relationships with civil service officials who ran service bureaucracies like the health care system. They also at one time were believed to have close relationships to paramilitary organizations. For these reasons, politicians today are not enthusiastic about forming partnerships with or responding to demands from community groups. Do people in the community groups you work with feel they get support from, and can work closely with, politicians?
 - Some community groups have a long history of taking care of community needs without government help (especially where law enforcement is concerned in the Nationalist community). Now, according to this report, government wants community building to be

controlled by government and to happen inside of government. Does this create problems in the opinions of the community leaders you meet?

- Do local community people you meet feel that they have (or had when it was running) strong connections to the government in Belfast? Can they get the help they need to secure resources?
- How does education inhibit rather than encourage cross-community relations? What would it take to change the current institution of education?