Civil Society Activists in a Protracted Conflict:

Explaining Differences in Motivation to Engage in Intergroup

Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland

By

Rachel Marie Rafferty

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Abstract

The conceptualization of peacebuilding has broadened beyond institutional considerations in recent decades, leading to increased recognition of the role played by civil society actors in contributing to sustainable peace in conflict-affected societies. However, it has also been demonstrated that in the more extreme case of protracted conflicts, collective psychological features such as intergroup emnity and mistrust discourage individuals from building the cooperative intergroup relationships necessary for genuine conflict transformation. This thesis focuses on explaining how differing levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding have developed among civil society activists living in a society affected by protracted ethnic conflict.

This study employed classic grounded theory methodology, drawing primarily on qualitative interview data from 29 individuals active in the community sector in Northern Ireland. 15 of the interviewees are engaged in intergroup peacebuilding activism while the remaining 14 are active largely on behalf of the interests of their own identity group. The study has taken an inductive approach to investigating how some individuals have developed high levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding while others show significantly less interest in building cooperative intergroup relationships. Two parallel explanatory frameworks, known as grounded theories, have been developed and are presented in this thesis. They indicate the role of personal traits and socialization in supporting differences in mindset that in turn are associated with different levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding.

Thus, this thesis argues that the development of motivations to pursue intergroup peacebuilding are not arbitrary and unpredictable, but can be explained by differences in mindset. It makes an original contribution to knowledge by providing a theoretical framework that explains the role of universalist and particularist psychological features in shaping motivations regarding intergroup peacebuilding. Resulting from the findings, recommendations are made for supporting the more widespread development of universalist psychological features in populations affected by protracted conflict, as a potential contribution to conflict transformation and the establishment of sustainable peace.

Preface

There is an old Gaelic proverb that says much about the interdependence of human beings, *ar scath a cheile a mhaireann na daoine*, or in English, *people survive in the shelter of one another.* Although the writing of a PhD thesis can feel like a solitary journey, in fact this thesis could not have been written without the guidance and support of a number of individuals who deserve my fullest appreciation.

I offer sincere thanks to my supervisors, Dr Katerina Standish and Dr Heather Devere, at the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies in the University of Otago. Beyond your tireless support and willingness to offer guidance, I am particularly grateful for your belief in the potential of this research topic and your belief in my ability to pursue it to a successful conclusion.

I must also thank my husband Malcolm, my parents and wider family, and my closest friends for providing the network that supports me in life and motivates me to strive to succeed. Your presence in my life is always and forever appreciated.

Finally, I could not have completed this research without the willingness of 29 individuals to take time out of their lives to share their life stories with me in the research interviews. I was humbled by the frankness, warmth and humor with which they recounted lives lived in the shadow of violent conflict. I am profoundly grateful to them for participating and I hope that my research findings will be of use to them.

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List of Abbreviations

CGTM	Classic grounded theory methodology
CSO	Civil Society Organization
BA	Belfast Agreement of 1998 (popularly known as the Good Friday Agreement)
GTM	Grounded Theory Methodology
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
pIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army
UDA	Ulster Defense Association
UDR	Ulster Defence Regiment
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force

1. Introduction

> There is a strange phenomenon in human interactions that defies easy explanation, and that is the coexistence of the long-standing human capacity for total war, on the one side, and, at the same time, the persistent phenomenon of peacemakers, people who cross the boundaries of enemies and enemy systems to create relations of love, compassion, and forgiveness.
>
> (Gopin, 2012b, p.1).

Violent interethnic conflicts are estimated to have cost over 10 million lives since the end of World War Two (Horowitz, 1985; Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013). Some of these conflicts endure over generations and have been termed protracted conflicts (Azar, Jureidini & McLaurin, 1978; Brecher, 1984; Coleman, Bui-Wrzosinska, Vallacher & Nowak, 2006). Such conflicts profoundly shape societies, marking them with political instability, deep social cleavages, fragmented civil society, economic stagnation and a vulnerability to outbreaks of intergroup violence. In particular, societies affected by protracted conflict are often characterized by a lack of intergroup relationships, sometimes described as a lack of bridging social capital (Aiken, 2013; Lederach, 1997; Putnam, 2000; Korac, 2009). A lack of cooperative intergroup relationships diminishes the capacity of civil society actors to underpin democracy (Putnam, 2002; White, 2011) and to contribute to transformation of the conflict into a situation of sustainable peace (Lederach, 1997; Belloni, 2009).

In protracted conflicts human psychology and cultural socialization conspire to influence many individuals to support continued conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011; Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Porat, Halperin & Bar-Tal, 2015). Thus, there can be substantial support for conflict continuance among populations experiencing protracted conflict, despite great cost to their own wellbeing and that of their society.

Yet within these social contexts, where cultural life and social norms reflect patterns of intergroup mistrust and hostility, there can often be found a minority of individuals motivated to actively develop peaceful intergroup relationships (see Cochrane, 2000; Garred, 2013; Gopin, 2012b). Although small in number, these civil society actors exemplify peaceful alternatives for addressing cultural diversity and for resolving local level conflicts (Feuerverger, 2001;Nasie, Bar-Tal & Shnaidman, 2014;

Plonski, 2005; Varshney, 2002). Their willingness to form cooperative intergroup relationships, if extended to the wider population, has the potential to make an important contribution to achieving sustainable peace, as explained later in this chapter and throughout the thesis.

How is it that, despite the norms of segregation associated with protracted conflicts, some individuals become motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding? This thesis explores how civil society activists have developed different levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding over the course of lives lived in a protracted conflict. It presents an explanatory framework that emerged inductively from data collected in the field, explaining how individuals have developed differing levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. This explanatory framework, comprising two parallel and interlinked grounded theories, presents the central argument of this thesis; that the development of individuals' motivations in regards to intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflict can be explained by the degree of an individual's adherence to certain psychological features, conceptualized in this thesis as an overall mindset, with adherence to different mindsets supported by particular socialization experiences and personal traits.

Thus, this thesis offeres insight into how certain individuals have developed a strong motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding, despite a wider social environment that is unsupportive of their efforts. As such, it is possible to make recommendations as to how the widespread development of motivations to build cooperative intergroup relationships in protracted conflicts can be encouraged, as a potential contribution to the achievement of sustainable peace.

1.1 Background to the Study

In recent decades the field of peacebuilding has emerged as a response to violent intergroup conflicts. Initially envisaged by policy-makers as efforts to strengthen institutions in the aftermath of civil wars (United Nations, 1992), the field has broadened to include a number of approaches at different levels of society (Chetail, 2009). In particular, it has been strongly argued that peacebuilding is most effective when it involves multiple actors in a society (Aiken, 2013; Byrne, 2001;

Lederach, 1997; Miall, 2004; Paffenholtz, 2009b; Van Tongeren, Verhoeven & Wake, 2005). The involvement of civil society actors in peacebuilding is believed to contribute to the development of sustainable peace, providing important social support to macro-level political changes (Barnes, 2005a; Byrne, 2001; Clements, 2012; Gidron, Katz & Hasenfeld, 2002; MacGinty, 2014; Paffenholtz 2009a; Van Tongeren et al., 2005). Civil society approaches to peacebuilding have their roots in conflict transformation theory, which emphasizes the importance of developing cooperative relationships between groups at all levels of society. Indeed, the author of conflict transformation theory, John Paul Lederach, has described peacebuilding as "the building of relationship" between former antagonists (Lederach, 1997, p. 23).

While grassroots actors should not be too readily assumed to make a decisive contribution to ending intergroup violence (see Cochrane 2000, Dibley, 2014; Knox & Quirk, 2000) there is empirical support for the role played by cooperative intergroup relationships in reducing violence, increasing social cohesion and developing capacities to peacefully resolve local-level conflicts. Sustained intergroup contact has been seen to provide spaces for dialogue and conflict resolution at the local level (Barnes, 2005a; Bland, 2001; Caputo, 2015; Love, 1995; Nan, 2009). Studies have found that intergroup relationships contribute to peacebuilding by revitalizing civil society, strengthening support for democratic institutions, and developing models of peaceful intergroup cooperation that can contribute to wider social learning (Aiken, 2013; Gidron et al., 2002; Paffenholtz, 2009b; Knox, 2011b). Meanwhile, social cohesion, defined as a minimal convergence across identity groups, has been found to be an important factor protecting against state fragility, including vulnerability to violence (Marc, Willman, Aslam, & Rebosio with Balasuriya, 2013). More specifically, individuals working cooperatively across group identity boundaries have been successful in preventing localized intergroup violence (Jarman, 2005; Varsheney, 2002; Zebulon Suifon, 2005), in brokering local-level ceasefires (Lederach, 1997), in developing an inclusive ethos that indirectly supported an elite-level political settlement (Cochrane, 2000) and in strengthening popular support for political agreements (Gidron et al., 2002).

Furthermore, social psychologists have found that individuals who engage in sustained intergroup relationships are less prejudiced towards the other group, holding more politically-moderate opinions, and more conciliatory attitudes, even in protracted conflicts (McGlynn, Niens, Cairns & Hewstone, 2004; Paolini, Hewstone

& Cairns, 2007; Stringer et al., 2009). In particular, increased contact with members of other identity groups is associated with increased trust in those groups (Hewstone, Cairns, Voci, Hamberger & Niens, 2006; Tam, Hewstone, Kenworthy & Cairns, 2009), while intergroup trust is an important supportive factor for social cohesion and intergroup conflict resolution (Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013; Maoz & Ellis, 2008). Social segregation of identity groups, meanwhile, has been found to decrease intergroup trust and increase individuals' level of prejudice and sense of threat in liberal democracies (Uslaner, 2012).

Moreover, positive intergroup relationships have been demonstrated to have effects beyond the individuals directly involved. Extended contact, where individuals have other individuals with out-group friendships within their personal network, has been found to correlate positively with reduced prejudice towards out-group members (Turner, Hewstone, Voci & Vonofakou, 2008; Tausch, Hewstone, Schmid, Hughes & Cairns, 2011). Meanwhile, where individuals perceive that positive intergroup relations are a social norm, as modelled by others in their identity group, they are more likely to display tolerant attitudes towards the out-group and to support peaceful compromise on issues of conflict (Christ et al., 2014; Paluck, 2009). Thus, it has been strongly argued that positive intergroup contact is an important mechanism for both preventing violent conflict and facilitating post-conflict peacebuilding at the societal level (see Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013).

Drawing on the above, then, the development of cooperative intergroup relationships can be conceptualized as an important component of sustainable peace in societies affected by protracted intergroup conflict, as depicted below in figure 1. As figure 1 illustrates, wider academic literature suggests such behaviors can impact on the development of sustainable peace at the societal level.



Figure 1: Linking individual motivations to the development of sustainable peace at societal level.

However, the presence of sufficient numbers of individuals willing to engage in such intergroup relationship building cannot be taken for granted. Individuals living in societies affected by protracted conflict often develop shared psychological features that contribute to conflict continuance (Bar-Tal, 2000; Bar-Tal, 2007; Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Gayer, Landman, Halperin, & Bar-Tal, 2009). Thus, protracted conflicts have been noted to take on a self-sustaining quality (Azar et al.,1978; Bar-Tal 2007; Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Salomon, 2011). In such societies, voicing support for peacebuilding can be seen by other in-group members as a betrayal of group values and goals, leading to an uncomfortable relationship with one's own identity group (Abarbanel, 2012; Gopin, 2012a; Nasie et al., 2014). In the face of such psychological and sociocultural barriers, efforts at building cooperative intergroup relationships can struggle to attract widespread participation and support in societies affected by protracted conflicts (Bar-Tal. 2007; Gopin, 2012b; Hermann, 2002).

Nonetheless, the existence of individuals born into protracted conflicts who are motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding has been demonstrated (Abarbanel, 2012; Cochrane, 2000; Gopin, 2012b; Garred, 2013; Nasie et al. 2014). Many of these civil society activists display strong internal motivations, and are

drawn to their roles as a matter of vocation (see Abarbanel, 2012; Gopin, 2012b; Nasie et al., 2014). These individuals have often undergone personal transformations that prompt them to engage in intergroup peacebuilding activities that many of their fellow citizens view with fear and suspicion (Abarbanel, 2012; Gopin, 2012b). Thus, they can be seen to have overcome the psychological and sociocultural barriers to intergroup peacebuilding that are so widespread in protracted conflicts, and it has been argued that expanding their activities more widely in society offers hope for positive social change, even where conflict is deeply embedded (Gopin, 2012b; Knox, 2011b; Nasie et al., 2014; Plonski, 2005).

There is, therefore, substantial value in understanding how individuals living in protracted conflicts can become motivated to engage in building cooperative relationships with the members of the other group or groups involved in the conflict. While such relationships are currently uncommon in societies affected by protracted conflict, as documented in the literature mentioned above, if this behavior were to spread widely we can expect that it would contribute to conflict transformation and sustainable peace. Greater numbers of individuals motivated to building cooperative intergroup relationships has the potential to create a more cohesive and trusting civil society, with greater numbers of citizens willing to negotiate the compromises necessary for peaceful coexistence and collaborate in the pursuit of the common good.

1.2 Gap in Current Knowledge

This thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge through the study of civil society activists living in a protracted conflict. In particular, it explores how differences in motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding can develop in a context where separation and hostility between identity groups represent widespread social norms. More comprehensive reviews of the relevant academic literature appear in chapters 2 and 6, and therefore this section merely contextualizes the thesis topic by indicating the gap addressed by the study without detailing the evidence for that gap at this stage.

Extensive searching of the available literature in English has resulted in the location of only a small number of studies directly addressing the development of individuals' motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts. Moreover, none of these draw on the case of Northern Ireland which formed the basis for this study. However, as depicted below in figure 2, this area of inquiry overlaps with, and can contribute to, three broader areas of literature; civil society peacebuilding in protracted conflicts, the psychology of protracted conflicts, and motivations for participation in social activism.

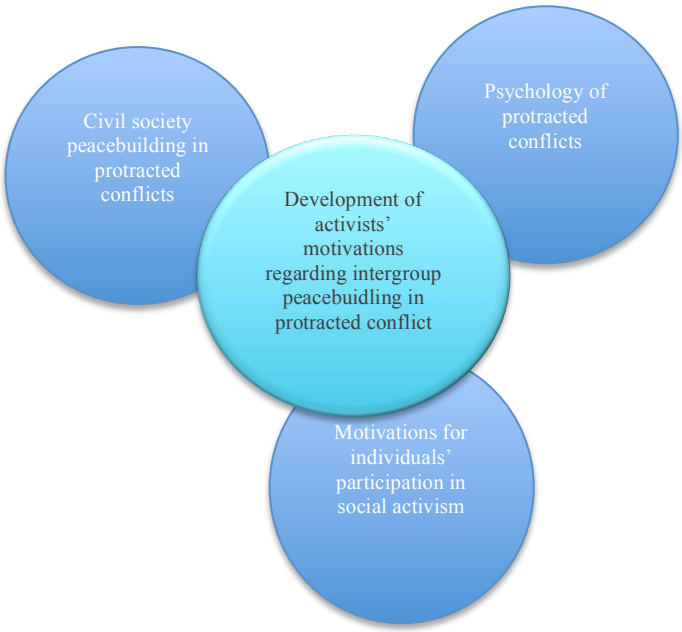

Figure 2: Relating the thesis topic to wider academic literature.

While there is a reasonable degree of consensus in the literature that cooperative intergroup relationships can support the development of sustainable peace, the motivations of civil society actors building these relationships in a context of protracted identity conflict have received "relatively little" scholarly attention (Nasie, et al., 2014, p. 313). Nonetheless, initial studies suggest the potential for identifying common features in the psychology of those individuals who are motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts (Garred, 2013; Grant, 2013; Gopin, 2012b; Nasie et al., 2014). Some have gone further to explore

socialization processes that support the development of such shared psychological features (Nasie et al., 2014). However, extensive searching of the available English-language literature has not revealed a comprehensive investigation of the process whereby such individuals develop their motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. Thus, there seems to be a substantial gap in the academic literature regarding the process or processes whereby certain individuals become motivated to engage in building cooperative intergroup relationships in a protracted conflict.

1.3 Statement of Research Problem, Purpose and Questions

The normative intention of this study was to produce knowledge that can contribute to more effective peacebuilding practices in societies affected by protracted conflicts. Protracted conflicts are a problem affecting a number of societies around the world, including Israel-Palestine, Sri Lanka, Bosnia-Hertzegovina, Cyprus and Northern Ireland. They cause much human suffering and can last over generations. Scholarship has indicated that such conflicts endure, at least in part, because of shared psychological features and sociocultural norms that act as barriers to conflict resolution and reconciliation (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Gayer et al., 2009; Kelman, 2010). As a result, despite the costs of continued conflict, many individuals living in protracted conflicts are not highly motivated to form cooperative relationships with members of other identity groups. The existence, then, of individuals willing to engage in building cooperative intergroup relationships in such societies is something of a puzzle, as well as a source of hope that the different groups in these societies can ultimately learn to coexist peacefully.

To date, however, it is not well understood how some individuals develop motivations to engage in intergroup relationship-building that are sufficient to overcome the external barriers to participation in such behavior. Thus, the specific purpose of this study is to understand how individual-level differences in motivations to build cooperative intergroup relationships can emerge in a protracted conflict.

For reasons outlined in chapter 3, classic grounded theory methodology was selected as the most appropriate means to achieve the research purpose. This

methodology follows a process of emergent design with a strong emphasis on inductive reasoning (Glaser, 1998). A study in this research tradition usually begins with a broad, general question, with more precise questions refined later as the study evolves and takes shape through the process described in detail in chapter 3. Thus, this study began as an inquiry into what is happening when individuals living in a protracted conflict decide to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. As data collection proceeded it became clear that understanding would be enhanced by including a comparative element. Hence, this study evolved into an investigation of how some civil society actors living in a protracted conflict have become motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding activism, while other actors have become motivated to engage in activism involving largely their own identity group, termed here within-group activism.

As a result, this study addresses three research questions;

1. How do some civil society actors living in a protracted conflict develop high levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding?

2. How do some civil society actors living in a protracted conflict become motivated to engage primarily in within-group activism rather than intergroup peacebuilding?

3. What are the key differences between those civil society actors in a protracted conflict who are primarily motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding and those who are primarily motivated to engage in within-group activism?

As can be seen, research question three is, in essence, a summation of the previous two questions, and this is reflected in how the findings are presented in this thesis. Research question one is addressed in chapter 4, while chapter 5 largely addresses research question two, and then concludes with an overview of the integrated findings that is offered in answer to research question three.

As such this thesis explores the mutually constitutive and interactive role of individual psychology and socialization experiences in shaping individual behavior and, by extension, the civil society sphere. The hope is that this knowledge can contribute to improved peacebuilding practice in protracted conflicts, through an

improved understanding of how motivations to build cooperative intergroup relationships can develop even in an unsupportive context marked by low social trust and high levels of intergroup hostility.

1.4 Overview of Research Design

This thesis presents a grounded theory study, following what is known as classic grounded theory methodology (hereafter CGTM), as explained in detail in Chapter 3. CGTM takes an epistemologically neutral approach to data collection and analysis and seeks to engage with data for its ability to contribute to theoretical development (Breckinridge, 2010; Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). The overall goal of classic grounded theory methodology is the development of an explanatory framework at a sufficient level of abstraction to be generalizable to other cases (Glaser, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). It does this through a process of collecting and analyzing data in the area of interest, following an emergent design rather than being determined by existing academic literature and theory (Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). As such, it allows for the investigation of topics that have previously received little attention from scholars and has the potential to generate new theoretical insight. This methodology was deemed particularly suitable for the topic of this thesis as there is a substantial gap in the literature and a clear value in pursuing more in-depth theoretical understanding of how peace-supporting motivations can develop in a context of protracted conflict.

The case selected for the study was Northern Ireland, the site of a centuries old conflict between two religio-national identity groups (Cairns & Derby, 1998; Hennessy, 2005). More recently Northern Ireland has been involved in a relatively successful political agreement leading to a significant diminution in direct violence that, nonetheless, has not been accompanied by widespread reconciliation across society (Cochrane, 2013; MacGinty, Muldoon & Ferguson, 2007). Civil society in Northern Ireland often lacks linkages between the two main identity groups, enhanced by patterns of segregated living and segregated schooling (Belloni, 2009; Morrow, 2006; Knox, 2011a). However, dating to the years before the violence and continuing

up to the present, a number of civil society actors have been motivated to attempt to build cooperative relationships between the two groups (Aiken, 2013; Knox, 2011b; Love, 1995). These individuals differ significantly in their behavior from a wider society that remains substantially hostile and segregated, and exploring the reasons for this difference has been central to the development of this thesis.

A total of 29 individuals were interviewed. All were involved in some form of civil society activity and in this thesis are termed civil society activists. However, in the interests of developing theoretical explanation research participants were recruited for two different samples. This allowed for comparison, highlighting key factors likely to explain their differing motivations regarding intergroup peacebuilding.

The first sample comprised 15 individuals who have shown strong motivations to engage in building cooperative intergroup relationships, termed intergroup peacebuilders in this thesis. Their activism involves a range of relationship-building activities, aimed at fostering more peaceful and cooperative intergroup relations. In order to move beyond the caricature of civil society peacebuilders in Northern Ireland as middle-class do-gooders, remote from the realities of violence (see Power, 2011), the individuals in this sample were selected because they grew up in areas strongly affected by the violent conflict of 1969-1998.

The second sample comprises 14 individuals who engage in activism that involves developing relationships primarily within the confines of their religio-national identity group, or that is focused on goals likely to exclusively benefit their own group. They have been termed within-group activists in this thesis. In general, they recounted much less contact, and of a lower quality, with members of other identity groups in both their social activism and their personal lives. The individuals in this sample engage in a range of activities such as maintaining cultural traditions, community development, and political advocacy. Their activism is shaped by an acceptance of divisions between religio-national identity groups and thus potentially contributes to a civil society sphere where distinct identity groups continue to pursue separate destinies, often in competition with one another, and with the potential to escalate into outright conflict when groups' interests are incompatible.

The interview format was qualitative, following a semi-structured approach. An interview guide was developed, involving asking respondents about their life story as a whole and how they got involved in their present activism. Overall, this data collection resulted in rich and complex accounts of how individuals have become

motivated to pursue their goals as community activists, including how their individual personalities have interacted with the wider society during key life events. Data was analyzed using the classic grounded theory methods of constant comparative analysis and theoretical memoing, as explained in Chapter 3. The resulting findings take the form of two parallel and interlinked grounded theories, explanatory frameworks that have been developed inductively from patterns in the data. Chapter 4 presents the first grounded theory, entitled "becoming motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict". Chapter 5 presents the second grounded theory "becoming motivated to engage in within-group activism in a protracted conflict", and also provides at the end of the chapter an integrated comparative model of the two grounded theories. This final integrated theoretical model is entitled "the development of differences in motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict".

1.5 Defining Key Terms

This thesis involves a number of terms that can have a variety of meanings according to the author, audience and field of study. In particular the interdisciplinary nature of this study necessitates clarity around the intended meaning of terms that occupy a central role in elaborating arguments within this thesis. Thus, this section provides brief definitions for a number of key terms, many of which will be elaborated in more detail throughout this thesis.

1.5.1 Protracted conflict.

Protracted conflicts, sometimes termed intractable conflicts (Bar-Tal, 2007; Coleman, 2000; Kriesberg, 1998) or divided societies (Lederach, 1997; Aiken, 2013), are long-lasting violent conflicts between identity groups, often played out within a single nation state. Such conflicts can vary over time in their levels of violence but even during times of relative peace, there is the potential for re-escalation of direct

violence (Azar et al., 1978; Brecher, 1984; Kelman, 1999). Examples of countries affected by protracted conflicts between different ethnic and/or religious groups include Israel-Palestine, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Kashmir, Cyprus and Northern Ireland.

Kriesberg (1998) has described intractable conflicts as long-lasting, involving what are perceived to be irreconcilable goals, waged by violent means and supported by vested material and/or ideological interests. Bar-Tal (2007) has added to this definition, pointing out that such conflicts are perceived as irresolvable and as being zero-sum in nature, and that they become of central concern in the lives of participants. Such conflicts are recognized as presenting substantive challenges to building sustainable peace (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009; Kriesberg, 1998; Lederach, 1997; Saloman, 2004a; Saloman, 2011). As these intergroup conflicts have become deeply embedded in the social fabric, they are believed to require a multi-faceted approach to peacebuilding including psychosocial as well as political change (Bar-Tal, 2000; Kelman, 2010; Lederach, 1997; Lederach, 2015; Miall 2004; Morrow, 2012).

Meanwhile, a number of authors prefer the term protracted when referring to these conflicts (for example, Azar et al., 1978; Brecher, 1984; Coleman et al., 2006). The term protracted conflicts is used in this thesis as use of the term intractable can suggest such conflicts cannot be resolved, and may inadvertently discourge exploration of how these conflicts can be transformed (see Psaltis, 2016).

1.5.2 Intergroup peacebuilding and sustainable peace.

Peacebuilding is a term employed not only by academics but also within the world of international development policy, and the everyday lives of people living in conflict-affected societies. In recent decades it has been applied to an ever-widening range of activities, moving beyond the resolution of specific conflict issues and the construction of inclusive governmental institutions to include processes aimed at building relationships and changing attitudes among conflict-affected populations. It can thus refer to any and all activities believed to support the development of sustainable peace, as is discussed in more detail in chapter 2.

Peacebuilding activities can be grouped according to different criteria. Firstly, peacebuilding can be structural and / or relational in its approach (Cochrane & Dunn, 2002). Structural peacebuilding involves the creation of macro-level political agreements and institutions that support nonviolent resolution of social conflicts. Relational peacebuilding gives attention to fostering cooperative relationships between conflict parties, and often involves overcoming the psychological and social barriers to forming and maintaining such relationships. Secondly, peacebuilding can also be said to take place within the intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup and international levels (Nelson, Puopolo & Sims, 2014). Conflict transformation theory further posits that peacebuilding can be understood as operating on three tracks; track one involves elite actors, track two involves civil society leaders and track three involves grassroots actors in civil society (Diamond & McDonald, 1996; Lederach, 1997; Miall, 2004). This thesis addresses motivations for relational peacebuilding in the intergroup domain at track three, or grassroots, level.

Intergroup peacebuilding is used in this thesis to denote deliberate efforts at building cooperative relationships between civil society actors belonging to different identity groups. The term is therefore used interchangeably with *building cooperative intergroup relationships.* Intergroup peacebuilding is distinct from intra-group peacebuilding which comprises attempts to peacefully resolve conflicts and improving bonding within a defined identity group. Due to the intergroup and identity-driven nature of protracted conflicts, intergroup peacebuilding is of substantial importance for overcoming these conflicts, while high levels of within-group cohesion may in fact contribute to the endurance of these conflicts (Belloni, 2009; Morrow, 2006).

Sustainable peace is employed in this thesis to represent a hypothetical situation where a society previously affected by conflict is able to sustain peaceful relations between identity groups, with all conflicts resolved through purely nonviolent means. The relationship of this concept to notions of conflict transformation, violence and reconciliation is examined in chapter 2.

1.5.3 Activism and civil society.

Activism is a term which some use to connote a direct challenge to the social and political order, pursued through unconventional means, beyond the sphere of formal politics (Martin, 2007). However, at its broadest, it can refer to sustained commitment to a cause of social change by an individual or collection of individuals (Martin, Hanson & Fontaine, 2007). This thesis takes activism in this latter, broad sense to refer to actions aimed at a social change to which the individual or group are normatively committed.

At the same time, actions towards social change often take place within the realm of *civil society*, a sphere increasingly of interest to the field of peacebuilding (see Anheier, Kaldor & Glasius, 2005; MacGinty, 2014; Paffenholtz, 2009b; van Tongeren et al., 2005). Civil society is generally understood as the sphere of human actions beyond government, economic activity, and the family (Paffenholtz 2009b). It thus refers to a sphere of social interaction marked by diverse forms of association and exchange and can include such diverse organizations as sporting clubs, cultural groupings, community associations, churches and a professionalized charity sector.

The 29 individuals interviewed for this study can be understood as *civil society actors*, as none of them are direct agents of the state or of private enterprise, and all of them operate largely within civil society. However, they are termed *civil society activists* in this thesis due to each of them having a defined goal of social change towards which they direct much of their efforts.

While *peace activists* can be understood as individuals engaging in a wide range of activities with the intention to contribute to peace at any level, the terms *intergroup peacebuilding activists* or *intergroup peacebuilders* are therefore used in this thesis to refer to individuals whose activities are specifically directed at building cooperative relationships between members of different identity groups. Their work can at times involve engagement with political structures, but due to the unsupportive political environment in protracted conflicts, individuals often employ relational approaches, as exemplified by the intergroup peacebuilders sample in this study.

1.5.4 Social identity, in-group and out-group.

Social identity is a common term within the field of social psychology (Hornsey, 2008). It is generally understood to connote how individuals view themselves in relation to membership or non-membership of social groupings (Tajfel & Turner 1979; Tajfel & Turner, 2004). It is recognized that membership of certain social groups is more important to an individual's sense of self than others (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). In the context of protracted conflicts, individuals are often strongly affiliated to a salient social identity such as ethnicity or religion, and issues related to the expression and maintenance of two or more social identities in the same political space can be of central importance to the conflict (Al Ramiah, Hewstone, & Schmid, 2011; Bar-Tal, 2007; Kelman 1999; Staub, 2001).

Related to the issue of identity divisions are the concepts of *in-group* and *out-group* or *out-groups.* These terms refer to whether or not an individual identifies as a member of a group and whether they are seen as part of that group by others. In the context of Northern Ireland, the religio-national identities of Catholic and Protestant are highly salient for many citizens and significantly shape politics, civil society and social life (Hamilton, Hansson, Bell & Toucas, 2008; Nolan, 2014; White, 2011). In this society, then, the *in-group* is the religio-national group into which an individual was born. *The out-group*, therefore, is used to refer to the other main religio-national identity group, unless otherwise stated. However, as Northern Ireland is not a purely binary society, at times the term *out-groups* is used to refer to all other identity groups beyond the in-group, including other parties to the conflict such as British state forces or the Irish government.

1.5.5 Psychological features: motivation and mindset.

This thesis engages with a number of psychological features as displayed by respondents when discussing their life choices, significant memories, and their perspective on Northern Irish society. By *psychological features* it is meant to refer to patterns of thought and consistent images about self and the world, regardless of whether they would be considered accurate representations of reality by others.

Among these, the most important concepts that emerged are motivation and mindset.

Motivation can be simply defined as the reasons an individual has for acting or behaving in a certain way. More specifically, they can be viewed as alternatively intrinsic or extrinsic (Assor, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivations are those internal to an individual such as normative beliefs, or a desired goal. Extrinsic motivations are those external to the individual and may cause them to act in contrary to their internally-held preferences, examples being the threat of punishment or the promise of social reward. In this thesis the term motivation refers to the internal psychological features shaping individuals' behavior, with an emphasis on how individuals formulate a particular social goal to be desirable.

This thesis also engages with the concept of *mindsets*, used here to mean a collection of mutually-supportive psychological features that lead to a stable orientation towards self and society. While mindset is a term more often used in everyday speech than among professional psychologists, it has been argued that this is a strength as it allows the researcher to express findings in ways which can be understood by interested parties beyond the academic sphere, including the research participants themselves (Garred, 2013). The findings presented in chapters 4 and 5 conceptualize mindset as comprising mutually-supportive elements of worldview, identity formation, and conflict framing. The term *universalist mindset* denotes an overall orientation towards identifying with humanity as a whole, with attention on similarities and shared experiences. The term *particularist mindset* is used to denote an overall orientation towards identifying with a particular social group, with attention on distinctions between groups.

In this thesis, mindsets are conceptualized as comprising worldview, identity formation and conflict-framing. *Worldview* refers to a set of assumptions about physical and social reality (Koltko-Rivera, 2004). Worldviews represent "a set of covert values and beliefs that is not often discussed with others and, indeed, is rarely examined by the individual who possesses it" (Unger, 2002, p.43). In this thesis, worldview refers to an individual's beliefs about life and society. *Identity* has been the subject of both psychological study and political theorizing. In this thesis it is recognized that identity can refer to an individual's self-concept, which in turn can involve membership of multiple social groups. The term *identity formation*, then, refers to the process whereby individuals compose their self-image and sense of belonging through a synthesis of personal reflection and interaction with the social

world. Meanwhile, the concept of *framing* was first put forward by Goffman (1974), and has since been adopted by scholars in a number of fields. Framing is most often understood as a cognitive process whereby information is fitted into preexisting mental schema, resulting in a particular perspective on real world events (Dewulf et al., 2009). In this thesis, *conflict framing* connotes the cognitive framework that individuals apply when interpreting the past intergroup violence and ongoing divisions in their society.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

Although carried out using the emergent design principles of classic grounded theory methodology, this thesis is presented in a relatively traditional format for the purposes of clarity, and in keeping with the requirements of doctoral examination (see Dunne, 2011). It begins by providing the reader with the theoretical and real-world context of the study, then presents a detailed exposition of the methodology employed followed by exposition of the study findings, then a discussion chapter that relates findings to wider areas of academic literature and a final conclusions chapter. While academic literature is examined as part of the context provided in chapter 2 for the clarity of the reader, the main approaches and debates in the relevant areas of literature are reviewed more fully as part of the discussion in chapter 6. The reasons for this are outlined in chapter 3, with reference to the grounded theory approach to research design and theory development.

Thus, the next chapter in this thesis, chapter 2, provides both the academic and real-world context of the study. In terms of academic context, it outlines debates around the nature of peacebuilding and provides detailed information on the specific challenges to peacebuilding provided by protracted conflicts. It also provides important background information on the case selected for this study, Northern Ireland. This includes an historical overview of the conflict, an examination of the state of the current political peace process, and an overview of civil society peacebuilding in the region.

Chapter 3 presents the research design in detail. It outlines the key elements of a classic grounded theory approach and explains the rationale for choosing this approach with reference to the research purpose and questions. It also provides detailed information on how participants were identified and recruited, how data was collected and analyzed and how the grounded theories presented in this thesis were developed through the processes of memoing and constant comparative analysis.

Chapters 4 and 5 present the findings that emerged from this study. Chapter 4 addresses research question one and presents a grounded theory, a theoretical framework derived from the data collected, that explains the process whereby some individuals have become motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. Chapter 5 addresses research question two by presenting a grounded theory outlining the process whereby individuals become motivated to engage primarily in within-group activism while motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding are much lower. Chapter 5 also addresses research question three, towards the end of the chapter, offering an integrated model of the two grounded theories presented previously. As such, it gives a summative overview of the knowledge produced by this study as to how differing levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding emerge among civil society activists in a protracted conflict.

Chapter 6 discusses the elements of the integrated grounded theories in comparison with relevant academic literature, further developing themes from the study. It also discusses the contributions and challenges provided by the findings in this study for the three areas of relevant literature identified earlier in this chapter; civil society peacebuilding, the psychology of protracted conflicts and motivations for participation in social activism.

Finally, chapter 7 presents a summation of the most salient points addressed in this thesis and an examination of their implications, alongside the conclusions that can be drawn from this study. It presents recommendations for peacebuilding policy-making and practice in societies affected by protracted conflicts, based on the research findings. The thesis concludes with a brief discussion of the prospects for conflict transformation is societies affected by protracted conflict with references to insights resulting from this study.

1.7 A Note on Style

This thesis has been written following the style guide for the American Psychological Association, a common style in the social sciences. In keeping with this style guide, spellings accepted in American English are used throughout. For the purposes of consistency, these spellings have been also applied to direct quotes from research participants, even though these individuals are most likely to use British English spellings in their daily lives.

As a thesis based on qualitative data collected during field research, the presentation of findings in chapters 4 and 5 involves illustration of themes with direct quotations taken from interviews. *Italic font* is used to denote direct speech by interview participants in these chapters, and in chapter 2. Local dialect approaches to grammar used by respondents in interviews have not been corrected in direct quotations in order to accurately reflect the patterns of speech used by research participants. It is not envisaged that these small deviations from standard English grammar will present problems for the reader to understand respondents' meanings.

The geography of Northern Ireland involves a number of place names that are contested or controversial. In order to acknowledge the sensitivities of the two main religio-national groupings in the region, the city that has Londonderry as its official legal name is denoted Derry-Londonderry in this thesis. However, although the term Northern Ireland is contested by some in the Irish Republican tradition, that name is used throughout this thesis to refer to the six northeastern counties on the island of Ireland that fall under the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom as it is the most widely recognized term for the region on a international basis.

Given the sensitive nature of some of the personal information contained in this thesis, research participants are respresented by pseudonyms throughout. A full list of research participants including pseudoymns used and brief biographical information appears in Appendix A.

2. Peacebuilding in Protracted Conflicts: The Case of Northern Ireland

Providing information on the context in which research takes place provides a useful backdrop to the social circumstances that underpin the need for a research study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Thus, this chapter provides detailed information on Northern Ireland, with regards to both past and continuing conflict and the efforts to build sustainable peace. Firstly, however, it locates this thesis in relation to wider academic knowledge about peacebuilding in societies affected by protracted conflicts, including the challenges facing such efforts. In this way, it is hoped to present the reader with sufficient background information to make sense of the research problem and purpose, and to illustrate the significance of the research findings and the arguments that develop through the course of this thesis.

As stated in the introductory chapter, this thesis is concerned with the problem presented by psychological and sociocultural barriers to peacebuilding in protracted conflicts. The research purpose, as a result, is to develop a framework to explain how some civil society activists living in a protracted conflict become highly motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding, while others are motivated to pursue substantially different goals.

To achieve this purpose, the study employed classic grounded theory methodology (hereafter CGTM). This methodology requires the researcher to enter the field without a predetermined theoretical lens, or even a fixed idea about the nature of the social phenomenon under investigation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1998). This means that the academic literature and theory reviewed in this chapter did not determine data collection strategies. Rather, the data collected using the methods outlined in chapter 3 led to findings that in turn suggested to which areas of knowledge this thesis contributes. Hence this chapter was written only after data collection and analysis. However, it is presented towards the start of the thesis with the aim of making clear the significance of the research purpose and of the findings presented in chapters 4 and 5. In keeping with CGTM, the relevant academic literature will be more fully reviewed and critiqued within the discussion of research findings in chapter 6.

This chapter begins with an overview of the main understandings of peacebuilding. It then outlines themes in the existing academic literature on the

challenges to peacebuildng presented by protracted conflicts, followed by a depiction of common civil society-based approaches to peacebuilding in protracted conflicts, an examination of existing literature on the peacebuilding activists involved in these efforts, and elucidation of the value of understanding how some individuals in a protracted conflict become motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. The chapter then goes on to present the particular case of Northern Ireland; the roots of the past violent conflict, the troubled and partial nature of its current peace, and the current attempts by civil society actors to build a more sustainable peace in the region.

2.1 Peacebuilding in Theory, Policy-making and Practice

Although the term peacebuilding appeared as early as the 16th century, study of this topic has become widespread only in recent decades (Chetail, 2009). Differentiated from the negotiation and mediation involved in peace-making among conflict parties, peacebuilding has been defined as an approach which focuses on addressing the root causes of the conflict with a view to establishing sustainable peace (Galtung, 1969; Lederach, 1997). However, the concept is understood somewhat differently among academic theorists and international policy-makers (Chetail, 2009).

Theoretical understandings of peacebuilding derive from Galtung's triangle of violence, pictured below in figure 3, and his distinction between negative and positive peace (Galtung, 1969). Peacebuilding, then, is conceptualized as not only aiming to eliminate direct violence, as in the case of negative peace, but also to eliminate structural and cultural violence, leading to the achievement of positive peace. In this model structural violence is understood as social structures that harm individuals and social groups (Galtung, 1969), while cultural violence is understood as any aspect of culture that encourages support for, or tolerance of, direct or structural violence (Galtung, 1990).

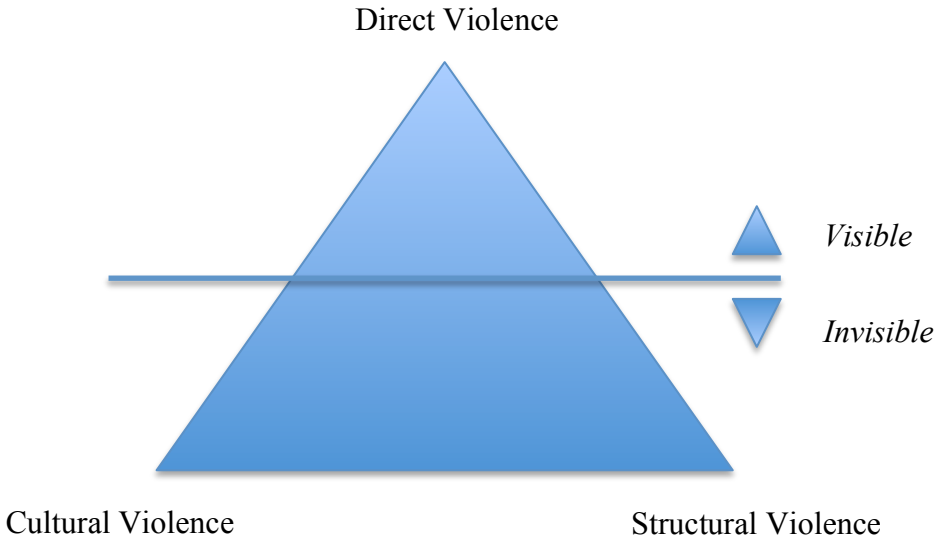

Figure 3: A typology of violence, based on Galtung (1969).

More recently, Lederach (1997; 2015) has further developed the concept of peacebuilding, conceiving of peacebuilding as a dynamic process encapsulating a wide array of activities that precede and follow formal peace agreements. His theorizing has given rise to the notion of conflict transformation, where sustainable peace is believed to arise from a substantial change in the conditions which gave rise to a conflict, including structural injustices, negative patterns of relationship and prejudicial attitudes between members of different groups (Lederach, 1997; Lederach, 2015; Goetschel, 2009; Miall, 2004).

Lederach (1997; 2015) has refined his presentation of conflict transformation theory as a multifaceted approach by distinguishing three levels on which peacebuilding activities can take place. As depicted below in figure 4, Lederach has created an influential model of peacebuilding as a three track process; track 1 involves elite negotiation, track 2 involves influential leaders in civil society and track 3 is the grassroots level of civil society. This thesis is based on interviews with grassroots community activists and contributes to an understanding of how the psychological

features that support protracted conflict can be transformed at the level of individual citizens.

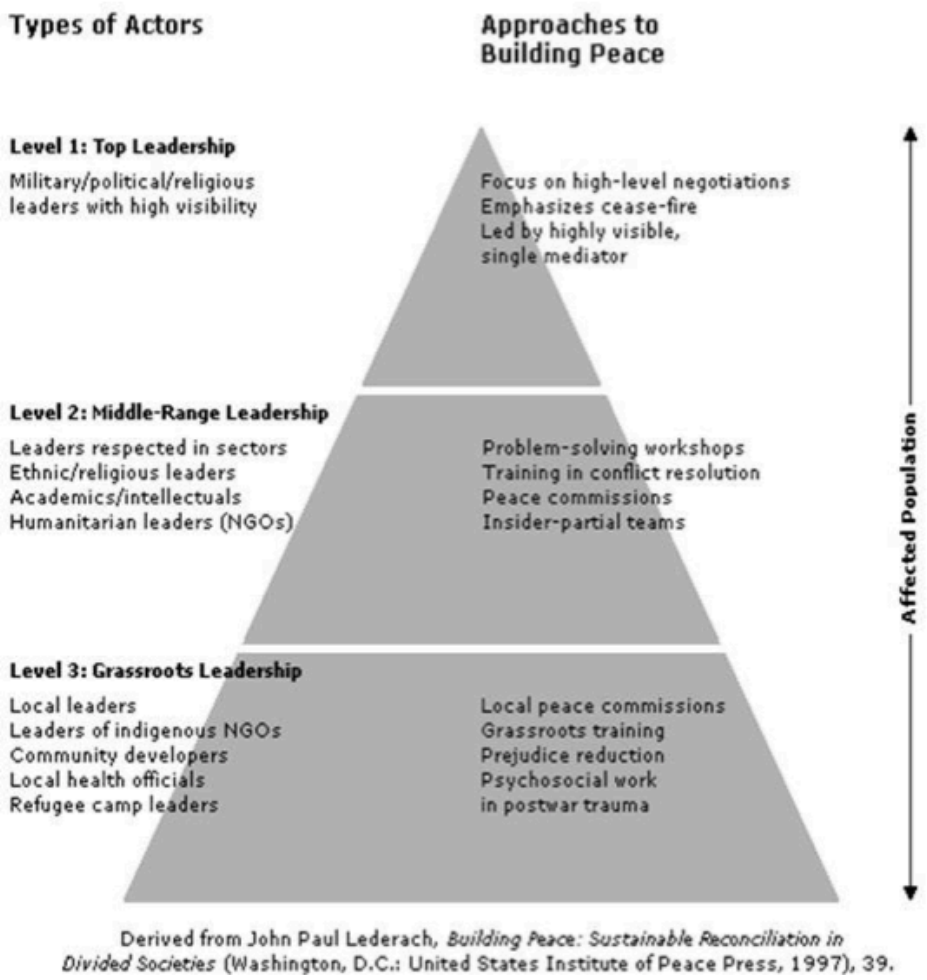

Figure 4: Levels of action in peacebuilding, summarizing John Paul Lederach (Maiese, 2003)

Peacebuilding as a theoretical construct, then, is intimately related to the concept of conflict transformation. Peacebuilding can be understood as a multifaceted and multilevel approach to transforming conflict and embedding sustainable peace. It aims to replace hostility and destruction with the equitable and inclusive social relationships that are represented by the concept of positive peace. It deals not only with direct, visible manifestations of violence, but also engages with structural injustice and with attitudes and cultural practices that can drive support for harming others. Peacebuilding activities need not be exclusively top-down or bottom-up, but can take place at all levels of society, and a number of scholars believe peacebuilding

is most successful when it involves multiple levels of society (Lederach, 1997; Miall, 2004; World Bank, 2006).

In the world of international policy-making, peacebuilding officially entered the diplomatic lexicon in 1992 when Boutros Boutros-Ghali published his Agenda for Peace (Chetail, 2009). In this document peacebuilding was more narrowly defined as rebuilding work undertaken after a period of violent conflict in order to avoid a return to direct violence (United Nations, 1992). Definitions of the term in policy literature have proliferated, increasing ambiguity around what the post-conflict peacebuilding project entails (Chetail, 2009). In 2007, the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission defined peacebuilding as involving a range of measures to increase national capacities for conflict management, aimed at laying the foundations for sustainable peace (Chetail, 2009). The Commission further argued for interventions to be tailored to the specific needs of the country in question and based on national ownership of the process.

An overall consensus has since largely emerged among international policy-makers that post-conflict peacebuilding involves three core components: security, socio-economic recovery and democratization (Chetail, 2009). The best means to achieve these continue to be debated however, alongside the relative merits of activities targets at different levels of society. Some scholars have critiqued state-focused interventions as being antithetical to empowering locals to build peace from the bottom-up (see MacGinty & Richmond, 2013; Richmond, 2013). However, as explained below, there is a convincing case for the ability of both state-focused and bottom-up approaches to support one another.

2.1.1 Structural and relational approaches to peacebuilding.

A review of the main literature on the practices of peacebuilding reveals two broad areas of focus. The first, often termed structural, is focused on the macro-level, on the institutions of governance and economic prosperity that are believed to support the maintenance of negative peace after violent conflict (Chetail, 2009; Cochrane & Dunn, 2002; Fetherstone, 2000). The other main approach is termed relational or psychosocial, due to the focus on improving the capacities of ordinary citizens to

relate positively to out-group members, thus allowing the development of a more cooperative civil society sphere (Cochrane & Dunn, 2002; Lederach, 1997; Hamber at al., 2015). The latter approach has been applied extensively by peacebuilding actors in protracted conflicts in the hope of creating a cultural shift towards peace where the political sphere is marked by hostility and intransigence (Hamber et al. 2015; Cochrane, 2000; Chaitin, 2012; Lederach, 1997; Lefranc, 2012; Sacipa-Rodriguez, 2014).

Structural approaches to peacebuilding can be seen as deriving from the focus of international policy literature on increasing state capacity to manage conflict. This largely instrumental approach has as its primary goal the establishment of negative peace (MacGinty & Richmond, 2013; Richmond, 2013; United Nations, 1992). It is often referred to in academic literature as a statebuilding approach (MacGinty & Richmond, 2013; Paris & Sisk, 2009; Richmond 2013), due to the focus on rebuilding state infrastructure and promoting effective governance. Structural approaches also include a number of efforts within the field of transitional justice, namely those focused on reestablishing the legitimacy of state legal institutions in the wake of human rights abuses (Lekha Sriram, 2007; Van Zyl, 2005). Concerns have been raised, however, that such interventions may have limited effectiveness without wider cultural change (Aiken, 2013; Lederach, 1997; Morrow, 2012), and that externally driven institutional changes may lack legitimacy from the perpsective of local populations (MacGinty & Richmond, 2013; Richmond, 2013).

Relational or psychosocial approaches to peacebuilding address some of the gaps left by a statebuilding approach (Clements 2012; Lambourne & Gitau, 2013). The focus is generally on working with civil society actors who are believed to play an important role in embedding peace in the wider society (Lederach, 1997; Lederach, 2015; Paffenholz, 2009a; World Bank, 2006). Within this field, the psychological and the social are seen as inherently inter-related, mutually influencing one another, with intangibles such as relationships and collective psychology believed to influence support for, or opposition to, social structures (Williamson & Robinson, 2006; Hamber, 2003; Hamber et al., 2015). This approach to peacebuilding can thus involve a large variety of goals including trauma-healing, community-building and resolving localized disputes peacefully (Hamber et al, 2015; Sonpar, 2015; Sacipa-Rodriguez, 2014; Van Tongeren et al., 2005). Primary practices within this approach include facilitating intergroup contact and dialogue, peace education, trauma support and

media-based efforts directed at establishing new cultural norms of tolerance and coexistence (Hamber at al., 2015).

Proponents of this approach recognize the need to address the damage that violent conflict causes to both individual psychology and social relations (Hamber et al., 2015). Such interventions can address the psychological and cultural formations that support violent conflict, help to repair the damaging legacies of violence, and can contribute to building intergroup trust and social cohesion, as attested by numerous case studies (Lambourne & Gitau, 2013; Lambourne & Niyonzima, 2016; Sonpar, 2015; Wessells & Monteiro, 2006). Efforts at developing cooperative relationships between members of different identity groups have particular relevance in the case of protracted conflicts where intergroup relations are typically characterized by separation, hostility and mistrust (Bar-Tal, 2007; Lederach, 1997; MacGinty et al., 2007) and where violent conflict can destroy relationships between members of different identity groups (World Bank, 2006). Thus, relational peacebuilding practices have an important potential to not only effect individual and community-level change, but to contribute to the development of a more cohesive civil society sphere in regions affected by violent conflict (Paffenholtz, 2009b; World Bank, 2006).

Thus, despite some theorists framing state-focused structural interventions and locally-led relational peacebuilding as oppositional (see Richmond, 2013), the two are not inherently mutually exclusive. In fact, evidence suggests that each approach can potentially support the other. With conflict transformation as the theoretical foundation and normative goal, all contributing factors to a conflict need be addressed, whether the structural exclusion from political power of an identity group, or social norms of intergroup hostility (Lederach, 1997; Lederach, 2015; Miall, 2004). Thus, while structures of governance can either aid or hinder the formation of cooperative social relations between identity groups (Reynolds, 2010; Mollica & Dingley, 2015), relational interventions can help to build support for political cooperation and the development of democratic and egalitarian institutions, as well as contributing to a vibrant civil society sphere with the potential to hold government to account (Gidron et al., 2002; Paffenholz, 2011; White 2011).

2.2 Peacebuilding in Protracted Conflicts

Since the end of the Cold War, intrastate conflicts between different ethnic or religious groups have resulted in the most intense and most protracted violence (Elcheroth & Spini, 2011; Gleditsch, Wallensteen, Eriksson, Sollenberg & Strand, 2002; Themner & Wallensteen, 2013). In particular, interethnic conflicts are more likely that any other group-based conflict to escalate into civil war (Denny & Walter, 2014), and are particularly difficult to resolve through peaceful means (Cordell & Wolff, 2010; Horowitz, 1985; Kreisberg, 1998; Lederach 1997). Violent intrastate conflicts are often characterized by high levels of civilian deaths, rape and torture as every member of the opposing ethnic or religious group can be seen as a legitimate target (Bar-Tal & Hammack, 2012; Staub & Bar-Tal, 2003; Volkan, 2006). Added to this human cost are the many other legacies of violent conflict including societal divisions and intergroup mistrust, psychological trauma, economic decline and the erosion of state legitimacy and the rule of law (Charbonneau & Parent, 2012; Chetail, 2009). Within the study of intrastate conflicts, protracted conflicts are widely recognized as being the most difficult to resolve through peaceful means (Aiken, 2013; Bar-Tal, 2007; Lederach, 1997; Kriesberg, 1998).

The causes of violent interethnic conflicts have received much academic attention, with explanations ranging from denial of basic human needs (Burton,1990), to economic opportunism (Collier, 2000; Collier & Hoffler 2005), to environmental pressures (Burke, Miguel, Satyanath, Dykema, & Lobell, 2009) to the psychology of group identity (Bar-Tal, 2007; Staub & Bar-Tal; 2003; Volkan, 2006) and of frustrated group ambitions (Gurr, 1970; Horowitz 1985). The causes of peace in such contexts are less well understood, however, and the international community continues to struggle to provide effective peacebuilding interventions despite the substantial resources deployed (Chetail, 2009; Paris, 2011). Nonetheless scholars have cogently argued that because protracted conflicts become embedded in the social fabric of everyday life they require a multi-faceted peacebuilding approach aimed at producing a wider cultural shift among the population towards support for peace, as well as brokering elite-level political agreement (Bar-Tal, 2000; Lederach, 1997; Lederach, 2015; Miall 2004; Morrow, 2012). Indeed, even where peace agreements have been signed by elite actors, lack of support among the wider population and the failure to address issues affecting the everyday lives of citizens risks the future

reemergence of violent conflict (Cudahar & Dayton, 2012; Hemmer, Garb, Phillips & Graham, 2006; Lederach 1997).

This section explores existing knowledge on the substantial challenges to peacebuilding that result from the collective psychology and habitual social patterns of populations experiencing protracted conflict. It is not surprising, then, that the need to develop civil society peacebuilding interventions appropriate to the particularly challenging circumstances of protracted conflicts has been identified (Bar-Tal, 2000; Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011; Niens & Cairns, 2005; Rosen & Saloman, 2011). This section, then, examines the main approaches to civil society peacebuilding in protracted conflicts, and concludes with an examination of existing literature addressing the motivations of those civil society actors willing to participate in such activities.

2.2.1 Challenges to peacebuilding in protracted conflicts.

Protracted conflicts are recognized as presenting substantive challenges to building sustainable peace (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009; Kriesberg, 1998; Lederach, 1997; Saloman, 2004 a; Saloman 2011). Conflicts involving group identities such as ethnicity or religious sect are marked by an emotional intensity not easily understood by outsiders (Bar-Tal, 2007; Halperin 2011; Horowitz, 1985; Staub, 2001, Volkan, 2006). Such conflicts are often so central to the lives of society members that attempts to resolve the conflict through compromise can be rejected as a threat to symbolic notions of group idenity (Bar-Tal, 2000; Bar-Tal 2007; Kriesberg, 1998; Ross, 2007). As a result, such conflicts present serious challenges to standard procedures for conflict resolution such as mediation or negotiation (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011; Kelman, 1987; Retzinger & Sheff, 2000; Tint, 2010). Furthermore, even when political agreement between elite factions is reached, there can remain substantial resistance at grassroots level to accepting the peace agreement and to developing new cooperative relations with the out-group (Aiken, 2013; MacGinty et al. 2007). Thus, elite level peace agreements are not sufficient to transform protracted conflicts (Aiken, 2013; Lederach, 1997; Lederach 2015).

Sociopsychologial infrastructure of protracted conflicts.

Psychological barriers to conflict resolution and conflict transformation, common among individuals in societies affected by protracted conflicts, have been termed the "sociopsychological infrastructure" of a conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007, p.1430). This socio-psychological infrastructure is conceived of as a prism or conceptual framework through which society members interpret experiences and form decisions about their course of action (Bar-Tal, 2007; Teicheman & Bar-Tal, 2008). These collective psychological patterns can involve shared beliefs about the nature of the conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007), adhering to conflict-supporting narratives that assert in-group superiority (Bar-Tal, Oren & Nets-Zehngut, 2014; Volkan, 2006), and holding dehumanized images of the out-group (Maoz & Eidelson, 2007; Staub & Bar-Tal, 2003). One of the notable features of protracted conflicts is the degree to which such psychological features are commonly internalized by group members (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bekerman, 2009; Kriesberg, 1998; Hammack, 2011; Teichman & Bar-Tal, 2008; Tint, 2010).

Collective narratives have been identified as a key psychological feature underpinning protracted conflicts (Bar-Tal et al., 2014; Bekerman & Zembylas 2011; Hammack, 2011; Ron & Maoz, 2013;Volkan, 2006). Narratives are attempts to provide coherence to events, to make sense of the social world and to make claims on both the past and future (Hammack, 2008; Bar-Tal et al., 2014). They assist in the structuring of personal and group identitiy (Hammack, 2008; Hammack 2011; Ron & Maoz, 2013). Narratives are considered to be conflict-supporting when they justify involvement in the conflict, delineate the dangers presented by the out-group and deny the humanity of the out-group (Bar-Tal et al., 2014, p. 662). Such collective narratives often idealize in-group identity while simultaneously delegitimizing the narratives of the out-group, contributing to processes of dehumanization and moral exclusion that facilitate support for aggressive action against out-groups (Bar-Tal & Hammack, 2012; Bar-Tal, et al., 2014; Ron & Maoz, 2013; Tint, 2010; Volkan, 2006). In particular, narratives of in-group victimhood have been observed to encourage support for violence against the out-group, not least because they portray in-group violence as justifiable revenge (Ross, 2007; Tint, 2010; Volkan, 2006).

Protracted conflicts are often deemed to be identity-driven due to the role of oppositional group identities in underpinning their duration and ferocity (Bush & Keyman, 1997; Finley, 2010; Fisher, 2001; Kelman, 1999; Rothman, 2012). In

societies affected by protracted conflict, the boundaries of group identities are typically viewed as impermeable and fixed (Bar-Tal, 2007; Coleman, 2000; Opotow, 2012). Identity categories tend to be essentialized, meaning that people view themselves, and others, as part of unchanging, homogenous collectivities (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bekerman, 2009; Finley, 2010; Volkan, 2006). Group identities often take on an oppositional dimension that encourages dehumanization of out-group members, thus reinforcing the cycle of conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007; Kelman, 1999; Opotow, 2012; Staub & Bar-Tal, 2003).

Belief in the need for in-group unity in the face of external threat has been identified as a common psychological feature among groups involved in protracted conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal & Hammack, 2012; Volkan, 2006). The phenomenon whereby a single group identity, usually ethnicity or religious sect, becomes highly salient in situations of intergroup conflict has been frequently noted (Bar-Tal & Hammack, 2012; Bekerman 2009; Hammack, 2011; Ross, 2007; Volkan, 2006). This phenomenon encourages a dangerous level of groupthink in conflict situations (Fisher & Kelman, 2011) and is associated with individuals becoming willing to perpetrate violence on behalf of the in-group (Swann et al., 2009; Sheikh et al. 2014; Atran & Sheikh, 2015). Given that an atmosphere of threat increases the tendency of individuals to identify strongly with an in-group (Bar-Tal, 2007; Huddy, 2003; Pyszczynski, Solomon, & Greenberg, 2003), protracted conflicts begin to look like a self-sustaining cycle where the conditions of conflict lead individuals to have psychological reactions that increase their support for more aggressive policies and further use of violence against the out-group.

Negative patterns of intergroup relations.

Societies affected by protracted intergroup conflicts are also notable for their segregated patterns of living, destructive dynamics in intergroup relations and for a fragmentation of politics around group identities that impedes pursuit of the collective good (Bar-Tal, 2007; Kriesberg, 1998; Lederach, 1997; Mollica & Dingley, 2015). This separation and hostility are exacerbated by, and in turn further contribute to, low levels of intergroup trust (Aiken, 2013; Kelman, 1987; Bar-Tal, 2007), and are further supported by a sense of existential threat deriving from the presence of an enemy out-group residing within the same borders (Jonas & Fritsche, 2013; Kelman, 1999). Thus

even where such societies enjoy a level of negative peace, relations between identity groups can be extremely hostile, and the peace insecure (Hoglund & Kovacs, 2010; MacGinty et al. 2007).

Individuals in societies affected by protracted conflict often avoid anything other than superficial interactions with out-group members. This manifests in separate education systems, lack of intermarriage, segregated living in city neighborhoods and rural regions, and a dearth of civil society organizations containing members from diverse identity groups (Belloni, 2009; Morrow, 2006; Pickering, 2006; Varshney, 2002). While such patterns of segregation may help to reduce direct violence through mutual avoidance (MacGinty, 2014), they also severely inhibit the opportunities for positive intergroup contact that have been shown to improve individuals' attitudes towards the out-group (Campbell, Hughes, Hewstone & Cairns, 2010; Hewstone, Hughes & Cairns, 2008; Hughes, 2011; Paolini et al. 2004). Furthermore, an extensive study in India found that cities lacking in cooperative intergorup relationships among civil society leaders were more prone to serious outbreaks of intergroup violence (Varshney, 2002).

Despite their lack of direct contact, however, groups in protracted conflicts are often strongly aware of the out-group and construct a highly-negative image of the out-group (Kelman, 1999; Bar-Tal 2007). One explanation for this is negative attribution error, a demonstrated psychological phenomenon whereby people typically provide positive explanations for in-group behavior while simultaneously attributing negative intentions to out-group actions (Pettigrew, 1979; Hewstone 1990). In addition, individuals involved in protracted intergroup conflicts tend to view the conflict as being zero-sum in nature, meaning that any gain for the out-group is automatically viewed as a loss and a threat to the in-group (Bar-Tal 2000; Gayer et al., 2009). Added to this is the often very real threat represented by out-group violence, creating a sense of vulnerability that in turn fuels support for in-group violence and repressive retaliatory actions (Fritsche, Jonas & Kessler, 2011; Maoz & Eidelson, 2007). Thus, such societies are easily trapped in a downward spiral of decreasing intergroup trust and escalating violence.

These dynamics combine to make identity politics in such societies dominant in the political sphere at the expense of material class interests (Coulter, 1999; Coulter 2014; Mujkic, 2007). The division of the political sphere into ethnic voting blocs leaves the state subject to repeated crises (Andeweg, 2000; Lederach, 1997; Mollica

& Dingley, 2015). This dysfunctional form of politics, marked by clientelism and a lack of attention to the collective good, has been termed "ethnopolitics" (Mujkic, 2007, p.112). It is characterized by sharp competition between identity groups, and the failure to develop an inclusive notion of the polity that might promote pursuit of the common good (Mujkic, 2007; Mollica & Dingley, 2015). While directing conflict dynamics into the political sphere is preferable to the widespread use of violence to resolve differences, such fragmented political arrangements mean that the peace attained is brittle and volatile (Mollica & Dingley, 2015; Wilson, 2011).

Socialization for conflict continuance.

Socialization is the process whereby an individual's character and personal values are shaped through interaction with the people, cultural practices and institutions in their environment (see Bronfenbrenner, 1977). A number of socialization mechanisms work to ensure protracted conflicts continue across generations, as identities, aspirations and narratives are transmitted to children and young people as an intrinsic aspect of membership of their identity group. The socialization of children in such societies has been conceptualized as a hegemonic project designed to encourage young people to carry on the conflict in future (Bekerman & Zemblyas, 2011; Ichilov, 2004). Important socialization mechanisms identified in protracted conflicts include the influence of family (Leonard, 2014; Muldoon, McLaughlin & Trew, 2007), peers (Stolk, 2011), schooling (Bekerman & Zemblyas, 2011; Hughes, 2011) and exposure to collective narratives (Bell, Hansson & McCaffery, 2010; Hammack 2009; Hammack 2011; Psaltis, 2016). Experiences of segregated social spaces can also normalize division in the minds of youth (Leonard, 2006; McGrellis, 2010). These mechanisms of socialization seem to exert a powerful effect in shaping the psychology of younger members of ethnic groups, presenting a substantive impediment to interventions such as peace education (Bekerman, 2009; Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Hammack, 2011; Salomon, 2004 a; Salomon, 2011).

In protracted conflicts children are introduced at a young age to essentialized group identity categories and enemy images (Bar-Tal, 1996; Connolly, Kelly & Smith, 2009; Teichman & Bar-Tal, 2008; Oppenheimer, 2006). Young people in conflict-affected societies have expressed a sense of duty to remember the collective past of their identity group (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Bell et al., 2010; Leonard,

2014). Such narratives about the past often make claims of group victimhood, serving the political purposes of a nationalist elite (Devine-Wright, 2003; Tint, 2010; Volkan, 2006).

Moreover, schools in societies affected by protracted conflict have been shown to be important sites supporting the cultural reproduction of identities, especially with regards to commemoration of historical events and the teaching of history (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Bell et al. 2010; Lange, 2011; Standish, 2015). School textbooks have been identified as a means for transmitting in-group narratives and negative images of the out-group (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Bar-Tal, 1996). School systems where children from different identity backgrounds are educated separately can normalize segregation (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Hughes, 2011; Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011) while denying children the opportunity to be educated in the integrated settings that can contribute to more tolerant attitudes towards the out-group (Hayes & McAllister, 2007; Hughes, 2014; McGlynn, Zembylas & Bekerman, 2013).

Family members and peers are also important sources of socialization, encouraging the internalization of group identity and conflict-supporting narratives (Muldoon et al., 2007; Stolk, 2011). A case study of young people in a polarized community in Northern Ireland has shown how family and peers both influenced young people's willingness to participate in low-level sectarian violence (Stolk, 2011). In Cyprus, listening to parents' and grandparents stories about the conflict has been found to influence young people to adopt similar attitudes towards the conflict (Leonard, 2014). Young people in Northern Ireland have also been also found to draw on multiple sources when constructing their understanding of the region's history, including individuals personally known to them and community-based commemorations (Bell et al., 2010).

2.2.2 Civil society peacebuilding in protracted conflicts.

Despite the challenges, many protracted conflicts are the site of substantial efforts to build peace. While these efforts can be directed at all levels of society, due to the frequent failures to achieve elite-level settlements and to the precariousness of those settlements where they are established, recent decades have seen an

intensification of interest in the potential of civil society actors to contribute to sustainable peace at both track two and track three levels. In societies experiencing ongoing violent conflict, work with civil society actors offers hope for building support for political settlement (Chaitin, 2012; Kelman, 1999; Lederach, 1997; Sacipa-Rodriguez, 2014). In societies where an elite-level peace agreement has been achieved, civil society peacebuilding measures can support conflict transformation by addressing social challenges such as mistrust and hostility in intergroup relations (Knox, 2011b; Lambourne & Gitau, 2013; Morrow, 2012; Paffenholtz, 2011). In such post-violence contexts civil society actors can also play an important role in social recovery from the damaging effects of violence, thus helping to prevent a future return to violence (Charbonneau & Parent, 2012; Hamber et al., 2015; Lumsden, 1997).

Much grassroots peacebuilding work in protracted conflicts draws on the contact hypothesis (see Hewstone & Cairns, 2001; Hughes & Knox, 1997; Hughes, 2014). First put forward by the psychologist Gordon Allport (1954), the contact hypothesis attributes prejudice against out-groups to lack of interpersonal contact with members of those groups, and proposes that intergroup relations can be improved by bringing about increased contact between members of different identity groups. A vast literature has built up around measuring the effectiveness of intergroup contact (for a meta-analytic review see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). While there has been mixed evidence for the effectiveness of intergroup contact, on balance the empirical evidence points to its effectiveness in reducing prejudice and increasing intergroup trust (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Specific to protracted conflicts, intergroup contact has been empirically related to reduced prejudice towards out-groups (Hewstone et al. 2006; Hughes, 2011; Niens & Cairns, 2005; Ron & Maoz, 2013). Intergroup contact in protracted conflicts has been found to be successful in reducing prejudices when it increases empathy for out-group members' experiences of the conflict and leads to the legitimization of out-group narratives (Ron & Maoz, 2013; Saloman, 2004 b).

However, positive results from intergroup contact are far from guaranteed in protracted conflicts. The successful reduction of prejudices does not occur equally among all participants, nor are such positive psychological changes guaranteed to endure in the face of ongoing conflict (Hammack, 2009; Salomon, 2011). It has been found that individuals experiencing intergroup anxiety, a common psychological feature in protracted conflicts, experience the least positive impacts from intergroup

contact, and may even come away from the contact experience with a worse image of the out-group (Paolini et al. 2004; Tam et al. 2009). It has also been noted that even where individuals experience an immediate positive change in their attitudes towards the out-group, it is very difficult for them to maintain this change in the face of the psychological and sociocultural pressures associated with protracted conflicts (Hammack, 2006; Ross, 2014).

Peace education is also employed in societies affected by protracted conflict. Peace education can involve a range of educational efforts aimed at inculcating values and skills that support peaceful interaction, leading to the establishment of a culture of peace (Reardon, 1988). In protracted conflicts, peace education can work to challenge conflict-supporting narratives and worldviews, and to increase understanding of out-group narratives (Clarke-Habibi, 2005; Danesh 2010; Rosen & Salomon, 2011; Saloman, 2004 b). There is also evidence that peace education can improve intergroup relations in situations of protracted conflict by reducing individuals' prejudice towards out-group members (Clarke-Habibi, 2005; Danesh 2010; Rosen & Salomon, 2011).

However, the long-term effectiveness of peace education interventions in protracted conflicts has been called into question (Rosen & Saloman, 2011; Saloman, 2004 a). Again, questions have been raised as to the sustainability of personal transformation in the face of on-going societal conflict (Saloman, 2004 a). Furthermore, individual-level variation in the outcomes of peace education initiatives has been noted (Rosen & Saloman, 2011), meaning that lasting attitudinal change across all participants is far from guaranteed.

Thus it can be seen that civil society peacebuilding interventions in protracted conflicts face many challenges and more can be learned about how they can best achieve their objective of supporting the development of sustainable peace. The failure of such interventions to achieve consistent, sustainable results suggests the need for continued development of more effective approaches to peacebuilding in protracted conflicts. In particular, the academic literature is characterized by the lack of a clear understanding of the factors that support individuals to make lasting transformations in their attitude towards the out-group while living in a social situation that supports continued mistrust and hostility.

2.2.3 Civil society actors building peace in protracted conflicts.

Although protracted conflicts present conditions strongly discouraging to the development of motivations to pursue peacebuilding efforts, many such societies have a number of civil society actors actively engaged in intergroup peacebuilding (Bryn, 2005; Cochrane, 2000; Gopin, 2012b; Nasie et al., 2014). While some of these activists may become involved in professional interventions funded by international donors, others pursue a more informal approach, developing solutions to local problems on a voluntary basis (Van Tongeren at al., 2005; World Bank, 2006).

Most of the academic literature in this area looks at civil society organizations (hereafter CSOs), with a focus on mapping their practices and assessing the effectiveness of their interventions (see for example, Gidron et al., 2002; Knox & Quirke, 2000; Paffenholtz, 2009b). While these are understandable areas of interest, what motivates individuals to become involved in this work has received less attention.

Although the ability of some organizations to pay salaries may be expected to attract certain individuals through economic motives, this does not account for numerous individuals who are involved in such efforts as volunteers, nor does it explain why educated individuals would choose to work in such a challenging field when other jobs, perhaps better paid, are available to them. Rather, there is some research to suggest that individuals engaging in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts share certain psychological features that underpin internal motivations (Garred, 2013; Gopin, 2012b; Grant, 2013; Nasie et al., 2014). This is further supported by wider research on individuals' participation in social activism that suggests the importance of psychological features such as identity and values in explaining motivations for involvement (see Benford & Snow, 2000; Klandermans 2004). This latter area of literature is explored in more detail in the discussion contained in chapter 6.

Extensive searching of the available English-language literature revealed a limited number of academic works that specifically relate to understanding why some individuals engage in intergroup peacebuilding activism in protracted conflicts. A number of authors have collated life stories of peacebuilding activists working in the protracted conflict of Israel-Palestine. Abarbanel (2012) and Gopin (2012b) present the activists' stories in their entirety and their analysis is limited to itemizing common

themes in the stories. Gopin (2012b, p. 1) has identified a number of similarities in what he termed the "inner lives" of these peacemakers, including transcendent spiritual ideals, a willingness to question tradition and an interest in relationships and networks. Meanwhile, Abarbanel (2012) has pointed to the role of emotional resilience in supporting individuals to honestly examine wrongdoing by their in-group, supporting a change in their overall understanding of the conflict. Neither author provides an in-depth explanation for why the peacebuilding activists, as a whole, differ so strongly from others in their society.

A few other authors have engaged, at least cursorily, with individual peacebuilding activists in protracted conflicts. Kaufman-Lacusta (2010) has highlighted the work of non-violent activists against Israeli occupation, particularly among Palestinians, but does not offer explanations for why individuals make that choice on a theoretical level. Chaitin (2014) has argued for the role of hope, personal experience of suffering and participation in storytelling projects as factors motivating peacebuilding activism in Israel. Grant (2013) has constructed an explanatory framework for the role of framing in shaping peacebuilding activism among Jewish Israelis, without examining in detail why some individuals were drawn to these frames while many in their society are not. Meanwhile, Garred (2013) has pointed to differences in mindset that underpin differences in religious leaders' willingness to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in the Philippines, without providing an explanation for how these differences in mindset develop.

The only attempt to develop theory in the area of individuals' motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding is a study by Nasie et. al (2014) who highlight a number of similarities in the accounts given by individuals of their motivations for joining radical peace organizations in Israel. They draw out common themes among socialization experiences, political orientation and understanding of the conflict. However, while offering an important first step towards building theory in an under-researched area, they do not focus directly on causal mechanisms or draw out explicit links between the commonalities. Thus, a comprehensive explanatory framework has not yet been developed in this area.

2.2.4 The value of understanding how motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding can develop in a protracted conflict.

Overall, this review of the relevant literature suggests that individuals living in protracted conflicts are frequently exposed to socialization experiences and experiences of conflict that tend to encourage them to develop psychological barriers to engaging in intergroup peacebuilding. These psychosocial barriers to pursuing peacebuilding have been found to be very common among populations affected by protracted conflict. However a puzzle is raised by the literature confirming the existence of civil society actors willing to engage in intergroup peacebuilding activism in these conflicts. This second area of literature indicates that support for conflict continuance is not inevitable, as there is some significant variation at the individual level.

Understanding how this variation emerges, and is supported, carries, then the potential for designing peacebuilding interventions that can more effectively overcome the psychosocial barriers to peacebuilding that are associated with protracted conflicts. Most of all, such insight can indicate how individuals can develop peace-supporting psychological features to a degree that they are robust and enduring, even in the face of the social pressures towards group loyaty and conflict continance that often accompany protracted conflicts. Such knowledge can support relational peacebuilding interventions to achieve more comprehensive and lasting attitudunal change among participants.

2.3 The Conflict in Northern Ireland

This thesis focuses on Northern Ireland due to its applicability to wider discussions on peacebuilding in protracted conflict. Many historians trace the origins of conflict in Northern Ireland to the early 1600s, making it an extremely long-lasting intergroup conflict (Barnes, 2005b; Cairns & Derby, 1998). While the political settlement represented by the Belfast Agreement of 1998 (hereafter, BA) has supported a sustained diminuation in intergroup violence, the peace has been criticized as partial and precarious (Aiken, 2013; MacGinty et al., 2007; Wilson,

2011). Northern Ireland remains a society divided along a religio-national identity faultline, with polarized notions of group identities still shaping everyday life for many citizens (Nolan, 2014; Cochrane, 2013). At the same time, Northern Ireland has a substantial community and voluntary sector including both intergroup peacebuilding activists and within-group activists (Belloni, 2009; Campbell et al., 2010; Knox 2011a). Thus, Northern Ireland is a highly suitable case for studying how differences in motivations regarding intergroup peacebuilding develop among civil society activists in a protracted conflict.

The Northern Ireland conflict and the partial nature of the current peace are addressed first in this section. This is followed by an overview of peacebuilding efforts in the region and an examination of the particular challenges facing civil society peacebuilding in this context.

2.3.1 The Northern Ireland conflict.

The Northern Ireland conflict is marked by its long duration and the complex array of factors that have underpinned its emergence and endurance. The violent conflict that broke out in 1969 has been attributed to the intersection of historic legacies of colonial conquest, religious differences, contested national territory, socio-economic inequalities and group psychology (Cairns & Darby, 1998). This section then briefly reviews some of the main causes of the violent conflict known as the Troubles that played out from 1969 until the peace agreement in 1998.

Historic roots of the conflict.

The deadly violence that broke out in 1969 across Northern Ireland can be understood as the latest iteration in a long-standing pattern of intergroup hostility and conflict that began with the conquest of Ireland by British forces at the end of the sixteenth century (Barnes, 2005b; Cairns & Darby, 1998; Darby, 1986; Hennessey 2005). The conquest of Ireland was accompanied by government-sponsored settlement of areas in the north of Ireland by Protestant subjects from Britain. These new settlers were expected to hold those territories in the face of a dispossessed and aggrieved native Irish Catholic populace (McKitterick & McVea, 2012). These

settlements, known as the Ulster Plantation, were only partly successful so that even when bolstered by further popular migration of Protestants from Scotland in the later seventeenth century, Protestants remained a minority on the island of Ireland. However, the British settlers were more deeply concentrated within the historic northern province of Ulster and their arrival transformed that region's culture and politics.

The wars of conquest in the late sixteenth century led to the collapse of the native aristocracy and from then until 1921, Ireland was essentially under the political control of the British government. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a system of penal laws were enacted, discriminating against non-Anglican Protestant denominations, and in particular against the native Catholic population (Bartlett, 1992). These laws not only proscribed some aspects of religious freedom but created barriers to social mobility, political power and the accumulation of wealth. Thus, colonial conquest in Ireland left a legacy in later centuries of overlapping religious and ethno-national identities, accompanied by notable socio-economic inequalities between the Protestant and Catholic populations.

The island saw a number of attempts to overthrow British rule in Ireland by force, culminating in the Irish War of Independence that heralded the formation of the Irish Free State in 1921. However, due to the historic strength of Protestants in the north of Ireland, and due to their fierce opposition to political separation from Britain, six counties in the northeast of Ireland remained within the United Kingdom, as the province of Northern Ireland (Hennessey, 2005). Northern Ireland had a Protestant majority of around two-thirds of the population, known as Unionists, who generally desired the continued link with Britain. The remaining third of the population were Catholics who largely held political aspirations to see the whole island of Ireland united under a Dublin government, free from British interference (McKitterick & McVea, 2012). This religio-national fault-line has shaped society in Northern Ireland up to the present day, and has been further complicated by demographic changes increasing the Catholic populace.

Politics in Northern Ireland today is still defined by religio-national identities rather than class politics (Coulter, 1999; McKitterick & McVea, 2012). Thus, Protestant citizens are almost entirely Unionists, while a large majority of Catholics describe their political identity as Irish Nationalist (McGlynn, Tonge & McAuley, 2014). While the terms Catholic and Protestant are used in this thesis as a shorthand

to denote the two main religio-national groupings, reflecting common parlance in Northern Ireland, it should be remembered that this refers to much more than differences of religious sect. Although they contain a number of distinctions and sub-groups, these identities coalesce around shared ethnic origins and nationalistic aspirations for political control of territory, forming the basis for engagement in parliamentary politics and many aspects of civil society activity (Cairns & Darby, 1998; MacGinty et al., 2007; Nolan, 2014).

The Troubles 1969 – 1998.

The Ulster Unionist party led the government of Northern Ireland from 1922 to 1972, supported by votes from the Protestant majority of the population. The majority-rule democratic system meant that the Nationalist Party voted for by most Catholics remained permanently excluded from power. Moreover, fearful of the majority-Catholic Irish state to the south, Unionist leaders set about consolidating their power, according special powers to the police, and at times manipulating local electoral boundaries to ensure gerrymandered victories for a Protestant minority (Hennessey, 2005; McKittrick & McVea, 2012). Meanwhile, Catholics withdrew from public life; the Nationalist Party long practiced a policy of abstentionism, and the Catholic Church provided a separate school system (Bew, Gibbson & Patteron, 2002; McKittrick & McVea, 2012). Catholics felt they were discriminated against by Protestant business owners when seeking jobs and with regards to local government allocation of social housing in Protestant-controlled areas. Although the degree to which this was a matter of wider government policy is still a controversial question, instances of discrimination by businesses and local government bodies have been documented (Hennessey, 2005; McKittrick & McVea, 2012).

An uneasy standoff between the two groups endured until the late 1960s and the rise of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement (Hennessey, 2005). The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) was formed in 1967 to use confrontational but nonviolent tactics such as sit-ins and public demonstrations to make demands for greater fairness and transparency regarding voting, housing and jobs (Hennessey, 2005; McKittrick & McVea, 2012). Although its early leadership included a number of Protestants, the great majority of supporters were Catholic and this out-pouring of discontent was viewed with alarm by many Unionists who feared

the ultimate aim of the movement was the destruction of the Northern Irish state (McKittrick & McVea, 2012). A popular Protestant backlash emerged with attacks on protestors not always prevented by the Protestant-dominated police, and both Catholics and Protestants began to engage in street violence and pogroms as the situation escalated beyond the control of the Unionist government. By the summer of 1969, British troops had been deployed to the streets of Belfast to try and reestablish public order, and the almost defunct Irish Republican Army had reemerged as the provisional IRA presented themselves as armed defenders of Catholic communities (Hennessey, 2005; McKittrick & McVea, 2012). Most commentators view this as the beginning of a period of organized violence known as the Troubles that would last for three decades.

What began as sporadic popular violence rapidly transformed into organized paramilitary groups pitted against each other, and in some cases, the state. The main paramilitary organization dedicated to Nationalist political goals was the provisional IRA (pIRA), although a number of Irish Republican splinter groups also operated. Emerging from Protestant communities, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) were the main paramilitary groupings dedicated to maintaining Northern Ireland's status as part of the United Kingdom. While these paramilitaries mostly attacked what they perceived as enemy targets, they also used violence to police their own communities (Knox, 2001; McKeown, 2009). Further violence was enacted by British troops who engaged in a number of human rights abuses during the decades long conflict (McKitterick & McVea, 2012).

While violence escalated sharply in the early 1970s, provoking the collapse of the Unionist government and the institution of direct rule from London, it later settled into a sustained pattern of sporadic violence sufficient to disrupt everyday life and create an atmosphere of tension and fear, but short of all-out civil war (Hennessey, 2005; McKittrick & McVea, 2012). Violence was also highly localized, with north and west Belfast combined witnessing 35.39 % of deaths, while the wealthy electoral ward of North Down was the site of just 0.36% of fatalities (McKeown, 2009). Key events that helped to polarize Northern Irish society included internment without trial in the early 1970s, Bloody Sunday in 1972, the Ulster Workers Strike in 1974, and the Irish Republican prisoners' hunger strikes of 1980-81 (Hennessey, 2005; McKittrick & McVea, 2012). Each of these contributed to deteriorating intergroup relations and increased support for in-group violence, helping to prolong the conflict.

Despite the protracted nature of the violence, however, in the 1990s significant moves towards mutual political accommodation began to be made (Bew, Gibbon & Patterson, 2002; McKittrick & McVea, 2012). These culminated in the paramilitary ceasefires of the mid 1990s, and then the Belfast Agreement of 1998. This peace agreement established mechanisms for Unionists and Nationalists to share political power, for paramilitary disarmament and demobilization, for the release of paramilitary prisoners, and for the creation of a number of bodies to oversee the development of a society founded in principles of equality and human rights. The agreement, only partially implemented in the years since, was not an end to conflict in Northern Ireland between Unionists and Nationalists but it has marked a sustained shift away from the use of violence as a means of pursuing political goals.

Nonetheless, the Troubles have had a substantial impact on Northern Irish society. 3,623 lives were lost and tens of thousands of individuals injured as a result of the violence (McKeown, 2009; Fay, Morissey & Smyth, 1999). Psychological impacts include widespread trauma in areas most affected by the violence (Muldoon & Downes, 2007), with past exposure to political violence linked to higher suicide rates (O'Neill et al., 2014; Tomlinson, 2012) and post traumatic stress disorder (Muldoon & Downes, 2007). The violence of the Troubles further deepened divisions between Catholics and Protestants with the early years of the Troubles witnessing substantial internal displacement as many families moved to areas dominated by their co-religionists (Cairns, 1987). Even almost two decades after the peace agreement, Protestants and Catholics still maintain a substantial degree of voluntary segregation (Nolan, 2014).

The political peace process has also left a legacy of institutionalized communal politics through a consociational system that provides for a balance of power between Unionists and Nationalists in the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive. The BA has been criticized for normalizing and further embedding divided group identities (Finlay, 2010; Wilson, 2011) and under this system political parties have continued to aim at consolidating their appeal among a single religio-national voting base rather than pursuing a form of politics that could transecend communal interests (McGlynn, Tonge and McAuley, 2014; Wilson, 2011). This political division has impacts not only on the quality of intergroup relations (Wilson, 2011) but also on vulnerable social groups who might be better served by greater focus on concerns of class (Coulter, 2014) or gender (Ashe, 2012; Rooney & Swaine, 2012). Despite their

shared suffering, however, victims of the Troubles are not a cohesive group in Northern Ireland, and the relative merits of different group's claims to victimhood have been sharply contested (Breen-Smyth, 2009; Fowler Graham, 2014).

At the same time, the BA has also left a number of divisive issues unaddressed including cultural expression in public spaces, and how Northern Irish society should deal with the violent past (Knox, 2011b; Wilson, 2011). As is examined in the next subsection, these continue to contribute to political instability and societal divisions in Northern Ireland, and suggest there is an ongoing vulnerability to intergroup violence reemerging in the right circumstances.

2.3.2 Northern Ireland's partial and precarious peace.

A Loyalist mural still visible in Belfast today, pictured below in figure 5, declares that the UVF paramilitary organization is "prepared for peace, ready for war". This precarious balance between continued hostility and a willingness to make some compromise is a notable theme in the academic literature on post-agreement Northern Ireland. Despite the political settlement, scholars have pointed to continued political instability and political intransigence (MacGinty et al, 2007; Morrow, 2012; Shirlow & Coulter, 2014). At the same time, continued patterns of avoidant and antagonistic intergroup interaction suggest that much of the socio-psychological dimension of the conflict remains unchanged (Knox, 2011a; Knox, 2011b; MacGinty et al, 2007; Morrow, 2012). Thus, this section reviews some of the main barriers to sustainable peace in Northern Ireland, as raised by interview respondents and confirmed by the academic literature.

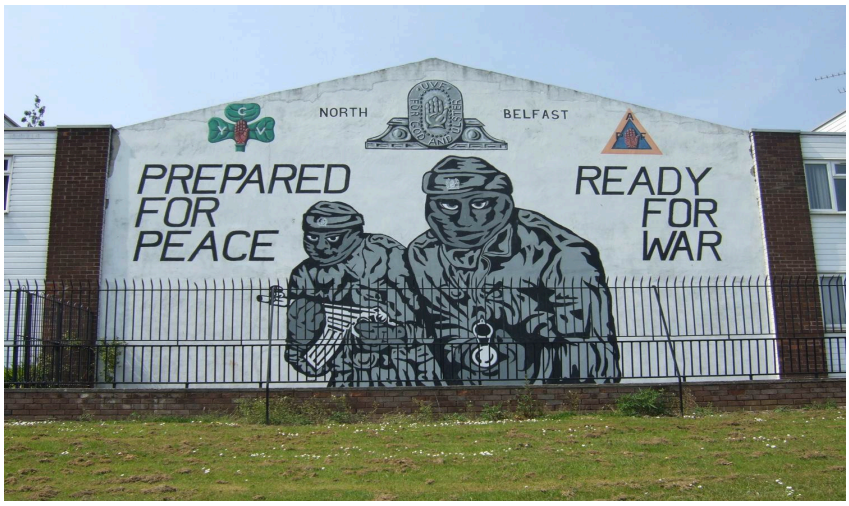

Figure 5 UVF mural, North Belfast. Viewed by author in 2014

Despite the continuous exercise of power-sharing between Unionists and Nationalists in government since the St Andrews agreement of 2007, unresolved issues arising from the conflict still present challenges to political stability. These issues include contestation over the presence of cultural symbols in public space, paramilitary demoblization, and how to address the legacies of past violence in the absence of an agreed transitional justice process. Recent examples of such issues impacting political stability include the failure of all-party talks to reach agreement on issues of cultural expression and dealing with the past (Mallinder, 2014), and a political crisis where the largest party, the Democratic Unionist Party, temporarily withdrew from government after the pIRA was announced to be still operational (Fenton, 2015).

The divided political system is also mirrored in patterns of social life in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland remains a profoundly segregated society in the areas where most people lead their lives (Hughes, Campbell, Hewstone & Cairns, 2007; Knox, 2011a; Knox 2011b; Nolan, 2014). 40% of electoral wards are dominated by a single religio-national group, while only 5% of electoral wards are truly mixed (Hayward, Dowds & Shaw, 2014). Even within purportedly mixed areas, smaller scale segregation often occurs, even down to street level (Nolan, 2014). This is most notable in Belfast where ninety-nine walls have been erected to separate Catholic and Protestant areas in an attempt to discourage intercommunal violence (Nolan, 2014). Important aspects of daily life are also divided such as schools, sports

teams, and cultural pursuits (Niens, Cairns, & Hewstone, 2003; MacGinty et al., 2007; Knox 2011a). Intermarriage between Protestants and Catholics remains uncommon, estimated to represent no more than 10% of marriages annually (Lloyd & Robinson, 2011; Shubotz & Robinson, 2006). Thus, overall, Northern Irish society is marked by high levels of within-group bonds but low levels of cooperative intergroup relationships, although this can vary somewhat at the local level (Campbell et al. 2010; Morrow, 2006).

Continued antagonism in intergroup relations has also been noted (MacGinty et al. 2007; Morrow, 2012). In particular this manifests in disputes over cultural uses of public space such as flying of flags and popular parades (Bryan, 2004; McEvoy, 2011; Ross, 2007). A number of interviewees mentioned ongoing cultural disputes that are also found in academic literature, such as contested parades (Bryan, 2004; Jarman 2004), the status of the Irish language and Ulster-Scots (McEvoy, 2011) and recent protests in support of flying the Union flag on public buildings (Byrne, 2013). Some within-group activist interviewees from a Protestant background spoke of a *culture war* being waged against their community. Such reactions are indicative of a new problem noted by academic commentators looking at Northern Ireland, of a growing sense of alienation among Protestants as they struggle to come to terms with changes to their previous dominance (Southern, 2007). Many Unionists seem to feel that the BA disproportionately advantaged Catholics, and that their community is struggling as a result (MacGinty et al. 2007; Hayes, McAllister & Dowds, 2005). This discontent is believed to have contributed to recent mass protests by Protestants in defense of cultural symbols (Byrne, 2013; Nolan, 2014).

At the same time, fierce disagreements over how to deal with the violent past have been described as "the continuing war over memory in Northern Ireland" (Dawson, 2014, p.265) and "war by other means" (Breen-Smyth, 2009, p.27). In particular, public references to "innocent" victims of the Troubles, with the implied existence of illegitimate or undeserving victims, has emerged in recent years among some Protestant victims groups, representing an ongoing impediment to peacebuilding (Fowler Graham, 2014, p. 37). With the nature of victimhood contested along religio-national lines, debates about the past are politically contentious (Ferguson, Burgess & Hollywood, 2010), and historical narratives of in-group suffering support continued antagonism in the present (Hancock, 2014).

Growing up in such a divided society has a demonstrable impact on young people (McAllister, Scraton & Haydon, 2014; McGrellis, 2010). Empirical studies reveal a heavy level of socialization into group identity and intergroup separation experienced by children from a young age in areas particularly affected by the Troubles (Leonard, 2006; McAllister, Scraton & Haydon, 2014; McGrellis, 2010; Stolk, 2011). More broadly, collective narratives about history and group identity are still being passed on to the current generation (Bell et al., 2010). Such socialization can be viewed as a form of "ethnic habitus" whereby children gain an understanding of religio-national identities from a very early age (Connolly, Kelly & Smith, 2009, p.217). This socialization takes place not only in the family but also among peers in the local community, and it can play a role in inciting some young people to participate in low-level inter-group violence (Stolk, 2011). Young men in many areas of Northern Ireland have been found to be influenced by paramilitaries and peers into participation in a subculture of violent masculinity associated with sectarian and racist attitudes (Harland, 2011). At the same time, the existence of separate school systems means most young people in Northern Ireland do not necessarily exposed to sustained contact with peers from other backgrounds (Hayes & McAllister, 2009; Hughes 2011).

Meanwhile, the oppositional religio-national identities at the heart of the Northern Irish conflict have been slow to change, with consequent impacts for intercommunal relations (Muldoon, Trew, Todd, Rougier & McLaughlin, 2007). Ethno-national identity categories in Northern Ireland have been found to be "embedded" in the self-concepts of many individuals and not easily changed (Todd, O'Keefe, Rougier & Bottos, 2006, p. 328). Moreover, antagonistic conceptualizations of identity in Northern Ireland are particularly associated with negative behavioral intentions towards the out-group those individuals who identify strongly with their religio-national in-group (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008).

Overall, although collective appetite for, or tolerance of, intergroup violence has reduced in recent years, the majority of Northern Irish citizens are not actively working for conflict transformation. Despite apparent support for integrated education and mixed residential communities (Knox, 2011a), parents still largely send their children to separate schools and individuals continue to choose to live in areas where their co-religionists predominate. Significant psychological barriers to reconciliation remain common in the population at large (Dawson 2014; Fowler Graham, 2014; Tam

et al. 2008). Thus, although Northern Ireland enjoys a degree of political rapprochement at the elite level, the societal peace is shallow and brittle, without roots in a transformative understanding of others' experiences and perspectives (see MacGinty & du Tiot, 2007). As the interview respondent Janine Hodgins described the current level of peace; *it's very fragile, and scratch under the surface, how deep do you have to scratch before the veneer comes off? Not very deep in my opinion. I really don't think that we have peace*.

2.4 Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland

There have been a number of attempts to build peace in Northern Ireland and to reduce the likelihood of a return to widespread intergroup violence. Broadly-speaking these efforts can be grouped into structural interventions aiming to reduce inequalities between Protestants and Catholics and broker an elite-level political settlement, and relational interventions aimed at reducing prejudices and fostering cooperative intergroup relationships at grassroots level. This section gives an overview of the main efforts at peacebuilding in Northern Ireland since the 1960s, grouped under structural and relational approaches.

2.4.1 Structural peacebuilding in Northern Ireland.

From early in the Troubles, the British government accepted the need to address Catholic grievances in relation to exclusion from political power, and economic inequalities (Aiken, 2010; Harvey, 2012). Initial efforts to ensure equality of opportunity between Catholics and Protestants took the form of reforming the system for allocating social housing and fair employment legislation to prevent discrimination in hiring and workplace culture (Aiken, 2010; Harvey, 2012). These measures, combined with increased access to higher education due to wider policies in the United Kingdom, have had a significant impact on the growth of a Catholic middle class and the lessening of inequalities in economic indicators between the two

religio-national groups (Harvey, 2012; Nolan, 2014). While the improvement in Catholic standards of living took place alongside continuing political violence, it may have played a role in starving Irish Republican paramilitaries of wider support (Aiken 2010).

Efforts at brokering a political settlement that would include Nationalist voices and concerns in the governance of Northern Ireland began in 1974 with the Sunningdale Agreement. This instituted a power-sharing government including Unionists and moderate Nationalists, but it quickly collapsed in the face of on-going paramilitary violence and a Loyalist general strike (McKitterick & McVea, 2012). The next major attempt at elite-level political settlement was the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement by the British and Irish governments in 1985. This agreement gave a role for the Republic of Ireland in the governance of Northern Ireland in an attempt to empower moderate Nationalism, but was strongly decried by many Unionists as a dilution of Northern Ireland's sovereignty (McKitterick & McVea, 2012).

However, beginning in earnest in the 1990s, a political peace process eventually bore fruit in the permanent ceasefires of all major paramilitary organizations, and the signing of the BA which set up power-sharing government in the region. As explored earlier, while this elite level agreement has provided for some degree of grudging political cooperation, it may also have institutionalized sectarian divisions. Concerns have also been raised that the focus on elite-level agreement has failed to address divisions at grassroots level, leaving elected representatives unable to move too far ahead of an electorate that remains mistrustful of the peace process (Knox, 2011b; White, 2011).

While the importance of transitional justice mechanisms is the subject of much academic study, Northern Ireland's approach to these issues has been "piecemeal" and contains both successes and failures (Aiken, 2010 p.167). The police have been successfully reformed from the Protestant-dominated Royal Ulster Constabulary to the more demographically-balanced Police Service of Northern Ireland that enjoys a reasonable degree of legitimacy among communities in Northern Ireland (Aiken, 2013; Ellison, 2007). Some success has also been achieved with the reintegration of former paramilitary prisoners into society, and a number of notable individuals now play an active role in conflict transformation at the grassroots level (McAuley, Tonge & Shirlow, 2010; McEvoy& Shirlow, 2009). However, Northern Ireland has not had any form of truth commission and there has been only patchy investigation of past

abuses of human rights (Aiken, 2010; Aiken 2013). Debates about whether victims of political violence might receive financial reparations, and about how the past should be memorialized have been highly contentious (Breen-Smyth, 2009; Dawson, 2014; Fowler Graham 2014). The Northern Irish government, thus, attempts to operate in the absence of any common understanding with regards to the causes of the Troubles, nor any agreement on how to counter the legacies of violence.

2.4.2 Relational peacebuilding in Northern Ireland.

The first concerted efforts to improve relations between Protestants and Catholics were driven by a grassroots ecumenical movement in the 1960s, before the Troubles began. The leading organization in this movement was the Corrymeela community, an ecumenical peacebuilding center that still exists today (Love, 1995). While such efforts failed to prevent the outbreak of widespread political violence in the circumstances of the late 1960s, civil society peacebuilding groups have been recognized as making an important contribution to Northern Ireland's transition out of political violence (Aiken, 2013; Bland, 2001; Knox, 2011b; Morrow, 2012; Smithey 2008). Such civil society peacebuilding initiatives have at times received funding from the British government and later from the European Union (Byrne, 2011; Hughes & Knox, 1997). At the same time, throughout the conflict, the British government has also promoted efforts at improving intergroup relations through the formal education sector (Hughes & Knox, 1997).

A number of terms have been used to describe relational peacebuilding interventions in Northern Ireland. The field of Community Relations was established in the 1970s, based in the view that much of the conflict was attributable to intergroup prejudice (Hughes & Knox, 1997). Early programs were based on the contact hypothesis and included trips abroad for cross-community groups of young people, and efforts to create cross-community activities in sport and music. Good Relations evolved as an updated concept to include relations between many different social groups, in particular broadening prejudice reduction efforts to tackle racism as well as sectarianism (McVeigh & Rolston, 2007).

With the signing of the BA in 1998, a large tranche of funding was allocated by the European Union to help underpin the elite-level settlement with wider societal change (Byrne, 2011). Much of this peace and reconciliation funding has been spent on infrastructure projects designed to boost the economy, but a substantial portion has been devoted to civil society efforts at relational peacebuilding (Braniff & Byrne, 2014; Byrne, 2011). Moving beyond the traditional community relations approaches, a range of projects have developed including deliberative dialogue, local-level mediation, and building collaborative relationships in flashpoint areas in order to prevent localized violence (Aiken, 2013; Hamilton & Bryan, 2006; Knox, 2011b).

Approaches can be broadly grouped into work that is cross-community, intercommunity and single identity (Cochrane & Dunne, 2002). Cross-community approaches involve deliberate intergroup contact and dialogue (Hughes & Knox, 1997). Intercommunity work is carried out by CSOs that work with both religio-national groups, but separately from each other (Cochrane & Dunne, 2002). At the same time, the need to engage those communities least open to mixing with out-groups has led to a rise in single identity initiatives that hope to encourage a cultural shift within groups, without the catalyst of intergroup contact (Smithey, 2008).

A separate strand of peacebuilding efforts has taken place under the auspices of the Department of Education since the 1970s. During the period of direct rule from London, the Department of Education was encouraged to facilitate contact between students from the separate school systems, and to include space in the curriculum for promoting Education for Mutual Understanding (O'Connor, Hartop & McCully, 2002). This work has evolved into Sharing in Education initiatives in recent years that encourage schools to open their courses to students from other schools, and that have funded some collaboration between schools on joint learning projects (Hughes, 2014).

Meanwhile, a more radical educational approach was pioneered by civil society activists, with parents coming together to establish integrated schools. This form of schooling has been widely commended for its contribution to conflict resolution in Northern Ireland (Hayes et al. 2007; Hughes, 2011; McGlynn, Niens, Cairns & Hewstone, 2004). However, although the government has a statutory duty to promote integrated education, and although support for mixed schooling is high among the Northern Irish population (Knox, 2011a), to date the status quo of separate schools systems has been maintained (Hughes, 2014; Nolan, 2014). Thus the potential of integrated education to improve individuals' attitudes towards members of other

identity groups has, to date, been limited to just 7% of students (Hayes et al., 2007; Hughes, 2011).

2.4.3 Challenges to relational peacebuilding in Northern Ireland.

Peacebuilding activists in Northern Ireland face a number of obstacles to achieving their goals. Despite evidence that they can make an important contribution to establishing sustainable peace (Aiken, 2013; Knox, 2011b; Cochrane, 2000), they receive comparatively little support from the Stormont government, according to interview participants. As European Union funding comes to an end there is a very real risk that Northern Ireland will see a sharp reduction in the effectiveness of civil society peacebuilding (Braniff & Byrne, 2014).

Civil society peacebuilders must also grapple with numerous psychosocial challenges to their peacebuilding work. A long history of conflict, and a recent violent past, have left significant legacies as outlined previously in this chapter. Oppositional conceptualizations of religio-national identities, and related patterns of intergroup segregation and antagonism, have been remarkably impervious to change despite an elite-level political settlement (Morrow, 2012; Nolan, 2014). Thus, the ideals of forgiveness and reconciliation are a long way from being widely accepted as desirable goals in Northern Ireland (Aiken, 2013).

Indeed, a substantial section of the Northern Irish population remains unconvinced of the merits of intergroup peacebuilding, and many individuals are not psychologically prepared for extensive contact with out-group members (see Smithey, 2008). Ongoing trauma, and the failure to resolve remaining issues at the political level contribute to an atmosphere where reconciliation is a contentious term, and some are suspicious of the motives behind reconciliation work (Beirne, & Knox, 2014; McEvoy, McEvoy & McConnachie, 2006). Psychological studies have also found notable individual-level barriers to the development of more positive attitudes towards the out-group, including lack of intergroup contact (Tam et al., 2009;, Hewstone, Kenworthy, Cairns, 2007), direct experience of political violence (Hewstone et al., 2006), negative intergroup emotions (Tam et al., 2007) and the

content of individuals' social identity (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Todd et al., 2006).

Peacebuilders in Northern Ireland, therefore, must work to convince their fellow citizens of the desirability of a deeper conflict transformation process that may involve a significant change in how they see themselves and others. Intergroup peacebuilding activists face a complex situation where they must balance sensitivity to the importance of group identities for many citizens, and an awareness of the trauma resulting from political violence, against the value of in engaging in meaningful dialogue with out-group members even if it involves the risk of participants experiencing negative emotions at times during the process (Bland, 2001; Aiken, 2013).

Aside from these external threats, the field also faces internal challenges and contradictions. It has been criticized as lacking clear goals and an agreed theoretical foundation that might direct efforts (Braniff & Byrne, 2014; Cochrane, 2000; Knox 2011b). It has been noted that the field operates largely separate from the formal political sphere, leaving it ill-placed to influence government policy (White, 2011). Concerns have also been raised that civil society peacebuilding interventions are failing to reach the most resistant constituencies (Braniff & Byrne, 2014). Moreover there are concerns that single identity work may serve to further embed divisive group identities rather than challenging them (Church, Visser & Johnson, 2004).

Thus, the relational peacebuilding project is far from complete in Northern Ireland. In particular, there is still a need to develop more effective approaches, based on an understanding of the mechanisms that can support those most resistant to peaceful compromise to make a psychological transformation where they would become willing to engage in building cooperative intergroup relationships. There is also scope for better understanding the factors that protect young people from developing psychological features that support engagement in intergroup conflict, as ultimately this could facilitate the growth of a non-aligned constituency in the voting population that might one day catalyze a transformation in the nature of regional politics.

3. Methodology

In order to arrive at knowledge that can be considered trustworthy and credible, academic research goes beyond other forms of investigation by constructing a robust research design, and making explicit the overall research methodology (Ruane, 2005). Methodology can be understood as the theory of organization that underlies an activity (Novikov & Novikov, 2013). Research methodology is the framework underlying the design of a research study, the principles and procedures that direct research activities towards a particular goal (Marshall & Rossman, 2014; Novikov & Novikov, 2013). This chapter, then, presents the overall research approach employed in this study, outlining the nature and sequencing of research activities and providing the rationale behind the choices that shaped the study.

This study followed the principles and procedures of classic grounded theory methodology. As stated previously, the purpose of this study was to develop an explanatory framework that gives insight into how civil society activists living in protracted conflicts have developed differing levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. Hence, it sought to compare life history data gathered from two samples of individuals; those who engage in intergroup peacebuilding and those who direct their efforts principally towards working for the benefit of their in-group. Classic grounded theory methodology (hereafter CGTM) was chosen as the most appropriate means to realize this research purpose, as is explained in detail in this chapter.

In keeping with the emergent nature of grounded theory methodology, the study began with an initial desire to inquire into what is happening when individuals become motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. As the study evolved, more detailed research questions were formed, as follows;

1. How do some civil society actors living in a protracted conflict develop high levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding?

2. How do other civil society actors living in a protracted conflict become motivated to engage primarily in within-group activism rather than intergroup peacebuilding?

3. What are the key differences between those civil society actors in a protracted conflict who are primarily motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding and those who are primarily motivated to engage in within-group activism?

These questions directed the later stages of data collection and analysis, and provide a guiding framework for the presentation of findings in chapters 4 and 5.

This chapter begins by locating classic grounded theory with reference to major research paradigms in the social sciences, outlining the principal elements of this methodology in some detail. Secondly, the rationale behind the formulation of the research purpose and the choice of classic grounded theory methodology are explained. Thirdly, the specific field research activities are presented; case selection, sampling, methods of data collection, and ethical considerations. Next, the process of data analysis and theory development are explained. And finally, consideration is given to the question of the trustworthiness and transferability of the research findings, including delineating the scope and limitations of the study.

3.1 Classic Grounded Theory as a Research Paradigm

The term grounded theory refers to a family of related research methodologies which follow a largely inductive research methodology, and which aim to systematically generate an explanatory framework for human behavior (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008; Hood, 2007). The grounded theory methodologies most typically use qualitative data collected during field research but it has been argued that the process can also be applied to quantitative data (Birks & Mills, 2011; Glaser, 1998). Not being definitively tied to either a qualitative or quantitative research paradigm, the methodology known as classic, or sometimes Glaserian, grounded theory is seen as occupying a unique place in the research landscape (Breckenridge, Jones, Elliott & Nicol, 2012; Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). Given this unusual epistemic location, this section presents CGTM in relation to other research paradigms, including the other main derivations of grounded theory methodology. The core methodological principles of CGTM are also outlined before

the chapter continues with an explanation of the rationale for adopting this research approach for the study.

3.1.1 Research paradigms in social science.

Social science research has evolved to include multiple methods for systematically and rigorously understanding and interpreting the social world (Seale, 2004). As such, it aims to supersede previously accepted sources of knowledge about human experience and human behavior such as tradition or authority (Ruane, 2005). Despite the existence of a plethora of research paradigms and methods, the majority of social science aims to be at least one of the following; exploratory, descriptive, explanatory or evaluative (Ruane, 2005). Which is deemed the most appropriate approach will depend on the nature of the research purpose and questions, and at times also on the personal convictions of the researcher.

Quantitative and qualitative approaches to research are often viewed as two distinct traditions resulting from antithetical philosophical positions (Lazar, 2004; Marshall & Rossman, 2014; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Quantitative methods are associated with a positivist ontology and epistemology, meaning that the researcher accepts the existence of a knowable reality, independent of human perception, and therefore goes about gathering data in order to test a hypothesis as accurately and objectively as possible (Filmer, Jenks, Seale, Thoburn & Walsh, 2004). The philosophical positions associated with qualitative methods are more diverse, but in recent decades qualitative research has become increasingly associated with constructivist ontology and epistemology (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Seale, 2004). Constructivism touts the existence of multiple subjective realities that can only be known through the lens of human perception (Andrews, 2012). This paradigm is closely tied with an interpretivist approach to research that concerns itself with understanding the meanings constructed by humans in a particular social context, rather than attempting to ascertain facts than can meet the scientific standards of generalizability and replicability.

From this perspective, social science research would appear to be comprised of two opposing and mutually exclusive camps; positivists concerned with

discovering facts and constructivists concerned with interpreting subjective meanings. However, there are also reconcilers who have sought to bridge the divide between positivism and interpretivism (Lazar, 2004). Most notably, Max Weber (1978) has been an advocate for the study of human social life to be both scientific and interpretive, stating that while persuasive interpretation of social action is necessary, it is not sufficient to make a valid claim about causality. Other authors have argued for the similarities between quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Datta, 1994; Feilzer, 2009; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005; Sechrest & Sidani, 1995). Indeed, it has been noted that both methodologies "describe their data, construct explanatory arguments from their data, and speculate about why the outcomes they observed happened as they did" (Sechrest & Sidani, 1995, p. 78). Moreover, Bryant (2009) has wryly asserted that the paradigm wars of the 1990s may have been driven more by academic politics than any true incompatibility between methodologies.

A number of researchers have also been influenced by the pragmatist school of philosophy which takes the position that there are both singular and shared realities that are open to empirical enquiry, and which orientates research towards developing workable solutions to practical problems (Feilzer, 2009). Thus, pragmatism has been put forward as a valid philosophical foundation for epistemologically diverse research such as mixed methods studies (Feilzer, 2009; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). The mixed method approach has also been termed "third paradigm" research (Datta, 1994, p. 68) due to its distinctiveness from both purely quantitative and purely qualitative methodologies (see also Dures, Rumsey, Morris, & Gleeson, 2011).

When grounded theory methodology (hereafter GTM) was developed in the 1960s, its originators, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, did not tie it to any single philosophical school or epistemic position (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Rather, Glaser (1978; 1998) has claimed that GTM is an interlinking series of methods aimed at inductively deriving theory from data collected in the field, rather than forcing a pre-existing theoretical position onto the data. Thus he asserts that a GTM approach can involve collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, and that it can be put into practice by researchers taking a number of different epistemological positions (Glaser, 1998). CGTM, as first developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and further developed by Glaser (1978; 1998; 2005), is thus a unique methodology within the wider context of social science research.

While some have criticized CGTM for its failure to declare clear epistemological foundations (Bryant, 2009; Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2000), others assert this is a fundamental misunderstanding of the purpose and nature of a grounded theory approach to research (Breckenridge et al., 2012; Glaser, 2012; Holton, 2008). CGTM, based on Glaser's views on the essential elements and overall purpose of GTM, aims to discover patterns in data gathered in the field rather than constructing a prior theoretical framework derived from existing academic literature, and to then conceptualize these patterns at an explanatory level of abstraction leading to the development of new theory grounded in real-world data (Breckenridge, 2010; Glaser, 1998; Glaser, 2012; Holton, 2008).

Thus, a number of authors have asserted that CGTM is best understood as an epistemologically neutral methodology (Breckenridge et al., 2012; Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). However, further clarification has been added with the assertion that CGTM can be linked to a philosophical paradigm, but only as suggested by the theoretical framework emerging from analysis of the data, rather than on the basis of preexisting convictions of the researcher (Breckenridge et al., 2012; Holton, 2008). The particular value of CGTM, then, lies in its ability to provide a conceptual overview of a phenomenon free from prior epistemological assumptions, and thus more fully reflective of realities encountered in the field (Holton, 2007; Holton, 2008).

3.1.2 Development and divergence of grounded theory approaches.

GTM originated in the field of sociology, when two researchers from differing academic backgrounds, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, collaborated in developing a new approach to field research in an organizational setting (Bryant, 2009; Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). They developed their approach while researching dying in hospitals, leading to the publication of their approach in the seminal texts "Awareness of Dying" (Glaser & Strauss, 1965) and "The Discovery of Grounded Theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). GTM represented a number of significant innovations in relation to common research practice at the time, and in particular applied a typically quantitative concern with rigor and

systematization to forms of qualitative data collection that allowed for the inclusion of participants' perspectives and concerns (Bryant, 2009; Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Glaser, 1998).

GTM was developed in response to two problems perceived by its originators. In developing GTM, Glaser and Strauss were reacting against what they saw as the prevalence of armchair theorizing where academics tested hypotheses developed within the confines of the ivory tower in detachment from the lived experience of communities, and theoretical capitalism where junior researchers were expected only to build on the existing theories of others rather than being empowered to develop empirically-based theories of their own (Dunne, 2011; Glaser, 1998). At the same time, they were also concerned with the need for a clear and rigorous empirical approach to conducting field research that could go beyond interpretive description and arrive at conceptual explanations of human behavior (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Dunne, 2011). Perhaps due to their resolution of these problems, grounded theory approaches have become widely used in the social sciences, applied within a number of different fields and disciplines (Glaser, 1998; Brekenridge, 2010).

Since the 1990s, as use of GTM has proliferated, a number of distinct approaches to GTM have developed. The principal variants employed by academic researchers today are Glaser's promulgation known as classic grounded theory, Strauss and Corbin's interpretation often called Straussian grounded theory, and Charmaz and Bryant's development of constructivist grounded theory (Breckenridge, 2010; Bryant, 2009). While all forms of grounded theory methodology share in common an emergent approach to research design and sampling, and a process of data analysis based on constant comparison of data with data, they differ quite substantially in their attitude towards the nature of data and the process employed for developing theory (Breckenridge et al., 2012; Breckenridge, 2010).

Any researcher interested in using GTM must be aware of the respective variations, and make a careful decision as to which approach will best reflect the aims of their research project. In order to make explicit my own choice of methodology, I next outline the key methodological principles of classic grounded theory and discuss its strengths and limitations as a research methodology relative to the other two main variants of GTM. Further details regarding the process of conducting CGTM research are outlined as appropriate in the later section on research design.

3.1.3 Methodological principles of classic grounded theory.

According to Hood (2007) CGTM is centered around seven key processes that will be explained in detail throughout the remainder of this chapter. Those processes are:

- a spiral of data collection, coding, analysis, writing, theoretical categorization, and data collection, as illustrated below in figure 6.
- constant comparative analysis of data against data and against theoretical categories throughout the above-mentioned cycle
- a process of theoretical sampling based on the categories which have emerged from ongoing data analysis
- the sample size is decided with reference to theoretical saturation rather than concern with representativeness
- the resulting grounded theory is developed inductively through a process of continually checking theorizing against the data and refining it accordingly
- codes and categories are not developed a priori from academic literature but rather emerge from the data
- the theory produced is the final goal of the research, and should take into account all the variation in the data, resulting in an analytical framework rather than a purely descriptive account.

The sequencing of these processes is depicted below in figure 6, illustrating the cyclical approach to data collection and inductive development of theory that occurs until the researcher is satisfied that theoretical saturation has been reached, whereby no further theoretical insight is gained as more data is collected.

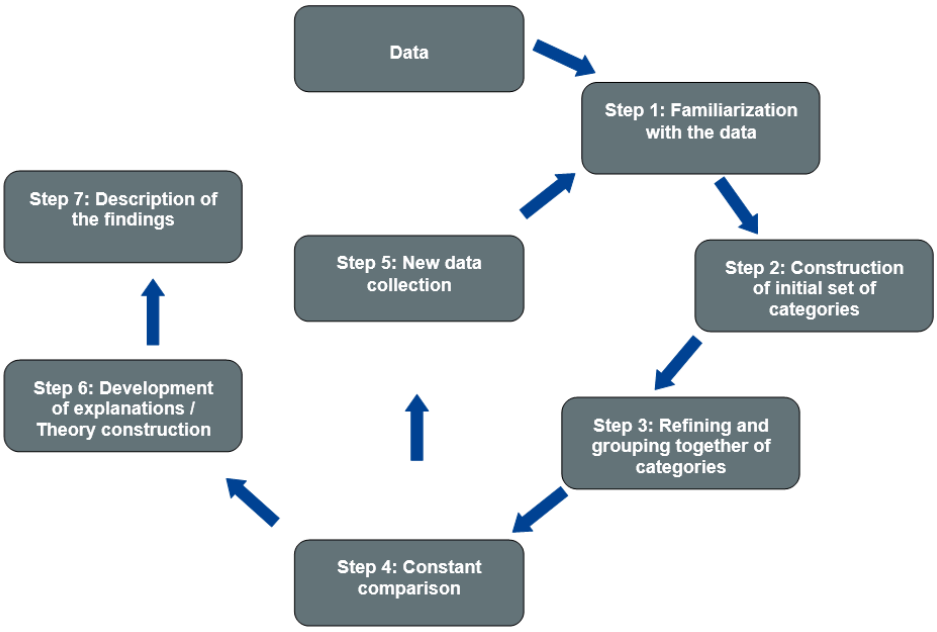

Figure 6: The cyclical nature of the GTM research process (Kohn & Christiaens, 2016).

All versions of GTM practice a cyclical approach to data collection, analysis, category development, theorizing and going back into the field to collect further data in response to developing categories (Birks & Mills, 2011; Breckenridge, 2010). In particular, all three rely on the core activities of theoretical sampling, constant comparison of data against data, and developing theory through configuration of patterns in the data into an interrelated set of categories (Hood, 2007). As these three elements distinguish GTM significantly from other research approaches, they deserve to be explained in some detail before exploring those elements that differentiate the CGTM approach from other variations of GTM.

Theoretical sampling is a non-probability form of sampling. It is understood as central to the emergent nature of GTM research design, and is a process of selecting research participants on the grounds of their ability to contribute to developing theory (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). The purpose of theoretical sampling is, then, to contribute to refining theoretical categories by seeking new data that can either confirm or challenge patterns emerging in the existing data (Birks & Mills, 2011; Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1998). Theoretical sampling and data collection cease at a point known as theoretical saturation, when categories are considered to be sufficiently well-developed and abstracted, so that

data collection no longer generates new lines of inquiry (Birks & Mills, 2011; Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2007).

Constant comparison refers to a process of data analysis whereby data is repeatedly compared against other data and against emerging theoretical categories, (Birks & Mills, Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1998). In all forms of GTM, although with some variations in method, data analysis aims towards a degree of theory development through the formulation of broad conceptual themes known as categories (Birks & Mills, 2011; Charmaz, 2006). Categories in GTM are abstract concepts accounting for variation in the data, and they are expected to emerge from the data rather than being forced on the data by the researcher's prior development of hypotheses (Glaser, 1998; Kelle, 2007).

Theory development through theoretical saturation of categories is one of the most unique and innovative elements of GTM. The basic principal is that theory should be developed in response to data collected in the field rather than extant academic literature. Instead, theory is developed through generating thematic categories in response to patterns observed in the collected data, and elaborating an understanding of the relationship of these categories to one another, until the point of theoretical saturation (Birks & Mills, 2011; Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). The aim of GTM, particularly CGTM, is to develop an explanatory framework that takes account of and explains variation in the data, is well conceptualized and makes sense, yields some insight into latent patterns and processes underlying a social phenomenon, and addresses the primary concern of research participants (Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008).

3.1.4 Differences between the main variants of grounded theory methodology.

While Glaser's version of GTM, is regarded as the classic version of the methodology, being the version that has stayed most true to the original research approach, other distinct approaches to grounded theory research have developed. Firstly, Strauss and Corbin (1994) published an amended version of GTM with a strong emphasis on methodically coding data and on developing theory through verification of emerging hypotheses. However, this led to a well-publicized split with Glaser who criticized this new approach as forcing data to fit a theory and thus

deviating from a key GTM tenet, that theory should emerge inductively (Bryant, 2009; Glaser, 1998).

Meanwhile, more recently, Charmaz (2000; 2006) and Bryant (2002) have sought to develop a constructivist version of GTM, leading them to propose some changes in the methods. Constructivist GTM has a focus on accurate interpretation of participants' meanings, co-construction of knowledge between researcher and participants and representing the final grounded theory as just one possible interpretation of the data (Mills, Bonner & Francis, 2008; Charmaz, 2000). However, Glaser (2012) has criticized this development as fundamental misunderstanding of the purpose of GTM and both he and other GTM researchers have questioned the value of shaping grounded theory research design in the light of a predetermined philosophical position (Breckenridge et al., 2012; Glaser, 1998; Glaser, 2012; Holton, 2008).

In order to understand the core difference between CGTM and other approaches to GTM, it is essential to recognize the difference between description and conceptualization (Breckenridge, 2010; Holton, 2008). CGTM, more than any of the other grounded theory approaches, aims towards arriving at an abstract conceptual overview that will expose and explain the latent processes underlying a phenomenon (Breckenridge et al., 2012; Glaser, 2012; Holton, 2008). Whether data are viewed from an interpretative or objectivist standpoint is irrelevant as a researcher following CGTM is not concerned with description of interpreted meanings, but rather with explaining conceptually the patterns within the data (Glaser, 2012; Holton, 2008).

CGTM, then, rejects the importance of deduction and verification asserted by Strauss and Corbin and the concern with accurately interpreting participants' meanings inherent in constructivist GTM (Glaser, 2012). Rather it is a strongly inductive methodology aimed at reaching a high level of theoretical abstraction by providing an explanatory framework for patterns discovered in the data (Glaser, 1998; Glaser, 2012; Holton, 2008). A particular strength of CGTM is that it leads clearly and directly to an abstract theoretical framework as its end product (Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). Thus, while CGTM does sacrifice attention to the rich description prized by constructivist researchers, and rejects the testing of pre-conceived hypotheses central to quantitative methods, it does so because the methodology consciously prioritizes the development of theoretical understanding of a phenomenon, based in data collected directly from research participants and thus, reflecting their perspectives and concerns.

3.2 Rationale for Research Design

This research study emerged in response to previous experiences of living and working in Northern Ireland where I had the opportunity to observe at first hand some of the psychological barriers, as well as external societal ones, that impede individuals from pursuing cooperative relationships with out-group members. The results of such widely-held barriers are visible across Northern Ireland today; continued social segregation between Protestants and Catholics, the lack of a shared vision for the future, sporadic escalations of localized violence, the failure to move beyond ethnopolitics in government.

In contrast with the general lack of motivation to pursue meaningful conflict transformation in the population as a whole, I was struck by how individuals working in the field of intergroup peacebuilding were highly motivated by the prospect of a more cooperative and integrated future. Unlike many of those with whom they endeavored to work, these peacebuilders seemed to hold a strong conviction that the establishment of cooperative intergroup relationships was a valuable social goal. While Northern Ireland has seen some inspiring instances of individual change towards more peaceful attitudes, I could see a need for a conceptual understanding of how these psychological changes could be deliberately encouraged and facilitated in others. Hence, I began to consider the value of learning from those individuals who are highly motivated to pursue intergroup peacebuilding, hoping to understand what makes them so distinct from other members of their society.

This thinking formed the basis of the purpose guiding this thesis. Although Glaser (1998) has written of the importance of a motivating drive in grounded theory research projects, he is also firm on the importance of leaving aside researcher pre-conceptions when conducting grounded theory research. Thus, I began field research guided only by a desire to inquire into what is happening when individuals become motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict. It later became clear that further theoretical insight could be gained from comparing these individuals to other individuals who prefer to contribute primarily to the wellbeing of their in-group, maintaining group identity boundaries by design or by default. Thus, as theoretical categories began to emerge from the data that I developed the three research questions that gave final definition to this study, as presented at the start of this chapter.

3.2.1 The choice of classic grounded theory methodology.

The decision to adopt a grounded theory approach was made based on a number of considerations. Firstly, and most importantly, was the desire to conduct a study that would be both exploratory and explanatory (see Ruane, 2005). GTM as a whole allows for the development of a theoretical explanation based on data collected in the field, fitting neatly with the research purpose of explaining how differences in motivations emerge among civil society activists living in a protracted conflict. Furthermore, the fact that GTM allows for the development of theory based on a small sample of participants was an advantage, given that intergroup peacebuilding is typically practiced by only a small minority in conflict-affected societies (Gopin, 2012b; Nasie et al., 2014). Thus, a large scale quantitative study aiming to test a hypothesis among a representative sample would not have been feasible.

Moreover, an initial review of academic literature on protracted conflicts was conducted, not as a guide to theory development but as a simple check that a similar study had not already been completed (see Dunne, 2011). This revealed that there is a paucity of academic literature dealing directly with individuals engaged in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts. Thus, it seemed particularly appropriate to adopt a methodology that does not rely on existing literature to provide direction for research activities, and that can, instead, develop new theoretical understandings by systematically analysing data collected in the field.

In choosing CGTM rather than other variations, the principal concern was its ability to clearly lead to the development of theory. It was clear that gaining a conceptual overview aligned well with the research purpose of providing an explanation for differences in levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. It seemed less important to arrive at a detailed interpretation of participants' meanings as championed by constructivist grounded theory. Moreover, Glaser's (1998) argument that the Straussian approach, with its focus on verification of hypotheses, distracts from the core tenets of GTM was found convincing.

Thus, overall, it can be seen that CGTM has the capacity to incorporate the aims of both exploratory and explanatory research. It is suited to exploratory research because it does not rely on a significant body of existing literature in order to develop a prior theoretical framework. It also meets the aim of explanatory research due to its emphasis on theory development. Therefore classic grounded theory is most

appropriate for research studies such as the present one, where the primary goal is exploration of a previously under-researched topic with a view to arriving at a conceptual explanation.

3.2.2 Focus on life history data.

While keeping in mind Glaser's dictum that "all is data" (Glaser, 1998, p. 8) this research study deliberately focused on life history interviews as the primary form of data collection. It was found early on in field research that these interviews offered an effective means of developing theory regarding the research topic. This choice was further supported by academic literature, as life history interviews have been shown to have particular value for understanding the psychological development of individuals in socio-cultural context (Atkinson, 1998; McAdams, 1993; Hammack, 2011). Life history research has been found to yield valuable insight into how the agency of individuals intersects with particular historical moments (Maynes, Pierce & Laslett, 2012). In particular, such interviews have been used to gain insight into motivations for individuals' participation in social activism (Berger & Zimbardo, 2012; Downton & Wehr, 1997; Hunt & Benford, 1994; Nasie et al., 2014).

Life history interviews are a loosely structured, qualitative interview technique where the respondent is invited to recount key events in their life in their own words (Atkinson, 1998; McAdams, 1993; Ross, 2014). After two pilot interviews, I was satisfied that this broad and open approach to interviewing would allow for the collection of a wide variety of information without preconceiving which data would be most theoretically relevant, in line with the principles of CGTM. Throughout the study it proved to be an extremely useful interview format. As theory developed in the field, I was able to further refine and focus the questions I asked during life history interviews but from the start their overall breadth and flexibility allowed for collecting a wide array of information without pre-determining which factors would be most important.

This study has therefore differed somewhat from other grounded theory studies that typically take place in a defined setting, such as a hospital or organization (see Breckenridge, 2010; Charmaz, 1990; Glaser & Struass, 1965; Locke, 2001).

However, life history interviews have occasionally been used as part of grounded theory studies (see Goulding, 2002; Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen; 2005). It was determined that a focus on life history interviews would align better with the research purpose than any insight that would derive from observation of civil society activists going about their daily activities. Moreover, the sensitive nature of some individuals' work and the necessary involvement in that work of many others who had not agreed to take part in the research project meant that the latter approach would also have been unfeasible. Life history interviews provided for the collection of a wide range of data, including memories of significant events in past decades, allowing for insight into how an individual activist's motivations develop over the course of a lifetime.

Thus, this study demonstrates some methodological innovation in basing a grounded theory study almost entirely on life history data. It also shows how life history interviews can be effective source of data, even when engaging with sensitive topics in context of a protracted conflict (see also Rafferty, forthcoming).

3.2.3 Ontology and epistemology.

It has been strongly argued that to assert a pre-existing epistemological assumption as the guiding basis for research design is contrary to the purposes of a CGTM study (Glaser, 1998; Glaser, 2012; Holton, 2008). A pre-conceived philosophical position could potentially limit the capacity of the approach to result in new and fresh understandings of social phenomena. However while a number of authors have asserted the epistemological neutrality of CGTM, an important clarification has emerged that a CGTM should be anchored in an epistemological position as suggested by the data (Breckenridge, 2010; Glaser, 2012; Holton, 2007; Holton, 2008). In the words of Holton (2007, p. 269):

> This is not to say that classic grounded theory is free of any theoretical lens but rather that it should not be confined to any one lens…classic grounded theory can adopt any epistemological perspective appropriate to the data….

Thus, while a constructivist paradigm is one possible lens for interpreting data and may be particularly appropriate for certain studies, it should only be applied if it emerges during the course of the study that it is relevant and appropriate.

During the course of this study, it became clear that the pragmatist ontology and epistemology are in keeping with the understandings developed out of the present research. In pragmatism, the social world is seen as being comprised of both single and shared realities, and thus both an external stable reality and individual perceptions and constructions can be researched (Dewey, 1925; Feilzer, 2009). This matches my own observation that both objective external factors and subjective interpretations can influence human behavior. It also reflects patterns that emerged from the data, in that both experiences of the social reality around them over which they had no control, and their individual subjective responses to those experiences, influenced individuals as they developed their motivations for activism.

Thus, overall, pragmatism has been identified as the most appropriate philosophical anchor for this study. Due to the concern of pragmatism to arrive at knowledge that will solve problems in the social world (Feilzer, 2009; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005), it also aligns well with the normative intention of the study to develop knowledge likely to support more effective approaches to intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts.

3.3 Research Design

As CGTM follows a process of emergent design, this section outlines the nature and sequencing of research activities and the reasoning behind researcher decisions. It gives an account of how the research design developed in the field as well as an overview of the research procedures employed at all stages from data collection to theory development.

3.3.1 Case selection.

This study was conducted in the single geographical setting of Northern Ireland. Initially the possibility of conducting multi-site international research was considered, but ultimately rejected because a single site study offered the opportunity for important insight into how multiple individuals reacted differently within the same socio-cultural context. Field research took place in 2014.

Northern Ireland was chosen as the case for this research for reasons of applicability and feasibility. In terms of applicability, Northern Ireland has often been cited as an intractable conflict (Cairns & Derby, 1998; Kriesberg, 1993; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005). In spite of a two decades-long peace process it is still recognizable as a deeply divided society with an uncertain political future (Aughey, 2014; Nolan, 2014; Shirlow & Coulter, 2014). It has also been noted that there are significant barriers to intergroup peacebuilding, including persistent social segregation and mistrustful relations between identity groups (Aiken, 2010; Cochrane, 2013; Mac Ginty et al., 2007). As such, it fits the definition of a protracted conflict as outlined in the introductory chapter.

Although intergroup violence has largely reduced in Northern Ireland since the 1990s, research participants had all lived through at least half, if not all of the three decades of political violence. Indeed, many were personally impacted by, or had witnessed, conflict-related violence. Thus, many of their life experiences are consummate with those of individuals living in other protracted conflicts where a political settlement has not been reached and intergroup violence continues.

Feasibility is also recognized as an important element in research design (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). The vibrancy of the community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland meant that sufficient numbers of suitable research participants could be located. In particular, due to my past work experience in the region I could draw on personal networks of contacts when identifying potential participants. In addition, having extensive personal experience of the cultural context in which research was carried out, I was able to build rapport successfully with participants regardless of our respective identity backgrounds, allowing for the exploration of sensitive topics during interviews (see Rafferty, forthcoming).

3.3.2 Sampling and recruitment.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, grounded theory approaches, including CGTM follow a practice called theoretical sampling. Theoretical sampling can include other forms of sampling common in qualitative research such as purposive, convenience or snowball sampling but is not limited to them (Hood, 2007). However, theoretical sampling does not meet the requirements of probability sampling as commonly used in quantitative research, nor does it aim to do so (Glaser, 1998). Rather, research participants are added to the study in light of their ability to contribute to emerging theoretical categories.

Thus, in the course of my field research, I began by interviewing a small number of participants through purposive sampling, as is typical in grounded theory studies (Birks & Mills, 2011). This form of sampling selects a small number of participants based on how closely they match the desired criteria. In this study, in the first instance, I felt it was important to interview individuals who:

- Have demonstrated a strong motivation to work towards intergroup peacebuilding in the civil society sphere. Criteria included spending more than 5 years working in the field and demonstrating some degree of voluntarism where they had shown enthusiasm for the work beyond the requirements of a salaried position.

- Are familiar with the challenges of life in a protracted conflict. Criteria included being born into a family with a clear allegiance to one religio-national group, and growing up in an area that was substantially affected by the violence of the Troubles.

After conducting interviews with the first three participants it was clear that there were already some notable similar themes in their stories, and that theoretical sampling could be advanced by continuing to recruit participants according to the above-mentioned criteria but broadening to include a balance of men and women, Protestant and Catholic family backgrounds, urban and rural backgrounds and across those generations which experienced the Troubles directly. Developing theory then

required the inclusion of some participants who had undergone a significant change in attitudes, which led to me interviewing two individuals who had previously been active in the conflict as members of paramilitary organizations and who now worked for reconciliation. This led to an overall sample of 15 civil society activists who are heavily involved in intergroup peacebuidling work. In recognition of the focus of their work, this first sample have been termed intergroup peacebuilders.

The final stage in the theoretical sampling process was the inclusion of a second sample of civil society activists who work primarily within their in-group and / or primarily for the benefit of their in-group. They were included for their ability to illuminate key differences between those individuals who are highly motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding and those individuals who do not share in those motivations. In recognition of their commitment to in-group wellbeing, this sample of 14 individuals has been termed within-group activists.

This group also involved purposive sampling in that I recruited participants on the basis of the following characteristics:

- Have been engaged in activism primarily on behalf of the needs and interests of their in-group. Criteria included devoting a significant amount of time and energy to activism aimed at increasing in-group wellbeing.

- Are familiar with the challenges of life in a protracted conflict, as outlined above for the first sample.

Both convenience sampling and snowball sampling were used for the recruitment of participants in the first sample. Thus, I was able to use existing networks of personal contacts and interview individuals whose personal commitment to intergroup peacebuilding was already known to me. I also accessed some participants through referrals from previous participants, known as snowball sampling. In one case a participant was located from an internet search which revealed he had recently received an award for his commitment to reconciliation work. Participants were initially approached by email, followed by a face-to-face meeting for interview.

Among within-group activists, the majority were identified as a result of internet searches, with just one participant resulting from a referral from a previous research participant, and a second participant located through referral by a mutual contact who was not otherwise involved in the research. In the case of the remaining respondents in this sample, potential participants were cold-called directly by telephone and those who were interested in participating were then sent further information by email. Again, interviews took place face-to-face.

When searching the internet in order to locate individuals active on behalf of their own identity group, I looked for individuals working with organizations which had one or more of the following characteristics:

- Cultural organizations strongly associated with Northern Ireland Protestant or Catholic identity (for example, the Orange Order, Irish language promotion in the West Belfast Gaeltacht).

- Community development or service organizations serving a target population which is almost exclusively one religion or the other (for example a victims support group in the Bogside in Derry-Londonderry, a loyalist ex-prisoners association).

- Locally organized political parties with a strong affiliation to a single religio-national community.

I believed that individuals working with such organizations would likely meet the criteria for being designated within-group activists because the primary focus of their activism is ensuring the wellbeing and continued existence of their group. Again, I aimed for a balance between male and female participants, and those from different generations and religio-national backgrounds.

A full list of participants, giving names or pseudonyms and details of their civil society activism appears in Appendix A. Details of recruitment email text and the research information sheet are provided in Appendix C.

3.3.3 Data collection.

In order to answer the research questions, the primary focus of data collection was gathering life history information from participants. This allowed for a broad exploration of both the life events and social circumstances that they had experienced, and insight into their personal construction of meaning around their identity and life experiences. Additional supplementary data was also collected from a number of secondary sources such as observation notes, documents provided by participants to illustrate their work, and photos.

Primary data collection took the form of semi-structured life history interviews. Each participant gave a single interview lasting between one to two-and-a half-hours. Every interview began by inviting the respondent to give an overview of their life story in their own words. This was then followed by a number of spontaneous questions to clarify and expand on what they had related. The final stage in the interview was to ask a number of questions, in a semi-structured manner, around their early socialization experiences, key life events, values, personal philosophy and motivating goals. These interviews allowed for flexibility in recording the unique elements of individuals' life histories as well as providing a degree of consistency to the data collected from different respondents. A copy of the interview guide appears in Appendix B.

Secondary data collection included observation notes made in and around the interview process, and also field notes from two opportunities where I was able to observe a reconciliation-focused public event facilitated by one of the participants in the first sample. Other sources of information which allowed for checking and refining the developing theory were published memoirs or website biographies, photographs of participants and the environments they work in, and documents given to me by participants to illustrate their work. These provided supplementary information for comparison with developing theoretical categories, in order to ensure the latter were as fully developed as possible.

3.3.4 Ethical considerations.

In the first instance, this study was conducted in line with the ethical principles for conducting research with human participants, as set out by the University of Otago (2015). Respondents were informed about the implications of their participation in the study before giving their consent to take part. In particular, care was also taken to offer the option of anonymity to participants due to the personal and sensitive nature of life history interviews.

In the particular context of post-violence Northern Ireland, an additional, and important ethical consideration was the potential for life history interviews to touch on memories that it could be painful for interviewees to recall. The first aspect of minimizing this risk was to make sure the information sheet informed potential participants that their participation was voluntary and they could decide which aspects of their life experience they wished to share. This was reemphasized during pre-interview conversations that alerted respondents to the possibility that some memories could be painful to recall, and handed them responsibility for selecting those elements of their life story that they were comfortable to share. I was also prepared to signpost any participants to counseling services available to victims of political violence, but this was not required. In general, then, the maximum possible control over what was revealed in the interview was accorded to respondents, and I did not press them to speak about difficult events further than what they appeared comfortable with.

To enhance the participants' degree of control over the process, they were also offered the option of receiving a full transcript of the interview for them to review. 26 out of 29 participants received a copy of their interview transcript and all were willing to proceed with no changes, or very minor changes, to the manuscript.

3.4 Data Analysis and Theory Development

This study followed the CGTM procedures for data analysis and theory development. This section outlines the process of constant comparative analysis and

theoretical integration of conceptual categories into the parallel explanatory frameworks that are presented in chapters 4 and 5.

3.4.1 Transcription.

While, Glaser (1998) has advised against taping and transcribing interviews out of a concern that researchers will become overly concerned with detail and description at the expense of allowing abstract theory to emerge from patterns in the data, other authors have recommended that taping interviews can be particularly appropriate for novice researchers as it provides a rich source of verbatim quotations that can illustrate and provide evidence for your grounded theory (Birks & Mills, 2011). Hence, life history interviews with all 29 individuals were digitally recorded. All 15 interviews with intergroup peacebuilders were fully transcribed, while in the case of within-group activists interviews with 12 participants were fully transcribed. The remaining two interviews were listened to in audio format, once the more selective process of substantive coding had begun, in order to ascertain that they confirmed the emerging theoretical categories and contained no new information that would require revision of the developing theory.

3.4.2 Coding and category development.

In CGTM the coding process begins with open coding, where every incident, or substantial item of data, is coded with a kind of shorthand reflecting the information it contains (Birks & Mills, 2011; Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). Thus, each section of the interview transcripts was coded as individual incidents, before proceeding to the second stage of selective coding. Already at this stage some patterns began to become apparent, although codes were still numerous and over-lapping.

The next stage in the process is selective, sometimes called substantive, coding, which leads to the elaboration of categories. Categories are broad conceptual themes that link together a number of codes at a higher level of abstraction (Glaser, 1998; Kelle, 2007). Categories should not be forced on the data but should emerge

through the process of coding and through constant comparison of data, with codes and emerging categories leading to identification of broad patterns at a conceptual level (Kelle, 2007). During selective coding, the researcher works to develop focused codes in relation to a variable of central importance known as the core category (Glaser, 1978; Glaser, 1998). This core category should relate to the primary concern of research participants as revealed in the data (Glaser, 1998).

The final stage in coding within classic grounded theory is known as theoretical coding and involves exploring the relationships between the core category and related categories in order to integrate them into a final theoretical framework (Glaser, 1998; Glaser, 2005; Holton, 2007). A model is developed for arranging the diverse categories and sub-categories into an organized whole (Glaser, 2005). Thus, at this stage of data analysis much time was spent conceptualizing, modeling and reconceptualizing categories in order to arrive at an understanding of the relationship between them.

It was clear from interviews that the two samples held different primary concerns. Intergroup peacebuilders were highly concerned with the quality of intergroup relations in society more generally, while within-group activists revealed a strong concern for in-group wellbeing. Hence, data from each sample was developed into a distinct grounded theory, providing parallel explanatory frameworks. Among the data collected from intergroup peacebuilders the categories of socialization, personal traits, worldview, identity formation, conflict-framing and goal identification emerged as sufficiently abstract to represent commonalities in the processes experienced by individuals as they developed their motivations. The same overall process was also applied to analysis of the data collected from within-group activists, and it was found that the same broad categories applied to them but with quite different aspects to each element in the process. This resulted in developing two parallel grounded theories that follow a similar pattern but with very different content for categories pertaining to each sample. Linking these two grounded theories together allowed for a coherent, explanatory answer to research question three, and allowed for an important comparative dimension to data analysis supporting a more confident identification of possible causal mechanisms.

3.4.3 Memo writing and theoretical sorting.

Memo writing is an integral part of the constant comparison method and occurs alongside each stage in the coding process (Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). Memos serve to "capture, track and preserve conceptual ideas" (Glaser, 1998, p. 180). Memos are then essentially analytic notes that allow the researcher to keep a working record of her developing conceptualization, offering a first opportunity to explore emerging theory (Birks & Mills, 2011). Theoretical sorting of memos is an important part of integrating the developing theory (Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2007). It facilitates the progression from substantive to theoretical coding and assists in raising the conceptual level from description to explanation (Holton, 2007). The researcher begins simply by sorting memos by hand, noting interrelationships that can provide the basis of developing theory. In seeking connections between categories, theoretical sorting creates additional memos that further refine and integrate the theory on a higher conceptual level until the end point of theoretical saturation is reached (Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2007), as explained below.

In this study, memo writing was used at all points, as a means of capturing developing ideas and translating them into abstract conceptualization. The content of memos included observations of recurring patterns in the data, speculations as to the significance of patterns, and considering alternative possible perspectives on the data. Memos were later reviewed and sorted in order to assist with theoretical integration, in keeping with the tenets of CGTM.

3.4.4 Theoretical saturation.

An important consideration for grounded theory researchers is how to know when the process is complete. Glaser & Strauss (1967) addressed this concern by elucidating the concept of theoretical saturation. This refers to the point at which the researcher stops sampling, where data collection no longer generates new leads and the theoretical categories and their properties are sufficiently elaborated to give a theoretical understanding (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1998; Birks & Mills, 2011). Saturation is understood as a point where new incidents in the data that differ

on the descriptive level nonetheless indicate the same concept (Glaser, 1998). This is termed interchangeability of indices, and when it is achieved for the core category and the related categories, the theory has become saturated (Breckenridge, 2012; Glaser, 1998).

Mindful of the concept of theoretical saturation, the grounded theories developed through this study were considered to be sufficiently developed when the relationship between the core category and other categories in each theory was clear and could be logically defended. This point was reached with theorizing based on interviews from 15 participants in the intergroup peacebuilders sample, and 14 in the within-group activists sample. Moreover, subsequent reviews of the data were undertaken to ensure that all variation in data could be explained within the emerging explanatory framework and that no incidents were identified that could not fit within the theories. At this stage it was therefore determined that it was no longer necessary to recruit further participants to the study.

3.4.5 Theoretical sensitivity and the use of academic literature.

Grounded theory approaches differ substantially from other research methodologies in their use of existing academic literature regarding developing theory and positioning the study in relation to existing fields of scholarly inquiry. In CGTM, academic literature is seen as another form of data, secondary in importance to data gathered in the field (Glaser, 1998). As a largely inductive research methodology, in a grounded theory study the relevant academic literature does not provide a guide to data collection and analysis in order avoid imposing the researcher's preconceived hypotheses on the study. Rather, literature is typically reviewed only after the inductive development of a grounded theory, once the study has revealed which specific areas of literature are most relevant and can contribute to furthering the insight regarding the area of inquiry (Dunne, 2011; Glaser, 1998). The relevant literature is typically examined for how the grounded theory can confirm, challenge, or contribute insight to, relevant fields of study (Glaser, 1998). The theory is thus integrated with relevant areas of academic inquiry, reviewing literature simultaneous to a discussion of the research findings, as is the case in chapter 6 of this thesis.

However, in practice it can be difficult within an academic environment, and especially when completing a doctoral thesis, to avoid completing a literature review prior to field research (Dunne, 2011; Glaser, 1998). Of necessity, the requirements of the doctoral process must be satisfied, including ensuring that another similar study has not already been done (Dunne, 2011). Furthermore it has been pointed out that most researchers have read extensively in the past on their areas of interest, and an awareness of existing academic knowledge in the field can potentially help researchers to increase their level of analytic abstraction (Breckenridge, 2010).

Glaser (1978) has developed the concept of theoretical sensitivity to address these concerns. Theoretical sensitivity refers to the researcher's ability to develop theoretical insights and make abstract connections on the basis of prior knowledge (Glaser, 1978; Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2007). Thus, the researcher's prior academic reading can be of assistance, but the important caveat is that it must earn its way into the analysis, to the degree it fits with the data and emerging categories. Thus, existing academic literature can also be incorporated in the latter stages of a grounded theory development, providing useful existing definitions and highlighting possible theoretical linkages (Glaser, 1998).

Therefore, prior to this study an initial, very broad literature review was completed as part of departmental requirements for PhD study. This review had the benefit of revealing a gap in understanding of motivations for intergroup peacebuilding among civil society actors in protracted conflicts, confirming that the planned field research would not be simply replicating existing knowledge. Reading literature on the psychological and sociocultural features of protracted conflicts provided a useful overview of the barriers to developing motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding, and assisted in later integrating the grounded theories with existing scholarly understanding of conflict-affected societies, as in chapters 2 and 6. A general understanding of the social psychology of intergroup relations and of protracted conflicts was useful for enhancing theoretical sensitivity, allowing for identification of such concepts as worldview, moral autonomy and socialization among patterns in the data. However, any reliance on the literature was avoided when conducting fieldwork. Thus, data was collected without reference to a prior theoretical framework and the research design was, instead, shaped by the researcher theorizing in response to patterns emerging from preliminary analysis of the data as it was collected.

3.5 Trustworthiness and Transferability

All social science research, regardless of paradigm, gives some consideration to the extent to which the research findings can be trusted to represent accurate and relevant knowledge. Another feature which marks out academic research from other forms of investigation is careful attention to whether the findings of the research can inform our understanding of other populations or contexts (Ruane, 2005). This section, then, makes a case for why the subsequent chapters can be trusted to represent accurate and useful knowledge. Often in qualitative research approaches these concerns are termed trustworthiness and credibility (Krefting,1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, as CGTM has its own criteria for assessing quality of research outputs, these are explained below, alongside the efforts made to meet these standards for research quality. A discussion of additional measures taken to ensure rigor in the research process appears in the final subsection in this chapter, as the scope of the study is delineated, and the measures taken to address potential limitations are outlined.

3.5.1 Assessing quality in classic grounded theory research.

The criteria established by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and reaffirmed by Glaser (1978; 1998) continue to be the standards against which the quality of a CGTM study should be judged (Holton, 2008). The four criteria for assessing whether a grounded theory has been successfully developed are termed fit, relevance, work and modifiability. When these are achieved, Glaser asserts that a grounded theory will have "grab", meaning that "people feel they can use it meaningfully" (Glaser, 1998, p. 237). Above all, a classic grounded theory should provide an explanatory framework that makes sense to readers (Breckenridge et al., 2012; Glaser, 1998; Glaser, 2012). Thus, the four criteria for quality relate ultimately to ability of a grounded theory to conceptualize and explain patterns underlying human behavior at an abstract level.

The concept of fit refers to how closely the grounded theory is derived from the data collected, and how accurately it represents the patterns in the data (Glaser, 1998). It refers to allowing the coding process and resulting conceptual categories to emerge from the data rather than forcing the data to align with preconceived codes

derived from existing academic theory (Holton, 2008). In this sense, fit is an important outcome of adherence to the principles of CGTM. Hence, throughout the research process particular effort has been taken to avoid imposing pre-existing assumptions by following a very broad and expansive line of questioning in my interview protocol, by reflecting on researcher assumptions in memos and by following closely the classic grounded theory method of data analysis so as to allow theory to emerge from the data. The fit of the present theory will be demonstrated in the following findings chapters, as they show how the grounded theory is derived from the data through inclusion of a number of detailed quotations.

The concept of relevance refers to the relatedness of a grounded theory to issues raised by participants in the course of field research (Glaser, 1998). Relevance is inherent to the methodology because constant comparison of data against data leads to identification of an issue that is of central significance to participants, known as the primary concern (Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). Thus, in CGTM, the resulting grounded theory relates strongly to participants' primary concern, revealing latent patterns and processes linked to their primary concern. In this study, each of the two samples had different primary concerns and this is a central element of explaining their differences in levels of motivation regarding intergroup peacebuilding. It was ensured that the two interlinked grounded theories are strongly related to the primary concerns of participants, and in fact the theories provide an explanation for how those differing concerns/ motivations develop in the context of a protracted conflict.

The concept of work refers to the ability of a grounded theory to explain behavior and thus to predict future behavior (Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). In CGTM, a grounded theory should be able to conceptually explain the patterns of behavior contained in the data, and the categories are expected to closely relate to what is going on (Glaser, 1998). In this research project work has been ensured through use of the constant-comparative method, working with emerging theoretical categories until a point where an explanatory framework was developed that explained the engagement of individuals in the two samples in quite different forms of activism. This is further evidenced in the concluding chapter of the thesis, which includes a delineation of three key findings resulting from the study and a discussion of their potential to lead to accurate predictions of human behavior in relation to intergroup peacebuilding activism in protracted conflicts.

The final criterion of modifiability means that a good grounded theory has a living quality and can be continually updated as new data in uncovered (Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). Modifiability is intended to ensure its continued relevance and suitability to the living world from which it emerged. In this thesis the two parallel grounded theories are thus presented as open to ongoing adaptation. Thus, it can only be stated with certainty that the theories here developed represent an accurate conceptualization of patterns in the data collected in this study, but that the framework may need to be further modified if applied to other contexts such as societies other than Northern Ireland. However, as discussed in chapter 7, the theories are envisioned as having reached a sufficient level of abstraction to be useful to scholars and practitioners interested in understanding the development of individuals' motivations regarding intergroup peacebuilding in other protracted conflicts.

Overall, then, a grounded theory is best understood as a complex hypothesis with strong predictive power, derived inductively from data, rather than a definitively proven concept. It is not intended to be considered true for all time, but rather has a temporal truth and is open to future modification as it is generalized to other areas and new data is received (Glaser, 1998). It can be trusted because it has been rigorously derived from data through a carefully structured process of inductive reasoning. Thus, the two interlinked grounded theories presented and elaborated over the coming chapters are offered as an explanatory framework giving insight into the processes underlying differences in motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding.

3.5.2 Delineation of the study.

This study had a limited scope that it is important to delineate, so as it is clear what claims to knowledge can be based on the findings and what remains unknown or unaddressed. The research purpose was to explore and explain differences in motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding among civil society activists living in a protracted conflict. Northern Ireland was chosen as the setting for the research due to its applicability to the topic of inquiry and due to considerations of feasibility. The overall focus was on understanding how motivations for intergroup peacebuilding might become more widespread, rather than a consideration of the

particular role played by civil society in the development of sustainable peace as the latter is already suggested by existing academic literature as outlined in the introductory chapter.

The study did not aim to assess the prevalence of motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding across the population in Northern Ireland, and thus this thesis provides no insight on this matter. The limited, non-probability nature of the sample was necessary in order to collect data sufficiently rich and detailed that could lead to inductive generation of theory by a single researcher. Nonetheless the grounded theory produced has a high probability of accurately predicting behavior among civil society activists in Northern Ireland, due to arrival at theoretical saturation where all new data examined was able to fit within and confirm the explanatory framework presented in chapters 4 and 5

Neither did this study seek to investigate how motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding develop across different cultural contexts. Rather, it was determined that it was more feasible and useful to collect data within a single cultural context, allowing for some consistency as a basis for fruitful comparisons to yield possible causal mechanisms. However, due to the abstract nature of the theories developed, in accordance with the precepts of CGTM as outlined in this chapter, the resulting insights can be viewed as applicable to other protracted conflicts subject to the principle of modifiability.

3.5.3 Addressing limitations of the study.

The research was also subject to a number of limitations, some inherent to the CGTM and others arising from issues of feasibility in the field. Wherever possible, efforts were made to address and overcome these limitations. The limitations and efforts made are described below in the interests of maintaining good standards of transparency and process-tracing, as recommended in qualitative research approaches (Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

CGTM does sacrifice detailed description in favor of conceptual explanation and thus this study has not led to a rich and detailed description of intergroup peacebuilding practice in Northern Ireland nor a profound phenomenological insight

into how individuals experience a protracted conflict. However, this has been to some degree mitigated in the following three chapters by the inclusion of multiple direct quotations to illustrate theoretical categories. The potential problem of the unclear epistemological foundations of CGTM was overcome by determining that a pragmatist philosophical position emerged as the most appropriate ontological and epistemological foundation for interpreting the study.

Life history interviewing is also subject to some inherent limitations. Due to the open and flexible nature of interviews means that different information might come to light with different researchers or even with the same researcher on different occasions (Atkinson, 1993). Life history interviewing cannot therefore be held to the same standards as quantitative research regarding reliability, but rather should be viewed as a rich source of information about individuals' subjectivities and perceptions (Atkinson, 1993; Maynes et al., 2012; McAdams, 1993). Moreover, in order to achieve a degree of consistency across respondents, a semi-structured interview guide was used in this study, as presented in Appendix B. Each respondents' account was not taken as objective fact, but factual details were ascertained by triangulation wherever possible. Furthermore, the main concern was to identify patterns shared across respondents and where many respondents, unknown to each other and without prior consultation, displayed the same patterns this was taken as a robust indication that a common process could be objectively observed to be at work.

The issue of respondents performing to notions of social desirability rather than speaking frankly has also been raised as an issue facing researchers, particularly when addressing sensitive topics (see Krefting, 1991; Krumpal, 2013). Qualitative researchers are recommended to spend extensive time in the field and gain multiple perspectives, as well as to build rapport with respondents, in order to reduce the likelihood of this occurring (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Krefting, 1991). Thus, efforts were made to put respondents at ease in pre-interview conversation, including emphasizing the non-judgmental position of the researcher, while the option of anonymity was also offered in part to encourage respondents to speak frankly. Moreover, if respondents were performing to notions of desirability during interviews then a significant difference in what is considered desirable could be observed between the two samples, and this in itself further supports the concept of differences in mindset as explained over the next two chapters.

Other limitations arose from specific difficulties experienced in the field. For example, it was not generally possible to observe civil society activists at work in their normal setting, with the result that the data collected focused heavily on life history information as related by participants. This limitation was addressed, in part at least, by adding additional sources of information including observation notes taken during interviews and documents relating to the work done by participants in the community.

Extensive efforts were also made to attract participants who were openly in favor of continued conflict, in order to provide a starker contrast with intergroup peacebuilders, but none were found who were willing to give interviews. This may well be due to recent legal action involving research interviews given by past participants in violence that has called into question the ability of field researchers to guarantee confidentiality when addressing conflict-related topics in Northern Ireland (Palys & Lowman, 2012). This study does not therefore address motivations for continuance of violent conflict, as might have been included in developing theory if it were possible to access relevant individuals in the current context. As a result, sample 1 and sample 2 should not necessarily be seen as representing the full spectrum of political opinion in Northern Ireland. Rather they are best understood as a cohort of individuals with the power to illustrate important differences between those civil society activists who are strongly motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding and those whose priorities direct them towards efforts to enhance in-group wellbeing.

4. Becoming Motivated to Engage in Intergroup Peacebuilding in a Protracted Conflict

The purpose of this study is to develop theoretical understanding around why some individuals living in a protracted conflict become motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding activism while others prioritize different concerns. As outlined in some detail in the previous chapter, this study followed classic grounded theory methodology. This has allowed an explanatory framework to emerge from the data, giving a conceptual overview of this phenomenon. Drawing on this methodological approach, this chapter seeks to contribute to fulfilling the research purpose by answering research question one; "how do some civil society actors living in a protracted conflict develop high levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding?"

This chapter presents a grounded theory developed out of patterns in the interview data collected from sample one, a group of 15 individuals engaged in intergroup peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. As explained in chapter 3, these individuals were recruited because they have shown sustained engagement in intergroup peacebuilding activism in the difficult circumstances of Northern Ireland, indicative of high levels of intrinsic motivations (see Klandermans, 2004). Moreover, an additional criteria for recruiting participants to this sample was that individuals have been exposed to conditions of conflict, as explained in the subsection on sampling and recruitment in chapter 3.

Emerging from patterns in the interview data, categories were defined and refined and integrated into an overall theory, in accordance with the precepts of classic grounded theory methodology outlined in chapter 3. The grounded theory presented in this chapter is entitled "becoming motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict".

This chapter deals with the psychological features that have influenced individuals living within the protracted conflict of Northern Ireland to develop high levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. It further provides insight into socialization experiences and personal traits that act as supportive factors to the development of those psychological features. Although this chapter outlines the psychological processes involved in becoming motivated to engage in intergroup

peacebuilding in a simplified, linear form, in their lived experiences some individuals may have developed certain psychological features concurrently, with others developed their overall mindset in a cyclical, iterative fashion. Nonetheless, the linear form allows for clear presentation of the data, and makes a case for how each preceding element supports the subsequent one, thus linking the categories together in an explanatory framework. Direct evidence from respondents' interview transcripts is provided throughout to illustrate how the conceptual categories derive from real world data.

4.1 The Significance of Understanding Sample Respondents' Motivations

Grounded theory methodology is concerned with understanding and explaining human behavior (El-Hussein, Hirst, Salyers, & Osuji, 2014; Glaser, 1998). In this chapter, the behavior of interest is engagement in intergroup peacebuilding. As elaborated in the introductory chapter, an increase in cooperative intergroup relationships, known as bridging social capital, has the potential to underpin an engaged civil society able to pursue the common good, and therefore to contribute to sustainable peace. Yet, as explored in chapter 2, most individuals living in protracted conflicts are little motivated to involve themselves in intergroup peacebuilding and support for conflict continuance is often widespread. Hence, understanding how certain individuals develop high levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding can illustrate how psychological features supportive of greater social cohesion can develop even in the divisive circumstances of a protracted conflict.

The grounded theory presented in this chapter derives from data collected from 15 individuals engaged in intergroup peacebuilding, a full list of whom appears in Appendix A. To make this small sample as representative as possible, a balance of men and women from both Catholic and Protestant backgrounds were included. Two former paramilitaries who became peacebuilders were also included. The majority of respondents identified as being from working-class backgrounds, evidenced by their accounts of growing up in social housing estates that were often dominated by paramilitaries and the site of considerable political violence. The majority of respondents in this sample grew up in areas known as hotspots of violence during the

Troubles such as West, North and East Belfast, the Bogside and Creggan housing estates in Derry/ Londonderry, Portadown, South Armagh and Strabane. They are, then, individuals with personal experience of the realities of violent conflict, as was confirmed in their interviews as they recounted encounters with such experiences as violent attack, death and injury of family and friends, harassment by state forces and paramilitary influence in their communities. The accounts about how their motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding developed in such an unsupportive sociocultural context thus point to the factors supporting them to develop strong levels of intrinsic motivations, providing an impetus to overcome external barriers such as norms of social segregation and hostility emantating from those in their communities who are opposed to their work.

These individuals share a strong commitment to developing relationships between members of different identity groups. This is evidenced through their sustained commitment to intergroup peacebuilding activism, outlined in Appendix A. In many ways they can be seen as networkers who transcend group identity boundaries with ease, connecting individuals and communities that would otherwise be isolated from one another. Moreover, forming relationships with the out-group is also part of their overall behavior as members of a society affected by protracted conflict. Thus, among the 15 respondents in this sample, there were accounts of 4 mixed-identity partnerships, while the average number of mixed marriages in Northern Ireland is estimated to be just 10% (Lloyd & Robinson, 2011). Furthermore, many of them recounted warm, sustained friendships with out-group members, and, as is seen later in this chapter, respondents in this sample frequently expressed a strong degree of care for out-group members, both as individuals and as a collective with valid aspirations and fears. These attitudes and behaviors are rare in protracted conflicts, making these individuals an interesting and potentially significant subject of inquiry.

4.2 Overview of the Grounded Theory: Becoming Motivated to Engage in Intergroup Peacebuilding in a Protracted Conflict

It is recommended, when writing-up a grounded theory to first present the theory as an integrated whole, in the form of a narrative, before outlining the component elements in more detail (Birks & Mills, 2011; Glaser, 1998). It can also be advisable to make a pictorial representation of the main elements in the theory, and their inter-relationship, to aid the reader's understanding of the conceptual overview offered (Birks & Mills, 2011). This section, then, first presents a visual overview of the main elements in the grounded theory of "becoming motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict", followed by a brief narrative overview of the processes involved. It then outlines in more detail the core category of "shared humanity mindset" and explains how this concept relates to the other categories featured in the theory, in particular the primary concern of participants in this sample. Further elaboration of categories, with appropriate evidence from research data, appears in the next section.

4.2.1 Visual overview of "becoming motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflict".

An overall pattern was observed in how activists develop their motivations, and this pattern has formed the basis for category development in both of the parallel grounded theories. It is depicted below in figure 7. This section then goes on to elaborate in more detail how this model works in the case of individuals who become highly motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict.

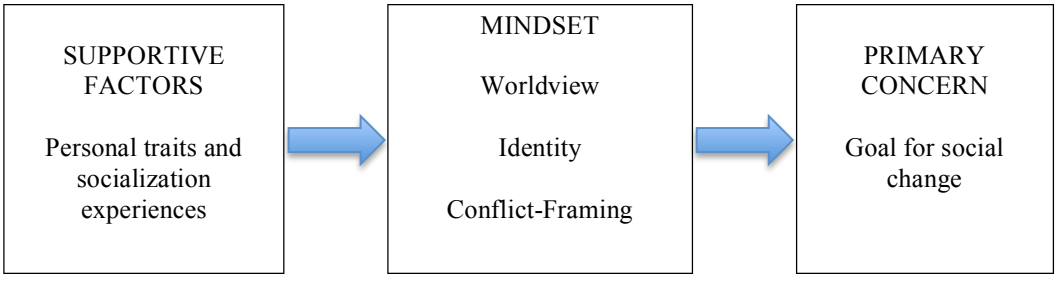

Figure 7: Outline of process of developing activism motivations.

The more detailed representation, below in figure 8, shows how the different categories and subcategories that will be elaborated on in this chapter interact as an integrated whole. A primary concern of improving intergroup relations was found to provide the motivation for individuals' engagement in intergroup peacebuilding. The grounded theory in this chapter explains how certain personal traits and socialization experiences support individuals to develop a shared humanity mindset that in turn encourages the development of their primary concern of improving intergroup relations when faced with a deeply divided society. The development of the primary concern of improving intergroup relations, therefore, can be conceptualized as resulting from adherence to a shared humanity mindset that is supported by both personal traits and socialization experiences.

Shared humanity mindset (core category)			
Universalist Worldview (category)	**Broadened Identity Formation** (category)	**Inclusive Framing of Conflict** (category)	**Adopting goal of improving intergroup relations** (primary concern)
Subcategories: Essential sameness of all human beings Equal worth of all human beings Interdependence between groups	Subcategories: Questioning oppositional identities Broadening beyond narrow group loyalties Moral inclusion of out-group	Subcategories: Focus on shared suffering Attribution of shared responsibility for conflict Inclusive vision of future peace	Subcategories: Perceiving need for change Shaping activism to resolve the primary concern

Factors supporting the development of a shared humanity mindset:

Socialization (category)		
Subcategories:		
Universalist family micro-culture	Exposure to different perspectives	Transformative experience of the out-group
Personal traits (category)		
Subcategories:		
Moral autonomy	Openness to complexity	Reflexivity

Figure 8: Overview of categories and subcategories in grounded theory, "becoming motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict".

4.2.2 Narrative overview of the process of becoming motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict.

The concept of a shared humanity mindset provides the core category of this grounded theory; it is the prism through which individuals perceive and make sense of their social reality, resulting in the development of an overriding concern to improve intergroup relations. This mindset can be seen as comprising identifiable patterns in worldview, identity formation and framing of the conflict, that collectively support individuals to become concerned about the quality of relations between identity groups in their society. Individuals develop this mindset in a process of interaction between certain personal traits and socialization experiences in the context of a protracted conflict.

The shared humanity mindset.

The term shared humanity is used to describe a mindset marked by universalism and egalitarianism, focused on the similarities shared by all human beings. As a mindset, it is a collection of psychological features displayed across respondents' accounts in this sample. As it seems to be comprised of multiple elements that mutually support one another, the shared humanity mindset is conceptualized as a total outlook on life in a protracted conflict, comprising the elements of worldview, identity formation and framing of the conflict.

The foundation of this mindset is a worldview comprised of universalist beliefs in the essential sameness of all human beings, the equal worth of human beings and the interdependence of groups in society. Holding these fundamental assumptions about social reality in turn encourages individuals to question the narrow group loyalties expected of them by their society, leading to a broadened sense of social identity that is not limited to identifying with members of the religio-national in-group but is also inclusive of out-group members. Being less closely identified with their religio-national in-group, these individuals take a more inclusive and balanced view of the conflict, focusing on the shared suffering caused by the conflict, attributing responsibility for the conflict to identity divisions, and developing a vision of future peace that is concerned to include the needs and aspirations of all social groups.

Holding this mindset, and faced with awareness of the harm and suffering caused by a conflict that they blame on identity divisions, they become concerned to improve intergroup relations. Improved relations are believed to contribute to prevention of a return to intergroup violence, and to provide a platform for the creation of a just and inclusive society that will benefit all citizens. As a result, these individuals are highly motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding as it fulfills their internal sense of purpose and reflects their worldview, sense of identity and understanding of the conflict.

Developing a shared humanity mindset.

Individuals are supported to develop a shared humanity mindset by a number of socialization experiences. While none are the exclusive cause of developing such a mindset, each can play an important supporting role, especially when these experiences allow for the development of personal traits that enable an individual to handle the cognitive and emotional complexity involved in intergroup peacebuilding between identity groups in a protracted conflict.

Intergroup peacebuilders were notably strong in the personal traits of moral autonomy, openness to complexity, and reflexivity. Moral autonomy, a determination to set and live by their own moral principals, supports these individuals to question in-group norms and to deviate from expected behaviors such as avoiding contact with the out-group. A tendency towards the self-awareness, characteristic of reflexivity, encourages concern for the impact of their actions on others and a willingness to accept responsibility for their own role in contributing to conflict. Openness to complexity is associated with a willingness to view issues from more than one perspective, attributing the conflict to multiple inter-related factors rather than blaming a particular group. This capacity facilitates their engagement with multiple actors in their society, and is a protective factor against making simplistic judgments about others.

Socialization within a particular cultural context is a key aspect in the development of human psychology (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Hammack, 2011; Bandura & Walters, 1963; Rogoff, 2003). Lived experience can shape personal traits and mindsets as individuals are exposed to certain experiences while discouraged from engaging in others. Thus, differences in individuals' exposure to certain socialization

experiences is an important explanatory factor as to how individuals develop different mindsets and thus different levels of motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. Individuals strongly motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding were often, though not always, brought up in families that exposed them to universalist ideas such as socialist fraternity or humanistic concerns. Other individuals who did not experience this early exposure to a broad and inclusive view of society and humanity, have instead experienced transformative encounters with out-group members that challenged their view of the out-group. For other individuals, exposure to alternative viewpoints was experienced by encountering diverse cultures when traveling or living abroad.

Summing up.

Overall, then, individuals living in a protracted conflict can become motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding when they develop a sufficient degree of adherence to a shared humanity mindset and become concerned to improve intergroup relations in the face of a divided society. They are supported to develop this mindset through contact with universalist ideas, encountering diverse perspectives and recognizing the humanity of out-group members. This mindset is also supported by the personal traits of moral autonomy, reflexivity and openness to complexity, not least because these facilitate the independent thinking that can lead to questioning widely accepted social norms.

4.2.3 Core category and primary concern.

In classic grounded theory methodology, there is strong emphasis on the discovery of a core category that emerges from the data during the constant-comparative analysis (Holton, 2007; Glaser 1998). The core category is a linking concept that brings together and makes sense of all the other categories, providing an overall coherence to the explanatory framework (Holton, 2007; Glaser 1978). Glaser, meanwhile, has said that a core category is a "high impact dependent variable of great importance" (Glaser, 2007, p. 14). The core category emerges from the data in reference to the primary concern, often encapsulating commonalities in how

participants seek to resolve their primary concern (Holton, 2007). This section, then, addresses the identification of the participants primary concern in this study, outlines the nature of the core category, and explains the relationship between the two as part of the overall grounded theory "becoming motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict".

Identifying the primary concern.

Improving relations between identity groups emerged from the data as a concept that linked the variety of work undertaken by respondents in the intergroup peacebuilders sample. Their work often comprised elements such as dialogue between members of different identity groups, challenging individuals' negative images of the out-group, preparing isolated cultural groups for intergroup contact and mediating local level disputes that could disrupt wider intergroup relations. All of these can be seen as efforts to improve the quality of relationship between identity groups in Northern Ireland, and were described as such by participants.

This primary concern was discernible in many direct statements made by intergroup peacebuilders. For example, Clare Connor recalled a time when she lived in a small community where *everybody was different religions and everyone got on really well, and it was really nice*, and later stated her aspiration for a future Northern Ireland to have many more people learning to live together in this way. Meanwhile Amy Curran described her goal as a society with *a sense of belonging for everyone*, an achievement that in her opinion can only come through meaningful dialogue between members of different identity groups. Or more directly, Malachy Dougan expressed his sense of purpose as simply *preventing our people from killing one another*, which he worked towards by acting as mediator between groups.

Many intergroup peacebuilders believed improved intergroup relations would result in many benefits for all members of Northern Irish society. Thus, for example, Mary Hancock declared her belief that better relations between groups would improve the lives of ordinary people in Northern Ireland:

> *I think that the only way forward is…some form of education system that is totally inclusive. And I think that peace would be…more visible if you have people living and working, playing and socializing together…. I think that for*

me, also…peace will look like a whole range of new politicians, fighting for community politics and fighting for the man and woman on the street rather than doing party politics.

In this way Mary, like many of the intergroup peacebuilders, explicitly links greater integration of identity groups with the development of politics devoted to social justice.

Meanwhile, the poor state of relations between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland is, in the opinion of participants, the source of many social problems. Like Mary above, many expressed their frustration with the social results of a political system organized around religio-national identities. Furthermore, many of them saw lack of relationship between groups as facilitating violence, with all of the suffering and destruction that entailed. Hence for example, Gerry Dunne explained his belief that social segregation facilitates intergroup violence:

Because we live in ghettos…it makes it easier for gunmen and gunwomen to thrive because we are all in this ghetto and we don't actually see the devastation there, and … they don't see the devastation over here.

In this, Gerry exemplifies a general tendency among individuals in this sample to directly blame poor relations between identity groups for the emergence and perpetuation of violent conflict.

Overall, then, the primary concern of improving intergroup relations is associated with the belief that poor relations cause social problems, including violent conflict, and that improved relations would help to create a society better devoted to ensuring the wellbeing of all members. This primary concern provides an impetus to action, and also provides a guide to what action should be taken; the desire to improve intergroup relations emerges because it is believed that improving intergroup relations is a form of activism that can result in important societal benefits.

Identifying the core category.

It was apparent from early in the process of data analysis that the intergroup peacebuilders held a number of beliefs in common, beliefs that were not strongly held

among participants in the other sample. Developing this observation to its logical theoretical conclusion, it became clear that differences in mindset were key to explaining the different activism behavior of individuals in the two samples. Mindsets were identified as a core explanatory variable because they represent patterns in beliefs, identity and framing that were similar among individuals within the same sample, but differed notably between the two samples.

The concept of mindset thus provided for the integrative function of a core category in classic grounded theory methodology as it linked a number of emerging categories, namely worldview, identity and conflict framing, to the primary concern. Differences in mindset between the two samples were closely associated with differences in their respective primary concerns, providing a reasoned explanation for why individual civil society actors develop different social goals for their activism. It could furthermore be seen that the remaining categories of personal traits and socialization experiences could be seen to support the development of a shared humanity mindset, thus incorporating all the categories in an integrated framework as illustrated above in figures 7 and 8.

The shared humanity mindset is conceptualized to comprise three constituent parts, as explored later in this chapter. Briefly, these are a universalist worldview, a broadened formation of identity and an inclusive and balanced framing of the conflict. Worldview can be understood as the broadest psychological feature, relating to an overall outlook on life, while identity is more specific and conflict-framing more specific still. A pictorial representation of the theorized relationship between these concepts appears in figure 9, below.

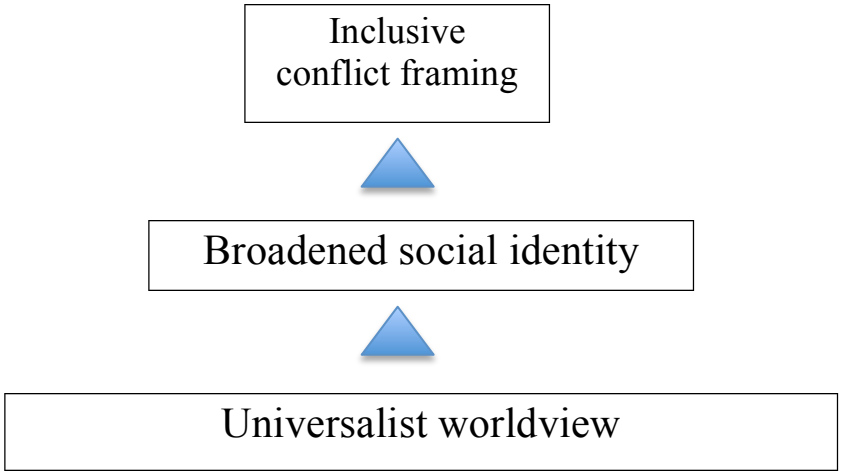

Figure 9: Inter-related elements of shared humanity mindset.

The adherence of intergroup peacebuilders to this mindset was apparent from patterns in the data as they discussed their personal philosophy and sense of identity, the motivations for their activism and their memories of the past conflict. To give a few examples; John Mallon related how he was motivated by the African concept of interdependence expressed by the word *Ubuntu*, and by his sense of being *a global citizen*. Similarly, Liam Mullan related his belief that we are *enmeshed* around the world, and stated that he was *as happy going up to someone in Cambodia as in Culloville (his home village)*, thus suggesting his belief in the essential sameness of human beings. Meanwhile Mary Hancock displayed the egalitarianism of her mindset when discussing victims of violence, stating that her personal experience of the long-term consequences is *one of the driving factors why I work with victims. I don't care who they are, what their background is…. What I do care about is that the consequences of violence makes them a victim.*

Thus, the shared humanity mindset comprises multiple elements in combination, as will be explored in detail in the next section. Overall, this mindset is marked by universalism, inclusivity and egalitarianism. It has been termed the shared humanity mindset because it refers to a set of psychological features deriving from a focus on what human beings share in common, how they are ultimately more alike than they are different and how they all have an equal inherent worth. The theme of

shared humanity can be seen running through individuals' worldview, identity formation and how they frame the conflict. It is a conviction they develop in response to the interaction of certain personal traits with particular socialization experiences, and ultimately their primary concern emerges out of a belief that all society members are part of a single group and should recognize this humanity that they share and thus form caring and cooperative relationships with one another.

Linking the core category and primary concern.

The shared humanity mindset thus predisposes individuals to develop their primary concern of improving intergroup relations. This particular concern however, develops in the conditions of protracted conflict because the society so manifestly fails to have cooperative intergroup relations and because individuals can reasonably link the poor quality of intergroup relations to the propensity for outbreaks of intergroup violence. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that many intergroup peacebuilders in this sample were strongly aware of the human suffering and societal problems resulting from violent conflict, and out of the dissonance between their personal mindset and the social reality emerges the desire to take action to improve intergroup relations. Their ultimate goal is the creation of a society that better reflects the ideals of their worldview. Thus, their activism is shaped by their primary concern and, in turn, this leads them to work to inculcate elements of the shared humanity mindset in others.

4.3 The Shared Humanity Mindset

This section presents a full elaboration of the psychological features shared by the intergroup peacebuilders interviewed, as apparent from their interview transcripts and secondary data collected in the field. It deals in detail with the elements of a shared humanity mindset that were identified as mutually supportive and being closely associated with the development of a concern to improve intergroup relations in a protracted conflict. They are presented in a simplified, linear fashion not because they can be demonstrated to emerge chronologically within the psyche of individuals,

but because of the direction of their explanatory power. Thus, adherence to a universalist worldview explains why individuals would question oppositional group identities, prompting them to reevaluate their loyalties and encouraging them to include the out-group within their sphere of concern. In turn such a broadened sense of identity explains why individuals would take such an inclusive and balanced position when framing the conflict. While it is possible that being raised without a clear sense of group identity might alternatively support individuals to develop a universalist worldview, respondents' accounts suggest that exposure to universalist ideals or a transformative encounter with the out-group that challenged their prior worldview preceded the broadening of their sense of social identity and their development of an inclusive and balanced framing of the conflict. Collectively this worldview, sense of identity and conflict framing explain how these individuals have developed a primary concern to improve intergroup relations when faced with a society where intergroup relationships are often either lacking or marked by competition and hostility.

4.3.1 Universalist worldview.

Universalist Worldview (category)	**Broadened Identity Formation** (category)	**Inclusive Framing of Conflict** (category)
Subcategories: Essential sameness of all human beings Equal worth of all human beings Interdependence between groups	Subcategories: Questioning oppositional identities Broadening beyond narrow group loyalties Moral inclusion of out-group	Subcategories: Focus on shared suffering Attribution of shared responsibility for conflict Inclusive vision of future peace

The intergroup peacebuilders interviewed were notable for their strong adherence to three broad beliefs that have been conceptualized here as the category of "universalist worldview". This worldview comprises belief in the essential sameness

of all human beings, in the equal worth of all human beings and in the interdependence of groups in society, elaborated as subcategories in this subsection. Evidence is presented below for the intergroup peacebuilders' common adherence to these beliefs. The conceptualization of a universalist worldview emerged from constant comparison of patterns in the data, leading to an understanding of the assumptions shared by intergroup peacebuilders about social reality, regardless of the cultural or philosophical source of those beliefs.

Worldview emerged as an important explanatory concept, not least because intergroup peacebuilders often cited how their personal beliefs about human beings and society guide their decision-making and behavior. Thus, for example, Mary Hancock described her activism as deriving from an overall psychological framework that she described as *a value and belief system that's about humanity, and that's about the greater and common good*. Similarly, John Mallon stated that he saw his work on intergroup dialogues as an extension of his worldview where he believes there is *spirituality in (all) people, and in nature and life itself*. Based on such patterns in the data, the category of "universalist worldview" was developed to represent those beliefs about social reality largely shared among the intergroup peacebuilders.

Belief in the essential sameness of all human beings.

Belief in essential elements shared by all human beings was a strong pattern among the intergroup peacebuilders. Hence, the majority of respondents in this sample talked about similarities shared by members of the human race, in particular arguing that recognition of these similarities enables interpersonal connections across group identity boundaries. Thus, for example, Allison Chambers explained her view of how human similarities form the basis of connection:

> *I believe that the majority of people have compassion, that you can interact with them on some level….Because most people can link with another human person, and they can see that we are related to one another because we all suffer, we all love our children - those are universal things.*

Like Allison, then, many individuals in this sample expressed a conviction that recognizing this sameness has the power to transform individuals' relationship towards one another.

Hence, Gerry Dunne described a moment during a residential training program when two female participants recognized that the similarities of their experience transcended their differing identity backgrounds:

> *You know those moments in drama where…you are just spellbound, because they are telling you some kind of inner truth….Sometimes in our work that is what happens. It happened when we were on residential on the weekend. Two woman in front of the group spoke to each other. They didn't realize what they have in common, and as they spoke it became manifest. It wasn't just that they spoke it, but you could feel it.*

That Gerry describes this transformative moment as the revelation of an *inner truth* indicates the extent to which belief in the essential sameness of all human beings is a fundamental aspect of his worldview.

Meanwhile, other intergroup peacebuilders focused on the similarities of working class experience as a rationale for transcending divisive religio-national identities. Hence, for example, Seamus Murtough works on behalf of both Catholic and Protestant young people, despite his Irish Republican background. He explained his motivations in class terms, stating, *I find I have a passion for working with people from a working class background*, and going on to say that his view *on where reconciliation needs to be is with working class people, regardless of where they come from*.

Similarly, for John Mallon, recognizing the similarities between the struggles of his home community in Derry-Londonderry and those of the English working class prompted him to change his perspective on the British soldiers who had been harassing him in his home town. As he explained:

> *I was a youth and community worker in Manchester for a while, in…one of the poorest housing estates in Europe. It had huge problems, social problems. But if you translated Widdenshaw to Creggan in Derry, there wouldn't be a lot of difference, in terms of social conditions…. So that taught me something as*

well, in terms of these guys who were coming over (to Northern Ireland as soldiers) – they had very few choices in their lives.

Thus John, like many intergroup peacebuilders, found that direct observation of working class struggles fostered in him a sense of what he shared with others who had known those same experiences, regardless of religio-national identity.

Overall then, whether deriving from a philosophical view of human nature, or a recognition of shared experience among the working class, a sense of essential sameness seems to encourage individuals to recognize the possibilities for connection and empathy across identity groups. It also seems to underlie their commonly-held belief that individuals can connect on a human-to-human level, even across rigid group identity boundaries.

Belief in the equal value of all human beings.

The second element in this universalist worldview is the belief that all human beings have an inherent, equal value. This idea follows from belief in the essential sameness of all human beings, but goes further to encapsulate the belief that human beings are equally deserving of care, regardless of their group identity. This belief, again, was widespread among interview responses given by intergroup peacebuilders as they described the motivations underlying their work, and in particular their sense of equal responsibility towards the out-group and their in-group. This belief seems to be associated with their rejection of violence as a means of conflict resolution, and a preference for inclusive dialogue as the means of resolving differences among members of society.

The idea of equal human value was displayed strongly by respondents in this sample in allusions to the idea that everyone has something to offer and deserves to be included and given dignity in society. Every intergroup peacebuilder made at least one statement of support for a future society that would include all parties to the conflict, and that would do more to meet the needs of its most vulnerable members. Concern was often expressed for the experience and needs of others. Thus, for example, Amy Curran expressed her belief that peacebuilding should be based in equality and inclusivity:

It's all about belonging - if people feel a sense of belonging, included, valued, then they will more easily buy into a peace process. That's what I work at every day. That there is no such thing as domination, there is no such thing as privilege –that everyone matters and there is room for us all in a society we can share and be proud of.

Sentiments similar to Amy's concern to see a more inclusive and egalitarian society were expressed by many respondents in this sample.

Significantly, intergroup peacebuilders all displayed a recognition that the aspirations and experiences of the religio-national out-group were of equal worth to those of their in-group. Indeed, many seemed to be as concerned for the needs and aspirations of other identity groups as they were for those of their in-group into which they were born. Hence, for example, Ryan O'Sullivan expressed his concern that Northern Ireland would not arrive at a future that incorporates and reflects the identities and aspirations of both main ethno-national groups:

The future I would like to see … would be a future … where we find a way for people to say that they're Irish while at the same time acknowledge that they're British, that we could even live with that. But we are not there…we are still in a zero-sum game - someone has to win and someone has to lose. But I think that (a situation where both identities are acknowledged) is the only way that we would get to somewhere that I feel happy with, otherwise a whole load of people will feel that they have lost.

In this way, Ryan was typical of many in this sample in displaying a personal concern for the experience of others in his society, regardless of their religio-national identity.

Furthermore, belief in the equal value of all human beings was manifested in the concern of intergroup peacebuilders to prevent violence and harmdoing against members of all groups. A number of intergroup peacebuilders explicitly stated their the worth and value of each human life, like, for example, Malachy Dougan who stated that his overall sense of purpose in life was *preventing our people from killing one another*, a goal shaped in part at least by his religious belief in the sacredness of human life. In this short phrase, Malachy further illustrates his sense of the equal

worth of all members of society, as he is not concerned with protecting one preferred group from another, but with preventing members of a collective people from mutually harming one another.

Thus, a number of intergroup peacebuilders stated explicitly their belief in the preciousness of human life. Garry Dunne explained that his work is in part guided by a sense that *people are sacred… a philosophy that you and I and everybody can change for the better*. Meanwhile Tom McIvor found that his Christian beliefs meant that he firmly believed that it is *morally wrong to kill a human being for a political cause,* regardless of the identity of the killer or their political cause.

Belief in the inherent worth of human life also manifest in multiple statements made by respondents in this sample where they rejected the possibility of becoming involved in violence out of a concern for out-group suffering. Thus, for example, Malachy Dougan, who was present when 13 Catholic civilians were shot dead by the British Army in January 1972, an event credited with motivating many Catholics to join the pIRA (McKitterick & McVea, 2012), explained his personal response to violence:

> *I was on the Bloody Sunday march, and a young guy out of the youth club was behind me - he ended up getting shot…. That was traumatic at that time, because you have choices to make - either you could have joined the IRA or you could have stayed peaceful, but I had no intentions of ever wanting to kill anybody!*

On a similar note, Liam Mullan displayed a strong aversion to the use of violence by members of his local community, explaining his objection to political violence due to the worth of every human life:

> *I always think for all these people (who use violence), in any organization or army, they say "people have to die" and I would like to say to them, "well if we could just sacrifice one of your children, just one, and I guarantee you that would make everything be over and everything would be sorted - would you be prepared to make that sacrifice?" There is not many of them would do it.*

Liam and Malachy then, like many individuals in this sample, displayed a conviction that it is important to care equally about the suffering of all individuals. This outlook is associated with individuals' rejection of violence as an acceptable method for achieving political goals, and can be expected to encourage their pursuit of nonviolent approaches to resolving the conflict such as dialogue and relationship building.

Belief in the interdependence of identity groups in society.

A final important element involved in the universalist worldview of a shared humanity mindset is the belief that groups in a society are interdependent, and inevitably impact upon each other mutually. Statements about the naturalness and desirability of interdependence and mixing between groups, and the unnatural and harmful nature of social segregation were common among the intergroup peacebuilders. Many stated that, for them, interdependence between Protestants and Catholics was a natural state of affairs, something that had been corrupted by the violence of the Troubles. The majority recalled favorable memories of experiences of interdependence early in life.

To give a salient example, Fiona Maguire recalled fond memories of positive relationships between Catholics and Protestants when she was growing up before the Troubles:

> *I went in and out of the (other) churches for weddings, funerals or harvest times, the thanksgivings. And if I was away anywhere…with a friend of mine who was Protestant I went into church with her if I couldn't get a chapel….Religion is this big banner (now), but we never had labels before.*

For Fiona, then, in common with many respondents in this sample, interdependence between identity groups is a natural and desirable state of affairs. Fiona recounted her sense that these relationships were a public good that has been lost as a result of the Troubles but that deserves to be recovered, because for her *that is how you live your life.*

Many intergroup peacebuilders framed interdependence as a key aspect of their overall worldview. Hence, John Mallon explained that he is motivated by the

concept of a metaphysical connection between all human beings, reflected in the African term *Ubuntu*. Similarly, Amy Curran stated that she *could not understand the idea of separate people* when she encountered social segregation as a young woman returning to Belfast from multicultural Canada.

At the same time, many of the intergroup peacebuilders displayed a strong concern with how groups can impact upon one another in either constructive or destructive ways. Thus, individuals in this sample displayed an awareness of the impact of in-group actions on out-group members. For example, Malachy Dougan was able to disregard his membership of the Catholic community sufficiently to express an awareness of how social changes that had benefitted Catholics had been perceived by many Protestants. As he described:

> *Unionists, at the present point in time, are looking at what they see as loss…. They have lost control in Stormont, they have lost control in many of the local councils through proportional representation… they have lost the RUC, they have lost the B specials, they have lost the UDR, they have lost the Queen's picture, they have lost the right to parade…. On the other hand, Catholics don't understand that loss. And that is a problem.*

In this way, Malachy is aware of the role of both Catholic and Protestant perceptions in contributing to a current state of social tension and political disagreement. This is in keeping with the great majority of respondents in this sample who displayed a marked willingness to reflect on the negative impacts of in-group behavior on the out-group.

Summing up.

Comparing data between the two samples revealed that individuals motivated to participate in intergroup peacebuilding have a notably more universalistic worldview and are much less likely to conceptualize group identities in hierarchical terms. Their belief in the essential sameness of human beings and the equal worth of human beings can be seen to be associated with a conviction that group identity boundaries can be transcended by making deep personal connections, and with a strong aversion to the use of violence as a means of resolving conflict. Moreover their

belief in interdependence between identity groups as a natural state of affairs would seem to lead these individuals to be highly sensitive to the impact the actions of their in-group can have on other groups, as well as being desirous that the inevitable relationship between identity groups would be a positive one.

The exact origins of these beliefs cannot be determined with certainty from the data, although it can be observed that they are mutually supportive of one another, being found together as revealed in individuals' accounts. However, exposure to universalist ideas is discussed later in this chapter as one socialization experience that seems to act as a supportive factor in the development of a shared humanity mindset. Overall, these beliefs comprise a broadly universalist outlook on life, a set of assumptions about social reality that predispose individuals towards a broader and more inclusive formulation of their social identity. This topic is the subject of the next subsection.

4.3.2 Broadened identity formation.

Universalist Worldview (category)	**Broadened Identity Formation** (category)	**Inclusive Framing of Conflict** (category)
Subcategories: Essential sameness of all human beings Equal worth of all human beings Interdependence between groups	Subcategories: Questioning oppositional identities Broadening beyond narrow group loyalties Moral inclusion of out-group	Subcategories: Focus on shared suffering Attribution of shared responsibility for conflict Inclusive vision of future peace

An important consequence of adherence to a universalist worldview, and a significant stage in the process of becoming motivated to act as a peacebuilder in protracted conflict, is the impact on how individuals form their sense of group identity. While protracted conflicts are notable for the perpetuation of sharply distinct,

essentialized and oppositional group identities (Bar-Tal, 2007; Kelman, 1999), adherence to a universalist worldview seems to strongly encourage individuals to transcend narrow loyalties to their in-group. Instead of adhering to a clearly bounded sense of group identity, defined in opposition to a perceived enemy, the intergroup peacebuilders tended to express their sense of identity in much broader and more inclusive terms.

Patterns emerging from the data showed that intergroup peacebuilders had a notable tendency to question the inflexibility and absolutism of group identities as they are typically constructed in Northern Irish society. Many of them also displayed a lack of strong personal identification with their in-group. Instead, they were notable for their rejection of communal expectations of in-group loyalty, instead extending a sense of care and moral inclusion to the out-group. Thus, ultimately, many of them spoke in terms of being members of a shared society rather than identifying themselves solely as members of a religio-national group dedicated to opposing an enemy out-group.

Questioning oppositional identities.

The intergroup peacebuilders interviewed displayed a strong tendency to question simplistic notions of Northern Irish society as composed of two wholly distinct, oppositional identity groups. Instead, they expressed substantial skepticism regarding arguments that religio-national identities are primordial facts of the social landscape, often describing group identities as malleable social constructs. Hence, many respondents in this sample displayed a strong awareness of the ways in which socialization processes worked to inculcate loyalty among young group members. At the same time, the majority of respondents in this sample were convinced of the negative impact of oppositional conceptions of group identity.

Many intergroup peacebuilders pointed to the constructed nature of group identities in Northern Ireland, viewing attention to identity distinctions as a choice rather than an inevitable result of primordial, separate ethnicities and cultures. For example, Allison Chambers spoke against a claim for the distinct ethnic origins of Catholics and Protestants she had encountered on social media:

Also somebody… put on something about "we are a separate people", meaning Protestants. But as it turns out, he is a Loyalist paramilitary…. but he is related to my cousin who told me "his mother is a Catholic". So he is not a separate people! And who are these separate people? Maybe it's me, but then my grandmother was a Catholic so I am not that separate people (either).

Thus, similar to a number of respondents in this sample, Allison asserted her belief that identity boundaries are more permeable, and less inevitable, than most people in Northern Ireland like to believe. Most illustrative of this tendency, meanwhile, was Amy Curran who expressed her belief that national identities should be no more constrictive than support for a football team, an affiliation that can be changed at will by an individual.

The intergroup peacebuilders also often showed a strong awareness of how oppositional identities could be actively constructed by groups. A number of respondents in this sample were critical of how their religio-national in-group had provided them with highly selective narratives that claimed victimhood for the in-group alone. Hence, Cheryl Graham described her experience of acclimatization to communal memories based on her exposure to partial historical information among the Protestant community of Portadown:

My mommy… would say "that's when Catholics killed us, killed Protestants … in the River Bann". And then that was sort of (translated in my mind into)… "all Catholics kill you and put you in the water"….. Now I have since been told that about two weeks before that, Catholics were burned in a shed in Loughgall, and there was another massacre down the road maybe a week later. But we weren't told that (where I grew up).

Thus, Cheryl is now able to reflect on the limited nature of the historical information she was exposed to as a child, questioning her in-group's desire to identify themselves as the exclusive victims of history.

Alternatively, Clare Connor described how she had often questioned in-group narratives when she was growing up in West Belfast, a fact she credits to her mother's insistence that she be skeptical of *urban legends*. Clare recalled events almost from the perspective of an outsider, able to consider that leaders in her community were

using the opportunity to build loyalty to an in-group identity strongly opposed to the British state. As she recalled, *there was always where you were being shown things, and told things, to make you more sympathetic to the Republican cause*. Thus Clare is similar to many respondents in this sample, who generally displayed the ability to take a somewhat detached perspective on their religio-national in-group, alongside a willingness to question in-group narratives.

At the same time, other intergroup peacebuilders grew up with a relatively clear sense of group identity, and it was only later that particular life experiences caused them to question their previous understanding of their own group and the out-group. This topic is dealt with later in this chapter, in the section on socialization processes.

Furthermore, individuals in this sample were largely critical of the role identities played in fostering societal problems and limiting individuals' life opportunities. As Liam Mullan explained, *it is a divisive system - when you have politics based on Protestant and Catholic or British and Irish, instead of on issues, it's them and us - it's not going to work*. Hence, the great majority of the intergroup peacebuilders interviewed expressed a belief that Northern Irish society would be greatly improved if identity-based segregation were to be eliminated. Thus, their sense that such oppositional constructions of group identities are contrived and unnecessary is often compounded by a concern that such oppositional formations of group identity are actively harmful to the wellbeing of the most vulnerable members of their society.

Broadening beyond narrow group loyalties.

The individuals in this sample were also notable for their lessened degree of identification with their religio-national in-group, as well as for their formulation of a much broader sense of identity. Rather than displaying a blind loyalty to the in-group, they were often openly critical of the in-group and frequently displayed an equal concern for out-group needs and experience. The process of broadening beyond narrow group identities can be conceived as comprising two elements; the lessening of personal identification with the religio-national in-group and the development of a broader, more plural sense of social identity.

The individuals in this sample were much less strongly identified with their in-group than those in the within-group activist sample. For some intergroup peacebuilders this lessened identification with the religio-national in-group can be traced to their socialization in a family that itself was not deeply identified with the in-group. For others, they initially identified quite strongly with their in-group but at some point, becoming aware of the harmful consequences of intolerance and violence, their moral values called in-group loyalty into question. Their socialization into a less-identified family is explored later in this chapter under the category of socialization experiences.

For now, however, it is worth noting that many respondents in this sample explicitly recognized that they did not want to conform to the expectations of loyalty they perceived emanating from their religio-national in-group. This was usually expressed in moral terms as, for these interviewees, adherence to a narrow group identity was bound up with expectations to at least tacitly condone in-group violence. Thus, many intergroup peacebuilders rejected full identification with the in-group for moral reasons. For example, Liam Mullan confessed his ambivalence towards a group identity that seemed to demand his participation in violence, saying, *the image in South Armagh was to be a fighter defending the Irish, and I was as Irish as anybody and considered myself that, but I didn't buy into the fighting end of it*. Similarly, Tom McIvor explicitly rejected a militarized notion of group belonging:

> *A common phrase people would have used when I was growing up was "a true Ulsterman is prepared to fight and die for Ulster". And I remember knowing pretty early on that meant I wasn't a true Ulsterman…because I wasn't going to fight and die for that.*

Thus it would seem that dissonance between personal moral values and the norms of the identity group in times of violent conflict prompted some individuals to lessen their sense of identification with the in-group. Their at least partial de-identification from the in-group suggests that their individual-level moral identity is more important to them than membership of a group to which they have been assigned arbitrarily by birth.

One indication of this lessened identification with the in-group was the strong willingness among the intergroup peacebuilders to voice criticism of in-group

attitudes and behavior. Thus, for example, Gareth McNeill voiced his frustration with the confrontational ways that some members of his in-group engage with their culture:

> *It's ridiculous when some Protestants try to pretend that they're super-Prods by throwing tires on a bonfire.... Your culture is about a Protestant faith, which a lot of people don't adhere to, so there's a bit of double-standards there…. You know, there's many contradictions, and I wish people would spend a bit more time reading about their culture, rather than protesting about having a lack of it, because you gain it by your knowledge, I think.*

In this way, Gareth reflects a wider trend among respondents in this sample, being willing to voice opinions substantially different from the collective narratives propagated among the religio-national group into which he had been born.

At the same time, some individuals rejected the very notion of group belonging, preferring to focus on membership of humanity as a whole. Hence, when asked about her sense of group identity Clare Connor replied simply, *I don't have one.* Similarly, Mary Hancock affirmed, *I don't feel that I have a group identity as such*, while John Mallon described himself as, above all, a *global citizen*, and Liam Mullan declared, *first and foremost I feel I belong to the human race.* For these individuals at least, it seems that identification with humanity as a whole is a satisfactory substitute for identification with a religio-national group, an option more congruent with their universalist worldview.

Others in this sample described themselves in dual or hybrid terms, asserting the possibility of being both Irish and British at once. Thus, Amy Curran described herself as *Irbish* meaning she considers herself both British and Irish. Similarly, Ryan O'Sullivan explained the duality of his belonging:

> *In the same breath I could identify with (Irish) Republicanism, and at the same time rage against it. I feel the same about my British identity - I can feel proud of it and ashamed of it. I'm very mixed about my identity.*

The idea that British and Irish are mutually exclusive and inevitably opposed is thus challenged by how these intergroup peacebuilders construct their sense of self in a complex social world.

Meanwhile, other respondents in this sample related how they have developed a nuanced and overlapping sense of identity that responds flexibly to changing life experiences. Illustrative of this pattern was Gareth McNeill who gave a long and considered response to being questioned about his sense of group identity:

> *It really depends how it's defined…. I still have an identity with Britain, but as I get older and older, that's less and less somehow, although not consciously, but because…I'm working cross-border and I'm working with Republicans, Catholics and Nationalists, as much as I'm working with Loyalists. And in some ways, it doesn't really matter what you call the country….We're here, and we have to look after here for a little bit, and do our best possible job doing (that). So really, the whole identity thing, it's changing (for me).*

Gareth was typical of a number of other intergroup peacebuilders in expressing a sense of multiple and over-lapping identities, and in vocalizing an awareness that the situation in Northern Ireland is complex with identities existing in many possible shades of grey rather than a simple binary between Protestants and Catholics.

Thus, overall, while intergroup peacebuilders described their sense of group identity in a number of different ways, they were united by their conviction that they were free to determine their personal sense of identity, rejecting communal expectations of loyalty. The great majority seemed to actively strive to construct a broader sense of identity with the potential to be more inclusive of others. They are, thus, comfortable criticizing their religio-national in-group, and, as is explored below, are highly willing to morally include the out-group.

Moral inclusion of the out-group.

It is a noted facet of protracted conflicts that individuals often become impervious to the suffering of the out-group, and can favor aggressive action against the out-group if it is believed to protect in-group interests (Bar-Tal & Hammack,

2012; Maoz & McCauley, 2008; Staub & Bar-Tal, 2003). Moral inclusion is an existing theoretical concept used to describe the psychological phenomena whereby individuals distinguish between those they believe deserve their care and those who do not (Opotow 1990; Opotow, 2012). The term moral exclusion refers to a cognitive process whereby certain groups or individuals come to be viewed as unworthy of moral treatment. Moral inclusion, then, refers to viewing others as fully human and equally deserving of being treated with the same morals applied to behavior towards in-group members. Employing theoretical sensitivity, as outlined in chapter 3, the term moral inclusion is adopted here to refer to the common attitude of care and inclusion displayed by intergroup peacebuilders when discussing the out-group.

Moral inclusion of the out-group was demonstrated frequently by intergroup peacebuilders in statements expressing empathy for out-group suffering and a substantial awareness of, and sympathy for, out-group perspectives. Hence, for example Clare Connor, despite her upbringing as a Catholic in West Belfast, expressed her concern that Protestant communities are coping less well with post-peace agreement reality. She highlighted the contrast, stating that she sees a degree of optimism and prosperity in West Belfast that is lacking among the Protestants she works with:

> *I feel really sorry for a lot of the people that I work with…. It's because the Troubles are still very real for most of the men I see in (Orange) Lodges. Many of them are ex-UDR. I think there hasn't been enough done about ex-UDR people through the Troubles.*

Similar sentiments, expressing concern for the experience of others who might typically be seen as enemies, were highly prevalent among respondents in this simple.

Going further, Mary Hancock, whose husband was left permanently disabled by an IRA attack, displayed a concern to understand rather than condemn his attackers:

> *It goes back to violence, and the reality of what violence does. And today, it's one of the best kept secrets, when you incite young people to violence you've no idea – perpetrators or victims, they live with trauma… (perpetrators) live*

with what they've done as much as…(victims) live with what's been done to them…. If I see them as somebody who needs help and support, I'm there.

In this, Mary provides a particularly strong example of a common theme among individuals in this sample, a sense of moral inclusion that extends even to those members of the out-group who more typically would be seen as aggressors and enemies.

An important aspect of the moral inclusion of the out-group is an improved awareness of, and empathy for, out-group aspirations and struggles. Thus, for example, Seamus Murtough, although he holds Irish Republican aspirations and would like to see Northern Ireland politically incorporated with the rest of Ireland, expressed his concern that Protestants would be protected and included in such a state:

I would like to see… an overall Ireland context. But what I would like to see within that overall context is so much checks and balances that others who then become the minority will never have to worry about discrimination or being in any way victimized. And I would like to see, if we were in that situation, that Protestantism would have a place – an equal place – to commemorate their culture...

Thus, Seamus, like many respondents in this sample, demonstrated considerable concern for out-group wellbeing, suggesting a strong level of moral inclusion of the out-group.

Furthermore, the intergroup peacebuilders' broadening beyond narrow group identities and their concern for out-group wellbeing are associated with a strong concern for the collective good of Northern Irish society as a whole. Thus, intergroup peacebuilders spoke largely about problems affecting society as a whole, and rarely focused solely on in-group experience of social problems. They tended, moreover, to view the social segregation of identity groups as problematic for the health of the overall society, without displaying any concern that a more integrated society might facilitate a certain dilution of in-group culture and identity.

Hence, for example, Amy Curran worked for a time as a local council member on behalf of the cross-community Women's Coalition party. As she recounted, she saw her role as endeavoring to improve life for all citizens:

> *For me was it was about change. I brought the Women's Coalition values to the Council chamber and used them as best I could around inclusivity, diversity and human rights. In everything I did, I focused on these. I had no party line to follow - I just focused on these values.*

Thus, Amy believed that in moving beyond the identity-basis of local party politics, she was better able to work for the benefit of all citizens.

Or going further, Tom McIvor expressed the belief that a more integrated society would have important tangible benefits for the Northern Irish population as a whole:

> *If you take Belfast, if all those (peace) walls were down, and we had a more integrated society, I think it would be much more prosperous because I think the creativity and the industry and the outward investment coming in….And I think the most socially deprived areas, both because of politicians elected on social and economic issues, and because of the not wasting money on segregation and the other money that would bring in, I think it would address poverty issues as well. All of that, I think, would be connected.*

In this way, like Tom, many intergroup peacebuilders related their vision for a future that would be characterized by greater attention to the concrete needs of individuals and communities, regardless of their religio-national identity.

Overall, moral inclusion of the out-group suggests some degree of identification with the out-group, or, at least, a strong willingness to acknowledge a degree of relationship with others beyond the in-group. This broadened identification would seem to support a concern with the collective good of society, in contrast with the general tendency in protracted conflicts for individuals to clearly prioritize the wellbeing of the in-group over that of the out-group (see Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal & Hammack, 2012; Opotow, 2012).

Summing up.

It can be seen then that the shared humanity mindset is marked not only by adherence to a worldview characterized by universalist and egalitarian beliefs, but by a sense of social identity that is broader than a delineated religio-national group. Questioning the inevitability of group identity distinctions, intergroup peacebuilders define their own sense of belonging in more plural and inclusive terms. For some individuals this manifested as identification with humanity as a whole, while others have constructed a multifaceted or hybrid sense of self. Such broadened formations of identity are associated with a willingness to criticize the in-group and a strong tendency to morally include the out-group. Out of this broadened perspective on society stems a concern with the collective good of society as a whole, and a desire to see a social system and form of politics that can benefit members of all identity groups equally. This, in turn, shapes how these individuals understand the conflict and how they define a future vision of peace, as examined now in the next subsection.

4.3.3 Framing conflict and peace inclusively.

Universalist Worldview (category)	**Broadened Identity Formation** (category)	**Inclusive Framing of Conflict** (category)
Subcategories: Essential sameness of all human beings Equal worth of all human beings Interdependence between groups	Subcategories: Questioning oppositional identities Broadening beyond narrow group loyalties Moral inclusion of out-group	Subcategories: Focus on shared suffering Attribution of shared responsibility for conflict Inclusive vision of future peace

Aside from their worldview and formation of identity, the intergroup peacebuilders interviewed could be seen to share a number of notable similarities in how they view the past violent conflict and in their vision of future peace. Thus, they strongly tended to acknowledge the suffering of out-group members as well as the in-

group, while those who discussed the causes of the conflict assigned responsibility to both the in-group and out-group. Moreover, respondents in this sample were united in envisioning a future peace where all identity groups would be equally included and respected.

Employing theoretical sensitivity, the concept of framing is useful for describing the ways in which individuals make sense of society. Frames are mental schema that allow for the interpretation of social reality and direct attention toward what is believed to be important (Dewulf et al., 2009). As can be seen in this subsection, respondents in this sample shared a strong tendency to view past violent conflict and a hypothetical future peace in highly inclusive terms. The common patterns identified among respondents' framing of the conflict were acknowledgement of shared suffering, advocacy of shared responsibility for the harm caused by the conflict, and an inclusive vision of future peace. Thus, how intergroup peacebuilders frame the conflict supports the development of their motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding as a form of social activism.

Acknowledging shared suffering.

The intergroup peacebuilders were notable for their tendency to view the suffering of both sides in the conflict in equal terms. A number of them explicitly rejected the notion of any hierarchy of victimhood, while others spoke with concern about the suffering caused by violence without regard to identity boundaries. Thus the universalist dimensions of their worldview and their broadened sense of identity would seem to support intergroup peacebuilders to be highly egalitarian in their acknowledgement of suffering caused by the political violence of the Troubles.

The willingness to acknowledge equally the suffering caused by violence to both religio-national identity groups was exemplified by Amy Curran who related how she had been active during the Troubles in organizing public events mourning loss of all lives:

> *(I) was involved in organizing many vigils saying all death is wrong and that we needed to work to ensure that we could create a society where there is no more death and we can work together….We spent a lot of time in front of the*

City Hall (in Belfast) after terrible atrocities, gathering people together in solidarity to call for an end to the violence.

Amy's concern to acknowledge the essential value of every human life lost, and the pain of all grieving relatives, reflects a common pattern among respondents in this sample. Notably, with suffering shared across all groups, the conflict becomes the enemy, being the source of suffering for all.

Intergroup peacebuilders, then, tended strongly to reject any notion of a hierarchy of victimhood. Rather than according greater significance to the suffering of in-group members, or delegitimating the claims to victimhood of the out-group, individuals in this sample described highly inclusive understandings of victimhood. Thus, for example, Clare Connor explicitly rejected the notion that some victims could be labeled innocent while others could be held to be less deserving of sympathy:

My view (on the idea of innocent victims) is, going back to the wee fella who was so badly injured with the plastic bullet (by state forces), all his brothers joined the IRA…because their little brother was so badly maimed on an empty street. And they probably committed terrible atrocities. And then two of them got killed and are down in with the IRA volunteers (in the cemetery). So that whole hierarchy of victimhood, to me, is (misleading)…I really can't see where you can start and decide the innocent victim thing.

Moreover, a number of respondents in this sample recognized the equal capacity of perpetrators of violence to suffer. Thus, for example, Amy Curran explained her perspective:

I have noticed simply that we all have the potential (for violence).... People got involved because of their own circumstances in doing things that would have been totally uncharacteristic…. I have met and worked with so many people…who have done things (they regret) and who have to live with that, to live with what they did - especially as young teenagers -and find it very difficult to live with that.

Thus, intergroup peacebuilders as a whole strongly tended to avoid discriminating between claims to victimhood and instead acknowledged all claims to suffering as equally valid regardless of religio-national identity.

Acknowledging shared responsibility for the harm caused by conflict.

Intergroup peacebuilders also displayed a common tendency to acknowledge that both sides in the conflict had caused harm to others, and that both religio-national groups had some responsibility for the continuation of a long-standing identity conflict in Northern Irish society. This reluctance to blame a single group more strongly than others is associated with a preference for deflecting blame from specific actors onto the wider social forces of sectarianism and segregation. From this stems respondents' frequently expressed sense that all citizens in Northern Ireland have a role to play in examining and overcoming their own prejudices as a contribution to building sustainable peace.

Intergroup peacebuilders were notable for their tendency not to blame any particular group more than others for perpetuating the conflict, instead preferring to focus on how all members of society contribute to conflict continuance. Hence, they tended to focus on what Tom McIvor described as the *similarities of sectarianism*, exhibited equally by both sides in the conflict. Similarly, Ryan O'Sullivan was critical of the lack of motivation among both religio-national groups to build a shared society:

> *It's difficult to conceive of a situation where you can have a dual equal identity (as a Northern Irish citizen) – it's not impossible but it's difficult. The only way it will happen is if people actually set out to make that happen, it won't happen by accident. But neither of our main traditions are setting out for that….There is no common goal of a shared identity*.

Ryan then, frames the ongoing conflict as resulting from both religio-national groups conspiring to avoid integration and potential loss of identity.

Respondents in this sample largely avoided blaming a specific out-group for causing the outbreak of violence, and instead focused on discussing how a social system based around sectarianism and segregation contributes to intergroup hostility and violence. Thus for example, Steven Walker referred to the *mental barriers*

keeping communities separate while also criticizing a government policy of segregating housing estates in the early years of the Troubles. Others, like Gerry Dunne, drew a strong link between social segregation and violence:

> *It makes it easier for gunmen and gunwomen to thrive because we are all (living) in this ghetto…. But in terms of values, right at the center of this is, if I grew up in a ghetto and I don't know that other story, part of what needs to happen for healing here is that people (need to) hear each other.*

Thus, like many in this sample, Gerry holds the view that lack of relationships between identity groups is an important driver of violent conflict.

Similarly, when intergroup peacebuilders discussed the origins of the Troubles, they tended to attribute the outbreak of violent conflict to a complex set of historical forces. This was aptly illustrated by Clare Connor, who gave her analysis of how violence came to break out in the late 1960s:

> *I just think it was…the times, and things converging... the whole spirit of the sixties, the whole revolutionary thing, and how Republicanism draped itself in that (revolutionary rhetoric)…. plus the fact that…. the Northern Ireland state from 1922 pretty much lent itself to feeding that, through the discrimination that was going on at the time, the lack of rights. So everything was just crashing together and culminating (in violence).*

In this way Clare, like many in this sample, takes the view that both religio-national groups interacted with one another and were impacted by wider cultural trends resulting in an outbreak of violence. In their view, responsibility cannot be attributed wholly to a single group but rather to multiple interdependent factors.

However, in deflecting blame onto the wider society intergroup peacebuilders were not absolving individuals from responsibility to contribute to peace. Rather, as all citizens of Northern Ireland participate in a divided social system all are responsible for contributing to conflict transformation, in the view of many respondents in this sample. This sentiment was well illustrated by Amy Curran who spoke passionately about the need for everyone to take ownership of the peace process and live their lives according to the values of peace:

We all have to take steps if we are going to make a change happen…that we all work together consistently to change the way we have done things in the past and to build something different - that's the way forward.

In this way Amy reflects the attitudes of many respondents in this sample, that all members of society share some degree of responsibility for the continuance of conflict and that, therefore, all individuals have some responsibility to make changes at the personal level that, it is hoped, can contribute to sustainable peace.

Envisioning an inclusive future peace.

The intergroup peacebuilders tended to express the belief that sustainable peace between identity groups is both possible and highly desirable. While many individuals living in protracted conflicts hold concerns about possible losses for the in-group associated with peaceful compromise (Bar-Tal, 2007; Gayer et al., 2009), respondents in this sample painted an overwhelmingly positive picture of the benefits they believed would result from the achievement of sustainable peace. Their vision of peace was highly inclusive, concerned with out-group as well as in-group wellbeing, while most respondents favored a much more integrated society in Northern Ireland.

Intergroup peacebuilders were overwhelmingly positive about the benefits they believed would result from sustainable peace, and none of them raised fears that a more integrated society would negatively impact religio-national identities or cultures. Rather, respondents in this sample often affirmed their belief that sustainable peace would result in a better society for all. Hence, for example, Mary Hancock envisioned peace as a new form of politics better able to address practical issues:

I think that for me, peace is a new generation of politicians who don't have the legacy of the past… to haunt them, or to keep informing their politics in the future. So for me peace will look like a whole range of new politicians, fighting for community politics and fighting for…the man and woman on the street, rather than doing party politics.

Thus, peace was often envisioned by respondents in this sample as resulting not only in the prevention of intergroup violence, but was also seen as a necessary precursor to a more just and prosperous society.

Many respondents envisioned peace as a more plural society where all identities would be equally included and respected. For example Amy Curran spoke of her desire for a more inclusive future society:

> *Irishness (would be) as much accepted in our society as Britishness, that the fear of that (diversity) dissipates, that people coming from other countries are welcomed and not treated with the racism that is happening today…. So I would like to see Northern Ireland become, really become, an inclusive society.*

Amy's vision of peace, like that of many in this sample, is highly inclusive of different identity groups, indeed peace is understood as arising from relationships characterized by acceptance of difference and the willingness to include other identities and cultures.

Thus, many individuals in this sample articulated a vision of peace as a more integrated society, with members of different identity groups interacting in relationships characterized by care and respect for one another. In this way, Tom McIvor spoke about the possibilities for a more integrated society in Northern Ireland and the benefits that he believed would result for the most disadvantaged sections of society:

> *I think (if peace were achieved) people would be living together more, we'd have more integrated areas. It'd be ok to be maybe the minority in a village that's traditionally majority one side or the other, that's alright, you're cherished…. I think that would be great, a sense that you can live wherever you want really, and it's ok, no one's going to bother you because you're a minority, it's the opposite, they think it's great that you're there.*

Tom's vision of peace then, like that of many intergroup peacebuilders was intimately connected to a more integrated society where identity groups can enjoy cooperative relationships with one another.

The intergroup peacebuilders then, tended not to envision future peace with reference to the particular concerns of their religio-national in-group but rather expressed their interest in the collective good, displaying a concern for the wellbeing of all identity groups in any future society. Their preference was for a society marked by respectful interdependence between members of different identity groups. This inclusive vision of peace would, then, logically support the development of their primary concern to improve intergroup relations as they tended to conceive of a relational approach as central to peacebuilding.

Summing up.

Respondents in this sample displayed significant similarities in how they framed the past conflict and their future vision of a more peaceful society. Taking an inclusive approach to framing the conflict, they acknowledge the shared suffering resulting from political violence, and attribute responsibility for perpetuating the conflict to all identity groups. As a result their conceptualization of victimhood is inclusive and non-hierarchical. Similarly, their tendency was to envision future peace as including all identities and cultures on equal terms, accompanied by the hope that this would provide practical benefits for those most socially and economically marginalized in Northern Ireland.

Hence, it seems that adherence to a universalist worldview, and a broadened sense of group identity provides individuals with an important cognitive foundation for taking a broad and inclusive perspective on the conflict and any vision of future peace. Intergroup peacebuilders' conflict framing thus moves beyond adherence to selective narratives common among their particular religio-national in-group. With conflict viewed as a shared problem, the need for co-operation between identity groups begins to become apparent, as does the responsibility of ordinary individuals to contribute to building an inclusive future peace. The process of formulating a goal for social change is the subject of the next subsection.

4.4 Adopting Goal for Social Change

An individual's development of the psychological features encapsulated in the shared humanity mindset does much to explain how they would develop a primary concern of improving intergroup relations. Belief in the essential sameness and equal worth of individuals and the interdependence of groups in society predisposes an individual to broaden beyond their identification with the in-group and to view their society from a broader and more inclusive perspective. In particular, these features support them to adopt an inclusive framing of the past violence and desired future peace. Cumulatively, this mindset attunes individuals to a concern for the collective good, and to developing a conviction that cooperative relationships between members of different identity groups are natural and desirable.

An individual's concern to improve intergroup relations is formed, then, as their belief in the value of cooperative intergroup relationships interacts with a social situation where such relationships are often lacking, and where intergroup relations are hostile. As will be seen in this section, the intergroup peacebuilders displayed a shared conviction that Northern Irish society needs to change in ways that would support improved relations between identity groups. This perceived need for change, in turn, seems to shape the particular form of their activism as they work to inculcate aspects of the shared humanity mindset in others.

4.4.1 Perceiving the need for change.

A number of intergroup peacebuilders explained their motivations in terms of a reaction to experiences of violence and division, often experienced at first hand. Dissonance between their personal ideals and the realities of conflict in Northern Irish society, seems to have prompted many individuals in this sample to become determined to improve intergroup relations. Thus, their adherence to a shared humanity mindset supports their belief that Northern Irish society needs to change in more peaceful and cooperative directions.

Hence, for example, Malachy Dougan related how his belief in the worth of human life contrasted with the surrounding violence in his society. Having witnessed

the death of an acquaintance on Bloody Sunday, he decided that he *never wanted to be killing anybody,* while the experience of the pIRA exploding a bomb in his barber shop *convinced him that he wanted to do something about our situation (in Northern Ireland).*

Similarly, Amy Curran recalled how she could not reconcile her personal beliefs with the prejudice she witnessed on her return to Belfast from living in Canada as a teenager:

> *I had come from such a mixed background in Canada, all the children, our neighbors, were from different backgrounds, and for me then to be sent to a school that was all female and all Protestant was strange…. And all of a sudden when it came to 12 July, and all the celebrations for the Protestant community - even at that time, and that was in 1964 we would go on a trip and the girls would end up throwing lightbulbs out of the top window of the bus at Catholics on the Ardoyne even then….And all this was just so alien to me, so I being the rebel that I am - I have been all my life - I stopped taking part in any of the celebrations.*

Amy went on to explain how her sharp awareness of the problems of sectarianism helped to shape her commitment to working towards a more inclusive society. In this, both she and Malachy reflect a wider pattern among this sample whereby individuals developed their primary concern in reaction to a certain dissonance between how their mindset suggests people should behave and the realities of Northern Irish society.

Meanwhile, a number of intergroup peacebuilders attributed their motivation to improve intergroup relations to personal experiences of the suffering caused by violence. For example Ryan O'Sullivan related how his near-death experience at the hands of loyalist paramilitaries did not turn him against the Protestant community, but rather he stated that the incident *just put me off the whole situation (of conflict) altogether*. Meanwhile, Tom McIvor expressed the view that close experience of the conflict motivated his desire for peace:

> *I would've noticed that people who lost loved ones could have gone either way and often when they lost loved ones it made them quite understandably bitter*

and angry. And I totally understand that. But I also noticed that not everyone did that, and some people went, in some ways, went the other way – in terms of being so… so shaken by what violence can do to a family, that the last thing they would want would be for this to happen to anybody else. And that would have been my sense of, you know… the whole tit-for-tat thing, I used to be appalled by that. You know, that there was just more misery, more funerals, more coffins.

Similarly, Mary Hancock stressed how personal experience of the harm caused by violence motivated her work to improve intergroup relations. She related how the attack on her husband changed her perspective and set her on a path to working for peace:

That was a big wake-up call for me. What violence does. That has stayed with me…. And I think if I were to say to you what motivates me, (I'd say opposition to) violence in all shapes and forms – it doesn't have to be physical, (it can be) verbal, or psychological violence, you know, and the damage it does…. What it does is it can stop people from living fully. So that's a big driving (force).

Thus, Mary, like many in this sample, draws on her own painful experience of the consequences of a breakdown in social relations, as she sees it, in developing a concern to improve intergroup relations as a means to prevent future suffering for others.

With social segregation and lack of relationships blamed for the conflict, and the human costs of violence witnessed directly, intergroup peacebuilders developed a primary concern of improving intergroup relations. As outlined earlier, this goal is believed to contribute to the collective good by reducing the many harmful effects of separation, including the damage caused by violence and the negative impacts of identity politics on working class experience.

4.4.2 Shaping activism to resolve the primary concern.

Drawing on their concern of improving intergroup relations, respondents in this sample readily accepted opportunities to become actively involved in intergroup peacebuilding. In interviews, they spoke passionately about their work and their hopes that their activism can contribute to improved intergroup relations and a future sustainable peace. Many recounted how they enthusiastically took up opportunities to become involved in peacebuilding work, sometimes presented by friends and acquaintences in their personal networks. We can surmise that respondents in this sample took up such opportunities because these aligned with their mindset, and the primary concern they had developed to see improved intergroup relations.

The intergroup peacebuilders were remarkably willing to accept the potential negative consequences of their work, including rejection by others in their in-group. Thus, for example, Steven Walker related how his transition from paramilitary to peacebuilder had impacted his position within his own community:

> *I have made enemies within my own community. Some of my personal friends have never spoken to me since I took up the role of peacebuilder. And I mean real close friends…they see me as a traitor, an enemy.*

However, Steven emphasized that he had no regrets about getting involved in intergroup peacebuilding:

> *It doesn't worry me (to lose friends) because I know I'm doing right in what I am doing…especially when I see real positive outcomes - young people engaging on a cross-community basis…young people being educated about what diversity is, young people embracing the concept of Human Rights.*

In this way Steven's example reflects a tendency among the intergroup peacebuilders to shape their activism according to the beliefs of a shared humanity mindset rather than following the expectations of in-group members.

In a similar vein, Mary Hancock was willing to accept financial insecurity in her career, in order to pursue her activism goals:

…making the decision to leave (my job in local government) and head up a project that I had been passionate about…having a centre for people to come (and mix), was a big, big decision. Leaving the statutory sector, the safe environment of having a steady job, and being respected because of the fact that, you know, when you're seen as a statutory body you're seen as being a professional. When you work in the community sector you're a do-gooder. So that was big risk, but to this day I don't have one regret, not one regret. I've achieved so much more in the (voluntary) sector.

Thus, Mary and Steven, like many of the intergroup peacebuilders, expressed a willingness to accept personal difficulties resulting from involvement in intergroup peacebuilding. In particular, their primary concern seems to provide sufficient internal motivation to overcome external barriers such as the disapprobation of their community or financial insecurity.

With the intergroup peacebuilders adhering strongly to the features of a shared humanity mindset, the means to resolve their primary concern and improve intergroup relations is viewed as encouraging others to make changes to their mindset. Thus, to give an illustrative example, Mary Hancock described how she views changing individuals' mindsets as an essential element of intergroup peacebuilding:

I think it's about liberation. You free people up to think differently. And you know, that (really) happens. We've just finished a course in Cookstown with a big group of people, it was about the shared history – and just the conversations where people were able to say "I never knew that!" or "I have never, ever thought of it that way before", those are the things that you almost see visibly, that… the light goes on.

As Mary exemplifies, many intergroup peacebuilders made a link between individuals' attitudes and their ability to engage in cooperative dialogue with out-group members.

Similarly, Cheryl Graham believes her work involves challenging young people to question oppositional constructions of group identities presented to them by others in their community:

It's people's parents, and grandparents (influence them)…. My mummy would be very, very sectarian…and I would say to her "you know mummy, that's a disgrace the way you're talking!"…. *So my job is about saying to young people "well no matter what your parents say, try to have your own (opinion), try to have your own mind as well, and open your horizons - don't just listen to what mummy and daddy tells you".*

Hence, for Cheryl and many other intergroup peacebuilders, their activism is shaped by a desire to free individuals from any psychological influences in their social context that might prevent them from engaging in building cooperative relationships with out-group members.

Thus, individuals in this sample tended to enthusiastically embrace opportunities to engage in intergroup peacebuilding activism. Indeed, a number of them became involved through personal contact with an existing intergroup peacebuilder. Hence, for example, both John Mallon and Fiona Maguire attributed their involvement in peacebuilding work to meeting Mary Hancock who offered them opportunities for engagement. Similarly, Liam Mullan related how he found his way into peacebuilding work at the invitation of an existing intergroup peacebuilder:

*The first actual bit of peace work (I did) probably was with Jacki*e. *It was with the ... youth club, we had a group of young Moslems come down and work with the boys from south Armagh. I remember Jackie asked me to do that, but I don't remember how she tracked me down! I would have been known about this area… (my) house has always been full of coming and going with people from different cultures and countries visiting - it's just one of those places…. (But) I would say it started (with Jackie). I was probably doing work that was peace funded in the background, but I wasn't involved in it formally or anything (before that).*

This pattern, illustrated by Liam, suggests that engagement in intergroup peacebuilding activities can spread along networks of individuals, with those who already adhere to the features of a shared humanity mindset being the most likely to take up opportunities for involvement. As also touched on in Liam's account, the role

of external funding deserves to be acknowledged for its contribution in enabling many individuals who share in this primary concern to increase and intensify their work in their local communities (see also Byrne, 2011).

Summing up.

Overall then, developing a concern to improve relations between identity groups provides the final impetus to engage in intergroup peacebuilding activism. As related in their life history interviews, the intergroup peacebuilders had previously developed many of the features of a shared humanity mindset. Hence, they reacted against the violence and division in Northern Irish society by adopting the goal of improving intergroup relations and shaped their activism towards this goal by attempting to inculcate similar psychological features in others.

It would seem, then, that where individuals adhere strongly to the features of a shared humanity mindset, they will be more predisposed to be concerned about the quality of intergroup relations. Where such individuals have personal experiences of the suffering resulting from identity-based violence they will be even more likely to engage in improving intergroup relations as these experiences of divison contrast sharply with their adherence to a universalist worldview. Out of this dissonance between personal ideals and social reality, individuals find sufficient internal motivations to overcome external impediments and become active in their local communities.

4.5 Factors Supporting the Development of a Shared Humanity Mindset

Data analysis revealed that not only did the intergroup peacebuilders share notable similarities in mindset, but they also displayed certain personal traits and recounted certain socialization experiences that distinguished them from within-group activists. These factors of personal traits and socialization experiences make an important contribution to explaining how some individuals develop a shared humanity mindset in the context of a protracted conflict while others, as explored in chapter 5,

develop a notably different mindset and become motivated to engage primarily in within-group activism.

Explaining why anyone does anything is not simple. Furthermore, there is no consensus in the social sciences as to the degree to which human development is shaped by innate tendencies and the degree to which it results from social learning in a particular cultural environment (see for example McCrae & Costa, 1997; Rogoff, 2003). Nevertheless, following the inductive nature of CGTM, the accounts given by interviewees suggest that personal traits and socialization experiences can have a mutually-reinforcing effect on one another. The notable differences in both personal traits and life experiences between the two samples, suggest that certain traits can be developed or discouraged through exposure to life experiences. At the same time, it is possible that some personal traits are at least partly innate and lead individuals to pursue or avoid certain life experiences such as traveling abroad or pursuing further education. It is, then, perhaps most helpful to think in terms of self-reinforcing circles whereby personal traits are encouraged by certain experiences and then lead an individual to seek out further similar experiences, or avoid contradictory experiences, thus further embedding the personal traits. This is illustrated below in figure 10.

The personal traits and socialization experiences most common among intergroup peacebuilders, and not generally found in the data from the within-group activists, are presented in this section. Where possible it is made explicit how these factors might encourage or support individuals to develop the psychological features encapsulated in a shared humanity mindset.

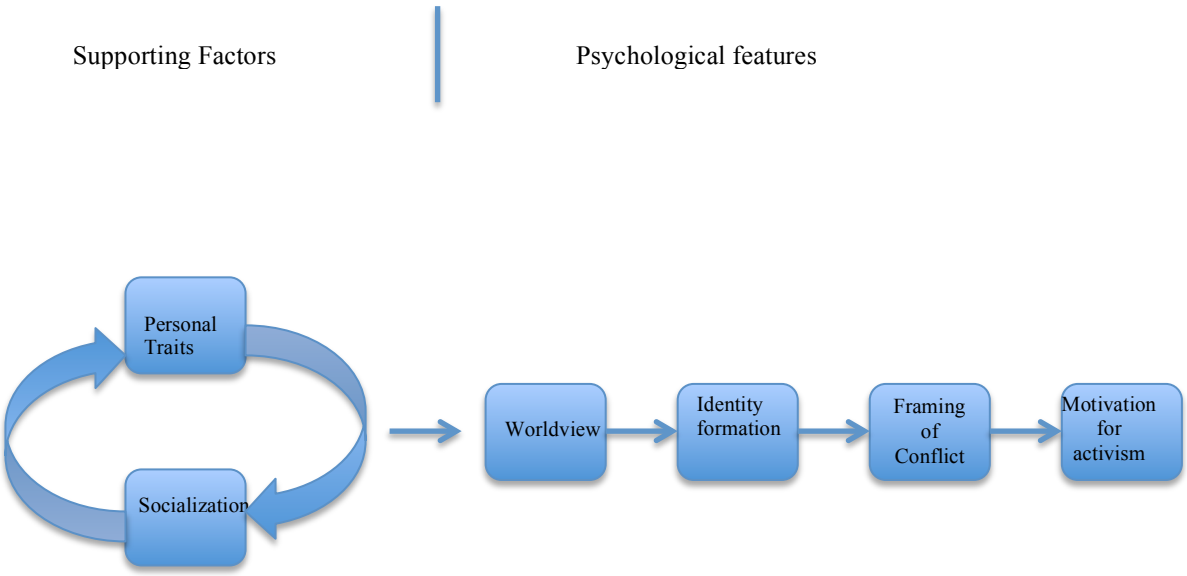

Figure 10: Conceptualization of interrelationships between categories in developing motivations for activism.

4.5.1 Personal traits associated with a shared humanity mindset.

While all the intergroup peacebuilders interviewed during this study were unique individuals, they nonetheless shared some broad traits that could be conceptually linked to their development of a shared humanity mindset and consequent decision to get involved in intergroup peacebuilding. Personal traits are understood by psychologists to be individual differences that transcend situational constraints (MacRae & Costa, 1997). They have also been described in terms of tendencies, as dispositions to respond to stimuli in certain ways (Wright & Mischel, 1987). Traits, then, are not rigidly determined constraints on human agency, but rather represent the tendency of an individual to typically think, act and respond emotionally in certain ways.

These theoretical definitions are in keeping with the patterns observed in the data of beliefs, responses and behaviors that interviewees appeared to have

maintained over time, applying them to different circumstances and within different environments over the course of their lives. Hence, the term trait is used here to represent stable individual differences in thoughts, feelings and behavior (see Church, 2000; McCrae & Costa, 1997). These differences can be observed in how respondents responded to life events, how they adapted to social circumstances, and in decisions they have made during their life course.

The three personal traits that emerged most strongly as a distinct facet of the intergroup peacebuilders, differentiating them from within-group activists, were moral autonomy, openness to complexity and reflexivity. These are examined in turn now below.

Moral autonomy.

Intergroup peacebuilders displayed a high degree of willingness to act contrary to wider in-group norms, much more so than within-group activists as can be seen in chapter 5. Intergroup peacebuilders were notably more willing to critique their religio-national in-group, and to question wider social norms such as oppositional identities and patterns of social segregation.

The willingness to question and act against group norms on the basis of one's own sense of morality can be termed moral autonomy. This term was first espoused by Kant who viewed human beings as autonomous individuals able to make decisions free from influences on their conduct originating outside of themselves (Johnson, 2008). The term is used in this thesis to describe the willingness of individuals to construct their own individual perceptions of right and wrong, even when this brings them into opposition with in-group norms and narratives. It is of particular relevance in explaining why intergroup peacebuilders are willing to hold beliefs that clash with the expectations of their in-group, why they are willing to accept the resulting sense of lessened belonging to the in-group, and why they are willing to go against wider social norms of segregation and engage in intergroup peacebuilding.

By the very act of engaging in intergroup peacebuilding, respondents in this sample showed a willingness to go against wider social norms of in-group loyalty and religio-national segregation. This was often evidenced by how they discussed their personal disagreement with some of the beliefs widely shared among the in-group, stating how they preferred to adhere to their own interpretation of what constitutes

moral action. Thus, for example, Tom McIvor recounted how he preferred to derive his values directly from personal reading of the bible rather than the Christian community in his local area:

> *I …(was) reading (the Bible) on my own, and I was reading all this stuff about "Blessed are the Peace-makers" and "Love your enemies"… forgive seventy times seven – Jesus had said all of this but I never heard any of this in church. And I definitely didn't hear it in any of …the wee gospel meetings I went to…nobody was talking about this….So I thought "if you believe all this and you're trying to follow this, then you need to love your enemy, and you need to be a peace-maker, you don't leave that bit out just because you're living in Northern Ireland".*

In this account, Tom reflects a wider trend among intergroup peacebuilders whereby a personal process of reflection and formulation of values prompt him to reject the norm of enmity between groups that was considered an integral part of life in Northern Ireland during the Troubles.

Similary, Liam Mullan found that his personal values clashed with the behavior of religio-national leaders in his local community, leading him to become an out-spoken critic of the actions of the pIRA. As Liam explained, his personal moral beliefs, deriving from his adherence to a shared humanity mindset, prompted him to challenge their views directly:

> *I just felt I had to challenge them (about the behavior of the pIRA)….I would give them hell and they would say "are you from South Armagh at all?"…. (But) I would still prefer to be like this (rather than keeping quiet). I think it's about injustice – yes, there were injustices done to us as a people, but there was also injustices that we done within ourselves and we weren't allowed to talk about it or challenge it, and that really pissed me off.*

Here Larry's words suggest that he saw a universal moral principle of justice being threatened, without regard to the identity of those threatening it. In this, he is illustrative of a strong tendency among respondents in this sample to question in-

group behavior and wider social norms where they contradict a personal moral principle.

Larry's account also reveals the price exacted by Northern Irish society for non-conformity, in terms of lessened belonging, with his interlocutors challenging his attachment to the in-group. Like the great majority of intergroup peacebuilders, this was a consequence he was clearly willing to accept. Indeed, in a number of cases respondents recounted a willingness to challenge the expectations of their in-group, even at a degree of risk to their personal safety. Hence, Gerry Dunne, who regards his belonging to his religio-national in-group as *shaky* due to not being *typical*, related how he stood up for his moral beliefs against some in his local community:

> *A prominent dissident Republican, when he wrote an article - I think he condoned the attack on… someone I have known for a long time - I wrote an article straight back saying this is wrong…. I was proud of myself, having the courage to do it - but I was also nervous…. I remember going up to the house and thinking, perhaps irrationally, "are my windows going to be okay?"*

What Gerry illustrates is that at least some intergroup peacebuilders have gone so far as to risk their safety within the in-group, in order to be a voice of moral dissent. Others who recounted similar risk-taking on behalf of their moral beliefs include Larry, John, and Tom, while others such as Steven, and Allison recounted how they have to deal with criticism of their work from members of their local community.

This personal trait could also be seen beyond the field of peacebuilding, as something of a sustained characteristic in individuals' lives. Hence for example, Amy Curran related how she had; *always been a rebel…just someone with a free-thinking mind*. Meanwhile, Liam Mullan believed his capacity for being an out-spoken critic of the pIRA in his community derived from a general anti-authoritarian tendency:

> *It's probably that (resistance to) authority thing…. I believe you need to think things out. I think things through in my head a lot, and for me, as well, I need to be able to justify it in my own heart, you know. I can't go along with what other people say just because they say it - I don't care who they are.*

Thus the tendency to formulate moral judgments internally, through a process of personal reflection, was widely displayed by respondents in this sample in many areas of their lives.

Intergroup peacebuilding, then, is seen by respondents in this sample not only as a practical means to a better society, but as a morally-driven project, a goal they have formulated as morally-autonomous individuals rather than as loyal members of a specific identity group. Their high levels of moral autonomy would seem to support them to question wider social norms and in-group expectations of loyalty, thus facilitating their involvement in intergroup peacebuilding despite the lack of support, and even occasional hostility, from their surrounding society.

Openness to complexity.

Intergroup peacebuilders, when compared with within-group activists, showed a much greater awareness of the perspectives of out-groups, and a much greater willingness to try and integrate a number of perspectives in their understanding of society and the conflict. This capacity for taking other perspectives, and an openness to exploring the complexity of situations, seems to support respondents in this sample to better empathize with out-group perspectives and to form a complex understanding of the Northern Irish conflict that deters them from simply blaming the out-group and exculpating the in-group.

Hence, many intergroup peacebuilders showed a high level of willingness to engage with the complexity of competing claims involved in the Northern Irish conflict. Many of them displayed a notable awareness of the multiple perspectives in Northern Irish society regarding many issues, and a capacity for including a level of complexity in their analysis. Thus, for example, Ryan O'Sullivan praised a novel he was currently reading for its ability to accurately engage with the complexities of the Northern Irish conflict:

> *The book I am reading at the minute…. All the wee different vignettes, they are all connected…. They all have their own particular truths, all to do with things that have happened to them….It looks under the surface at all those different people, and I like that because it reminds me that…you can't take things for granted and you can't take people for granted. I like that.*

Ryan, then, like many individuals in this sample, indicated his sense that Northern Irish society is complex, that people are complex, and that engaging with this notion is positive because it leads to a more accurate understanding.

Similarly, intergroup peacebuilders in general welcomed opportunities to encounter cultural diversity and other viewpoints, viewing them as a positive rather than a threatening experience. Many intergroup peacebuilders related how they had taken opportunities such as travel and education where they knew they would be exposed to new, perhaps challenging perspectives. Thus, for example, Steven Walker believed that his later experience of education had made his thinking more complex, and that this was a positive, personally beneficial outcome. Moreover, this conviction has inspired him to challenge over simplistic ideologies within his local community:

> *Probably one of the greatest experiences that I have ever had in my whole life, was through education, through sitting down and reading books, being signposted to various libraries and reading various texts, talking to various academics…. All (the lecturers) had a political background, a conflict background…and they brought that to the fore, and we talked about those issues openly in class - about what it was like to be a Protestant in a working-class community and what it was like to be a Nationalist in a working-class community…. (Now I am) Trying to educate that sort of mindset into working-class communities… saying "there is more worth in life than going out and fighting with your neighbor or fighting because someone is a Catholic".*

In this, Steven reflects a common pattern among this sample, of believing that diversity is positive and that more complex thinking can lead to a more peaceful society.

In a similar vein, many respondents discussed how their work involves encouraging others to think in more complex terms about Northern Irish society, the conflict and group identities. This was exemplified by Gareth McNeill, who related how he tries to challenge simplistic notions through his work:

> *It's really just about getting people the opportunity to think…outside what they normally think. And that's difficult when they're living (in Northern*

Ireland), when they're reading a newspaper that writes…what they want to hear… sometimes there's no challenge (to their viewpoint)….in estates and working class areas, your next-door neighbor has the same opinion as you, it is nearly the same opinion because…they've all lived together for so many years. And really taking them outside that, challenging them…getting them to read their history books, getting them to see the complexity of it…looking at the stereotypes and the discrimination, and getting them to realize that things are more complicated.

Hence, it could be seen in this sample that intergroup peacebuilders derive some of their motivations from taking a complex view of Northern Irish society, but also that they believe inculcating this openness to complexity in others is an important pathway to conflict transformation.

Overall then, the intergroup peacebuilders' openness to complexity can be seen in their understanding of the nature of their society and the identities of those living within it. Taking a complex view seems to prompt them to challenge simplistic notions of identity and simplistic explanations for the causes of conflict in others. This openness to complexity may also support their willingness to engage with other perspectives, ultimately facilitating them to question in-group narratives and wider social norms of segregation.

Reflexivity.

All of the interviewees in this study lived through a prolonged period of political violence, and many have experienced harmful and traumatic events resulting from the conflict. Respondents from both samples have experienced attacks by armed actors, witnessed state and popular violence and a small number of interviewees in each sample had in the past been active perpetrators of physical violence. However, it deserves to be noted that there were differences between the two samples as to how individuals reacted to conflict-related events. The intergroup peacebuilders tended to focus more on internally processing their personal affective reactions to harmful events, creating explanatory frameworks where no group was particularly blamed. This tendency is here represented by the term reflexivity. Reflexivity has been defined in discussions of qualitative research as a capacity to be aware of one's self, able to

reflect on the origins of one's thoughts and emotions, and sensitive to one's impact on the world (Finlay & Gough, 2003: Jootun, McGhee & Marland, 2009).

To give one example, intergroup peacebuilders' accounts of personal victimhood were marked by a strong tendency to avoid blaming an entire out-group for the actions of one or two of its members, and a willingness to reflect on the responsibility of all citizens for contributing to the conflict situation. In this way, Clare Connor characterized the sectarian abuse she suffered at the hands of Protestants as just one more example of society-wide *bad behavior by adults* during the conflict. At the same time she was aware of how her own community was socializing young people to be *proto-revolutionaries.* Meanwhile, in a similar vein, Ryan O'Sullivan related that he had forgiven a former colleague for issuing a death threat against him, stating that; *he was a lovely man except that during the conflict he turned into an avenging angel for… the UDA*, so much so that Ryan later *ended up writing him a reference for a job.*

Intergroup peacebuilders also displayed high levels of willingness to reflect on their own personal contribution to the conflict, and that of their in-group, even where this resulted in experiencing negative emotions such as shame. This aspect of reflexivity was exemplified by Gerry Dunne when he recounted his memory of a transformative encounter with individuals from a Protestant background. Having been himself traumatized by witnessing state violence, he had come to tacitly support the IRA until, as he related, this encounter changed his perspective:

> *There was people from the Protestant community, and I remember thinking "the way my mindset has been, is that if the provisional IRA burst in here, I would have been thinking previously it is okay if they kill him or her, (because) they are from the Protestant community". But once I had got to know people, I suddenly felt very sick with myself…. Somehow I wasn't interrogating that (before) - but now in this situation I was interrogating it and I felt nauseous.*

Thus, Gerry Dunne neatly illustrates that an inward reflexive awareness is associated with inwardly processing negative emotions, rather than taking the psychologically easier option of denying one's own failings and / or directing blame and anger towards the out-group.

Many respondents in this sample, then, showed an interest in pursuing understanding and healing rather than justice in relation to conflict-related events. This was epitomized by Mary Hancock who recounted how she drew on her personal experiences of violence in creating a reconciliation-focused organization called Towards Understanding and Healing:

> *That has been my drive in creating Towards Understanding and Healing - understanding all the stories and the complexities, sitting without judgment to hear stories is really, really important to me. And it comes from that place, of being aware of what violence does*.

Here Mary is indicative of the belief voiced by many intergroup peacebuilders in the value of spaces where emotions can be reflected on and healing experienced, as opposed to believing that achieving external changes such as punitive justice can result in emotional satisfaction.

Reflexivity then was a personal trait demonstrated by respondents throughout their interviews. In taking a self-aware and inward-looking approach to conflict-related events, they seem to have been better able to process negative emotions. This inner capacity may have played an important role in protecting them, in some cases, from reacting to the conflict with a level of anger and blame towards the out-group that might have otherwise prompted them to become involved in perpetuating violence. In comparing them with within-group activists who, as examined in chapter 5, displayed a greater tendency to react against difficult experiences by blaming others, the trait of reflexivity seem to support intergroup peacebuilders to be more forgiving in relation to past harm experienced, and more willing to reflect on their own contribution to the wider conflict.

4.5.2 Socialization experiences supportive of a shared humanity mindset.

All respondents in this study shared a number of broader life experiences in common; they were all alive during a substantial portion of the Troubles, they were generally from working-class backgrounds, and all were exposed to conflict-related

events and collective narratives perpetuated by their religio-national in-group. At the same time however, some notable differences between the life experiences of intergroup peacebuilders and within-group activists were observable in the data. These offer a reasonable explanation of mechanisms whereby certain personal traits are developed at the expense of others, and whereby ideas are encountered that can lead to the formation of differing mindsets. The most salient socialization experiences that emerged from the data collected from intergroup peacebuilders were growing up in a universalist family micro-culture, being exposed to diverse perspectives and experiencing a transformative encounter with the out-group. While not every respondent in this sample experienced all three, they all experienced at least one of these factors. Of particular interest, those who did not grow up in a universalist family micro-culture were those most likely to find that an encounter with the out-group had a transformative impact on their mindset in later life.

Universalist family micro-culture.

Probably the most notable difference between intergroup peacebuilders and within-group activists was differences in the micro-culture represented by their family upbringing. Many intergroup peacebuilders grew up in families that did not fully and exclusively identify with their religio-national in-group. Many of these families had at least one parent who provided a strong role model for adhering to universalist beliefs such as socialist fraternity or a humanistic concern for the wellbeing of all others. To an extent then, despite wider norms in their geographic and religio-national communities, these families provided a micro-culture in which many respondents could develop psychological features congruent with a shared humanity mindset.

Intergroup peacebuilders, then, were much more likely than within-group activists to be born into a family that did not completely and clearly identify with the religio-national in-group. A number of respondents in this sample related memories of childhood characterized by a sense of dislocation from the wider in-group due to their family's refusal to accept that the two main religio-national identities were inevitably oppositional. Hence for example, Clare Connor was raised by two parents who had previously lived and worked amid the diversity of New York. She related how *they weren't as parochial* as other families in West Belfast and that while most of her wider family were *quite Irish Republican, we would have been the branch that*

weren't that Republican. Clare went on to recount how this had consequences for her family and others who similarly refused to participate in in-group violence, that they *weren't welcome in certain bars* because *it was seen that they had let the side down.* Similarly, Allison Chambers recalled feeling *out of step* with her wider in-group because she *didn't hate* Catholics, due to her socialist father teaching her to question sectarian division.

This disconnection from the local community went both ways, with a number of respondents in this sample recalling that their parents were critical of the religio-national in-group. Hence, Tom McIvor's father expressed his intense dislike of a prominent Protestant religious leader and told Tom that no son of his *would be joining no Orange Order.* Meanwhile, Clare Connor recalled that her mother was fiercely critical of local paramilitaries, stating, *I think she just didn't like… big men in any community…I don't think she liked, you know, this notion that people who… (you) didn't vote for could control you*. Similarly, Allison Chambers related how she knew her father would be horrified with her, when on one occasion she gave into peer pressure and broke off a friendship with a Catholic boy, explaining, *I just remember being ashamed, and I knew my dad would have killed me if he knew what I had done*. Allison's sense of shame at betraying the ideals of solidarity inculcated by her leftist father suggests that parental values can exert a significant influence on the developing mindset of individuals.

Within the family micro-culture respondents were often exposed to the universalist values of socialism. Hence, Tom McIvor described his nuclear family as *quite sort of left-wing types….some of my wider family would have been a bit more Loyalist, but my parents weren't you know.* Similarly Mary Hancock explained how her father taught her to focus on the class differences rather than sectarian divisions, and exemplified a concern for the wellbeing of others regardless of group membership:

> *Certainly my parents would not have encouraged any (awareness of religious) difference. Daddy worked at the unemployment office and he saw, rather, a class difference, more than religion, between the haves and the have-nots. He was a man who worked with, and supported, absolutely anybody and everybody…lots of people would have come to the house seeking my Daddy's*

advice, and he would've filled in forms (for them)…. So I think that was a big influence in my life, how class was big… rather than a thing called religion.

Thus, many respondents in this sample were exposed from an early age to the idea that sectarian divisions were largely irrelevant and that care should be extended to members of all identity groups.

At the same time, a number of individuals in this sample related how a parent had provided a role model for peacebuilding. Both Clare Connor and Tom McIvor related that they believed they were following in the footsteps of their parents, even if it had been unconsciously for most of their lives. As Tom explained:

My parents …were volunteers and they ran a youth club in our church….They started off taking us to Corrymeela (Peace Centre) to get away from the Troubles, and then it ended up taking us all over the world…. They were doing all kinds of stuff….I remember that they started a choir and … a Catholic guy from the Falls Road…called Brendan was teaching us songs, at the top of the Shankill at the height of the Troubles…. And they were all up for that, they thought that was great. So in a sense…what I have done has followed in some ways in their footsteps.

In this way, parents could not only provide exposure to universalist ideas, but in some cases they were role-models putting those ideals into action.

Additionally, several intergroup peacebuilders were born into families that actively encouraged them to mix with out-group members from an early age. Thus, Mary Hancock's family were close friends with the Catholic neighbors next door, and both she and John Mallon were encouraged to join cross-community sporting clubs, while Allison Chambers was sent for a year to a Catholic school due to family circumstances. Similarly, Clare Connor recalled her mother taking the considerable personal risk of engineering *staid teas* with Protestant visitors in their West Belfast home, while Tom recounted, as above, his parents drive to make sure he and other young people in his area had contact with individuals from a Catholic background that they otherwise would not have met. Mixing with the out-group was, thus, a family norm even if it wasn't common in the wider society.

In this way, many intergroup peacebuilders received their primary socialization in a micro-culture where universalist beliefs were expressed by role models and where they were exposed to sustained contact with out-group members. Although this was sometimes specifically engineered by parents as a reaction to the segregation of social life and increasing intercommunal hostility, more often it came about naturally as parents lived in accordance with their own values rather than those of the wider in-group. Adhering to ideals of socialist solidarity and humanistic concern for the welfare of others is thus closely associated in the data with a lessened sense of identification with a defined religio-national group and with an increased willingness to actively transcend identity divisions in daily behavior. In this way, a universalist family micro-culture can be seen as a mechanism supporting the development of a shared humanity mindset that in turn supports motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding.

Exposure to diverse perspectives.

A further notable difference between intergroup peacebuilders and within-group activists is the extent to which they related that they had been exposed to different perspectives. In particular, intergroup peacebuilders recounted many instances of sustained relationships with out-group members, as well as time spent in different cultural environments by either them or their parents or grandparents. Many respondents directly credit these experiences with influencing their mindset, setting them apart from others in their society who have lived within a tightly-bounded cultural milieu.

Many intergroup peacebuilders had early opportunities for forming friendships with out-group members, some as children and others later in life. Thus, for example, John Mallon, Mary Hancock, Fiona Maguire and Allison Chambers all expressed the belief that their non-adoption of communal prejudices against the out-group could be explained by childhood opportunities to mix with the out-group. As John explained:

> *There wasn't much contact with other communities when I was growing up. So I suppose my first contact really was through Sparta (athletics club). Setting that up and having it be on a cross-community basis – that was probably my*

first real encounter with people from the other community…. Sport was the common denominator so it didn't matter where people were from.

Thus, even somewhat cursory contact with the out-group could have beneficial impacts in terms of exposing individuals to the idea that identity background could recede in importance, superseded by other concerns.

These relationships with the out-group tended to be a rich source of learning about other perspectives. Thus, for example, Malachy Dougan explained how as he cut the hair of Protestants in his days as a barber, he formed friendships with them and learned about their culture:

A lot of them became good friends (of mine). A lot of Protestant people from the Waterside were great customers, but I also began to understand some of their history by getting to know them - getting their hair cut for the loyal order days, for the parades and stuff.

In this, Malachy was typical of many intergroup peacebuilders who willingly engaged with out-group members and learned about their perspectives with some degree of openness.

Many intergroup peacebuilders also had opportunities to encounter different perspectives due to travelling outside Northern Ireland. A number of respondents in this sample had spent time living in other cultural environments before returning to Northern Ireland and becoming involved in intergroup peacebuilding. Thus, Amy Curran, having lived in Canada in her early years found it hard to reconcile herself to the narrow communal identifications rife in Belfast. As she recounted, *I had come from such a mixed background in Canada, all the children, our neighbors were from different backgrounds, and for me then to be sent to a school that was all female and all Protestant was strange.* Hence, many intergroup peacebuilders recounted experiences that introduced them to other ways of living in a diverse society, creating a dissonance with the norms of segregation common in Northern Ireland.

Meanwhile, a number of respondents in this sample expressed the belief that they had been influenced by their parents' or grandparents' prior experiences of encountering diverse perspectives. Hence, Clare Connor believed her parents had a *less parochial* mindset than most people living in West Belfast because they had lived

in New York where her father had worked with *Protestants from Glasgow* and her mother worked in a *multicultural environment.* Similarly, Liam Mullan believes his family is less deeply identified with the in-group and more open to diversity because both of his grandfathers spent time living outside Northern Ireland and that *opened them up a bit*. Moreover, he recounted how his *father and grandfather had both worked on the rivers and it was a mixed community there*, leading to his family being opposed to the armed struggle of the pIRA.

Exposure to diverse perspectives can, thus, be seen as a mechanism encouraging individuals to question enemy images, and to learn about the possibilities for diverse cultural groupings to live together in a greater degree of harmony that was commonly the case in Northern Ireland. Such exposure to different ideas is likely to have supported the development of openness to complexity, and to have confirmed beliefs that human beings share certain essential similarities in spite of cultural differences.

Transformative encounters with the out-group.

The individuals in this sample can broadly be divided into two sub-groups; those who grew up in a universalist family micro-culture and were protected from strong adherence to in-group narratives about the conflict, and those who grew up in a family that was strongly connected to their religio-national in-group but who, later in life developed a shared humanity mindset in response to a transformative encounter with the out-group. This subsection deals with the latter individuals, exploring the types of encounters that provoked a shift in their mindset that can be termed transformative. These encounters share common elements; shared characteristics between the individual and the out-group members are recognized, the out-group is seen in a more positive light, and this new information calls into question in-group narratives about the negative characteristics of the out-group. Most of all these are experiences that lead to humanizing the out-group.

The impact of encounters with the out-group was well illustrated by Cheryl Graham who directly credited her encounters with Catholics at university for prompting her to question the norms of segregation and hostility she had learned from her family and local community:

I was born and reared in a really sectarian town…. Religions don't mix…. I never had any Catholic friends until I was 19….It was only when I went to university, that was the first time I started having Catholic friends. And I started thinking to myself " why was I being taught all this sort of stuff (about Catholics)? These girls are all right".

Thus it would seem that encounters with out-group members can have a transformational impact when they challenge negative images of the out-group, calling into question the authority of the in-group as a source of truth.

This is borne out by the even more dramatic transformation experienced by Steven Walker who went from being an active member of a Loyalist paramilitary group to an active intergroup peacebuilder. Steven related how it was very particularly the recognition of similarity in diversity between himself and out-group members that encouraged his change of perspective while in jail:

Within the prison I was introduced into…mixed wings….. We went out into the yard together, we played football together and we shared experiences....We also had conversations around culture, and respect for culture. We talked about what was it like being a Catholic and why were you proud to be a Catholic…. And likewise, from our perspective, why some of us from a Protestant perspective was proud to be a Protestant …. I brought that out with me…. I then started to talk about the peace-making, the peace building, and the moving forward, and the bringing together communities that were together before, the reintegration and the reconciliation of those communities.

In this way, Steven's encounter with the out-group contradicted previous socialization towards segregation and hostility, provoking a personal transformation in mindset that motivated him to engage in intergroup peacebuilding activism.

Encounters with the out-group could also prove transformative when they led to recognition of out-group humanity and out-group suffering. Such a transformative recognition of the humanity of the out-group was perhaps best exemplified by Gerry Dunne's interaction with a Protestant colleague that led to him seeing the experience of the out-group in a new light. As he described it:

She spoke to me about her husband being shot and she spoke to me about the fact that she was eight months and maybe a week or two weeks pregnant (at that time). So I have a picture of her, big with child, stood with her husband in intensive care. And that notion of hearing the impact of the violence that I was silently, clandestinely supporting - or certainly not opposing, not standing up and saying "this is wrong, stop it"…. Hearing directly from her about the impact on her family, that was a big moment - a recognition that that is what needs to happen, that people need to hear each other.

Thus, this moment of sharing in the inner world of another provoked a significant shift in Gerry's mindset. While before he had been able to ignore the suffering caused by in-group violence, this encounter with the human face of suffering was transformative for him, causing him to recognize the importance of working towards a greater understanding between identity groups that could prevent future violence.

Thus, certain forms of high-impact contact with the out-group were credited by some respondents with greatly changing their image of the out-group and their perspective on the conflict, as well as setting them on a trajectory towards engaging in intergroup peacebuilding activities. Such transformative impact seems to arise from experiences that directly contradict previous assumptions about the out-group, experiences that highlight similarities between the in-group and out-group members, and experiences that bring into focus the humanity of out-group members and thus evoke empathy for their suffering. Interestingly, it is perhaps the very narrow and fixed nature of enemy images that leads an uncomfortable dissonance when an encounter with out-group members reveals that they are in fact human and likeable. In the case of these individuals, this dissonance seems to have played an important role in not only their rejection of simplistic enemy images, but of the whole social system of divided identities which gives rise to such images in the first place. Thus, experiencing such transformative encounters would seem to explain why some individuals are able to overcome their previous socialization supporting loyalty to the in-group and hostility towards the out-group. As a result of experiencing their own potential for transformation, they become active intergroup peacebuilders, enthusiastic about the possibilities for others to make similar changes in mindset.

Summing up.

Viewing traits and experiences as operating in mutually reinforcing cycles calls attention to how individuals develop in interaction with their surrounding sociocultural environment. While this is undoubtedly a complex process, unique to the life of each individual, certain notable similarities were observed in intergroup peacebuilders' personal traits and socialization experiences, especially when compared with within-group activists, as seen in chapter 5. Personal traits that could be identified as supporting the development of a shared humanity mindset in unsupportive social circumstances were moral autonomy, openness to complexity and reflexivity. Supportive socialization experiences identified were a universalist family micro-culture, exposure to diverse perspectives and transformative experiences of the out-group.

None of these factors alone can be seen to guarantee the development of a shared humanity mindset. However, individuals in this sample were found to display a significant number of these factors in their interviews, suggesting these personal traits and socialization experiences contribute to developing such a mindset. Interacting collectively then, these factors make a significant contribution to explaining why some individuals ultimately became motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. The presence of at least some of these factors in their personality and life experience supports individuals in developing a universalist worldview and broadened sense of identity, even in the face of a wider society that encourages the development of enemy images and acceptance of social segregation.

4.6 Summation in relation to the research question

The grounded theory featured in this chapter is presented in answer to research question one, "how do some civil society actors living in a protracted conflict develop high levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding?" As such, it seeks to explain the interrelatedness of socialization experiences and personal traits in shaping the development of a mindset that supports a high level of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict.

As examined above, the development of the psychological features encompassed in a shared humanity mindset is key to explaining why some individuals become concerned to improve intergroup relations and, thus, are highly motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. Adherence to this mindset cannot be said to exist to the same degree in each respondent in this sample, but it was observable in the data that intergroup peacebuilders made many more statements illustrative of those psychological features than within-group activists. Moreover it could be seen that those intergroup peacebuilders who made the most statements congruent with a shared humanity mindset, seeming most universalist in their worldview and least identified with a religio-national group, were also most enthusiastic about the possibility of a more deeply integrated society. This suggests that adherence to the collection of psychological features conceptualized here as a shared humanity mindset can be conceived as existing as a spectrum. Individuals can therefore vary in their degree of adherence, with those most invested being most motivated to engage in a deep level of intergroup peacebuilding, as illustrated below in figure 11.

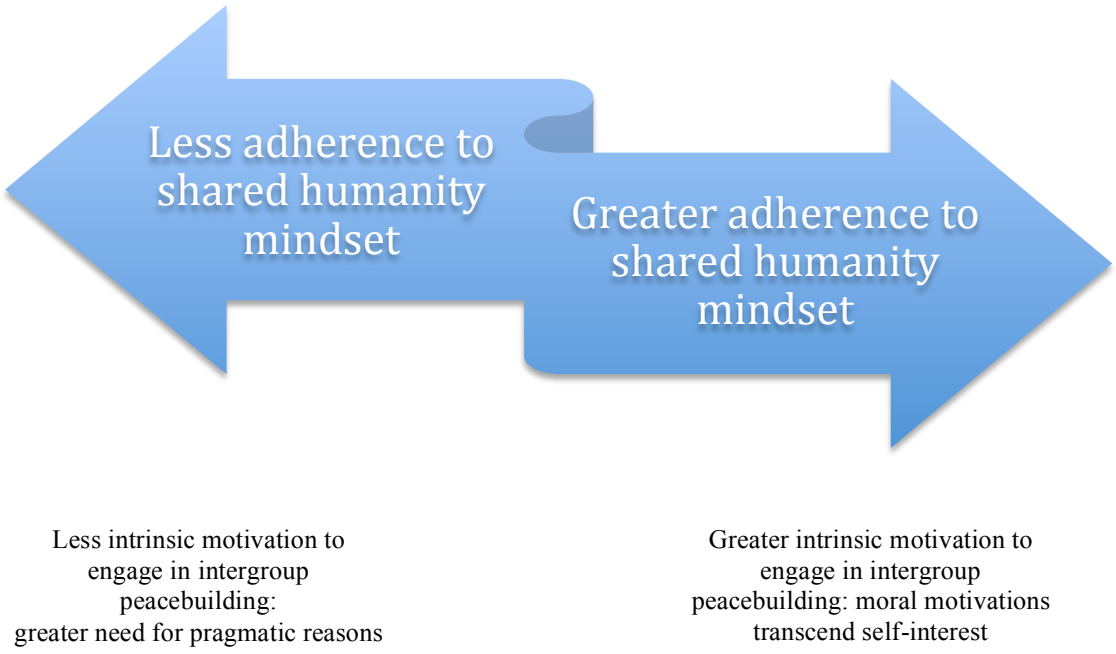

Figure 11: Conceptualizing adherence to a shared humanity mindset as a spectrum.

Grounded theories are considered to be fully developed when they reach a level of abstraction where predictions can be made (Glaser, 1998). Drawing on the grounded theory presented in this chapter, it can be predicted that individuals will be intrinsically motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding when they adhere reasonably strongly to a universalist worldview, a broadened sense of social identity that allows moral inclusion of the out-group, and are framing the conflict inclusively as a shared problem requiring mutual cooperation for its resolution. It can further be predicted that individuals will be much more likely to develop the aforementioned psychological features when their socialization includes at least one of the factors of a universalist family micro-culture, a transformative encounter with the out-group, or exposure to diverse cultures and perspectives. Finally, it can be predicted that individuals who have developed personal traits of moral autonomy, openness to complexity and reflexivity will be those who find it easiest to adhere to a shared humanity mindset, and act accordingly, even in the unsupportive sociocultural environment of a protracted conflict.

Ultimately, the process of becoming motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflict involves a complex set of interrelated factors, as each individual's unique psychology interacts with the social world. However patterns can be observed that have explanatory power, as detailed above, for how socialization, personal traits, mindset and primary concern all play a role in motivating individuals to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. Hence, the findings presented in this chapter provide insight into psychological factors that support individuals to overcome some of the most common barriers to peacebuilding in protracted conflicts and to engage enthusiastically in building cooperative intergroup relationships.

5. Becoming Motivated to Engage in Within-Group Activism in a Protracted Conflict

The purpose of this study was to develop an explanatory framework around differences in motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. This was found to require, for the purposes of theoretical sampling, comparison between civil society activists who are highly motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding and others who are notably less motivated, those who largely or entirely locate their activism within identity-group boundaries. This comparison allows for key points of difference to be revealed between individuals who, apart from their attitude regarding intergroup peacebuilding, share much in common. To that end, a second grounded theory was developed during data analysis, to account for the process whereby individuals become motivated to engage in within-group activism. It is presented here in this chapter as a counterpoint to the previous chapter, with comparisons drawn at all points in order to provide maximum explanatory value.

This chapter outlines how a collection of mutually supportive particularlist psychological features, encompassed by the core category of a "group distinctiveness mindset", encourage high levels of motivation to engage in within-group activism, while being associated with much lower levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. The grounded theory presented in this chapter, entitled "becoming motivated to engage in within-group activism in a protracted conflict", was developed using the same methodology outlined in chapter 3. As with the grounded theory presented in the previous chapter, it is organized around the overarching categories of socialization, personal traits, worldview, identity formation, conflict framing and primary concern. However, many differences were apparent in the content of these categories. These differences are explored in this chapter, and brought together in a final intergrated framework towards the end of the chapter.

Overall, then, this chapter first presents research findings in answer to the second research question in this study, "how do some civil society actors living in a protracted conflict become motivated to engage primarily in within-group activism rather than intergroup peacebuilding?" It begins by describing the composition of the sample and outlining the importance of understanding their motivations. The chapter goes on to give a visual and narrative overview of the grounded theory, and of its key elements of core category and primary concern. It then explores in more detail the

elements of a group distinctiveness mindset, followed by the supportive factors of socialization and personal traits. Throughout this chapter the findings are illustrated by direct quotes from interviews.

The chapter concludes by presenting an answer to research question three, "what are the key differences between those civil society actors in a protracted conflict who are primarily motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding and those who are primarily motivated to engage in within-group activism?". This final section presents an integrated framework illustrating the two grounded theories concurrently, and a summation of the key differences that have been revealed by comparison of the two grounded theories.

5.1 The Significance of Understanding Sample Respondents' Motivations

In this chapter, the grounded theory was developed from interviews with respondents who were chosen for their participation in certain forms of behavior and lack of participation in others. Individuals in this sample were strong advocates for the maintenance of in-group cultural identity, and / or dedicated to serving a community that is largely made-up of their own identity group. Thus, their activism is strongly focused within group identity boundaries and it was found that they do not generally form sustained cooperative relationships with the out-group, but only loose associations and occasional, sometimes confrontational, interactions. As will be illustrated in this chapter, their motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding are low, with many respondents expressing skepticism about the current peace process, framed by concerns for how resulting social changes are impacting their in-group. Others in this sample recounted some involvement in activities that might be described as peacebuilding, but their motivations were conditional on perceiving a benefit to the in-group from their involvement. The quality of relationships between identity groups in Northern Ireland was not a strong concern for them as will be seen later in this chapter, and thus their motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding were contingent on external factors such as benefit to the in-group rather than the

intrinsic personal commitment to improving intergroup relations exemplified by the intergroup peacebuilders sample.

Moreover, unlike the intergroup peacebuilders, within-group activists did not recount the formation of many warm and sustained relationships in their personal lives. Thus, out of 14 respondents in the within-group activists sample, none mentioned that they were part of a mixed marriage and only four mentioned forming friendships with out-group members, often with a certain degree of social distance, referring more to collegial collaboration rather than a strong and sustained emotional bond.

Within-group activism can be an important source of bonding social capital among communities experiencing a protracted conflict (see Leonard, 2004), while group identities can be important in mobilizing oppressed groups to challenge the status quo (Eskridge, 2002; Klandermans, 2004). However, drawing on the discussion of peacebuilding in protracted conflicts in Chapter 2, while their activism may have important outcomes for the wellbeing of group members, it may also have negative consequences for society as a whole, particularly with regards to conflict transformation and the achievement of sustainable peace. Lack of cooperative intergroup relationships in the civil society sphere in Northern Ireland is believed to provide a barrier to conflict transformation (Belloni, 2009; Morrow, 2006). Within-group activism can be seen as accepting and maintaining identity-group divisions rather than challenging them. Thus, while such activities may have many valuable outcomes for in-group members, they act to an extent to withdraw the in-group from society as a collective project and are unlikely to make a significant contribution to sustainable intergroup peace.

It is worth understanding how within-group actvists developed their motivations, for how this gives insight into what is exceptional and different about intergroup peacebuilders, and for how it illustrates how life in a protracted conflict can do much to discourage individuals' engagement in intergroup peacebuilding. In their heightened concern for the in-group and lack of identification with out-group members, they can be seen as reasonably typical of individuals living in a society affected by protracted conflict (see Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011). As will be explained below, their mindset differs notably from that of intergroup peacebuilders, suggesting strongly that differences in these psychological features

explain differences in motivations – and ultimately behavior – among civil society activists in a protracted conflict.

5.2 Overview of The Grounded Theory "Becoming Motivated to Engage in Within-group activism in a Protracted Conflict"

This section presents a visual overview of the grounded theory "becoming motivated to engage in within-group activism in a protracted conflict", followed by a narrative overview of the same. It then outlines the core category and primary concern of participants, and discusses the relationship between these two central facets of the theory.

5.2.1 Visual overview of the grounded theory.

Holding a primary concern to contribute to in-group wellbeing was found to provide the impetus for individuals to engage in within-group activism. In particular they identified a need to act on behalf of the in-group due to a perception that the wider society contained forces that were preventing their in-group from achieving the levels of wellbeing they deserved. The grounded theory in this chapter addresses how certain personal traits and socialization experiences support individuals to develop a group distinctiveness mindset that in turn encourages the development of a primary concern with improving in-group wellbeing when faced with a society they believe is competitive and potentially hostile. The relationship between these main elements of the theory is represented below in figure 7, copied from the previous chapter.



Figure 7: Outline of process of developing activism motivations.

The more detailed representation, below in figure 12, shows gives an overview of the various categories and subcategories in the grounded theory.

Group distinctiveness mindset (core category)

Particularist worldview (category)	**Delineated Identity Formation** (category)	**Perspectival Framing of Conflict** (category)	**Adoption of goal for social change: improving in-group wellbeing** (primary concern)
Subcategories: Distinctiveness of identity groups Greater responsibility to in-group Society seen as site of competing groups	Subcategories: Salience of religio-national identity Fusion of individual with group identity Clear delineation between us and them	Subcategories: Focus on in-group suffering Focus on out-group responsibility Peace seen as justice for the in-group	Subcategories: Perceiving need for change Shaping activism to resolve the primary concern

Factors supporting the development of mindset and primary concern:

Personal traits Subcategories:		
Strong in-group loyalty	Emotional Reactivity	Adherence to in-group perspective
Socialization experiences Subcategories:		
Particularist family micro-culture	Immersion in in-group culture	Negative experiences of out-group not counterbalanced

Figure 12: Overview of categories and subcategories in grounded theory, "becoming motivated to engage in within-group activism in a protracted conflict".

5.2.2 Narrative overview of the process of becoming motivated to engage in within-group activism in a protracted conflict.

The category of "group distinctiveness mindset" provides the core of this grounded theory. This mindset acts as a prism through which individuals in this sample make sense of social reality, resulting in them developing their primary concern of improving in-group wellbeing. This mindset is comprised of a particularist worldview, associated with an identity shaped by a strong connection to the in-group, and framing the conflict solely from the perspective of the in-group. Individuals develop this mindset through the interaction of certain socialization experiences and personal traits that cumulatively support individuals to develop a group distinctiveness mindset.

The group distinctiveness mindset.

The group distinctiveness mindset is marked by belief in the inherent distinctiveness of identity groups, with a tendency to regard separation between members of different religio-national groups as natural if not desirable. It could be seen that these psychological features were frequently observable in a single individual, seeming to mutually support and influence one another, suggesting that the group distinctiveness mindset is a total outlook on life comprising a particularist worldview, a clearly delineated group identity, and perspectival framing of the conflict.

Central to this mindset is a particularist worldview marked by distinguishing between those people an individual is connected to by shared membership of an identity-group and those beyond that sphere. This worldview is comprised of belief in the inherent distinctiveness of identity groups, belief that an individual has greater responsibility towards their in-group than towards other members of society, and belief that society is a site where groups must compete against one another to achieve wellbeing. Holding these beliefs is associated with individuals forming a sense of group identity founded in a deep connection to the in-group and clearly delineated from the out-group. Being highly identified with a clearly defined in-group, individuals frame the conflict in their society from the perspective of their in-group, focusing on in-group suffering and out-group responsibility. As a result, peace is understood as the achievement of justice for the in-group, a situation where out-group

wrongdoing would be acknowledged, and perhaps punished, and where in-group victimhood would be recognized and suitable reparations made or support offered.

Cumulatively these psychological features support individuals to form a sense that they have a duty to contribute to in-group wellbeing in the face of a competitive, potentially hostile, society. This then becomes their primary concern, motivating the social activism towards meeting in-group needs and achieving in-group aspirations. As a result, these individuals are much less motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding as they are not so concerned with needs of a collective society, nor with the needs and aspirations of out-group members. Pursuing relationships with the out-group becomes conditional on a perception that this will contribute directly to in-group wellbeing.

Developing a group distinctiveness mindset.

Individuals are supported to develop a group distinctiveness mindset by a number of socialization experiences. While none of these can be seen as an exclusive cause, each can play a supporting role, especially alongside the development of personal traits that encourage a preference for engaging with the world from the perspective of a clearly defined group identity.

Within-group activists were notably strong in traits of group loyalty, emotional reactivity and adherence to the in-group perspective. The value they place on loyalty to the in-group, and to those closest to them in their families and communities, supports these individuals to confine their activism within group identity boundaries. A tendency to react emotionally to out-group actions was also observable, facilitating some blaming of the out-group and a lessened willingness to reflect on in-group responsibility for the conflict. There was also a marked tendency among respondents in this sample to adhere to in-group narratives, displaying a lack of awareness of or concern for out-group perspectives, which contributes to their failure to construct a complex and multiperspectival understanding of the conflict.

Within-group activists also often shared similarities in their socialization experiences that in turn differed from those shared by intergroup peacebuilders. Within-group activists often grew up in a family with particularlist values, strongly connected to the religio-national in-group. Many of them were immersed in in-group culture from an early age, sometimes intensified by the realities of conflict in their local community. Furthermore, a number of them recounted negative experiences of

the out-group without drawing on any counterbalancing positive experiences of out-group members that might have mitigated these. Thus, it would seem that the lack of contact with the out-group deriving from such a deeply connected membership of the in-group could compound the impact of negative experiences of the out-group, by reducing the likelihood that individuals had already had prior positive experiences of interaction with out-group members.

Summing up.

Overall, then, individuals are likely to become motivated to engage in within-group activism when they adhere to a group distinctiveness mindset and develop a concern to contribute to in-group wellbeing, particularly where they perceive in-group wellbeing as threatened by others in society. Once this mindset is adopted, they are likely to be little motivated to pursue intergroup peacebuilding unless they can see clear benefits, and no serious threat, for the in-group. They are supported to develop this mindset through exposure to particularist values in the family, through immersion in in-group culture and through experiencing negative encounters with the out-group that are not mitigated by prior positive experiences. This mindset is also supported by traits of group loyalty, emotional reactivity and adherence to in-group collective narratives.

5.2.3 Core category and primary concern.

As previously outlined, in classic grounded theory methodology (hereafter CGTM), the development of the grounded theory centers on identifying a core category and the participants' primary concern and on elaborating the relationship between the two (Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). This section, then, first elaborates how the primary concern was identified, followed by the identification of the core category. The relationship between between the two central categories is then discussed.

Identifying the primary concern.

Respondents in this sample were united in their concern to improve in-group wellbeing. With a focus on threats to in-group wellbeing and their personal responsibility to assist the in-group, they generally displayed a lack of concern for any other outcomes from their activism, including the potential in some cases to have negative impacts on intergroup relations. Rather, their work often involves making public statements of behalf of in-group interests and / or working in support of individuals within a defined community dominated by their religio-national group.

This primary concern was observable in direct statements made by within-group activists, as well being embodied in their social activism. They had a strong desire, often seen as a responsibility, to assist the in-group. For example, Fionn MacAnnadh spoke of his sense of duty to contribute to the survival and success of the Irish language community in West Belfast:

> *I think of the people who…volunteered to help me get to school, who protested, who campaigned (for Irish language education). And I view it as my role to put something back in, in a selfless capacity, to build the community for my own children and for my own community, for my nieces and nephews, for the next generation.*

In this way, as Fionn illustrates, the concern to contribute to in-group wellbeing is associated with a sense of close connection to the in-group. Thus, similarly, Victoria Neill describes the world of Protestant marching bands as a *very close-knit family,* while relating her perception that marching bands deserve to be recognized by others for the benefits they offer to members and to society as a whole.

Moreover, the concern to improve in-group wellbeing was often framed by the within-group activists interviewed as a response to a perceived external threat to that wellbeing. Thus, for example, Sarah McDonald related her belief that her religio-national group is a discriminated-against minority in the local area. As she stated, *there is a system of boycotting (Protestant businesses) that goes on… and there is a system of intimidation*. Hence, in part, her motivation to engage in local politics as an advocate for that group. Similarly, Brian Toner explained how his motivation to set up a museum commemorating the conflict-related suffering of a Nationalist

community derived from a sense that his in-group's perspective had been deliberately sidelined:

> *It was just so important that we get the story…told from…from the perspective of people who lived through it, who were actually involved. It's a really well-known story…but most of the time from the other side, the official British government version of events.*

Thus, for many respondents in this sample, their concern to improve in-group wellbeing was associated with a strong sense of connection to the in-group and often related to a perception that the in-group faced an external threat to its needs and interests.

Identifying the core category.

The group distinctiveness mindset was identified as the core category in this grounded theory. As mentioned previously, in CGTM the core category is the variable that holds greatest explanatory power, a category that pulls together all the other categories into an integrated framework. Emerging from the process of data analysis, it was observed that within-group activists held a number of beliefs in common, beliefs that, in turn, differentiated them from the intergroup peacebuilders. Evidence for within-group activists' adherence to these beliefs will be provided in the next section, but for now this subsection will clarify the location of the core category of "group distinctiveness mindset" in relation to other categories in this grounded theory.

Similar to the previous grounded theory elaborated in chapter 4, the concept of mindset provides a convincing explanation of why individuals develop motivations to engage in particular forms of social activism. The core category of group distinctiveness mindset integrates the psychological features of a particularist worldview, deepened identity and perspectival conflict framing as a mutually supportive whole. As depicted earlier in figure 7, mindset as a concept links personal traits and socialization experiences to the development of a primary concern, in this case improving in-group wellbeing. Thus, mindset is the core variable because the other categories either contribute to its development, or result from its application to the surrounding society.

The concept of a group distinctiveness mindset emerged from patterns in how respondents discussed their personal philosophy, sense of identity, and memories of important life experiences. The term mindset was deemed appropriate as each of the psychological features were frequently manifest in how respondents discussed their lives and their view on society in Northern Ireland, suggesting a total outlook on life that they applied when discussing more than one situation. Hence for example, this outlook was succinctly summed up by Conn O'Kane who believed Northern Irish society was essentially *tribal – it's their tribe and our tribe.* Or similarly, Janine Hodgins was convinced that group identities are inherently separate, explaining that in her view *there are those who subscribe to a British identity and those who subscribe to an Irish identity.*

Thus, the theme of group distinctiveness can be seen in within-group activists' worldview, identity formation and framing of the conflict. In viewing identity groups as inherently distinct and naturally in competition, individuals are encouraged to invest in an identity deeply connected to their religio-national group and tend, then, to view society, including the past violent conflict, largely from the perspective of their in-group.

Linking the core category and primary concern.

Put simply, adherence to a group distinctiveness mindset predisposes civil society activists to develop a primary concern of improving in-group wellbeing. Being strongly invested in the in-group identity, supporting the in-group is perceived as an important way to ensure wellbeing for those individuals most closely connected to the activist. This mindset also seems to encourage individuals to withdraw from viewing society as a collective project, instead viewing it as a competitive and potentially threatening domain. Thus, this mindset encourages individuals to take action to contribute to in-group wellbeing. The primary concern is thus the outcome of adherence to a group distinctiveness mindset interacting with a society where the actions of out-groups could be perceived as threatening the needs and aspirations of the in-group. To an extent, also, the group distinctiveness mindset provides a guiding framework for activism, pointing to the importance of passing on in-group culture and identity to future generations and achieving self-sufficiency as a group, as strategies for not only wellbeing but also susvival in a hostile social world.

5.3 The Group Distinctiveness Mindset

This section presents a full elaboration of a number of psychological features largely shared by respondents in the within-group activists sample. It outlines in detail the elements of a group distinctiveness mindset that emerged as themes in the interview data. As depicted previously in figure 12, these categories and subcategories interact to support individuals in developing a concern to improve in-group wellbeing. As with the grounded theory in chapter 4, they are presented in simplified, linear fashion, conceptualized to represent the most likely direction of influence between one factor and another. However, these psychological features may not develop always in a simple linear fashion within the complexity of individual's lived experience.

This section examines the psychological features of worldview, identity formation and conflict framing. Collectively this mindset helps to explain why some individuals, at least when they are confronted with a situation where in-group wellbeing is perceived to be threatened, are highly motivated to engage in within-group activism and much less motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding.

5.3.1 Particularist worldview.

Particularist Worldview	**Delineated Identity Formation**	**Perspectival Framing of Conflict**
Subcategories: Distinctiveness of identity groups Greater responsibility to in-group Society seen as site of competing groups	Subcategories: Salience of religio-national identity Fusion of individual with group identity Clear delineation between us and them	Subcategories: Focus on in-group suffering Focus on out-group responsibility Peace seen as justice for the in-group

A particularist worldview is one where the wider society is viewed from the perspective of an individual's strong attachment to their in-group, with groups viewed as inherently separate and naturally in competition with one another. Thus, while an individual adhering strongly to this worldview may care strongly about those to whom they feel tied by membership of a common identity group, beyond these connections there is a lessened sense of responsibility towards out-group members. While the respondents in this sample displayed varying degrees of particularism, nonetheless the term does convey the key difference between them and intergroup peacebuilders, namely the degree to which attachment to a defined in-group affects their mindset and social activism.

The particularist worldview was displayed by respondents in this sample as they discussed their lives and the surrounding society of Northern Ireland. Often the beliefs were evident in explicit statements, such as will be quoted directly throughout this section, but they were also implicit in how respondents talked at length about the needs and interests of the in-group while often the experience or perspective of the out-group was left unmentioned. Thus, comparing data from this sample with that from the intergroup peacebuilders, it was apparent that within-group activists largely shared in three beliefs that were largely absent from the discourse of intergroup peacebuilders. Firstly, a belief in the essential distinctiveness of identity groups. Secondly, a belief that individuals have a greater responsibility towards members of their in-group than towards out-groups. And thirdly, a belief that society is the site of competing groups seeking to maximize their own interests. These beliefs are further explored, now, in turn.

Distinctiveness of identity groups.

Within-group activists differ notably from intergroup peacebuilders in their belief that the two main religio-national identity groups in Northern Ireland are inherently distinct, and inevitably separate. Thus, for example, Janine Hodgins explained the non-negotiability of cultural identity:

> *I don't think we should be saying "get rid of all that culture". Bottom line is, that is who we are, you know. There are those in this country who identify with the Orange culture and there are those who identify with Irish culture.*

Janine, in common with many within-group activists, is not explicitly opposed to the existence of other identities but, like others in the sample, she does display a belief that identity groups are distinct entities.

Somewhat similarly, Fionn MacAnnadh described the very clear boundaries to his group identity, defined in resistance to an out-group when he was growing up:

> *I was born into a community in struggle…. We seen the British Army…as a force of occupation…. You knew, for example, that you wouldn't talk to soldiers because they were an army of occupation. I remember telling my friends "don't talk to them, you shouldn't talk to them because they are an occupying force".*

Fionn 's comments show a strong sense of communal territoriality, with soldiers located outside the realm of those who can be communicated with. Like many within-group activists, then, he accepts the divisions of conflict as inevitable.

At the same time, within-group activists often spoke in terms that belied assumptions of in-group homogeneity, the idea that in-group members shared the same perspectives and that they could be represented by a single voice. Hence, for example, Brian Toner spoke of his belief that the border in Ireland would inevitably disappear in future due to his perception that Northern Irish Catholics share a single political perspective:

> *(The question of the border is) going to become an issue at some point….Demographics are just going to deal with that, even if nothing else does. But I think at the very least there will be a violent reaction to that. We can compromise so much but the border…it is a win-lose situation, and there's going to be a reaction to that.*

As can be seen, Brian displays an assumption that the rising Catholic population of Northern Ireland will in future vote en masse for unification with the Republic of Ireland. At the same time, while viewing a Protestant backlash as inevitable, he does not display the kind of concern for out-group wellbeing that was common among intergroup peacebuilders. This willingness to accept conflict that

might ensue from the pursuit of in-group aspirations was a common feature among respondents in this sample.

In a similar vein, then, Norman Granger often spoke of his religio-national in-group as sharing a single perspective on societal events. As he described, *how does the Protestant community today look upon themselves?... The view is that they are seen as second-class citizens*. Hence, a perception of in-group homogeneity, whether accurate or not, may support individuals to believe that there is a need to advocate on behalf of this supposedly united in-group.

Overall, then, within-group activists strongly tended to discuss group identities as inherent facts of the social landscape that need to be accommodated rather than transcended or changed. They tended to see societal divisions as natural rather than problematic. As Fionn MacAnnadh described, *ultimately I think that human beings are creatures of community – the family, the community, the tribe. That's something that is perfectly normal and it's perfectly healthy.* Thus, it follows that such beliefs are closely associated with accepting group identities as fixed social facts, and with seeking to maximize wellbeing within the boundaries of a clear group identity.

Greater responsibility towards the in-group.

Another significant feature of the interview data gathered from within-group activists is that respondents largely displayed a strong sense that they were primarily responsible for improving the wellbeing of in-group members, without needing to show similar concern for the wellbeing of out-groups. This differs markedly from the intergroup peacebuilders who often displayed a concern for the wellbeing of others that did not seem to make distinctions on the basis of religio-national, or indeed other, identities.

Hence, for example, Janine Hodgins recounted her concern to preserve and promote in-group culture, while displaying a lack of interest in understanding how some out-group members might perceive her culture:

> *I think there is positive ways you can engage with your culture. But I think it needs to be respected….I think education, and being open about who you are, and to encourage other people to learn who you are and to respect it (are important)….but if somebody is going to come in the door (of our Ulster-Scots*

center) and be offended by something, then it is tough (on them) – simple as that.

Thus, Janine is illustrative of a tendency among within-group activists to believe that their primary responsibility is towards the wellbeing of their in-group while expressing little concern for the experience of out-group members.

Much of the sense of greater responsibility towards the in-group seems to derive from experiencing group membership that as personally beneficial. As cited earlier in this chapter, Fionn MacAnnadh described a strong sense of obligation towards the Irish language community of West Belfast in which he had grown-up. Similarly, Victoria Neill works tirelessly to promote a positive image of the Protestant banding community that enriched her childhood. She described that cultural scene as *very, very social and very, very community (orientated) and very, very close-knit…very much…like a very close-knit family.* However, at the same time, Victoria did not acknowledge how bands might be intimidating or offensive for some Catholics, instead stating that she saw complaints about Protestant parading being motivated by hostility and a desire to defeat her community. As she asserted, *it's a culture war….It's taking away things that they know are very personal to us*. Thus, this sense of responsibility to the in-group seems to be based on close personal ties, while the lessened sense of connection to out-group members is accompanied by a lessened willingness to take the out-group perspectives into account.

Moreover, while within-group activists expressed a strong sense of responsibility towards the in-group, they commonly described other groups as occupying separate realms of responsibility. Hence, while Brian Toner showed an awareness of how Unionist communities might struggle with community development relative to Nationalist areas, he located responsibility for changing that firmly with Unionists themselves:

(Historically) Nationalist communities got the idea that nobody is going to look after us but ourselves….Unionist communities don't have that same background…. a couple of years ago…there was a Loyalist spokesperson saying "look they're got their museum… when is somebody going to come and build us our museum?"…. No one came and built us this museum, we done it

ourselves. Whereas his attitude is "when is somebody going to come and do it for us?" But that's not the way it happens.

Brian's sense of social responsibility, then, like many within-group activists, is clearly group-based rather than society-wide. Hence, while he was willing for Loyalists to visit the museum he worked in to learn how to set up their own, he did not express during his interview how he might reach out and use his skills as a historian beyond his political and geographic community.

Thus overall, within-group activists seem to distinguish sharply between their sense of responsibility towards the in-group and towards out-groups. They demonstrated a particularly strong concern to improve the wellbeing of the cultural, political or geographic community in which they participate personally. At the same time, they tended to not discuss any concern for out-group wellbeing, suggesting that they view this issue as lying beyond their personal sphere of responsibility. The great majority of within-group activists, then, were notably silent as to how pursuit of in-group wellbeing might have unintended negative consequences for others in the wider society.

Society as the site of competing groups.

It is perhaps not surprising, then, that many within-group activists spoke of the wider society in terms of groups competing for their own interests. Hence, within-group activists often framed their activism as a struggle for survival and for justice against a threatening out-group, rather than as an attempt to contribute to the collective good.

In this way, Sarah McDonald expressed a strong sense that she needed to advocate for her local Protestant community in the face of a Nationalist-dominated local council:

I see the way the whole local government…operates….This community has struggled to get its head above the parapet and this is because it has not been enabled in the same way as other parts of the district….We are a minority….Things were stopped to repress the development of the (Protestant) area (of the district).

Thus, Sarah sees her local council chamber as a *bear pit* where she has to speak up on behalf of her community in a combative atmosphere dominated by communal politics. In this, she is representative of a common pattern among within-group activists of seeing a need for in-group interests to be defended and promoted in a competitive social environment.

This view is closely associated with the belief that equality is an important value that should be upheld. However, within-group activists from both Catholic and Protestant backgrounds focused on ways in which they perceived their own community was discriminated against and generally displayed no awareness that the other identity group felt they were also disadvantaged. Hence, activists from both religio-national communities expressed the view that the peace process had discriminated against their in-group. For example, Fionn MacAnnadh related his belief that provisions for parity of cultural esteem in the Good Friday Agreement were a British Government ruse to ensure that *you would have to give a disproportionate funding allocation to Ulster Scots relative to the Irish language.* Meanwhile, Victoria Neill bemoaned the impact of the agreement on Protestants, stating, *there is almost an over-emphasis (now) on being over-fair to the Catholic population. You feel as if you are almost becoming a second-class citizen (if you are Protestant).*

Thus, within-group activists made a number of statements in interviews suggesting their belief that Northern Irish society is a competitive domain where identity groups need to assert their rights in a struggle against others. It also seems that respondents in this sample, in general, understand in-group wellbeing as relative to that of the out-group, particularly as they discussed competition for economic resources. As a result, members of both religio-national groups felt their group was not being well served by a peace process that they believed had unduly advantaged the out-group.

Summing up.

Overall, then, within-group activists strongly tended to talk about the wider Northern Irish society in terms of distinct religio-national groups competing for their own interests. In general their activism seems to have gained impetus from the view that their in-group was not receiving fair treatment from the wider society, while being shaped by the belief that they have a greater responsibility towards their in-

group. Moreover, this particularist worldview is closely associated with their strong identification with a defined identity group, as explored in the next subsection.

5.3.2 Deepened identity formation.

Particularist Worldview	**Delineated Identity Formation**	**Perspectival Framing of Conflict**
Subcategories: Distinctiveness of identity groups Greater responsibility to in-group Society seen as site of competing groups	Subcategories: Salience of religio-national identity Fusion of individual with group identity Clear delineation between us and them	Subcategories: Focus on in-group suffering Focus on out-group responsibility Peace seen as justice for the in-group

A clearly observable pattern among the within-group activists interviewed was that they strongly identified with a clearly-delineated in-group, often associated with a lack of any meaningful sense of connection to the out-group. Instead, out-groups were either disregarded, or perceived as opponents. Within this deep, rather than broad, sense of identity, three features were apparent; the salience of religio-national identity over other identities, a clear delineation of group identity boundaries, and a tendency of individuals to fuse their sense of self with the group identity. Each of these features is examined in turn, now, below.

Salience of religio-national identity.

A notable difference between intergroup peacebuilders and within-group activists is that while the peacebuilders identified with a number of groups, including class, gender and humanity as a whole, the within-group activists all displayed signs of identifying most strongly as members of a single religio-national group. Employing

theoretical sensitivity, this phenomenon resonates with the claim of social identity theorists that individuals will often hold membership of a particular group to be the most salient aspect of their identity, prioritizing it over other affiliations (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987). Meanwhile, it has also been observed that protracted conflicts often involve two or more ethnic or religious identities, with these identities becoming central to how group members understand themselves and their society (Bar-Tal, 2007; Hammack, 2011; Kelman, 2010). Thus, in identifying strongly with a single religio-national group, within-group activists can be seen as representing a widespread tendency among individuals living in protracted conflicts.

Hence, many within-group activists described their sense of group identity in clear religio-national terms. For example, Sarah McDonald could sum up her social identity quite simply, saying, *do I belong to a grouping? It's a Protestant grouping*. Meanwhile, Conn O'Kane's response to a question about his sense of group identity was to state, *my grouping, it would be Irish*, and Brian Toner explained that he has *strong political beliefs which I suppose puts me firmly in one camp…I do consider myself Irish Republican.* All these statements are indicative that for respondents in this sample their religio-national identity is much more salient than it is for intergroup peacebuilders.

The primacy of religio-national identity over membership of other social groupings was also demonstrated by respondents' commitment to activism on behalf of a group tied to a wider religio-national cause. Hence, for example, Sam Armstrong stated, *first of all, I see myself (as being) from an area which is a Unionist-Loyalist…area. I would be a strong Unionist. I believe in the Union*. He now works in restorative justice in his local community with a group who are committed to the work because *we are all from here, from the community.*

Meanwhile, the sense of solidarity with the religio-national in-group was not extended equally to the working class, despite respondents' awareness of their shared socio-economic position. Hence, as Janine Hodgins explained, any attraction to socialist politics was superseded by identity-based concerns, saying, *I would have socialist leanings….The party that I could really sort of agree with…the most was the Workers' Party. But not in a million years would I have voted for them because of their associations (with Irish Republicanism).* Similarly, while Fionn MacAnnadh recounted how his parents *would draw from a socialist tradition* but chose to carry out their activism solely within *the local immediate area* of Nationalist-dominated

West Belfast, as part of a community struggling against the British *army of occupation*. In this, Janine and Fionn illustrate a wider theme among within-group activists, of placing highest value on membership of a religio-national identity with which they perceive themselves to share a destiny. Thus, among within-group activists, while there was an awareness of class concerns, the preference was for Catholics and Protestants to act separately, within their local areas, to resolve problems. In this, they differ notably from the intergroup peacebuilding sample where respondents often advocated the importance of class solidarity as a concern that should supersede religio-national concerns.

Fusion of individual with group identity.

Within-group activists also displayed a much stronger degree of personal identification with their in-group than intergroup peacebuilders. This pattern that emerged in the data is consonant with research in psychology that has outlined how some individuals are drawn to fusing their individual sense of self with the group identity (Swann et al., 2009; Swann et al., 2012). Identity fusion has been explained as occurring "when people experience a visceral sense of oneness with a group" (Swann et al., 2012, p.2). It is associated with extremes of behavior on behalf of the in-group, with individuals being willing to invest in the group's future at the same level they might invest in individual outcomes (Sheikh et al., 2014; Swann et al., 2009; Swann et al., 2012). Among within-group activists, identity fusion manifested in their altruism on behalf of the in-group as social activists, and also in statements demonstrating how in-group culture was a central part of their personal identity, and how they felt personally attacked when the wider in-group was harmed in some way.

Within-group activists were often strongly connected to in-group identity and culture. In this way, for example, both Victoria Neill and Fionn MacAnnadh spoke of their in-group's cultural practices as a *way of life*, and both of them had formed all of their most significant bonds with members of their same religio-national group. Similarly, Janine Hodgins explained her personal commitment to preserving Orange culture, stating, *it's who we are,* while Conn O'Kane accepted the demands of group loyalty, saying, *even within my own community if I was to practice (my faith) somewhere else it would be like (a betrayal). The religion is tribal*.

Victoria Neill, in particular, illustrated how identity fusion can lead an individual to experience negative emotions on behalf of in-group members they do not know personally. She explained the impact on her personally of changes imposed on Protestant marching bands' parading routes in Belfast:

> *It's that sense of belonging that's being attacked, that sense of community that's being attacked…. It is so hard to explain just the emotional impact of getting home (at the end of a parade)….Because it is so emotive and so personal, you feel an attack on it is an attack on you personally.*

In this, Victoria displays a more explicit and extreme version of a pattern common among within-group activists, of feeling an emotional connection to other members of the in-group not known to them personally, thus experiencing negative emotions in reponse to a perceived attack on symbols related to group identity.

Clear delineation between 'us' and 'them'.

Within-group activists were not just clear about the group they belonged to, but also about the distinctiveness of that group in relation to the out-group. This relationship was often characterized as oppositional, with groups defined by their struggle against hostile external forces. Thus, while within-group activists tended not to critique the in-group in any major way, they often voiced criticism of an out-group or of particular out-group members. This clear delineation between us and them, is also associated with expressing barriers to forming cooperative relationships with out-group members.

Separate group identities tended to be viewed by within-group activists as an unchanging social fact that should be preserved for future generations. As Janine Hodgins declared in reference to Orange culture, *it's part of who we are. It has been part of this country for generations, and I would like to think it will still be, way down the line.* In this, Janine in common with many within-group activists seems to be strongly in favor of preserving of cultural boundaries, as membership of the Orange Order is only open to Protestants.

Meanwhile, Fionn MacAnnadh's described his local Irish language community an an oppressed group defined by struggle against the British state:

After the 1981 hunger strike there was obviously a re-emergence, a cultural awakening in many senses. People were focused on issues of nationality and identity in a way that they haven't been for perhaps 80 years…. You can't talk about the Irish language revival without rooting it in British colonialism and British imperialism in Ireland and the fightback against that.

Here Fionn expresses how his sense of community is intertwined with a perceived *revival* of past culture, in order to confront a British out-group. Thus, this example is indicative of a wider pattern among within-group activists of defining in-group identity in opposition to an out-group that are perceived as threatening in-group wellbeing.

In delineating the difference between 'us' and 'them', many respondents attributed positive characteristics to their in-group, while believing negative motives underlie out-group behavior, a manifestation of the psychological phenomenon known as attribution error (Hewstone, 1990; Pettigrew, 1979). Thus for example, Victoria Neill contrasted the stoicism she perceived among Northern Irish Protestants with her view of manipulative Irish Republicans:

The Protestant psyche is just to get on with things, to make the best of a bad situation and not complain about it….there is almost a sort of resignation…. Sinn Fein…are so good at the PR game, they are so good at getting their message out, and getting sympathy worldwide, and sometimes I feel that sympathy is misplaced.

Thus, Victoria illustrates the wider tendency among respondents in this sample to draw on negative views of out-group motivations when constructing a positive image of the in-group.

At the same time, this delineation between groups was associated with psychological barriers to forming cooperative relationships with out-group members. Within-group activists were notable for the ways in which they felt uncomfortable when interacting with others outside their in-group. Thus, for example, when Fionn MacAnnadh studied at Queen's University in Belfast, he recounted that he viewed himself *as a fish out of water… that it wasn't for me, that I was from the community*

here (in West Belfast). Similarly, Mary Mullan described her discomfort when faced with victims of the conflict from other religio-national backgrounds:

> *Sometimes … something hits a raw nerve…(like) when I would hear sectarian language and I did experience that…on the Victim's Forum… I was really taken aback….Who talks this stuff? Who speaks this language?...I remember thinking to myself "jeez, it's like (this person comes from) another planet".*

Similar to many other within-group activists, then Fionn and Mary expressed a preference for living within the boundaries of their in-group, highlighting a sense of discomfort when faced with substantial differences of culture or opinion.

Thus, within-group activists generally displayed a notable willingness to accept social segregation as compared to intergroup peacebuilders. Hence, for example, Brian Toner saw little prospect for transformation of societal division, as he explained; *It's not that we are segregated because we hate each other, it's because that's the way it is and we all fit comfortably into that.* Yet while he recognized this state of affairs, he did not express concern for serious negative effects resulting, and his own activism does not seek to break down segregation as a first priority. Rather, he envisages a future Northern Ireland where separate communities give their own subjective accounts of the past, where *people have the right to their own perception of history and the idea is to understand, acknowledge and accept the differences.* Thus, most within-group activists did not reject the possibility of a degree of coexistence with the out-group, but as a whole they did not express aspirations for significant social integration.

At the same time, a number of within-group activists expressed some willingness to interact with out-group members, but this was conditional on the interaction providing a clear benefit to the in-group. Benefitting the out-group was not voiced as a concern. Hence, for example, Alice McLean spoke about a Catholic colleague with whom she works alongside, promoting the Ulster-Scots and Irish languages in tandem, to the mutual benefit of both languages. Or similarly, Norman Granger described how he was happy for Protestant culture to be included in city-wide events in Derry-Londonderry, under certain conditions:

They (the Protestant Loyal Orders) have taken part in the Fleadh (Irish cultural celebration) here last year. That has to be welcomed, for Nationalism, Republicanism, to understand Protestant history and culture. But what we are also saying is "respect us as to who we are".

In this way Norman, like many within-group activists, tended to view contact with the out-group through the lens of in-group needs and interests. Contact then was conditional on the out-group showing respect for in-group culture, while the in-group was not viewed as needing to learn more about the out-group.

In a similar vein, a substantial number of within-group activists voiced support for contact with the out-group as an opportunity to educate the out-group about the in-group's identity and perspective, while none of them mentioned a desire to learn more about out-group culture and experience. Thus, a clear delineation of group identities would seem to not only influence how individuals view themselves but also how they relate to others beyond the boundaries of their religio-national out-group. While within-group activists did not reject all ties with out-group members, their relationships with them were notably less close and more conditional than their relationships with in-group members. Above all, and in contrast to intergroup peacebuilders, willing acceptance of clear identity boundaries seems to support individuals to deprioritize the pursuit of relationships with the out-group in favor of building cooperative relationships within the in-group.

Summing up.

Thus, individuals socialized into forming strong bonds within a defined group, and growing up in a society divided by intergroup conflict, seem likely to perceive a salient group identity as core to their personal sense of self. Belief in the primacy of communal identity has important consequences for their failure to engage with social identities such as gender and class that might have paved the way for engaging in activism on behalf of wider groups. In particular an identity formation that is deeply connected to a defined in-group is associated with a consequent lack of motivation to form cooperative relationships with the out-group, while close bonds to the in-group seem to encourage individuals to define in-group identity boundaries as the limits to their sphere of concern.

5.3.3 Perspectival framing of conflict.

Particularist Worldview	**Delineated Identity Formation**	**Perspectival Framing of Conflict**
Subcategories: Distinctiveness of identity groups Greater responsibility to in-group Society seen as site of competing groups	Subcategories: Salience of religio-national identity Fusion of individual with group identity Clear delineation between us and them	Subcategories: Focus on in-group suffering Focus on out-group responsibility Peace seen as justice for the in-group

Adherence to a particularist worldview and a clearly delineated group identity were also associated with how individuals made sense of the conflict in their society. In contrast to intergroup peacebuilders' inclusive conflict-framing, within-group activists strongly tended to view the conflict solely from the perspective of their in-group. As a result, there was little acknowledgement of out-group experience or needs. Rather, their focus was most often on how the in-group had suffered, on how they believed the out-group was responsible for the conflict, and on envisioning a future peace where justice would be achieved for the in-group. Each of these three features is examined, now, in turn.

Focus on in-group suffering.

Among within-group activists both their personal memories and their accounts of group experience demonstrated a notable tendency to focus on in-group suffering, while not often acknowledging out-group suffering. Thus, for example, many respondents from a Catholic/ Nationalist background spoke in some detail about the harm inflicted on their local community by British state forces, but none made any reference to pIRA violence causing suffering for other groups. Thus, for example, Mary Mullan recalled the Catholic church's condemnation of the pIRA presence in

her local community, focusing on the suffering experienced by, rather than that which was inflicted by, Irish Republicans:

> *I remember going to a Catholic church in Creggan and you had these priests standing at the altar and using language that was basically very judgmental and running people down, casting all sorts of aspersions on particular families and criticizing prisoners, siding with the British establishment, and yet the British were shooting people in our streets*.

Thus, from Mary's perspective, church criticism of the pIRA's use of violence was a betrayal of her in-group, while she did not voice any acknowledgment that concern for certain moral values or for the lives of out-group members may have underlain the critique.

In a similar vein, within-group activists from a Protestant background tended to be highly critical of the suffering inflicted on their community by terrorist violence, while ignoring any wrongdoing by state forces. Thus Sarah McDonald related her concern for *the people (in the security forces) that have lost their lives…and…there is mental health issues,* and also expressed her anger that *terrorism is being glorified* when Irish Republican narratives about the past are advanced in the public sphere. In a similar vein, Norman Granger expressed only admiration for the security forces:

> *There was a massive increase in car bomb attacks across Northern Ireland, city centers were basically destroyed. And that was part of the goal of the IRA to actually destroy Northern Ireland, but for the thin line of the security forces that managed – done fantastically well, in keeping people from actually destroying each other*.

In this, and throughout his interview, Norman made no reference to security force misdeeds, but rather focuses only on the suffering caused by the pIRA.

Furthermore, within-group activists often expressed how their in-group was the victim of external forces during the conflict, without reference to harm they caused to other groups. Thus, Conn O'Kane was sharply aware of army misdeeds in his local community as he grew up, stating that he knew there was *a lot of injustice happening,* but he gave no acknowledgement in his interview of the suffering caused

by pIRA violence in other communities, nor of the role played by the rise of the pIRA in explaining why soldiers were assigned to his local area in heavy numbers.

In a similar vein, a number of respondents from Protestant backgrounds expressed the view that their culture continues to be under attack, perhaps more than ever in post-peace agreement Northern Ireland. Thus, for example, Victoria Neill spoke of a *culture war* against her in-group, while Janine Hodgins expressed the view that the Orange Order was specifically under attack from Irish Republicans. As she explained; *a political party played a big part in politicizing things…I feel they… specifically targeted the Orange Order to demonize it.* However these respondents did not voice any consideration of the possibility that Catholics in Northern Ireland genuinely feel excluded, or even threatened by, this parading culture, preferring to dismiss Catholic objections as resulting from them being manipluated by religio-national leaders.

Overall, a focus on suffering experienced by the in-group during the conflict was widespread among within-group activists. In general they shared a common pattern of struggling to see past in-group victimhood to a wider, more complex situation where all groups were both perpetrators and victims. Thus, recognition of in-group responsibility for causing suffering to others was rare among within-group activists, while many of them expressed anger about past hurts suffered by their in-group.

Focus on out-group responsibility for the conflict.

A further notable pattern among within-group activists was that those who discussed the past violence tended to clearly blame the emergence of conflict on an out-group. Within this, in-group action was largely framed as a response to aggression by the out-group which was was often attributed to negative motivations among the out-group. Thus, among the within-group activists respondents from a Protestant background tended to view paramilitarism as arising from character flaws rather than social context. Respondents affiliated with Irish Republicanism, meanwhile, mainly attributed the conflict to discriminatory and abusive actions by the British State, without acknowledging the desire of Protestants in Northern Ireland to maintain a relationship with that state. Hence, respondents in this sample differed from the intergroup peacebuilders who tended to give complex and contextualized accounts of

the Troubles based on notions of interdependence, with groups' actions seen as mutually reinforcing each other in a destructive cycle.

For example, Sarah McDonald framed the conflict as emerging from malicious motivations of individual terrorists, with her Protestant in-group framed as innocent victims, absolved of any responsibility for contributing to the wider social context of conflict:

> *The IRA…need to apologize for the atrocities….get down on their knees and say that they are completely and utterly sorry for the destruction and mayhem and the murders and slaughter of the people….There are guys who are bad, there is badness in them and…they have broken the law. And they need to be brought to justice*.

Thus, Sarah does not frame the motivations of individual paramilitaries as emerging from a difficult context, but rather in terms of personal character flaws. At the same time she contrasted state forces favorably with paramilitaries:

> *The security forces protected all citizens in Northern Ireland, not just the Protestants. He (my husband) protected Catholics from being blown-up and being shot, and he risked his life in doing so….The IRA are coming out as being the heroes here, that they were fighting for a true cause….These people terrorized the Protestants. Catholics were terrorized….That has to be changed…the rewriting of history*.

Sarah does not, however, acknowledge the role of abuses of human rights by state forces in fostering support for pIRA actions in the early years of the Troubles (see McKitterick & McVea, 2012).

Meanwhile, Fionn MacAnnadh described his West Belfast community as victims of a new wave of British colonialism during the Troubles. Thus, he explained how a fraught encounter with a British government representative contributed to his arrival at the conclusion that the government was to blame for the conflict in his area:

> *We were dealing with someone who had the discretionary power to deny your human rights. And for me it was interesting for a developing analysis that I*

had of colonialism in Ireland. In our very street there was the biggest British Army barracks in the north of Ireland…. They were an army of occupation in anybody's understanding of what an occupation means.

Thus Fionn made sense of personal suffering in the conflict through clearly blaming the British state. He gave his analysis of the *forces that led to the death of my brother* in this way:

The British government was trying to make sure the Republican community here would be coerced into accepting the Good Friday Agreement, and the message went out loud and clear that if this agreement wasn't accepted, this is the type of future you will have.

Fionn, then, displayed a strong conviction that British colonialism was the root cause of many of Ireland's ills, including the recent conflict. He did not address, however, the role of the pIRA in a cycle of tit-for-tat killings of which his brother could be considered a victim. Thus, Fionn illustrates a common tendency among within-group activists to draw on collective political narratives to make sense of the conflict, leading to a non-recognition of in-group responsibility for harm caused to others accompanied by a heavy focus on in-group suffering. Thus, while their overall narratives about the conflict are sharply opposed, in keeping with the differing political positions of Unionists and Nationalists, many within-group activists gave an analysis of the conflict where an out-group was principally to blame while the in-group are viewed simply as victims of out-group actions.

Peace seen as justice for the in-group.

With the conflict framed as emerging from out-group aggression, and with a focus on in-group suffering, within-group activists tended to frame peace as a situation where the out-group would stop preventing the in-group from achieving justice. As mentioned earlier, respondents from both Protestant and Catholic backgrounds expressed how their in-group that had suffered, or was continuing to suffer, in a way that needed to be remediated in order for a genuine peace to be achieved. Thus, while Catholic respondents cited continuing economic deprivation and lack of justice for victims of state violence as barriers to peace, Protestant

respondents focused on lack of acceptance of Protestant culture and appeasement of former paramilitaries as harms to their in-group that needed to be addressed. As a consequence, within-group activists tended to hold the view that it was the responsibility of the out-group to change in order for peace to be achieved.

Thus, for example, Conn O'Kane described peace as the undoing of past economic neglect of the Catholic community by the state:

> *Are we at peace? No. We haven't sorted out all our problems….There is a serious (economic) deficit west of the Bann and you need to be fixing it…. There are still some people… down in Stormont who are trying to go back to the past where they hold all the purse strings – they say what areas don't get developed and all of that. So you have to break all of that down. It's about equality.*

In this, Conn illustrates a wider tendency among within-group activists to express the belief that their in-group was suffering under continued injustice, and that some degree of confrontation with the out-group may be necessary in order to achieve in-group wellbeing.

Meanwhile, Norman Granger was representative of many respondents from a Protestant background in describing the current peace process as an injustice against his identity group:

> *Nobody was prepared for what changes were going to take place…. A lot of victimization, discrimination, selective discrimination in order to appease a political party – Sinn Fein – to buy into the peace process….We have a two-tier policing force in order to embrace Republicanism….So there is an issue there with law, there is an issue with justice which has not been properly addressed.*

Thus Norman frames a genuine peace as one where current discrimination against his in-group is remediated.

Indeed, many within-group activists blamed the lack of intercommunal harmony in Northern Ireland today on a lack of equality. This contrasts with intergroup peacebuilders who often saw poor relations between groups as a cause of

discrimination and economic deprivation. Thus, for example, Sarah McDonald expressed the view that discrimination against Protestants needed to be reversed for peace to be achieved, saying, *the policies…are not equal, they are not treating both sides of the community equal(ly). And that again is causing division*. Or similarly, Fionn MacAnnadh expressed a belief that ending discrimination against the Irish language would facilitate peace. As he explained*, if the Irish language is given, and Irish speakers are given, equal status that they are entitled to then you would be able to remove the vexed political contention that is associated with the Irish language*. Thus, many within-group activists blamed negative relations between groups on unequal treatment of groups by the state, with respondents from both religio-national groups expressing the view that it was their group that is currently discriminated against.

Hence, within-group activists tended to view the achievement of genuine peace as conditional on some change on the part of an out-group. For example, Janine Hodgins expressed a conviction that Catholics should learn to *tolerate* Protestant parading practices, rather than going *out of their way… to be offended.* Or, meanwhile, Mary Mullan declared that *there is a lack of acknowledgement* of her community's pain, and that her community is being caused further pain with *the language that people are using, just dismissing people's experiences.* As a result, Mary works to *educate people as to why (people joined the IRA)… particularly those within the Unionist community…to challenge that discourse (of innocent victims).* Thus, many within-group activists framed responsibility for achieving sustainable peace as resting with an out-group that they viewed as the sole source of continued intergroup hostility and conflict. As a result, they often saw a role for their activism in challenging the out-group to make the necessary changes but did not generally display a willingness to reflect on changes the in-group might make to contribute to peace.

Moreover, the possibility of peace involving substantial integration of identity groups did not arise in interviews with respondents in this sample. Rather, most within-group activists spoke in terms of their in-group's existence as a separate identity group continuing indefinitely into the future. Hence Janine Hodgins rejected the notion of identity distinctions fading in the future, questioning, *is the world going to be a better place if everything is a shade of grey?* Janine then, like many within-group activists, expressed a preference for a future where diversity is managed, and cultural identities and practices go unchallenged. As she explained, *I would like folk*

to live and let live…just show a bit more respect and toleration, that's all it takes….allow those who subscribe to the culture to celebrate (it). Similarly, Brian Toner rejected pursuit of an agreed understanding of the past, stating, *this idea that we are going to come up with one agreed history is completely wrong…. The idea is… (to) acknowledge and accept the differences*.

Thus, among the within-group activists interviewed, peace was not described in terms of the greater integration favored by many intergroup peacebuilders. Rather peace was generally envisioned by these respondents as separate communities pursuing separate destinies under the auspices of a state that would protect in-group interests and rights. Moreover, the data from this sample indicates an implicit preference for a future peace that would improve the wellbeing of their in-group, without regard to competing claims of out-groups or any concern to attend to the quality of intergroup relations.

5.4 Adopting Goal for Social Change

The psychological features comprising a group distinctiveness mindset do much to explain how individuals develop a strong concern to improve in-group wellbeing. With group identities seen as inherent distinctions, and with competition between groups seen as inevitable, individuals are likely to identify strongly with their religio-national in-group and to be less motivated to build relationships with out-group members. As clear boundaries to group belonging are accepted as natural and inevitable by respondents in this sample, this can be seen to direct their activism towards actions likely to benefit in-group members. In particular, their commitment to in-group wellbeing is shaped by a perception that society contains other groups that are hostile and present a threat to in-group wellbeing. Thus, the final impetus to social action among within-group activists derives from the interaction of a particularist mindset with a society affected by protracted conflict. This supports a perception that there is a need for changes that will address perceived in-group disadvantage, with the overall primary concern being to improve in-group wellbeing.

5.4.1 Perceiving the need for change.

Similar to the intergroup peacebuilders, within-group activists expressed a sense of dissonance between their vision of how society should be organized and their understanding of how it is currently organized. Notably, however, within-group activists often identified a need to defend their group and maintain their wellbeing in the face of an external threat. They also tended to display a sense that their understanding of justice and equality were not sufficiently embodied in current social arrangements, describing their in-group as unfairly disadvantaged. Thus, many respondents in this sample expressed the view that improved in-group wellbeing needed to be achieved by undoing harm caused by an out-group or out-groups.

Hence, for example, Mary Mullan described how the community trauma-healing project she worked for was formed to address the suffering caused by state violence in her local area:

> *(Our) work was primarily borne out of a…view…that…we had to take care of our own mental health and wellbeing….as a community by and large we were exposed to…on-going traumatic events and on-going conflict events in terms of militarization, house raids, death, imprisonment and everything else that came with it.*

Hence, Mary is illustrative of the tendency among within-group activists to perceive that harm caused to their in-group by external forces needs to be addressed and overcome.

At the same time, a number of within-group activists expressed a sense of grievance, viewing current social arrangements as embodying a fundamental injustice. Thus, Sarah McDonald expressed her conviction of the need for a more just treatment of the Protestant narrative post-peace agreement:

> *I am angry…and I certainly do want there to be a change. I want it to be a certain way and it has to be put right…..Even what they (my sons) think of their father (serving in the armed forces)…they certainly wouldn't class him as being somebody who has done anything positive….that has to change….. I*

will not have my sons thinking that their father was a bad man…and that he done the wrong thing. That has to be changed.

Sarah's concern here that things need to be *put right* is reflective of a wider trend among respondents in this sample, the conviction that a certain injustice needs to be confronted in order to achieve in-group wellbeing.

As can be seen, while within-group activists from different religio-national backgrounds differ sharply in the injustices they perceive and to whom they attribute blame for those injustices, they do share a tendency to perceive in-group wellbeing as threatened by external forces. Their motivations to engage in within-group activism seem to be shaped in reaction to a perceived threat to in-group wellbeing, while their adherence to a group distinctiveness mindset shapes their preference for in-group solidarity and action as the means to wellbeing rather than pursuing an improvement in intergroup relations.

5.4.2 Shaping activism to resolve the primary concern.

In common with intergroup peacebuilders, within-group activists' primary concern predisposed them to take opportunities for involvement in social action that they perceived as helping them achieve their goal. Their activism was generally located firmly within group identity boundaries, or it was perceived to result in clear benefits for in-group wellbeing. Believing the in-group to be threatened by hostile outsiders, their activism has often been shaped by a perceived need to challenge the out-group in an attempt to change out-group behavior. As a result, any engagement in building relationships with the out-group was conditional on such activities being perceived to improve in-group wellbeing. Thus, those respondents in this sample who had taken part in some intergroup relationship-building activities usually described these as an opportunity for out-group members to be educated about the worth of the in-group culture and political position, rathen an opportunity for the in-group to learn about out-group culture and perspectives.

In this way, Janine Hodgins recounted how she got involved in promoting more positive perceptions of the Orange Order because she felt others were unfairly disparaging the organization:

> *The thinking behind it was to try and sort of dispel some of the myths, the misconceptions, that had grown around the Orange (Order) as an organization….I thought it was something that was needed, I really did. I thought the Orange Order had got a lot of bad press. I felt we weren't good at deflecting it and we weren't very good at taking ownership of and defining who we were.*

Here, Janine demonstrates a common pattern among within-group activists of believing the in-group to be the victim of hostile outside forces, and perceiving a need to mobilize in its defense.

At the same time Janine was not opposed to some participation in intergroup relationship building, but she did state that she viewed it as contingent on being an opportunity to express in-group culture without challenge:

> *I was asked not that long ago would I host a group who was visiting the area from Sligo…. (Our town) is sort of a majority Unionist town, and there was an interest within the group in seeing that Orange culture. So as I says, "aye, it's not a problem - it doesn't worry me", and I says "but I am who I am - I am not going to change that for them and I am not going to change the (Ulster-Scots cultural) center". It's like in here (in the center), there is nothing set out here to offend anybody…but if somebody chooses to come in the door and be offended by something, then it is tough (on them). Simple as that.*

Thus, Janine illustrates a common pattern among within-group activists of directing all activism towards improving in-group wellbeing, while relationship building with out-group members is conditional on contributing to that goal.

Moreover, in the difficult circumstances of the political violence of the Troubles, a number of within-group activitsts recounted that they had become actively involved in the conflict in order to defend in-group wellbeing. For example, both Janine Hodgins and Norman Granger joined the security forces as a means to

counteract the threat from Irish Republican violence. As Norman explained, *I was convinced that Northern Ireland was going down the road to anarchy…. that was part of the goal of the provisional IRA, to actually destroy Northern Ireland*. And as a result he decided he *would join the new (army) regiment to help… protect our communities through the turbulent years.* Similarly, Janine recounted how she joined up because *you were hearing (about IRA violence) on the news, every day of the week…. A woman that I had a Saturday job with, and her husband, were shot dead*.

This protective instinct, shaping social action towards defence of the in-group, was also found among within-group activists from Catholic backgrounds during the Troubles. While Fionn MacAnnagh and Mary Mullan recounted their early involvement in protests on behalf of in-group political causes, Brian Toner and Conn O'Kane admitted their involvement in rioting as young men. Conn O'Kane related his anger as a young man as he observed injustices practiced against his community as a whole, prompting his involvement in throwing stones at soldiers:

> *That has an impact on you - that you are growing up in a country where there is no justice…. I had an older brother was arrested - he went to jail, accused of being in the IRA. I can remember our house being raided. All the houses round our Street would have been raided on a regular basis. There were times they (the army) would have pulled up in a lorry and maybe raided six houses in a row.*

Thus, to an extent, Conn's involvement in violence as a young man was explained by him as retalitaion for harm caused to his community. A concern for in-group wellbeing can perhaps, therefore, in a context of violent conflict, support more confrontational forms of social action.

At the same time, similar to the intergroup peacebuilders, a number of respondents in this sample related how they had taken up opportunities to engage in activism that were presented to them by others in their personal networks.
As Janine Hodgkins recounted, *I had been in the Orange for approximately about 10 years, when I was asked if I wanted to become involved in a festival around the 12th (of July celebrations)*. Similarly, Brian Toner described how his past involvement in related activism lead him to the opportunity to get involved in setting-up a community museum:

I got involved in the campaign around Bloody Sunday through the Weekend Committee and the organisation of the commemoration. And then I moved into this job as a researcher for the museum…. So I have been here since, not right at the beginning but pretty early in the planning stage. And I have sort of managed the project through the first build and setting up this place first off as a temporary exhibition, and then as a museum.

Thus, as illustrated by Janine and Brian, connection to a particular cultural or political sphere could lead to new opportunities, sustaining and intensifying an individuals' commitment to within-group activism.

Overall, then, the within-group activists engaged in a wide range of social actions on behalf of their in-group over the course of their lives. This could even extend to active participation in the conflict at times prompted by the interaction of a particularistic mindset with difficult conditions that could readily be perceived to threaten the security of the in-group. The final impetus to them taking action was often a perception that in-group was threatened, with their social activism also often shaped by close personal connections to a defined community.

5.4.3 Summing up.

Within-group activists in this study described how they were motivated to take action to make the social world better reflect their values. The particular form of their activism was shaped by their strong sense of group membership and their primary concern of improving in-group wellbeing. They are often motivated by a sense that they need to defend the in-group from a wrong perpetrated against them by an out-group, and their activism can be confrontational as well as at times more collaborative. Thus, their social activism is located firmly within the boundaries of in-group identity and does not automatically lend itself to intergroup peacebuilding. In addition, the location of their personal networks almost exclusively within their own identity group may further impede their participation in intergroup peacebuilding as

they only encounter opportunities for involvement in activism that relates to in-group needs and aspirations.

When considering the value of intergroup relationship building in protracted conflicts then, the question becomes how to motivate such within-group activists to take up opportunities to engage in intergroup peacebuilding, beyond a cursory involvement conditional on trying to educate and change the out-group. As was explored in the previous section, a number of within-group activists did take opportunities to collaborate with out-group members where this could be seen to benefit the in-group, and where out-group members were willing to show respect for in-group culture. However, the influence of the particularist mindset can also be seen in their lack of motivation to independently seek out opportunities to contribute to intergroup peacebuilding. This suggests that more widespread participation in intergroup peacebuilding in Northern Ireland is dependent on changes to the psychological features comprising a group distinctiveness mindset. In the absence of this, efforts could be made to convince individuals strongly identified with their in-group that improved intergroup relations can provide clear benefits for their religio-national group.

5.5 Factors Supporting the Development of a Group Distinctiveness Mindset

As with the intergroup peacebuilders sample, data from the within-group activists contained patterns relating to personal traits and socialization experiences. In keeping with chapter 4, these can be understood as having a mutually reinforcing effect as socialization supports certain traits to develop, while traits may also shape individuals' willingness to pursue certain experiences. Taken cumulatively, and in comparison to the intergroup peacebuilders sample, these factors offer an explanation as to why these individuals became highly motivated to engage in within-group activism while being substantially less motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding.

The personal traits and socialization experiences most common among within-group activists, and not generally found in the data from intergroup peacebuilders, are

presented in this section. Where possible, it is made explicit how these factors can support individuals to develop the psychological features represented by a group distinctiveness mindset.

5.5.1 Personal traits associated with a group distinctiveness mindset.

As outlined in chapter 4, personal traits can be understood as stable individual differences in thoughts, emotions and behavior. Certain traits could be observed in how respondents discussed their responses to events in their lives, their understanding of social circumstances and their rationale for making decisions. The three personal traits that emerged strongly in the data from within-group activists were group loyalty, emotional reactivity and adherence to the in-group perspective. In these they differed markedly from the traits shared by intergroup peacebuilders that were outlined in chapter 4, as examined now below.

Strong in-group loyalty.

While many intergroup peacebuilders held moral autonomy to be an important personal trait, loyalty to the in-group emerged as an important value among the within-group activists interviewed. This was best evidenced by the ways in which within-group activists voiced a strong sense of responsibility towards in-group members, as well as how they have shaped their activism to contribute to in-group wellbeing. While these themes have already been examined earlier in this chapter, it is worth also engaging with the ways in which loyalty to the in-group is believed by many within-group activists to be a moral calling, while within-group solidarity is seen as the most effective way to achieve wellbeing.

Much of the loyalty of within-group activists towards their in-group seemed to derive from the sense that their group was vulnerable and victimized. In these perceived circumstances, in-group unity takes on a new importance. Hence for example, Janine Hodgins praised the role of the Orange Order in providing unity for the wider Protestant population of Northern Ireland. As she explained, *it was an umbrella with all those different Protestant churches and the different Unionist opinions and indeed different social classes came into the one-room, and those*

differences were set aside. Similarly, Fionn MacAnnadh expressed his view that the Irish language became an important vehicle for people in his local community to develop personally and educationally, as well as being *a cultural awakening* and part of a *fightback against British imperialism in Ireland.*

Thus, many within-group activists displayed a belief in the power of in-group solidarity to achieve social change in the face of hostile external agents. For example, Conn O'Kane described the importance of in-group cohesion for successful activism by Irish Republican prisoners, stating that within *that sort of jail community where you banded together and you stuck together….we literally challenged the penal system….it changed quite dramatically as a result of actions people took standing together*.

Meanwhile, Victoria Neill praised the *support network* among Protestant marching band members across Northern Ireland, and related how she got involved in a coordinating body for Protestant marching bands due to her perception of a need for collaboration in countering harmful narratives:

> *We worked with the government (to create two reports on the contribution of marching bands to society)…. And they… tried to look at the positive sides of it, because there is an awful lot of negativity, a lot of perceptions which are incorrect about marching bands. These two studies themselves were created totally to try and dispel those myths, to try to evidence how much marching bands contribute to the community.*

Thus, the importance of in-group solidarity for achieving important social change was a common theme among within-group activists, who often portrayed their in-group as engaged in a struggle against an external opponent.

To an extent then, for within-group activists, in-group membership seems be the lens through which morality is viewed. Loyalty to the in-group is a primary moral value, not least because it is believed to ultimately support the wellbeing of group members. Thus, cultural symbols and practices viewed as central to in-group identity should be respected and propagated according to many within-group activists. In particular, actions that contribute to in-group wellbeing are viewed as moral while out-groups that appear to threaten in-group wellbeing are viewed as motivated by malicious intent. However, group loyalty values were also associated with a lack of

moral autonomy as suggested by the fact that within-group activists rarely made any criticism of in-group behavior during interviews.

Emotional reactivity.

While intergroup peacebuilders showed a strong capacity for reflecting inwardly on their emotions and their impact on others, within-group activists tended to react strongly against conflict-related events. Within-group activists often recounted how they had reacted to conflict-related events with anger, directing blame towards a specific out-group. This emotional reactivity relates to their strong personal investment in the in-group identity and with their tendency to frame the conflict from the perspective of the in-group.

Hence, for example, Conn O'Kane recounted his growing anger as a young man exposed to the effects of state violence in his local community, without reference to the role of the IRA in contributing to the escalation of violence:

> *If somebody threw a stone, not necessarily you, you could have been arrested….they (the army) took whoever they could get….So it left you …thinking "I didn't chuck any stones (at soldiers) the last time and they tried to grab me, so if they are going to grab me, they are going to grab me for something!"*

Conn's subsequent involvement in escalating violence against soldiers is an extreme example of a wider tendency among within-group activists to prefer an externalized reaction as their response to harmful conflict-related events. This stands in contrast to the intergroup peacebuilders tendency towards processing negative emotions internally and directing social activism against the conflict as a whole, rather than against an out-group opponent.

Within-group activists also tended to react against the out-group as an existential threat to the in-group. Thus, Victoria Neill expressed how she fears for the future of Northern Irish Protestants as a distinct cultural group:

> *I fear for my child, in 20 or 30 years time - will he be allowed to parade at all? Will he lose all these things that I believe so much in, that I think are good for him? …. Will he even know his own background? Will he be allowed*

to show it? … And you know the way things are going, I don't think a united Ireland is that far away. And that's a very scary thought….We would be a very small minority, a very small minority.

Thus, both Conn and Valerie, like many within-group activists, expressed the sense that they were reacting against injustices that threaten the very existence of the in-group.

Taking action against the out-group, on behalf of the in-group, becomes then the logical response to conflict-related events in the eyes of within-group activists. For example, Fionn MacAnnadh explained how he reacted to the death of his brother by deepening his commitment to Irish language activism given that he understood this personal loss as an attack on his community as a whole:

(Irish language activism) would be a medium through which you could make a contribution, to fight back and to resist against the forces that had not only led to the death of your brother but had held back your community and allowed the narrative to develop that you weren't worthy.

Hence, in line with Fionn's account, within-group activists tended to describe conflict-relations events in terms of their personal emotional reaction, expressing strong empathy for in-group suffering. However, they generally expressed little interest in reflecting on and processing their feelings internally as individuals.

Thus, an overall tendency towards experiencing anger on behalf of the in-group and towards seeking external solutions by acting in opposition to an out-group was associated with within-group activists having a notably stronger concern to pursue justice for the in-group in relation to the past violence. While it is associated with within-group activists' strong investment in their religio-national identity, it can also be seen as lessening individual's willingness to question in-group narratives and behavior.

Adherence to in-group perspective.

Intergroup peacebuilders tended to distance themselves from narrow in-group narratives and take a more inclusive view of society, supported by a personal trait of

openness to complexity that allows them to engage with multiple perspectives. In contrast, within-group activists did not generally display any substantial willingness to engage with perspectives other than that commonly held by their in-group. Rather it was found that often, when giving their personal perspective on Northern Irish society and the conflict, they were following narratives commonly believed and repeated among others in their religio-national in-group.

Within-group activists, then, tended to share in the political aspirations commonly associated with their religio-national in-group. For example, Jack Keane expressed the belief that doing away with the Irish border was an essential precursor to peace, as he stated; *I see that (border) as the thorn in the side of Ireland. And I think all people could live together, on all sides, if that was gone*. Alternatively, Sarah McDonald declared the benefits to remaining in the United Kingdom:

> *I do want to remain an integral part of the UK…. When I look and I listen to the things being discussed down south (in Irish politics)…of the two, with the way in which they are governed…I prefer to be governed by the United Kingdom.*

Thus, within-group activists tended to avoid acknowledging the complications presented by out-group aspirations when discussing the perspective of their in-group.

In a similar vein, many within-group activists related an understanding of their society that seemed strongly influenced by in-group collective narratives. For example, Victoria Quinn spoke of a *culture war* against Protestant culture in Northern Ireland, and this was echoed by similar statements made by other respondents from the same background, that Protestant interests were under threat. Alternatively, respondents from Catholic backgrounds did not express any sense that Protestants were disadvantaged in Northern Irish society. Rather, they tended to share an analysis of the past violent conflict shaped by anti-imperialist thinking. Thus, Fionn MacAnnadh explicitly spoke of *British Imperialism in Ireland* while others such as Mary Mullan and Conn O'Kane spoke of the intrusion of state forces into their local communities, but at the same time none of them gave any significant attention to the position of Northern Irish Protestants within the conflict.

Overall, within-group activists were notable for their tendency to give voice to in-group narratives as their personal perspectives. They did not tend to stand back and

evaluate these narratives critically, and they displayed less interest than intergroup peacebuilders in incorporating out-group perspectives into their understanding of the conflict. A strong adherence to a group distinctiveness mindset, then, would seem to support individuals to willingly adopt in-group narratives as their own perspective (see Hammack, 2011), while at the same time they struggle to understand the perspectives of others. This suggests that a strong adherence to in-group narratives, particularly when it results in rejection of out-group narratives, is a trait that might deter engagement in intergroup peacebuilding.

5.5.2 Socialization experiences supportive of a group distinctiveness mindset.

The within-group activists interviewed could be seen to largely share a number of socialization experiences that in turn, set them apart from intergroup peacebuilders who had quite different experiences. The three socialization experiences that emerged as most significant among within-group activists are growing up in a particularist family micro-culture, immersion in in-group culture and negative experiences of the out-group that are not counterbalanced by prior positive experiences. These are discussed in this subsection.

Particularist family microculture.

Within-group activists were generally born into a family where the parents were highly identified with the religio-national in-group. Thus, from an early age they were introduced to opportunities for participation in advocating for in-group wellbeing, as well as to the notion of separation, if not hostility, between identity groups in Northern Ireland. Thus, for example, Mary Mullan recalled how she grew up in a family active in the Irish Republican struggle:

> *Two of my brothers…spent very lengthy periods in jail for political reasons. So my mommy became more or less a full-time political activist, mainly around human rights abuses relating to what was happening within jails at that time. And from a very young age I recall going to protests and going to*

marches….I think it is fair enough to say the whole family were politically active.

Mary's example, then, is indicative of a wider trend among within-group activists' accounts, of relating how their parents introduced them to certain values and a certain sense of belonging to a group that shared certain goals and aspirations.

While not all of their families were explicitly political, many within-group activists were socialized into a strong sense of identification with the in-group at an early age. Thus, Fionn MacAnnadh developed a strong sense of belonging to the Irish language community of West Belfast, as he admitted, *through probably no choice of my own in that I was sent to the school (by my parents).* In a similar vein, Victoria Neill related how she became involved with marching bands from a very young age due to her father's participation:

They've (bands) always been part of my life. My father…had been in a band from when he was a toddler right through (his life) so that's all I have ever known….You grew up going to the main parades….So it was very deeply ingrained. And everyone you knew was in a band, and they looked out for you…it was like a very close-knit family, and there was actual blood relations in it as well.

In this way, many within-group activists were introduced to a strong sense of in-group identity early in life through their family's facilitation of their participation in political causes and cultural practices.

Overall, it was generally not only within-group activists who identified strongly with a clearly defined in-group but also their families. In this way, identification with the in-group was actively supported within the family, while many respondents in this sample recounted how they were exposed to expectations of group loyalty from an early age as their parents involved them in cultural and political activities. Similar to accounts in the intergroup peacebuilders sample, within-group activists' parents often acted as role models for directing personal values into social activism.

Immersion in in-group culture.

In contrast to the intergroup peacebuilders sample, within-group activists tended to have extensive experience of in-group culture but much less contact and familiarity with other cultures and other political perspectives. Their connection to in-group culture was often expressed in terms of an emotional bond. At the same time, respondents in this sample tended not to have lived abroad, nor did they recount relationships with out-group members that had helped them to better understand out-group perspectives.

Immersion in in-group culture was often facilitated by parents from an early age. Associated with belonging, and nostalgia, then, it seems to have heightened respondents' tendency to identify with a clearly defined in-group. Thus, for example, Sarah McDonald related how involvement with Protestant marching bands has supported her developing a strong sense of identification with the wider religio-national group:

> *I'm part of the Unionist community….I suppose that comes with, and that's where the divide is…I love the (Protestant marching) bands because of the music that they play. My father was in…(a) pipe band, and five of my brothers and sisters all piped and drummed. So 12th July and all the pomp and ceremony of it, I loved all of that….I love that culture. And any of my friends would be involved in that as well, so that's the grouping (I belong to)….It's a Protestant grouping.*

Here Sarah illustrates a common pattern among within-group activists, where in-group culture plays a role in intensifying their sense of identification with the group, providing them with positive emotional experiences and with close networks of contact within the same identity group. By default then, out-group members and out-group cultural practices are excluded from their personal world.

Similarly, a number of respondents from Catholic backgrounds related how they had grown up in a tightly bounded, single identity community. Thus, for example Fionn MacAnnadh described how the Irish language center was at the heart of local community life and identity:

You can hear people talking in Irish language - it isn't that they are trying to score a political point, it is their way of life. So they work here, they live here and they socialize here, and round here is the place where their kids go to school, making this kind of economic and cultural hub.

Thus, again, in-group culture acts as a centripetal force, not perhaps actively shunning contact with out-group perspectives, but providing a *hub* for community life whereby relationships with out-groups become unnecessary.

At the same time, within-group activists recounted notably less relationships, and significantly less close relationships, with out-group members. While none of them expressed that this resulted from deliberate avoidance, they strongly tended to accept this lack of relationships as unproblematic and thus expressed little motivation to actively pursue relationships with the out-group, nor any strong concern for the quality of intergroup relations.

Thus, for example, Janine Hodgins related how she did have two Catholic friends while growing up in a largely Protestant area, but affirmed that they were acceptable friends because of their acceptance of the dominant local culture. As she described, *a couple (of girls) I chummed with, they were Roman Catholics, they went to the 12th (of July parades) along with me….It was a day out, you went and enjoyed it.* Janine's assertion that her friends enjoyed the parades may be correct, but she goes on to state her belief that the only reason Catholics now object to such parades is because *there was a concerted campaign…to make it politicized.*

Janine's dismissal of Catholic concerns about these parades contrasts with the reflexivity of Mary Hancock, an intergroup peacebuilder, as she wondered, on the basis of later discussions with Catholics, whether her Catholic friends had truly been comfortable with Protestant parades:

My Mummy would've been a great follower of all the bands…. I suppose in that respect she felt that it was alright to enjoy her culture. I don't think it was at the expense of (Catholics)…. You go along and you're blind, you're living in a bubble. And you don't see where it might be offensive…. you don't know how comfortable (Catholic) people were, feeling that you had to watch because it was expected. So, then realizing (later)…did we in some way hurt friends of ours that might not have been Protestant?

Thus, while both Janine and Mary have had friendships with out-group members, their statements suggest the different outcomes when friendship involves dialogue about a contentious issue as in the case of Mary, and when it involves acquiescence on behalf of the out-group member as in the case of Janine.

Immersion in in-group culture then would seem to support individuals to bond emotionally with in-group identity, and to be associated with lessened formation of relationships with out-group members. In particular, the consequent lack of exposure to diverse perspectives is associated with respondents displaying a lack of awareness of out-group concerns as seen earlier in this chapter.

Negative experiences of the out-group not counterbalanced.

While within-group activists recounted many negative experiences of out-groups, including the loss of a family member, intergroup peacebuilders had also often experienced or witnessed out-group violence. One important difference, however, was that intergroup peacebuilders could often call on some positive experience of contact with out-group members that could help them to distinguish between those in the group who meant them harm and the majority that did not. As the intergroup peacebuilder Mary Hancock recalled, although her husband had been badly injured by the pIRA, she knew from prior experience that Catholics *weren't evil, they were ordinary, lovely people.* Among within-group activists however, they did not generally relate having any counterbalancing positive contact with the out-group and instead many described how negative experiences of the out-group influenced their analysis of the conflict.

In this way, for example, Fionn MacAnnagh's belief that locals *shouldn't talk to soldiers* because they were an *army of occupation*, contrasts with the intergroup peacebuilder John Mallon, who as related in chapter 4, had the opportunity to see firsthand the poverty which drove many young men to join the British army. Or similarly, Sarah McDonald related only one significant interaction with Catholics, an interaction with a work colleague:

> *There was a Catholic girl who was working with us…whenever the two soldiers were killed in Belfast…she didn't condemn it. She said they shouldn't*

have been there….It didn't change my view of her…but…I knew she was supporting something….I just thought was…totally wrong.

Meanwhile, Sarah's experience of hearing a Catholic make excuses for Irish Republican violence, was not, according to her account, counterbalanced by any experience of contact with Catholics who openly opposed in-group violence.

Social divisions then, often did much to shape the thinking of within-group activists, by both exposing them to negative interactions with the out-group, and preventing them from experiencing counterbalancing positive contact. This at times then interacted with the wider conflict to shape their adherence to a defined identity group and its political cause. For example, Brian Toner explained how his youthful experiences of conflict with the out-group at the local level were compounded by national-level events:

I grew up in a fairly (Irish) Republican area…. And like all kids, (when) Land Rovers went past you threw stones at them because that's what you did. It was a very sectarian situation where I grew up… down the end of the street was another estate which you never went near, and there was regular battles at the end of the street between both sides….around the age of 10-11-12, you start to think "why am I chucking a stone at these guys?"…. As I was sort of reaching that point…the hunger strikes happened…. So the two coincided, and that sort of clarified my thinking a wee bit.

Thus, as illustrated by Brian, for many within-group activists negative experiences of confrontation with the out-group and a lack of opportunity for counter-balancing perspectives could coalesce in a deepened adherence to in-group identity and a concomitant lack of connection to the out-group. As Brian stated, Irish Republicanism is now *central to my belief system.*

Overall then, socialization in a context where an individual is exposed to negative encounters with out-group members, but not to counter-balancing positive experiences, is associated with individuals adhering strongly to in-group identity. And while respondents in this sample were not necessarily hostile towards the out-group, they did tend to describe them as an impediment to in-group interests. Moreover, they

did not express the view that greater collaboration with out-group members could offer any benefits to their in-group as they their own separate destiny.

5.5.3 Interaction of traits and socialization in supporting development of a group distinctiveness mindset.

Thus, similar to intergroup peacebuilders, the within-group activists interviewed can be viewed as individuals developing through interaction with their surrounding sociocultural environment. Within this, however, they can be seen to differ from intergroup peacebuilders with regards to the development of personal traits and influential socialization experiences.

Within-group activists, then, were notable for traits of strong group loyalty values that supported them to view morality through the lens of in-group wellbeing. At the same time they were more emotionally reactive, tending not to process reactions to conflict-related events internally but rather by directing blame onto an out-group target. Moreover, they were prone to adopting in-group collective narratives as their personal perspective on the conflict rather than questioning these narratives and formulating their own, more complex, perspective. It is difficult to say to what extent these traits might develop in an individual prior to their development of a group distinctiveness mindset and thus they cannot be seen as causal in a chronological sense. However, they are closely associated with adherence to the psychological features described in this thesis as group distinctiveness mindset and thus, at the very least, can be seen as a supportive framework helping to maintain that outlook on life.

In terms of socialization, meanwhile, a stronger case can be made for these experiences operating as mechanisms supporting the development of a group distinctiveness mindset. Being raised in a particularist family micro-culture can be seen to normalize separation between identity groups and high-levels of loyalty to the in-group. Similarly, immersion in in-group culture could be seen to encourage within-group activists to form an emotional bond with in-group identity, as well as providing a central focus to communal life that discourages the formation of relationships with out-group members. Lastly, being exposed to only negative experiences of the out-group, without counterbalancing positive contact, can only be expected to deepen

individuals' commitment to the in-group while simultaneously lowering their motivations to pursue cooperative relationships with the out-group.

5.6 Key Differences between Intergroup Peacebuilders and Within-group Activists.

This section provides a summation of the research findings in this chapter, in answer to research question two, "how do some civil society actors living in a protracted conflict become motivated to engage primarily in within-group activism rather than intergroup peacebuilding?" It then goes on to offer a summation of the cumulative findings, as a comparison between intergroup peacebuilders and within-group activists, in answer to research question three, "what are the key differences between those civil society actors in a protracted conflict who are primarily motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding and those who are primarily motivated to engage in within-group activism?".

5.6.1 Summation of findings in this chapter.

The grounded theory "becoming motivated to engage in within-group activism in a protracted conflict" examined above in some detail in this chapter was presented in answer to research question two. It outlined how the development of certain psychological features, here termed a group distinctiveness mindset, facilitates individuals to develop a primary concern of improving in-group wellbeing. The development of these particular psychological features can also be seen to be supported by the personal traits and socialization experiences as outlined in the previous section.

This chapter, therefore, adds further support to the contention in this thesis that motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding do not emerge arbitrarily but rather can be explained by individual-level differences in mindset. In the case of within-group activists their lower motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding could be seen in their lessened pursuit of cooperative relationships with out-group

members, in their lessened concern for the impact of in-group actions on the out-group, and in their development of an over-riding concern with in-group wellbeing. As with intergroup peacebuilders, their level of motivation can be explained with reference to their mindset and primary concern, and these can be seen to develop when supported by personal traits and socialization experiences.

Within-group activists, then, are notably less motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding due to their adherence to a group distinctiveness mindset. It can be predicted therefore that the more an individual displays these psychological features the more they will be concerned with in-group wellbeing and the less likely it is that they have high levels of intrinsic motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. Rather, they would be expected to only engage in intergroup peacebuilding when convinced that such activities benefit the in-group. Where such individuals perceive intergroup peacebuilding as a threat to in-group wellbeing, perhaps perceiving favoritism towards the out-group or fearing a loss of the in-group's distinct identity and culture, they are likely to oppose such activities. Thus, it can be asserted that it is likely that, among populations where the group distinctiveness mindset is prevalent, motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding will be highly conditional on perceived benefits to the in-group and unlikely to withstand social conditions where intergroup peacebuilding comes to be perceived as a threat to in-group wellbeing.

5.6.2 Summation of key differences between the samples.

How then do mindsets become prevalent? Or more specifically, how is it that some individuals adhere to one mindset while others adhere to another. This final subsection reviews the key differences between those individuals who are highly motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding and those individuals who are notably less motivated in this regard – in the case of this study, the within-group activists. This subsection therefore, draws together the two previous grounded theories as an integrated framework explaining individual- differences in levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding.

Although the comparison between the samples has required some simplification for the purposes of theoretical abstraction, it does yield insight as to why some individuals are much more motivated than others to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict. Depicted below in figure 13, the integrated framework illustrates how personal traits and socialization experiences coalesce to support the development of differences in mindset. These different mindsets, in turn, lead to the development of different primary concerns. Motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding are much higher among those individuals who are concerned to improve intergroup relations, while motivations are notably lower, and much more conditional, among individuals who are concerned primarily with in-group wellbeing. Thus the development of motivations regarding engagement in intergroup peacebuilding can be explained by individuals' adherence to a particular mindset, as supported by their personal traits and prior socialization experiences. In particular, growing up in a universalist or particularist family micro-culture, as explained previously, seems to have played an important role in how individuals developed their mindsets.

	Supportive factors			Mindset (Core Category)			
	Socializ-ation	**Traits**		**Worldview**	**Identity Formation**	**Framing of Conflict**	**Primary Concern**
Highly motivated to engage in inter-group peace-building (Intergroup peace-builders)	Universal-ist family micro-culture Exposure to diverse perspect-ives Transform-ative experience of out-group	Moral Autonomy Reflex-ivity Open to complex-ity		**Shared Humanity** Essential sameness Equal worth Inter-dependence	Questioning group identities Broadening group identity Moral inclusion of out-group	Shared suffering Shared responsibility Inclusive vision of peace	Improving intergroup relations
Little motivated to engage in inter-group peace-building (Within-group activists)	Particular-ist family micro-culture Immersion in in-group culture Only negative experience of out-group	Group loyalty Emotional reactivity In-group perspective		**Group Distinctive-ness** Inherently distinct identities Responsible to in-group Competition	Delineating us and them Fusion with in-group identity Accepting barriers to relationships with out-group	In-group suffering Out-group responsibility Peace as justice for in-group	Improving in-group wellbeing

Figure 13: Integrated framework explaining individual-level differences in motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflict.

Overall, therefore, the key differences between individuals who are highly motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding and those who have much lesser motivation derive principally from differences in adherence to either a universalist or a particularist mindset. While intergroup peacebuilders were found to adhere to a worldview marked by attention to sameness, interdependence and equal worth, within-group activists adhered to beliefs that groups were inherently distinct and competitive and that individuals have a greater responsibility towards the in-group. In

terms of their social identities, intergroup peacebuilders were supported by their worldview to question binary identities instead of developing a broadened sense of identity that was more inclusive of the out-group. By contrast, within-group activists adhered to a more clearly defined sense of identity, exclusionary of the out-group to at least some extent. The two samples also, as a consequence, framed the conflict quite differently, with intergroup peacebuilders developing a complex and inclusive understanding of the situation while within-group activists tended to view the conflict solely from the perspective of their in-group's experiences and aspirations.

As a result of their differences in mindset, individuals have developed quite different, although not necessarily antithetical, primary concerns. These differences in primary concern, then, provide the bridge between mindset and activist behavior. A concern to improve intergroup relations motivates intergroup peacebuilding efforts while a concern to contribute to in-group wellbeing motivates within-group activism efforts. In protracted conflicts, typically marked by profound political disagreement, the salience of concern for in-group wellbeing may become an impediment to intergroup peacebuilding as this process can entail making compromises that may be perceived as losses for the in-group. In contrast, when improving intergroup relations is the primary concern, in particular when this is seen as resonating with an individual's worldview and moral concerns, compromise and losses may become more acceptable as evidenced by intergroup peacebuilder respondents much greater willingness to envision a future society where in-group and out-group identities and aspirations are included and balanced.

The question of why individuals develop different mindsets can be explained through the interaction of their unique personality with particular experiences in their social context. This suggests that while the socio-psychological infrastructure of protracted conflicts can be seen to be partly self-reinforcing, there are possibilities to overcoming these barriers to intergroup peacebuilding through changes in socialization that encourage individuals to develop more of the features of a universalist mindset. Recommendations for improving relational peacebuilding practice in protracted conflicts, drawing on the insights provided by this study, are presented in chapter 7.

6. Discussion of Findings in Relation to Relevant Academic Literature

In classic grounded theory methodology (hereafter CGTM), it is recommended to review the relevant literature only after data has been collected and theory has emerged from the process of constant comparison (Glaser, 1998; Holton, 2008). At this stage, the areas of relevant literature can be identified without limiting the scope of data collection or theory development (Birks & Mills, 2011; Glaser 1998). The purpose of reviewing the literature at this stage in a CGTM study, then, is to compare the emergent theory with existing academic literature so as to further develop the themes emerging from the data (Dunne, 2011; Glaser 1998). In this way, relevant academic literature reviewed is integrated into a discussion of the research findings, offering a point of comparison and indicating how the grounded theory developed contributes to wider fields of knowledge (Birks & Mills, 2011; Dunne, 2011; Glaser 1998).

This chapter, then, fulfills the methodological procedures associated with CGTM, as well as the expectations for a doctoral thesis to demonstrate knowledge of relevant academic literature. It begins by briefly locating the area of inquiry addressed by the grounded theories presented in chapters 4 and 5 in relation to three fields of academic research. Secondly, the findings encapsulated in the theoretical categories presented in the previous two chapters are compared and contrasted with existing academic literature in these areas. The chapter concludes with a review of how the grounded theories emerging from this study contribute to these three relevant areas of existing academic scholarship, offering a critical analysis of trends and debates in those literatures.

6.1 The Substantive Area

In CGTM, a substantive area is simply a topic of interest that becomes the focus of formal inquiry (Glaser, 1978; Holton, 2008). Overall, this study addresses the substantive area of how individuals develop differing levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict. This topic was not rigidly defined

prior to data collection, but rather emerged from a general interest in understanding intergroup peacebuilders in Northern Ireland. Ultimately, two grounded theories emerged from the field research and data analysis; one addressing how some individuals develop high levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding as presented in chapter 4, and another addressing how other individuals develop motivations to engage in within-group activism with an associated de-prioritization of intergroup peacebuilding. Taken together, these theories argue for the role of personal traits, socialization experiences, worldview, identity formation and framing of conflict in explaining how individuals develop different motivations regarding participation in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict.

As illustrated in figure 2 in the introductory chapter, replicated below, the findings from this study contribute to three broad fields of academic inquiry. Firstly, the findings have relevance for the study of civil society peacebuilding in protracted conflicts, providing insight as to how motivations to engage in such activism develop in some individuals but not among others. Furthermore, the findings can contribute to understanding how the psychological and cultural barriers to peacebuilding in protracted conflicts can be overcome, by illustrating how differences in mindset relate to motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. Finally, this study also has relevance for the study of individuals' participation in social activism, in particular for the role of mindsets in shaping individuals' motivations to engage in different forms of activism.

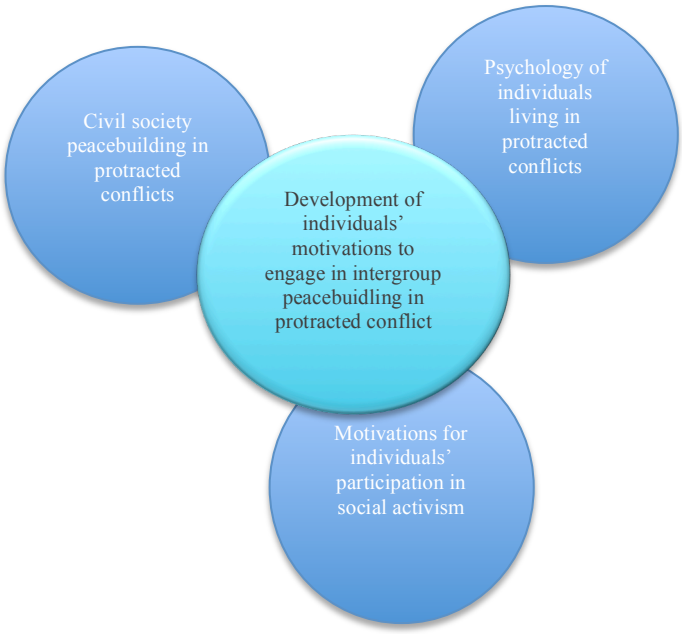

Figure 2: Relating the thesis topic to wider academic literature.

The most relevant themes and debates in each of those fields is reviewed in the final section of this chapter. That section also examines in some detail how the findings from this study contribute to these three areas of inquiry. Firstly, however, the next section will review how the content of the theoretical categories presented in chapters 4 and 5 compares with existing academic scholarship in these areas.

6.2 Discussion of Grounded Theory Categories in Relation to Relevant Literature

This section examines how the theoretical categories developed in this study relate to academic literature addressing these same topics. It is therefore a review of existing scholarship related to how personal traits, socialization experiences, worldview, identify formation, and conflict framing can influence the attitudes and behavior of individuals living in a situation of protracted intergroup conflict. Each category is

compared in turn to relevant research on the topic, as uncovered during extensive searching of the available academic literature in English. Specfically, it is examined to what extent the findings encapsulated in the theoretical categories are confirmed by the wider literature, and to what extent the findings present a counterpoint to, or further elaboration of, existing academic knowledge.

6.2.1 The role of personal traits in explaining participation in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflict.

As outlined in chapter 4, traits can be understood as personal characteristics and patterns of behavior that are relatively stable over time (Church, 2000; McCrae & Costa, 1997). While the degree to which traits are in-born or shaped by socialization continues to be debated, a number of scholars have identified the value of researching how certain traits relate to individual attitudes regarding intergroup relations and the perceived merits of pursuing peace as a response to conflict.

There is some evidence that personal traits can influence how individuals respond to intergroup conflict. For example, xenophilia, a benevolent attitude towards members of foreign cultures, correlates significantly with the trait of openness to experience (Sturmer et al., 2013). Meanwhile, the trait of agreeableness has been found to predict support for accommodating solutions to conflict (Wood & Bell, 2008).

A number of scholars have explored the potential for a cluster of traits to be identified as comprising a peace-supporting personality. Allport (1954) identified a cluster of traits believed to comprise a tolerant personality low in prejudices towards out-groups, with characteristics including self-insight, empathetic ability, tolerance for ambiguity, and an inclusive life philosophy. Meanwhile, Ziller, Moriarty and Phillips (1999) conceptualized a universalist orientation to represent a peace personality, and found that individual adherence to this orientation correlates with lessened support for punitive military action against an out-group. The notion of a peaceful personality based on concern for others, identification with humanity, universalism, and rejection of vengeance norms has also been but forward by Nelson, Puopolo and Sims (2014).

While none of the above has been comprehensively and conclusively related to intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts, taken together this literature suggests that certain personal traits may predispose individuals to be more or less motivated to pursue cooperative relationships with out-group members. As outlined in chapters 4 and 5, intergroup peacebuilders and within-group activists displayed a number of differences in their personal traits. These findings are discussed below in relation to relevant academic literature.

Moral autonomy / in-group loyalty.

To an extent these two traits can be conceived of as contrasting tendencies. While intergroup peacebuilders often expressed how their internal moral standards led to them questioning in-group behavior, within-group activists rarely questioned in-group norms, and tended to express loyalty to the in-group cause as a moral value in and of itself.

The development of moral reasoning over the life course has been identified as an important determinant of individuals' social behavior by a number of scholars (Gilligan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1964; Piaget, 1932; Turiel, 2002). Within the field of moral psychology, "autonomous moral motivation" has been defined as cases where the moral act is valued in and of itself and perceived as emanating from one's authentic self (Assor, 2012, p. 240). Similarly, "integrated moral motivation" has been identified as the desire to put personal values into practice (Assor, 2012, p. 242). Social actions, then, can be confirmed as deriving from personal moral values on some occasions at least, while developing different moral reasoning and different capacities for autonomous moral motivation is likely to result in individuals behaving differently.

In protracted conflicts, the courage to question and challenge in-group norms has been noted to support individuals to participate in intergroup peacebuilding (Abarbanel, 2012; Chaitin, 2014; Gopin 2012a). The courage to dissent from wider social norms, adhering instead to personal moral values, also supports other forms of peace activism in less divided contexts (Shwebel, 2005). High levels of moral courage among peace activists may be encouraged by experiences in early life that foster independent, critical thinking (Nasie et al., 2014; Schwebel, 2005). Taken with the findings in this study this suggests that moral autonomy, seen as a willingness to

engage in internal moral reasoning that can result in dissenting from wider social norms, may be an important factor encouraging participation in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts.

Conversely, there is substantial evidence that a strong sense of in-group loyalty can deter individuals from seeking a peaceful and cooperative resolution to protracted conflict. Many authors have argued that societal divisions based around identities such as ethnicity or religion contribute to the emergence and duration of violent conflicts (Aiken, 2013; Cordell & Wolff, 2010; Horowitz 1985; Kriesberg 1993; Lederach, 1997). Strong in-group loyalty matched with hostility to out-groups has been termed "parochial altruism" (Choi & Bowles, 2007, p.636), and such loyalty to a cherished in-group can mobilize individuals to engage in violence in a context of protracted conflict (Atran, 2016). Moreover, it has also been noted that loyalty to in-group interests can prevent individuals in protracted conflicts from supporting the pursuit of intergroup peacemaking (Gayer et al., 2009; Hameiri, Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2014). Thus, a strong concern for a defined in-group can contribute to intensification, rather than resolution of, intergroup conflicts.

Thus, while it has been argued that affection for an in-group does not necessarily equate to prejudice against the out-group (Brewer, 1999), the picture in conflict-affected societies is somewhat different. This literature provides some support, then, for the finding presented in chapter 5 that individuals strong in group loyalty values were not strongly motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding, especially where such activities were not seen as advancing in-group interests. Therefore, while strong loyalty to an in-group may result in positive benefits for group members, it would seem that such loyalty can at times act to support conflict continuance.

Reflexivity / Reactivity.

Respondents in the two samples also differed in degree to which they displayed reflexivity or emotional reactivity. Intergroup peacebuilders showed a notably stronger capacity for processing difficult emotions internally and for reflecting on the impact of their actions on others. This pattern was termed reflexivity. Conversely, within-group activists displayed notably less willingness to reflect internally on difficult emotions, and less concern for the impact of in-group actions on

out-group members. Instead, they displayed stronger negative emotional reactions when discussing out-group behavior in relation to the conflict in Northern Ireland.

The term reflexivity is most commonly used in relation to the researcher's role in qualitative research and refers to an ability to be aware of one's own biases and their potential to impact research outcomes (see Finlay & Gough, 2003; Jootun et al., 2009). While studies exploring the influence of reflexivity on how individuals perceive and react to a protracted conflict were not found in the exsiting literature, the finding that intergroup peacebuilders are strong in this trait may be partly confirmed by studies demonstrating the role of emotional self-regulation in protracted conflicts. Individuals' ability to regulate emotional reactions and reappraise the situation has been found to correlate with greater support for conciliatory policies in a protracted conflict (Halperin, Porat, Tamir & Gross, 2013). Stronger emotional regulation is also associated with greater concern for out-group suffering in a conflict-affected society (Halperin & Gross, 2011). Similarly, Gopin (2012a) has remarked on the strong capacity of peacebuilding activists for self-reflection regarding their own role in the conflict, while Abarbanel (2012) has pointed to the capacity of peacebuilding activists to process difficult emotions arising from exposure to alternative views on the conflict. More generally, self-insight and self-policing are also believed to be important tools for overcoming prejudicial reactions to out-groups (Allport, 1954; Devine, 2005).

Meanwhile, there is academic literature to support the contention that emotional reactivity plays a role in shaping individuals' responses to conflict-related events. It has been noted that negative intergroup emotions such as fear, anger and hatred become part of the psychological repertoire of individuals living in protracted conflicts (Bar-Tal, 2007; Halperin, 2011; Kelman, 1997). Bar-Tal, Halperin and De Rivera (2007) developed the notion of a collective emotional repertoire, whereby group members largely share emotional responses to conflict events. Thus, individuals who are strongly identified with a group experience strong emotions when other members of that group are exposed to conflict related events (Halperin, Bar-Tal, Nets-Zehngut, & Drori, 2008). Such negative intergroup emotions can constitute a significant barrier to peaceful conflict resolution (Halperin, 2011). In more extreme cases, negative emotional reactions to out-group actions and life circumstances have been argued to support individuals to engage in violence against out-group members (Loza, 2007; Rice, 2009).

Overall then, there is support in the literature to suggest that emotional reactivity is associated with conflict continuance. The finding in this study that emotional reactivity is associated with lessened motivations for individuals to engage in intergroup peacebuilding adds a further dimension to this discussion, suggesting that emotionally reactive individuals who are strongly identified with their in-group will be little motivated to form cooperative relationships with the out-group in a protracted conflict. Conversely, there is also literature that provides reasonable support for the finding presented in chapter 4 that a notable capacity for reflexivity may support individuals to react to a protracted conflict in such a way that they can process negative emotions without focusing on blaming the out-group. Thus, an increased awareness of own's own emotions, and the willingness to engage with them reflexively, would seem to support individuals to overcome some of the potential emotional barriers to intergroup peacebuilding.

Openness to complexity/ adherence to in-group perspective.

As outlined in the findings chapters, intergroup peacebuilders displayed a notable openness to complexity, evidenced by their willingness to view the conflict from multiple perspectives. Within-group activists, on the other hand, tended to view the conflict from a single perspective, seeming to narratives widely shared among in-group members. While the preference for adopting in-group narratives may not be determined by a general lack of openness to complexity so much as identification with the in-group, nonetheless the intergroup peacebuilders' tendency to describe social issues as complex and requiring insight into multiple perspectives seemed to support their openness to exploring other narratives about the conflict.

These findings resonate with scholarship on individuals' need for cognitive closure versus tolerance for ambiguity (Allport, 1954; Kruglanski, 2013), on individuals' capacity for integrative complexity (Tibon, 2000) and on perspective-taking as a precursor to empathy and peacebuilding between groups (Abarbanel, 2012; Lamm, Batson & Decety, 2007; Oswald, 1996). Kruglanski's (2013) work has shown that individuals who strongly prefer simple and definitive answers, termed cognitive closure, tend to reject ambiguity and at the same time are more likely to be more prejudiced against out-groups. This confirms Allport's (1954) observation that individuals who were tolerant of ambiguity held less prejudices towards outgroups.

Similarly, integrative complexity refers to a cognitive ability to grasp a number of different perspectives on a situation, and synthesize them into a coherent framework as the basis for responding to a situation (Raphael, 1982), with Tibon (2000) finding a correlation between higher levels of integrative complexity and greater willingness to pursue cooperative tactics in resolving conflict. Moreover, the ability to take on perspectives different from one's own has been identified as an important cognitive basis for empathy (Lamm et al., 2007; Oswald, 1996), with empathy for the out-group found to discourage aggressive attitudes in a protracted conflict (Rosler, Cohen-Chen & Halperin, 2015). Peacebuilding activists in a protracted conflict have also been identified as demonstrating openness to alternative information, allowing them to reevaluate in-group narratives (Abarbanel, 2012). Similarly, the trait of xenosophia, being a disposition of benevolence towards other forms of knowledge and religious faith, has been found to support the motivations of religious peacebuilders in Sri Lanka (Masters, 2016).

At the same time, a number of scholars have investigated how individuals living in protracted conflicts often adhere closely to shared in-group narratives when analyzing the conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal et al., 2014), with many adopting these narratives as an integral aspect of their personal identity (Hammack, 2008; Hammack 2011; Ross 2014). Strong adherence to in-group narratives has been found to be associated with difficulties in legitimizing the out-group perspective on the conflict and with attitudes supportive of conflict continuance (Hammack, 2009; Ross, 2014).

Thus, overall, combining evidence from both interview data and the existing academic literature suggests openness to complexity can be associated with willingness to take the perspective of the out-group as a precursor to empathizing with their experience. This trait, then, would seem to be supportive of participation in intergroup peacebuilding where there will inevitably be exposure to out-group narratives that challenge the in-group's perspective. This may indicate that a preference for adopting a single, coherent narrative about the conflict can discourage individuals from engaging in activities where they would expect to encounter radically different perspectives that may discomfit them emotionally, such as intergroup peacebuilding can require. However, this topic would benefit from being further researched.

Discussion.

The findings in this study strongly suggest that personal traits as a construct may have some utility in explaining individuals' behavior in protracted conflicts. The literature reviewed in this subsection generally supports the contention, put forward in this thesis, that certain personal traits can support individuals' to develop high or low levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict. There is evidence to suggest that personal traits of moral autonomy, reflexivity and openness to complexity can support individuals to more easily overcome some of the psychological barriers to engaging in intergroup peacebuilding that are common in societies affected by protracted conflict. Meanwhile, it would seem that the traits of in-group loyalty, emotional reactivity and fusion with in-group narratives may actively discourage individuals from developing strong motivations to engage in building cooperative relationships with out-group members.

Nonetheless, the role of traits in shaping individuals' attitudes and behavior should not be over-stated. Many scholars have argued for the importance of socialization in a particular context in shaping how individuals engage with the world (for example, Bandura & Walters, 1963; Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Rogoff, 2003). It is best to view traits as a supportive factor rather than a specific causal mechanism. Thus, the notion of a peace personality may be overly deterministic as personalities are often considered to be fixed and unchanging, whereas traits can potentially develop and change over the life course.

Traits deserve, therefore, to be researched in more detail as to their capacity to shape individuals' mindsets and behavior in protracted conflicts. In particular the traits of moral autonomy, reflexivity and openness to complexity could be more fully operationalized and tested for a correlation with individuals' willingness to engage in building cooperative relationships with out-group members in a protracted conflict. At the same time, the three traits most notably displayed by within-group activists could be more fully investigated for their capacity to potentially discourage individuals from participating in intergroup peacebuilding. Moreover, given that, as will be seen in the next subsection, individuals develop certain traits in a context of socialization that encourages some traits while discouraging others, the impact of traits on willingness to engage in intergroup peacebuilding deserves to be further researched with reference

to how supportive traits can be encouraged through socialization experiences such as education and parenting.

6.2.2 The role of socialization experiences in explaining motivation to engage in peacebuilding in protracted conflict.

Socialization within a family and a wider culture is recognized as an important factor shaping individual psychological development (Bandura & Walters, 1963; Boyd & Bee, 2012; Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Rogoff 2003). Moreover, parenting practices can play a key role in fostering childrens' attachment to in-group identity and in shaping their attitudes towards out-groups (Hughes et al., 2006; Van Bergen, Ersanilli, Pels & De Ruyter, 2016). In protracted conflicts, many mechanisms work to socialize successive generations in the identities, beliefs and narratives that justify continued conflict, as outlined in chapter 2. Socialization into peace-supporting attitudes and values have received much less scholarly attention, although there are some indications from anthropological literature that in highly peaceful cultures children are strongly socialized towards non-aggression (Fry, 1992; Fry, Bonta, & Baszarkiewicz, 2009). Similarly, scaled up to the macro level of whole societies, it has been found that societies with strong social norms of tolerance and egalitarianism are more likely to enjoy high levels of peacefulness (Fischer & Hanke, 2009; Institute for Economics and Peace, 2015), although the direction of causality is not easy to determine.

This study found a number of differences in the socialization experiences recounted by resondents in the two samples. These findings are compared in this subsection with academic literature on peace-supporting and conflict-supporting socialization.

Impact of universalist or particularist family micro-culture.

Family is potentially the most important source of socialization for children and, hence, learning in the family home is known as primary socialization (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Ostberg, 2000). A number of studies of activists have identified the importance of primary socialization in shaping their commitment to social change

(Della Porta, 2000; Flacks, 2004; Nasie et al., 2014). In particular, the tendency of peace activists and peacebuilding activists to adhere to a position different from mainstream culture has been attributed to values learned in the family home (Schwebel 2008; Nasie et al., 2014).

The literature on socialization in protracted conflicts has been more fully explored in chapter 2, pointing to a number of mechanisms whereby conflict-supporting beliefs are transmitted to new generations within and beyond the family home. In protracted conflicts family members have been identified as an important source of information about the conflict for young people (Bell et al., 2010; Leonard, 2014; Stolk, 2011). Furthermore, a wide-ranging survey of young people in Northern Ireland found that family was by far the most important source identified in shaping their views of the out-group (Schubotz & Robinson, 2006). This literature largely confirms the findings presented in chapter 5 in relation to within-group activists, that family micro-culture is an important influence encouraging the development of an emotional bond to in-group identity. Moreover, the findings in chapter 5 go further and illustrate specific mechanisms encouraging this exclusive bond, such as when parents readily involve children in cultural and communal activities but they do not actively seek opportunities for their children to encounter the out-group,

Meanwhile, the literature contains only limited investigation of socialization in protracted conflicts that can support individuals to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. One study of the lives of peacebuilding activists points to the role of their parents in transmitting universalist and egalitarian values to them from a young age (Nasie et al., 2014). This study found that many of the Israeli peacebuilding activists they interviewed felt they were following in the footsteps of their parents who had encouraged early participation in left-wing political activities. Conversely, Abarbanel (2012) observed no single socialization experience shared by all the peacebuilding activists whose stories she collated. While primary socialization in the family should not be seen in purely deterministic terms, with individuals acquiring relevant socialization experiences at different points in their life course, the findings from this study confirm Nasie et al.'s (2014) assertion that exposure to universalist values in the family supports intergroup peacebuilding activism.

While there are areas of agreement between this study and the literature on peace-supporting socialization, this thesis goes further by conceiving of the family as a micro-culture that can potentially encourage children to develop a peace-supporting

mindset, even in the challenging context of a protracted conflict. It also provides an important caveat to the literature on conflict-supporting socialization in protracted conflicts, by demonstrating that wider socialization mechanisms such as collective narratives, formal education and peer socialization are not universal in their effect. Primary socialization seems to influence the extent to which individuals are influenced by wider socialization mechanisms, and therefore deserves to be researched in detail for its potential to contribute to shaping the mindsets of populations affected by protracted conflict.

Exposure to diverse perspectives / immersion in in-group culture.

In this study, it was found that intergroup peacebuilders referred to many experiences of exposure to different perspectives beyond the shared narratives of the in-group, while within-group activists generally related growing up firmly embedded in the cultural practices of the in-group, without significant exposure to other narratives or perspectives. The findings in chapter 4 identified a number of sources of alternative perspectives, including intergroup friendships, parents or grandparents who had lived abroad, exposure to an alternative sub-culture such as communist politics, and time spent in a culturally diverse community. Within-group activists, meanwhile, rarely recounted having lived outside of Northern Ireland, or having formed sustained relationships with members of other cultures. At the same time, respondents in this sample frequently recounted experiences of participation in in-group cultural practices from an early age.

While exposure to diverse perspectives has emerged as an important theoretical subcategory in this study, helping to explain why certain individuals developed strong motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding, the academic literature provides only minimal confirmation. As mentioned above, Nasie et al. (2014) noted the role of early exposure to leftwing ideologies in encouraging individuals to becoming involved in peacebuilding activism. Less clearly related, while some studies have linked exposure to diverse cultures with reduced prejudice towards out-groups (see Brewer & Miller, 1988), others have found that diversity in a neighborhood can be associated with a general increase in prejudicial attitudes (see Fieldhouse & Cutts, 2010; Stolle, Soroka, & Johnston, 2008). A further clarification has emerged, pointing to the importance of direct interaction with neighbors in a

culturally-diverse area for reducing prejudice and fostering intergroup trust (Laurence, 2011; Letki, 2008). Furthermore, the possibilities for both positive and negative results from intergroup contact interventions in protracted conflicts have also been elaborated (for a meta-analysis see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

Although entering into this wider debate is beyond the scope of the present thesis, the findings relating to this subcategory suggest that greater nuance is called for. What can be said is that exposure to diverse perspectives, when coupled with a family micro-culture where certain universalist values were promoted, seems to support individuals to develop strong motivations to form cooperative relationships with out-group members. At the same time, as revealed by within-group activists, accounts of discomfiture when exposed to certain alternate experiences, socialization in a particularistic family may present a barrier to responding positively to intergroup contact. However, both of these possibilities are best considered as fruitful topics for future research.

Meanwhile, the finding that within-group activists tended to be highly bonded to the in-group and to have spent most of their life developing relationships within the in-group reflects much of the literature on conflict-supporting socialization in protracted conflicts, as outlined in chapter 2. In particular, these accounts of early participation in in-group culture add further support to the contentions of a number of authors who have pointed to the role of cultural practices in intensifying individuals adherence to in-group identity (for example, Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Ross, 2007).

Thus, while not conclusive, there is evidence to suggest that exposure to diverse perspectives or, alternatively, immersion in in-group culture can influence how individuals come to perceive and respond to a protracted conflict. In particular, how exposure to alternative perspectives interacts with prior socialization within a family micro-culture deserves to be further researched.

Transformative or negative encounters with the out-group.

Many participants across both samples related significant encounters with out-group members that had helped to shape their worldview. In particular, those intergroup peacebuilders who had not previously been exposed to a universalist family micro-culture recounted how one or more transformative encounters with out-

group members had provoked a personal transformation in their thinking about the conflict. Conversely, many within-group activists recounted negative encounters with the out-group, while few were able to draw on prior positive contact with out-group members that might have mitigated these negative experiences to some extent.

The importance of transformative experiences of the other relates to academic literature addressing individual-level attitudinal change in protracted conflicts. Specific to the literature on individual peacebuilders in protracted conflicts, Nasie et al. (2014) found that peacebuilding activists had been particularly affected by encounters with the other that challenged their prior negative or dehumanized view of the out-group. Similarly, a number of the Israeli peacebuilding activists profiled by Abarbanel (2012) cited a turning point in their lives when they encountered the human face of Palestinian suffering.

More generally, intergroup contact has long been recognized as a potential means to reduce prejudice towards out-groups (see Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Intergroup contact has been empirically demonstrated to encourage positive attitudinal change towards out-group members (Brown, Eller, Leeds & Stace, 2007; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). In the particular context of Northern Ireland, individuals engaging in more cross-group contact have been found to hold less extreme political attitudes (Stringer et al., 2009) and to be more likely to hold favorable views of the out-group (Shuboltz & Robinson, 2006), although in these studies the direction of causality is not clear. Futhermore, a number of contact-based interventions have been evaluated as having successfully changed attitudes among at least some participants in societies experiencing protracted conflicts, although not equally among all participants (Hammack, 2006; Ross, 2014). Substantive investigation of the individual-level factors explaining reactions to intergroup contact remains lacking.

However, there is significant academic debate around the conditions under which intergroup contact is most effective (see Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) as well as why such interventions struggle to achieve lasting change among the attitudes of participants living in protracted conflicts (Hammack, 2006; Rosen & Salomon, 2011; Ross, 2014; Salomon, 2011). This is perhaps not surprising given that the recommended conditions for intergroup contact - equal status between groups, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and the support of authorities, law or custom - are largely lacking in societies affected by protracted conflicts (Bar-Tal, 2007; Kriesberg, 1998; Lederach, 1997). In particular, individuals have been found to react

negatively to intergroup contact when they have low trust in the out-group and consequently experience anxiety during contact (Paolini et al., 2004; Tausch et al., 2007). Again, this barrier to positive attitudinal change is more likely to be present in protracted conflicts where enemy images are often widespread and levels of intergroup trust are generally low (Bar-Tal, 2007).

Thus, the findings emerging from comparison of intergroup peacebuilders' and within-group activists' different encounters with the out-group can contribute to wider academic discussion. This study has found that early positive contact with the out-group, particularly when it happens naturally through living or socializing in a mixed environment, can exert a counter-balancing effect if individuals later have a negative encounter with the out-group. Meanwhile, where individuals have not had such counter-balancing prior positive contact, difficult encounters with the out-group seemed to contribute to a hardening of attitudes, leaving them less likely to be motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. However, among individuals who had previously developed a negative view of the out-group, this could be transformed when they had an experience that provided contradictory information encouraging them to more fully humanize the out-group in their mind, leading to increased empathy for out-group suffering.

Taken together with the literature, this study confirms that intergroup contact can result in positive attitudinal change even in a protracted conflict. Going further, it can be confirmed that the nature of intergroup contact is important, with this study outlining two types of contact that intergroup peacebuilders felt had exerted an important influence in shaping their attitudes and motivations. Early and sustained contact with the out-group would seem to be beneficial in predisposing individuals to take a positive attitude towards intergroup peacebuilding, while later contact can have a transformative effect when a previously dehumanized out-group is suddenly humanized in the mind of the individual. This suggests then that humanization of the out-group and the awakening of empathy for the experience of others could be important goals for contact-based interventions in protracted conflicts.

Discussion.

This study seems to confirm the existing literature on socialization in protracted conflicts that support conflict continuance. However, it also contributes to

and extends this literature by pointing to the important role played by parents in developing individuals' mindsets that, in turn, impact on how they later make sense of events in the wider society. Moreover, the findings in this study emphasize the important role played by socialization in a mono-cultural or mixed environment in shaping individuals' developing mindsets.

This study makes a further contribution by highlighting the value of researching the socialization mechanisms associated with development of motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. Multiple searches of the English language literature revealed little research on this topic to date, and therefore this study makes an important contribution by showing that even within the wider environment of a protracted conflict, individuals can have more immediate socialization experiences that support them to develop a peace-supporting mindset. Early exposure to universalist ideas and a diversity of perspectives and cultures would seem to be potentially significant mechanisms that deserve to be researched further. The ability of family micro-culture to influence individuals in favor of conflict continuance or intergroup peacebuilding could be an important avenue of future research within the study of protracted conflicts.

Moreover, by taking into account the complexity of lives lived in a particular context, the present findings suggest that intergroup contact is not a panacea guaranteed to result in personal transformation, but it can be an important trigger in the right conditions. This study suggests that peacebuilding interventions based on intergroup contact should be evaluated for their capacity to support a transformation in worldview and identity, as this study found that only such a profound change of mindset supports motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding.

6.2.3 Worldviews and motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict.

Worldviews are a set of assumptions about physical and social reality (Koltko-Rivera, 2004). They are often held at an uncouncious level but can do much to shape individuals' behavior (Nudler, 1990). Scholarship in the field of social psychology has shown variations in worldview at the individual level can have significant impact on attitudes and behavior towards out-groups, including in the case of protracted

conflicts (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011; Fiske, 2002; Porat et al., 2015; Pratto, Sidanius & Levin, 2006; Rosenthal, Levy, Katser & Bazile, 2015). Meanwhile, athropologists have noted that differences in peacefulness or aggression between cultural groupings may relate to differences in worldview (Robarchek & Robarchek, 1998).

Moreover, differences in worldview are also implicated in the intractability of conflicts. Nudler (1990) has theorized that worldview conflicts arise when people living with different woldviews, that he calls "worlds" (p.177) are obliged to interact, and that these conflicts can be particularly difficult to resolve using rational-based models. Indeed, Nudler's (2011) controversy spaces model suggests that the presence of controversy indicates fundamental differences in assumptions. Identifying and responding to different worldviews in a conflict can therefore be a important aspect of third-party intervention in disputes (Docherty 2003; Nudler 1993).

This study found that intergroup peacebuilders and within-group activists displayed substantial differences in their overall beliefs about society and human social life. These differences seemed to contribute strongly to explaining their different attitudes towards the conflict and the out-group. This section compares these findings with existing academic literature regarding the influence of worldviews on individuals' attitudes towards intergroup peacebuilding and intergroup conflict.

Worldviews associated with intergroup peacebuilding.

This study found that intergroup peacebuilding activists in Northern Ireland shared a number of assumptions about reality that were termed a universalist worldview. It should be clarified here that when describing this worldview as universalist it was not indicated that the peacebuilders take a position in regards to universalism as a question of epistemology and scientific rigor, as put forward by Merton (1942), for example. It is closer to Parson's (1949) assertion that universal values, as opposed to particularism, supports the development of a cohesive society that can be accepting of individual difference. However, there is no claim made in this thesis that the peacebuilders values are universal, rather the term is used to refer to the ways in which their worldview is focused on the human race as a single group, naturally interdependent, and comprised of individuals and groups of equal worth.

A small number of studies point to the importance of shared psychological features in explaining peacebuilding activism in protracted conflicts (see Garred,

2013; Grant, 2013; Gopin, 2012b; Nasie et al., 2014). Among religious civil society leaders in Mindanao, Garred (2013) found those who were willing to engage in interfaith peacebuilding valued inclusivity and acceptance of difference, concluding that "mindsets powerfully shape the willingness of individuals to engage with people from other identity groups" (p.22). Meanwhile, Nasie et al. (2014) found that among Israeli peacebuilding activists "early political socialization at home and in youth movements provides foundations for the formation of a worldview about the Israeli reality and especially about the conflict" (p.325). Although the authors do not specify the exact elements of this worldview, they do note that respondents tended to subscribe to a liberal worldview, hold a leftwing Zionist orientation, and display universalist values related to altruism and social equality.

The universalism of the shared humanity worldview finds further support in the literature addressing the influence of universalist values on attitudes towards out-groups more generally. Universalist beliefs have been found to support care for out-group members and willingness to act on their behalf (Borshuk, 2001; Oliner & Oliner, 1992; Schwartz, 2007). Bar-Tal and Halperin (2011) found that universalist values were positively associated with individuals' openness to new information and support for compromise in the context of Israel Palestine. In a study conducted in Lebanon, adherence to universalist rather than sectarian values seemed to counteract the effects of identity fusion and discouraged individuals from supporting extreme actions such as violence on behalf of the in-group (Sheikh et al. 2014). Meanwhile, Ziller et al. (1999) found that a universalist orientation was highly associated with compassionate responses to out-group suffering and a desire to avoid military conflict during wartime. This may be because universalism has been found to support empathy (Hoffman, 1976), while the moral inclusion of out-groups is associated with increased concern for out-group members and a reduction in desire to engage in intergroup conflict (Deutsch 1990; Opotow 2012; Schwartz, 2007).

Meanwhile, egalitarian attitudes have been found to support individuals to be morally inclusive towards out-groups (Schwartz, 2007). Of particular relevance, Nasie et al. (2014) link an overall left-wing, egalitarian worldview to the frames activists form about the conflict, confirming the finding in this thesis that worldview shapes framing of the conflict. However, regarding the ability of an egalitarian worldview to support engagement in intergroup peacebuilding, the best evidence is

provided by logical inference from the literature linking hierarchical worldviews to support for intergroup aggression, as reviewed below.

Limited literature was found to support the role of belief in intergroup interdependence in shaping attitudes towards intergroup conflict. Polyculturalism, the belief that different identity groups have historically interacted and influenced one another, has been found to be associated with individuals' displaying more positive attitudes and behavioral attentions towards a stigmatized minority group (Rosenthal et al., 2015). Moreover, Danesh (2006; 2010) has argued that a worldview based in the fundamental inter-relatedness of all humanity can provide an important psychological foundation for developing peaceful attitudes and behavior. A peace education curriculum based on this model was found to be effective in encouraging pro-peace attitudes and behavior among students in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Clarke-Habibi; 2005).

Worldviews associated with intergroup conflict.

A number of studies have found that certain worldviews are associated with greater prejudice against out-groups, support for punitive or militaristic approaches to conflict resolution, or a tendency to dismiss opportunities for peace-making. In particular, worldviews that support social hierarchy, in-group bias and a general sense of threat have been found to be associated with attitudes and behaviors that might support the continuance, rather than the peaceful resolution, of intergroup conflict. More specific to protracted conflicts, empirical studies have found that enduring worldviews shape individuals' response to conflict, and relate to their level of support for peaceful compromise.

In general, hierarchical worldviews such as Right Wing Authoritarianism or Social Dominance Orientation have been found to correlate strongly with prejudicial attitudes towards out-groups (Duckitt & Sibley, 2007; Pratto et al., 2006; Whitley, 1999) and with support for militaristic foreign policies (Benjamin, 2006; Henry, Sidanius, Levin & Pratto, 2005; Pratto et al., 2006). Belief in in-group superiority has been found to support willingness to engage in intergroup conflict (Eidelson & Eidelson, 2003). Meanwhile, extreme bias in favor of the in-group can underlie intergroup aggression, particularly where there is a concern to preserve hierarchies and values viewed as traditional (Fiske, 2002).

Worldviews that involve a sense of consistent threat also appear to be associated with support for aggressive actions against out-groups. Eidelson & Eidelson (2003) have noted that individuals who believe that their in-group is vulnerable and helpless are more likely to support aggressive actions, and are more likely to distrust out-groups. Belief in in-group vulnerability has also been found to correlate with support for extreme policy preferences in a protracted conflict (Maoz & Eidelson, 2007), while a greater sense of being under threat has been found to correlate with individuals preferring aggressive state policies against the out-group (Maoz & MacAulay, 2008). Furthermore, adherence to a "dog-eat-dog worldview" and holding conservative views that important social values are on the verge of collapse are both associated with bias against out-groups (Fiske, 2002, p. 127).

Specific to protracted conflicts, Bar-Tal and Halperin (2011) have found that enduring worldviews shape individuals' response to conflict, with traditionalist and conformist worldviews showing a negative correlation to support for peaceful compromise. It has also been empirically demonstrated that general worldviews affect how individuals view conflict issues and the out-group, with right-wing authoritarianism and traditional values associated with lack of openness to information about new peace-making opportunities (Porat et al., 2015). Moreover, Bar-Tal and Halperin (2011) have also found that individuals who believed that group qualities are fixed and unchangeable, a concept termed group entity theory, were more likely to reject compromise with the out-group in a protracted conflict.

Discussion.

Overall, existing academic literature provides substantial confirmation that a shared humanity worldview and a group distinctiveness worldview can influence individuals' attitudes towards intergroup peacebuilding. When taken conversely, the literature on conflict-supporting worldviews provides substantial support for the influence of a shared humanity worldview in developing positive attitudes towards the out-group. As hierarchical worldviews and in-group bias have been shown to support prejudice and aggression against out-groups, this assists in explaining how universalist and egalitarian beliefs can support motivation to engage in building cooperative intergroup relationships. Moreover, the role of a shared humanity worldview in supporting intergroup peacebuilding is further confirmed by the

literature regarding peace-supporting worldviews that points to the importance of universalist and egalitarian beliefs, and belief in human interdependence, for underpinning positive attitudes towards out-group members.

It should also be emphasized that the elements of a group distinctiveness worldview displayed by respondents in the within-group activists sample cannot be directly linked to support for conflict continuance. However, the group distinctiveness worldview lacks those elements of universalism and interdependence that seem to support intergroup peacebuilding, while containing elements of in-group bias and sense of threat. Moreover, belief in the inherent distinctiveness of groups is reminiscent of group entity theory, belief in which leaves individuals more likely to hold a negative opinion of the out-group and to dismiss information about opportunities for peace-making (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011). Thus, while the group distinctiveness worldview cannot be confirmed as directly supporting conflict, it can be suggested that a number of elements overlap with worldviews that are associated with increased prejudice towards out-groups and increased support for aggressive action in support of in-group interests. This worldview can therefore be regarded as a potential psychological barrier to intergroup peacebuilding, this study suggests adherence to these psychological features would seem to discourage individuals from developing strong motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding.

6.2.4 Identity formation and attitudes in protracted conflict.

The prejudices and biases associated with affiliation to an ethnic or religious identity have been argued to be an important driver of violent conflict by many authors (for example, Aiken, 2013; Cordell & Wolff, 2010; Horowitz, 1985; Volkan, 2006). In particular what Horowitz (1985, p.1) has termed “ascriptive identities”, being unchosen social identities of ethnicity, race and family religion, are associated with protracted conflicts (Aiken, 2013; Bar-Tal. 2007; Kriesberg 1998; Lederach, 1997). Approaches to understanding the influence of group identities on violent conflict have focused on their impact on intergroup relations (Aiken, 2013; Bar-Tal, 2000; Bar-Tal, 2007; Hewstone & Cairns, 2001), their contribution to a divided polity and society (Campbell et al., 2010; McGarry & O’Leary, 2013; Pickering 2006) and

their capacty to mobilize support for collective violent action (Cordell & Wolff 2010; Fearon & Laitin, 2000; Gurr, 1970; Horowitz, 1985). Conversely, there is substantially less literature investigating how alternative configurations of group identity might support intergroup peacebuilding, although some studies highlight the importance of superordinate identities for encouraging peace-supporting attitudes in protracted conflicts.

Chapters 4 and 5 presented substantial differences in how respondents in the two samples have formed their sense of group identity. This subsection relates those findings to wider academic scholarship on how group identities relate to intergroup conflict and intergroup peacebuilding.

Group identities and intergroup conflict.

Competition around group identities has been observed across many different societies, not only those affected by violent protracted conflict. Within the field of social psychology, the influential social identity approach takes the position that while individuals ascribe varying degrees of importance to different group identities, the overall tendency to identify strongly with a social group is innate and generally leads to bias against out-groups as the individual seeks increased self-esteem through comparing the in-group positively against out-groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This social identity approach, based on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Tajfel & Turner, 2004) and self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987), has pointed to the capacity for human beings to develop biases in favor of the in-group that support discrimination against out-group members (Hornsey, 2008). A number of social psychologists have asserted that protracted conflicts represent an intensification of these universal human tendencies towards in-group bias, reinforced by social systems (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal, 2012; Fisher, 2012; Fisher & Kelman, 2011), while others assert that violent conflicts emerge when human needs for identity and recognition are not met (Burton, 1990; Kelman, 2010).

Researchers have identified a number of psychological features relating to individuals' identification with a social group that can act to support intergroup conflict. Biases such as the negative attribution error work to deepen the sense of in-group superiority and out-group inferiority (Hewstone, 1990; Pettigrew, 1979). Processes of dehumanizing and delegitimating the out-group and of creating negative

stereotypical images of the out-group facilitate moral exclusion whereby violence against the out-group can be seen as legitimate or even desirable (Bar-Tal, 1996; Bar-Tal & Hammack, 2012; Opotow, 2012; Staub & Bar-Tal, 2003). Thus, strongly delineated group identities can play a role in reducing empathy for out-group members, particularly when the out-group is believed to threaten the existence of the in-group or to challenge the sacred values of the in-group (Batson & Ahmad, 2009; Kesebir & Pyszczynski 2011; McCauley, 2001).

Beyond social psychology, there has been a longstanding debate as to whether these identities are primordial, reflecting distinct historic ethnic origins (Shils, 1957; Geertz, 1963; Issacs 1975), or socially constructed, instrumental to political purposes in the present (Eller & Coughlan, 1992; Fearon & Laitin, 2000). There is also debate as to whether identity-based prejudices such as racism should be understood as an expression of universal cognitive tendencies, often at an unconscious level, as argued by many social psychologists and neuroscientists (for example, Allport, 1954; Avenanti, Sirigu & Aglioti, 2010), or as the result of socialization aimed at excusing historic exploitation of an out-group as argued by some political psychologists and political theorists (for example Du Bois, 1898; Jackman, 2005; Kinder & Sears, 1981).

This debate not withstanding, both fields of inquiry can contribute to understanding the interaction of group identities and intergroup conflict. While psychologists have provided compelling evidence for a shared human tendency across cultures to identify with a defined in-group, this does not preclude the potential impact of cultural socialization in either intensifying or mitigating this psychological tendency (see Henry et al., 2005; Pratto et al., 2006). Thus, both innate human tendencies and deliberate socialization towards the formation of individual identity in relation to membership and non-membership of certain social groups can underpin intergroup conflict and the related problems of intergroup prejudice and discriminatory behaviors.

Identity fusion in protracted conflicts.

In particular, protracted conflicts are believed to be underpinned by group identities framed in opposition to one another (Beckerman, 2009; Kelman, 1999; Kreisberg, 1998). As explored previously in chapter 2, strong adherence to these

identities is associated with individuals adopting divisive collective narratives about the conflict and showing reluctance to seek any peaceful compromise with the out-group, particularly where peacebuilding is feared to involve a symbolic loss of identity (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal et al., 2014; Gayer et al., 2009; Hammack, 2009). Furthermore, socialization mechanisms encouraging adherence to in-group narratives and loyal support of in-group political causes has been observed by researchers in a number of protracted conflicts (Beckerman & Zembylas, 2011; Hammack, 2011; Leonard, 2014; Standish 2015; Stolk, 2011).

The link between identification with an in-group and hostility towards an out-group is not inevitable (Brewer, 1999) but discriminatory attitudes and behavior are often facilitated by adherence to a sharply-delineated group identity (Staub, 2001). Individuals who identify strongly with their in-group have been found to perceive more threat from the out-group and consequently be more prejudiced against the out-group and less open to intergroup contact (Al Ramiah et al., 2011; Tausch et al., 2007). When individuals are highly identified with a particular social group, they tend to react emotionally to the suffering of in-group members and tend to blame all out-group members equally for any harm caused to the in-group (Brewer, 2011; Roccas & Elster, 2012). Furthermore, highly identified individuals have also been found to be more likely to support violence against any out-group perceived to be threatening (Swann et al., 2009; Sheikh et al., 2014). Moreover, in protracted conflicts high levels of identification of an individual with their in-group has been found to inhibit forgiveness in a post-conflict context (Myers, Hewstone & Cairns, 2009; Noor, Brown, Gonzalez, Manzi & Lewis, 2008; Voci, Hewstone, Swart & Veneziani, 2015), to predict greater adherence to competitive victimhood (Noor, Brown & Prentice, 2008), and to facilitate the moral exclusion of out-group members (Bar-Tal & Hammack, 2012; Opotow, 1990; Opotow, 2012; Staub, 2001; Seul, 1999).

However, not all individuals are equally strongly identified with a particular in-group. Rather, it has been observed that individuals can vary in terms of which of their group identities are most salient (Staub, 2001; Turner et al., 1987). The phenomenon whereby individuals conflate their self-concept with a particular group identity has been termed alternatively "identity fusion" (Swann et al., 2009, p. 995); "embedded identity" (Staub, 2001 p. 166), "engulfment" (Retzinger & Scheff, 2000, p. 76) and "de-individuation" (Fisher & Kelman, 2011, p. 69). Protracted conflicts are thought to be particularly difficult to resolve because the atmosphere of threat and

violence encourages individuals to identify strongly with the in-group and this in turn facilitates bias against the out-group and a determination to ensure in-group survival at all costs (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal & Hammack, 2012; Gayer et al., 2009; McCauley, 2001). Thus, while protracted conflicts encourage identity fusion, identity fusion can encourage conflict-supporting attitudes and behaviors (Atran, 2016; Myers et al., 2009; Sheikh et al., 2014). Hence, the within-group activists can be seen as displaying psychological features typical in protracted conflicts, while the intergroup peacebuilders point to the importance of understanding how the tendency of individuals living in protracted conflicts to engage in identity fusion can be avoided, mitigated or overcome.

Identity transcendence in protracted conflicts.

While the role of group identities in supporting intergroup conflict is a substantial area of inquiry in the social sciences, there has been less investigation of the factors that enable individuals to broaden beyond adherence to narrow group identities. However, the possibility of lessened adherence to ethnic or religious identity in such contexts has been noted. Hammack (2006, p. 323) used the phrase "identity transcendence" to describe those participants in a Palestinian – Israeli contact program who experienced a significant reduction in the salience of their in-group identity and a related increase in willingness to legitimize out-group narratives. Similarly Ross (2014, p. 38) has identified "identity transformation" as one possible outcome from intergroup encounter programs in Israel, whereby individual participants developed a new awareness of structural injustices and became willing to critique their in-group. Both authors have identified the difficulties experienced by individuals in maintaining this change in the face of social pressures to conform to in-group norms. However, neither has provided a full theoretical explanation as to why these individuals were able to make profound and sustained changes to their mindset, while other participants in the same intergroup contact programs did not. Thus, this thesis can make an important contribution in this area, pointing to traits, socialization experiences and an overall worldview that would seem to support individuals to broaden beyond a narrow identification with their in-group.

Moreover, developing a superordinate identity including both the in-group and out-group has been found to be associated with a number of peace-supporting

attitudes in societies affected by protracted conflicts. Individuals with a strong sense of superordinate identity have been found to more strongly support reconciliation in Northern Ireland (Lowe & Muldoon, 2014). Adherence to a superordinate identity has also been linked to individuals' willingness to reject competitive victimhood and acknowledge out-group suffering (Andrighetto, Mari, Volpato & Behluli, 2012; Shnabel, Halabi & Noor, 2013), and predicts greater willingness to forgive the out-group after violent conflict (Shnabel et al., 2013). Broadening and complexifying group identity to include multiple categories is also believed to reduce intergroup prejudice (Hewstone & Cairns, 2001; Al Ramiah et al., 2011).

While a number of psychosocial peacebuilding interventions have been found to improve attitudes towards out-groups in protracted conflict, the tendency for psychological changes to fade over time has also been noted (Beckerman, 2009; Kuppermintz & Salomon, 2005; Rosen & Salomon, 2011). Rosen and Salomon (2011) have pointed to the difficulties in effecting a change to participants' core beliefs and how this can cause peace education initiatives in protracted conflicts to fail in their aims. Meanwhile Hammack (2006) noted how the phenomenon of identity transcendence rarely lasted when participants returned to their daily lives amid the pressures of protracted conflict. Thus, the importance of understanding how narrow configurations of group identities can be transcended in protracted conflict has been highlighted by the literature on psychosocial peacebuilding practice, but clear solutions, to date, have not been forthcoming. This thesis, then, makes a contribution in this area by highlighting the role of certain socialization experiences, traits and mindsets in supporting individuals to maintain a broadened sense of group identity even in the challenging social conditions of a protracted conflict.

Discussion.

The literature on variations in individuals' identity formation in protracted conflicts supports the findings regarding intergroup peacebuilders' group identities, as presented in chapter 4. This suggests that it is not only possible for individuals in protracted conflicts to transcend narrow group loyalties, but that doing so in a sustained manner supports greater motivation to build cooperative intergroup relationships. An important contribution made by this study to the wider literature on identity formation in protracted conflicts is in showing how this broadened formation

of identity is supported by a universalist worldview, which in turn is encouraged by socialization in a universalist family micro-culture. Linking to self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987), this universalist worldview may facilitate individuals to identify more readily with humanity as a whole, and certainly it seems to encourage them to extend moral inclusion to out-group members.

This study, then, provides some insight into why some individuals are more inclined than others to experience identity transcendence. The impact of universalist values on identity formation offers a promising line of inquiry for future research into the social psychology of protracted conflicts. Furthermore, the findings in this study indicate that the transcendence of narrow group identities would also seem to influence social behavior, making individuals much more likely to engage in building cooperative relationships with out-group members.

The literature deriving from social identity theory, particularly regarding identity fusion in protracted conflicts, has parallels with the accounts given by within-group activists in this study. Their formation of group identity reflects social identity theory closely, with its focus on individuals' delineation of in-group and out-groups identities, and subsequent preference for the in-group. In keeping with the social identity approach, within-group activists exhibited a desire to maintain and protect a positive image of the in-group, for example by preferring to focus on in-group suffering and out-group responsibility regarding the Troubles. In contrast with the intergroup peacebuilders, within-group activists displayed much less interest in forming close relationships outside the in-group. As a result, this study suggests there is an important link between individuals' configuration of group identity and their social behavior within a protracted conflict.

Furthermore, the multifaceted and overlapping group identities discussed by intergroup peacebuilders offer an insight as to how individuals can construct a sense of social identity that supports intergroup peacebuilding, even in the context of protracted conflict. This adds support to one strand of theorizing regarding reconciliation, that it should be understood as an identity-based process where the goal is for former enemies to develop a new sense of identity as residents in a shared region bound by ties of mutual collaboration (Aiken, 2013; Kelman 2010; Nadler, 2012).

Much of the literature regarding group identities and intergroup conflicts has come from the field of social psychology where the social identity approach

predominates, viewing adherence to a defined group identity as inevitable, with bias in favor of the in-group understood as the result of universal psychological needs for a positive self-concept (see Tajfel & Turner 1979; Turner et al., 1987). However, the observed variation between the samples in this study as to how individuals configure their sense of identity is a challenge to the assumed universality of the social identity approach. In particular, it adds nuance to claims that populations experiencing protracted conflict will tend to fuse their personal identity to the threatened group identity, developing shared narratives that justify the in-group's position and derogate the claims of the out-group (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal et al., 2014). Rather, this study points to factors that might explain how some individuals avoid or overcome these typical psychological responses to protracted conflict, indicating that individuals' responses to protracted conflict are influenced by an overall mindset including worldview and identity formation.

6.2.5 The role of framing in explaining activism in protracted conflicts.

The concept of framing was first put forward by Bateson (1972) and then popularized by Goffman (1974), and has since been adopted by scholars in the fields of psychology, social movements activism and by practitioners of alternative dispute resolution. Framing is generally understood as a cognitive process whereby information is fitted into preexisting mental schema, resulting in a particular perspective on real world events (Dewulf et al., 2009). Framing influences behavior, including individuals' involvement in social movement activism (Benford & Snow, 2000; Gamson, 1992; Gamson, 2013; Grant, 2013).

Framing has also come to the attention of conflict resolution scholars. Nudler (1990) has identified frame conflicts, where parties have a substantially different framing of the situation, as being particularly difficult to resolve. As a result, the need to identify and unpack parties' conflict frames has been identified as a important aspect of effective conflict resolution (Campbell & Docherty, 2003) and sustainable conflict resolution in these cases has been imagined as a situation where parties agree to restructure their frames into an agreed common framing of the situation (Nudler, 1990). More specifically in relation to protracted conflicts, there has been investigation of how particular conflict frames can shape individuals' participation in

intergroup peacebuilding (Grant, 2013; Garred, 2013; Nasie et al. 2014), as well as how group-based narratives about a protracted conflict can support conflict continuance (see for example, Bar-Tal, 2007; Beckerman & Zembylas 2011; Hammack, 2011).

As presented in chapter 4, intergroup peacebuilders were found to have an inclusive framing of the conflict whereby they gave equal acknowledgement to the suffering of both groups and formed the view that both groups were responsible for harmdoing. They tended to view the conflict as a common problem requiring co-operative solutions, with peace envisioned as greater integration between members of different identity groups. In contrast, within-group activists tended to frame the conflict from the perspective of their in-group, focusing on in-group suffering and out-group harm-doing, leading them to frame peace as justice for the in-group. In both cases, how individuals framed the conflict was closely associated with the development of different primary concerns, with intergroup peacebuilders concerned to prevent future violence through improving intergroup relations, while within-group activists were concerned to achieve in-group wellbeing in the face of what they perceived as a competitive and potentially threatening society.

These findings can be further understood in the light of existing academic literature that addresses how framing shapes social activism as well as literature examining how certain conflict frames can support the continuation of protracted conflicts while others motivate efforts at building peace. These themes are examined in turn below, followed by discussion of the contributions and challenges presented by this study to those areas of literature.

Framing and motivations for social action.

Framing of a social situation or issue has been identified in academic literature as an important factor that motivates and directs social action. Within collective social movements, how leaders frame a social issue can mobilize others to participate in their movement and has become an important focus of scholarly inquiry (Benford & Snow, 2000). Collective action frames often focus on some form of perceived injustice or grievance (Gamson, 1992; Snow & Benford, 1992). Mobilizing grievances are understood as issues that have power to provoke individuals to participate in social activism (Bergstrand, 2015; Snow & Benford, 1992). Grievances

can come from perceived threats to wellbeing or a sense of moral outrage, and are often directed by frames that diagnose the origin of the social problem and point to a desired method of resolution (Benford & Snow, 2000; Bergstrand, 2015). Grievances viewed as losses have been found to exert a particularly strong motivational effect towards social activism (Bergstrand, 2014). Meanwhile, developing a sense of deprivation relative to an out-group is believed to be an important driver of intergroup violence (Gurr, 1970).

Framing is also associated with individuals being attracted to certain activist causes. When individuals perceive that a social movements' framing is aligned with their own they are more likely to become involved (Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986). For example, anti-war activists have been found to share certain frames in regards to the inappropriateness of military action, belief in the efficacy of activist techniques, and a future vision of peace (Downtown & Wehr, 1998; Swank & Fahs, 2011).

Personal values and conceptions of morality have also been linked to participation in activism (Bergstrand, 2015; Van Stekelenburg, Klandermans, & Van Dijk, 2009). Individuals willing to engage in activism on behalf of out-group members have been found to have a strong adherence to universalist values (Borshuk, 2001; Oliner & Oliner, 1992). Meanwhile the term parochial altruism has been used to represent those individuals whose values and sense of identity lead them to perform extreme acts of self-sacrifice on behalf of their in-group (Sheikh et al., 2014).

Framing in protracted conflicts.

As outlined in chapter 2, concepts such as ethos of conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007) and collective narrative identity (Hammack, 2009; Hammack, 2011; Hancock, 2014) depict how group-members in protracted conflicts come to share in a collective framing of the conflict. Their understanding of the conflict differs sharply from the out-group's narrative, contributing an additional barrier to peaceful resolution (Bar-Tal, 2007; Hammack, 2006; Salomon 2004 b; Salomon, 2011; Psaltis, 2016). These oppositional conflict frames are often introduced to group members from an early age through socialization mechanisms such as public commemorations, formal history education and stories recounted in the family home (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Leonard, 2014).

At the collective level, conflict-supporting narratives have been identified as those that justify the conflict, delegitimize the opponent, glorify the in-group and emphasize the in-group's victimhood (Bar-Tal et al., 2014). In particular, belief in collective victimhood is associated with willingness to engage in conflict with an out-group (Bar-Tal, Chernyak-Hai, Schori, & Gundar 2009; Noor, Schnabel, Halabi, & Nadler, 2012; Volkan, 2006). Such narratives are believed to provide an important psychological function for group members, helping them to cope with the harsh conditions of conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal et al., 2014). However, conflict frames deriving from these narratives can support attitudes that can contribute to conflict continuance (Hammack, 2011; Psaltis, 2016; Ulug & Cohrs, 2016).

Nonetheless, individual group members have been observed to vary in the degree to which they internalize collective narratives (Hammack, 2006; 2009), and they can form distinct frames regarding the conflict (Grant, 2013; Psaltis, 2016; Ulug & Cohrs, 2016). Individuals are also capable of revising their adherence to group narratives in the light of new, contradictory information (Psaltis, 2016; Ross, 2014). Thus, while collective narratives can strongly influence individuals' conflict frames in protracted conflicts, such influence is neither universal nor unavoidable, as further confirmed by this study.

Framing in intergroup peacebuilding.

Literature on specific methods of conflict resolution such as mediation includes references to framing. In a conflict, disputants can frame the issues, identities and relationships involved (Dewulf et al., 2009). Frames relate to how the other party/ parties are characterized (Lewicki, Gray & Elliot, 2003), how individuals understand their own relation to an identity group (Lewicki et al., 2003; Rothman, 1997) and how the relationship between parties is viewed in terms of trust and power (Dewulf et al., 2009). It has been noted that conflicts often involve parties with different framings of the issue and what is important (Dewulf et al., 2009). All of these have been observed to impact on conflict resolution processes, with certain framings presenting important obstacles to collaborative problem solving (Gray, 2004).

There have also been attempts to explore how certain discourses may support peacebuilding. Reframing narratives has been put forward as the foundation for building a culture of peace (Korostelina, 2012a). Karlberg (2012) has argued that

achievement of peaceful societies is dependent on reframing public discourse to recognize the essential oneness of the social body. An empirical psychological study has found that reframing the in-group and out-group as part of a common victim or perpetrator identity supports individuals to favor reconciliation in a context of protracted conflict (Shnabel et al., 2013). Meanwhile, peacebuilding practitioners have successfully used tools such as radio broadcasting as a means to introduce listeners to out-group perspectives, encouraging them to reframe their understanding of the past conflict and to develop empathy for out-groups (Bilali & Vollhardt, 2013; Curtis, 2000; Paluck, 2009).

More specifically, some literature points to the importance of framing in motivating and directing peacebuilding activism in protracted conflicts. Thus, Grant (2013) has found that Israeli peacebuilding activists frame the conflict differently from others in their society, and that particular conflict frames are associated with choosing to engage in either reformist or radical peacebuilding activism. Nasie et al. (2014) also found that Israeli peacebuilding activists framed the conflict differently from many in the wider society, sharing a belief that the conflict was neglected by Israeli society that shaped their determination to raise awareness of the conflict in the wider society. Similarly, it was observed that religious peacebuilders in Mindanao are more aware of the destructive impacts of social divisions on their society than religious leaders who do not participate in intergroup peacebuilding (Garred, 2013). These contentions are further confirmed by findings in this study regarding the differences in the conflict frames of intergroup peacebuilders and within-group activists.

Discussion.

Overall, there is a substantial body of literature supportive of the findings in this thesis in relation to the impact of conflict frames on individuals' decisions to become involved in different forms of activism. This literature confirms the importance of framing in motivating and directing activism in general, as well as underlining how differences in conflict framing relate to willingness to engage intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts. Drawing on this literature, and the findings in this thesis, it can thus be stated with relative certainty that how individuals frame a conflict influences how they behave in response to that conflict.

However, the literature examined above has generally ignored the question of why some individuals frame a social issue in one way while others frame it very differently. This topic has important implications for protracted conflicts where widespread adherence to oppositional frames and narratives contribute to continued conflict between identity groups. This thesis, then, contributes knowledge in this area, by illustrating that worldview and identity formation are closely associated with how individuals frame the conflict in their society. Thus, the potential to develop more widespread adherence to peace-supporting conflict frames among populations experiencing protracted conflict may depend on peacebuilding interventions that can successfully transform individuals' worldview and sense of identity.

The findings on framing in this thesis also challenge, to a degree, the contention that conflict-supporting narratives are so widespread in protracted conflicts because they fulfill the universal psychological needs of individuals living in the difficult circumstances (see Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal et al., 2014; Beckerman & Zembylas, 2011). Specifically, this study demonstrates that internalizing the in-group's narratives about the conflict is not inevitable, and that alternate peace-supporting framing is possible, in agreement with the scholarship on peacebuilding activists in protracted conflicts (see Abarbanel, 2012; Garred, 2013; Gopin, 2012a; Grant, 2013; Nasie et al., 2014). Thus, it would seem that while adherence to in-group narratives is common in protracted conflicts, it should not be understood as a universal human need. Rather, this study not only confirms the possibility for individual group members to differ in their framing of the conflict, but helps to explain how this individual variation occurs.

While further research is necessary, these findings point to the value of developing theory around peace-supporting conflict frames as psychological mechanisms that can encourage individuals to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. Based on the findings in this thesis, it would seem that individuals will be much more likely to develop peace-supporting conflict frames when they already subscribe to a universalist worldview, and when their sense of identity has broadened to include some degree of concern for the out-group.

6.2.6 Adopting a goal for activism in protracted conflict.

The final categories examined in both chapters 4 and 5 encompassed those specific factors that provided a final impetus for individuals to become active as either intergroup peacebuilders or within-group activists. Among intergroup peacebuilders it was found that perceiving harm as resulting from identity divisions supported them to develop their primary concern of improving intergroup relations, which was then put into action when they came across opportunities for involvement in peacebuilding work. Among within-group activists the development of a sense of injustice or grievance supported them to develop their primary concern of contributing to in-group wellbeing, motivating them to take opportunities to get involved in actions on behalf of in-group interests.

The literature specific to peacebuilding activists in protracted conflicts also gives some indication of the importance of understanding and /or experiencing the conflict as harmful, and of personal contact with other peacebuilding activists. Thus for example, Gopin (2012a) observed that the peacebuilding activists he interviewed in Israel had almost all suffered directly from conflict-related violence. This may relate to the finding that some individuals living in violent conflicts react to personal suffering with altruistic actions designed to prevent others experiencing the same pain (Hernandez-Wolfe, 2011; Staub, 2005; Staub & Vollhardt, 2008). In a similar vein, it has been found that peacebuilding activists in Israel share an understanding that the conflict is harmful to both in-group and out-group (Grant, 2013; Nasie et al., 2014). Developing an empathetic awareness of the harm caused by intergroup conflict seems to be a common theme among peacebuilding activists in the Israeli-Palestinian context, particularly among Jewish citizens who might have previously been unaware of the experiences of Palestinians living in the occupied territories (Abarbanel, 2012; Gopin, 2012a; Nasie et al., 2014).

Meanwhile, the importance of a sense of injustice or grievance for motivating participation in social activism is well documented, particularly in causes opposing the status quo (Benford & Snow, 2000; Swank & Fahs, 2011). This suggests that the within-group activists' perception of the need for change are quite typical of individuals motivated to become involved in protest-orientated or oppositional activism. It also highlights that peacebuilding activism in protracted conflicts may stem from distinct understandings of what is wrong and what needs to change.

There is also some exploration of the role of personal networks in the social movement literature. Personal contact with activists already involved in a social movement has been found to be a supportive factor explaining individuals' participation in collective activism (Crossley, 2009; McAdam, 1986). Moreover, literature regarding peacebuilding activists in protracted conflicts suggests that once individuals in protracted conflicts first became involved in peacebuilding activism and made a psychological break with their in-group, they benefitted from involvement with networks of like-minded activists, helping to sustain their commitment and improving their effectiveness by acting in concert with others (Abarbanel, 2012; Gopin, 2012a; Nasie et al., 2014). This is then further confirmed by the finding in chapter 4 that some intergroup peacebuilders benefitted from opportunities for involvement stemming from their personal networks. Similarly, chapter 5 relates that within-group activists also at times took up opportunities provided by personal contacts.

Discussion.

The findings in this thesis relating to the category of "adopting a goal for social change" have parallels in the existing academic literature on social movements and peacebuilding activism, but also contribute further insight. While belief in the need for change may motivate social activism more generally, this thesis highlights how differences in mindset direct individuals to different understandings of what change is required and ultimately towards different forms of activism. Indeed, this thesis goes further, illustrating how personal traits and socialization experiences can support the development of different mindsets, and thus linking individual differences in these areas to different behaviors that in turn contribute to shaping society more generally. Hence, the findings presented in relation to this category indicate that mindsets are not simply internal psychological features, but are important determinants of social activism designed to create new conditions in situations of protracted conflicts. This would suggest that developing peace-supporting mindsets should be an important area of practical concern for peacebuilding efforts in protracted conflicts, while more particularist mindsets can be viewed as a potential barrier to widening participation in intergroup peacebuilding in these contexts.

Moreover, the differening reactions of intergroup peacebuilders and within-group activists to experiences of political violence are also significant. While intergroup peacebuilders understood the conflict as harmful and were thus motivated to change society in more peaceful directions, where within-group activists recounted close experiences of violence it tended to further reinforce their commitment to their in-group and their willingness to act in opposition to the out-group. This suggests that adherence to a shared humanity mindset may be a protective factor in situations of violent conflict, supporting individuals to oppose violence as a whole. Similarly, adherence to a group distinctiveness mindset may support individuals to contribute to conflict continance indirectly, and perhaps even to become involved in violence on behalf of their in-group in extreme cases.

6.3 Relating Thesis Findings to the Relevant Areas of Literature

As outlined in the introductory chapter, the parallel and inter-linked grounded theories presented in chapters 4 and 5 explain differences in individuals' motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict. A grounded theory approach was selected for this study partly because of the limited academic literature regarding peacebuilding activists in protracted conflicts that was revealed after multiple searches of the English language literature. However, once the grounded theories were developed it became clear that the findings emerging from this study have relevance for three broader areas of literature. The first relevant area of literature addresses civil society peacebuilding in protracted conflicts, a topic that, as outlined in chapter 2, falls within wider debates on peacebuilding policy and practice. The second area is the social psychology of protracted conflicts, in particular the psychological and cultural barriers facing peacebuilding efforts in protracted conflicts. Finally, the findings in this thesis also relate to research into the factors that motivate individuals to engage in social activism in general, and in peacebuilding activism in particular.

This section addresses each of these areas in turn, demonstrating how the findings in this thesis compare and contrast with existing themes in the literature. Due

to the huge scope of these areas of literature when taken cumulatively, and to the fact some of these areas have already been addressed in chapter 2, this section focuses on analyzing how the present findings relate to the most relevant arguments, theories and debates in each field. The emphasis then is on how the findings in this thesis compare with broad themes in these areas of literature, as well as how they address some of the existing gaps in the literature.

6.3.1 Civil society peacebuilding in protracted conflicts.

Recent decades have seen a growing interest in civil society peacebuilding among both academic scholars and international policy-makers (see Paffenholtz, 2009a; World Bank, 2006). This has been attributed to recognition of the limitations of macro-level structural peacebuilding (Paffenholtz, 2009a) and to the development of new theory, such as conflict transformation theory, around the potential contribution of civil society actors to peacebuilding processes (see Lederach, 1997; Lederach, 2015; Miall, 2004). A number of scholars have argued that civil society actors can play an important supportive role to structural peacebuilding efforts (Cochrane, 2000; Gidron et al., 2002; Lederach, 1997; Paffenholtz, 2011). Meanwhile, critics of the statebuilding model, who often refer to it as liberal peacebuilding, have argued that locally led, culturally sensitive approaches to peacebuilding should direct, if not supplant, externally driven peacebuilding interventions (MacGinty, 2014; MacGinty & Richmond, 2013; Richmond, 2013). Going further, some critics of liberal peacebuilding have critiqued certain forms of civil society peacebuilding as being overly beholden to external funding based on a liberal agenda, believing them to take an insufficiently radical and emancipatory approach (see Richmond, 2005; Heathershaw, 2008). Thus, debate continues as to the most appropriate goal for civil society peacebuilding, as well as to the relative effectiveness of different types of peacebuilding interventions.

A number of scholars have been concerned to understand the specific practices developed by CSOs in protracted conflicts, with a concern to understand under what conditions they play an effective role in assisting conflict resolution and / or conflict transformation. For example, a number of authors have examined case studies of CSOs working in protracted conflicts, with an emphasis on understanding their

contributions to political peace processes (see Cochrane & Dunn, 2002; Gidron et al., 2002; Knox & Quirk, 2000). International comparative studies have found that CSOs can make important supportive contributions to structural peacebuilding, particularly in the areas of social cohesion and socialization, especially when conflicts are de-escalating from a more violent stage (Paffenholtz, 2011; World Bank 2006).

Despite providing arguments for the merits of involving grassroots actors in peacebuilding, then, much of the literature on civil society does not engage with the particular psychological barriers deterring civil society actors from involvement in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts. In particular, the motivations of individuals engaging in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts are rarely addressed, despite evidence from the field of social psychology that citizens in such societies are often socialized to develop psychological barriers to forming cooperative relationships with out-group members, as outlined in chapter 2. Moreover, it has been found that grassroots actors can resist externally led peacebuilding interventions for a number of reasons, including self-interest (Lee, 2015). Thus, the willingness of local individuals to engage in peacebuilding efforts cannot be assumed, particularly in protracted conflicts. Nonetheless, if the potential of ordinary citizens to contribute to building peace is to be realized there is substantial value in understanding how motivations to build cooperative intergroup relationships can develop.

A few authors, meanwhile, have taken an interest in those civil society actors engaging in intergroup peacebuilding activism in protracted conflicts (for example Abarbanel, 2012; Grant, 2013; Gopin, 2012a; Nasie et al., 2014). Within this limited literature, it can be seen that the decision to engage in intergroup peacebuilding is an unusual one in the context of a protracted conflict, and that it can come at a substantial personal cost to individuals (Abarbanel, 2012; Gopin, 2012a). Certain studies have pointed to psychological features such as a left-liberal worldview or values of inclusivity as supporting individuals to engage in intergroup peacebuilding (Garred, 2013; Nasie et al., 2014), but a comprehensive analysis of these peacebuilders' mindset has not been developed, nor has an explanatory framework for how this mindset develops been provided. Thus, while these small-scale studies showed the potential for further inquiry in this area, they did not arrive at a conclusive framework for explaining how activists develop their motivations. In general, the researchers note common themes among the interviewees' responses but do not bring them together into a comprehensive theoretical explanation.

Therefore, the findings in this study have the potential to both challenge and contribute to academic literature in the area of civil society peacebuilding. With a consideration of the relative effectiveness of different forms of civil society peacebuilding falling beyond the scope of this thesis, it has taken a different approach from those scholars who focus on the theoretical merits of grassroots peacebuilding and those who focus on organizations and their societal impacts. While these are important fields of scholarship pointing to the importance of civil society peacebuilding efforts, they have not addressed the challenge presented by the widespread lack of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding among populations experiencing protracted conflicts. Thus, to date, there lacks an understanding of how such motivations might become more widespread in the form of a genuinely populist and popular movement for peace. Such a movement could conveivably transform the current tendency of peacebuilding CSOs in protracted conflicts to operate on a small scale, somewhat isolated from mainstream society (see Lefranc, 2012; Nasie et al., 2014).

This thesis, then, can contribute insight to the field by providing a comprehensive explanation as to how civil society actors in protracted conflicts can develop motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. In particular it points to the role of supportive psychological features such as worldview, identity formation and conflict framing in explaining how individuals can become are motivated to get involved in intergroup peacebuilding. These findings are in accordance with previous studies on the shared psychological features of peacebuilding activists (see Garred, 2013; Grant, 2013; Nasie et al., 2014), but go further to elaborate how multiple factors interact in the development of such motivations.

6.3.2 The psychology of protracted conflicts.

There is also a substantial body of literature relating to the shared psychology of populations experiencing protracted conflicts. As this literature has already been explored quite extensively in chapter 2, it will not be replicated here and instead the focus will be on examing how this study relates to the main theories and approaches in this field.

One theme that can be identified in this literature is an interest in understanding collective psychological features such as shared narratives about the conflict, collective memories and group identities. This tendency is epitomized by the leading figure of Daniel Bar-Tal who has developed such theoretical concepts as shared ethos of conflict, conflict-supporting narratives and conflict-supporting societal beliefs (Bar-Tal, 2000; Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal et al., 2014), some of which have later been empirically demonstrated to influence individuals' attitudes towards the out-group (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011). Meanwhile other scholars have explored shared psychological features such as collective memory (Bar-Tal, 2003; Devine-Wright, 2003; Leonard, 2014; Volkan, 2006) and the role of culture in transmitting such psychological features to new generations (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Ross, 2007; Rafferty, 2014). While such work provides valuable insight into typical and widespread psychological features among populations living in societies affected by protracted conflict, of necessity it ignores the presence of substantial variation among individuals in these societies (see Psaltis, 2016). As a result, the agency of individuals in choosing to what extent they internalize collective psychological features is neglected.

At the same time, however, some scholars have investigated individual variation within the psychology of protracted conflicts, using a range of different methodologies. Quantitative surveys have been used to demonstrate the association between individuals' adherence to certain beliefs and their level of support for policies related to the conflict (Maoz & Eidelson, 2007; Maoz & McCauley, 2008). Experimental designs have suggested the influence of individuals' worldview on their attitudes towards the conflict (Hameiri et al., 2014; Porat et al., 2015). Such quantitative methodologies are useful for demonstrating empirically the range of variation within a population, as well as the prevalence of certain attitudes, and have been used to monitor intergroup attitudes in Northern Ireland (Morrow, 2014). However, due to the limitations of the methodology they can only examine a small number of predetermined dependent variables, and thus complex interlinkages cannot be explored. Meanwhile, some qualitative studies of individuals living in protracted conflicts have illustrated how individuals interact with surrounding collective narratives (Hammack, 2006; Hammack 2011), and with contact-based peacebuilding interventions (Hammack, 2009; Ross, 2014). However, while these qualitative studies provide a more nuanced picture, they have not pointed to causal mechanisms

explaining why particular individuals develop their unique orientation towards the conflict. Thus, this thesis addresses an important gap in the literature by providing a rich account of how multiple factors interact in shaping the attitudes and behavior of individuals living in a society affected by protracted conflict.

Moreover, whether scholars in this field have focused at the collective or individual level, there has been a tendency to focus on the causes of conflict and the barriers to conflict resolution (see for example, Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal et al. 2014; Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Gayer et al., 2009; Halperin, 2011; Hammack, 2009). Thus, while an extensive body of academic literature is devoted to explaining the facets of human psychology that contribute to the maintenance of protracted conflict, only a few studies were located that address the psychological features of individuals who are motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts (Abarbanel, 2012; Gopin, 2012a; Garred, 2013; Grant, 2013; Nasie et al., 2014). Furthermore, a number of these are better described as collections of activist life histories (Abarbanel, 2012; Gopin, 2012a), rather than as systematic studies aimed at deriving an understanding of causality. And while others have outlined a number of interesting themes, studies resulting in a comprehensive framework explaining the development of peace-supporting attitudes were not found in the existing academic literature, dspite multiple searches.

Thus, overall, it can be seen that this field has an emphasis on understanding collective psychological features, with lesser attention devoted to explaining variation among individuals in their adherence to these features. Moreover, the literature located revealed a strong focus on the causes of conflict and the barriers to conflict resolution, with the mechanisms supporting the development of peace-supporting psychological features being less fully explored and understood.

This thesis can be seen as taking a distinct approach, focusing on explaining how individual-level differences in psychological featues develop in interaction with the surrounding environment. This study makes a specific contribution by outlining the elements in a process whereby individuals can transcend narrow group loyalties and develop strong motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. It provides an understanding of how individuals born into a protracted conflict can avoid developing, or can transform out of, the kinds of psychological features that typically encourage negative attitudes towards the out-group. Moreover, it goes further than much of the literature in social psychology, by directly linking adherence to certain

psychological features with involvement in activism that can shape the civil society sphere.

Thus, the findings presented in chapter 4, in particular, then, challenge the notion that adherence to conflict-supporting psychological features is an inevitable response to the difficult circumstances of protracted conflict (as argued by Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal et al., 2014). Rather, this study adds nuance through its comparison of individuals who are, and are not, motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding, and by pointing to socialization factors that explain why some individuals adhere strongly to psychological features that support ongoing separation of identity groups, while others develop a mindset supportive of building cooperative intergroup relationships.

6.3.3 Participation in social activism.

Although the findings presented in this thesis are most relevant to discussion of peacebuilding in protracted conflicts, they also have implications for a much wider field of study; explaining individuals' participation in social activism. This has been a topic of interest to sociologists and other scholars for many decades (Flacks, 2004; Jenkins, 1983), with the field developing a number of distinct approaches to understanding this topic resulting in different theoretical constructs. Some of the main arguments to emerge have been in relation to the relative impact of individual psychology and structural factors in explaining participation in social movements, and the relative importance of different forms of motivation in explaining individuals' participation in different forms of social activism. This subsection, then, briefly reviews these main approaches and arguments, before discussing how they relate to the findings presented in chapters 4 and 5.

The study of individuals' participation in social activism is a sub-field of the wider study of social movements (Collom, 2011; Flacks, 2004). While the ability to attract support and active participation from a large number of individuals is widely viewed as an important factor in the successful achievement of movement goals (Jenkins, 1983; Flacks, 2004; King, 2005), explanations for individuals' participation vary. Broadly, the debate can be divided into resource mobilization explanations that

address the capacity of movements to recruit individuals and direct efforts towards a collective goal (see Jenkins, 1983; Kitts, 2000; McAdam, 1986; Snow, Zurcher & Ekland-Olson, 1980), and a socio-psychological approach focused on understanding different psychological features that motivate individuals to support the movement's goal and to overcome the barriers to participation (see Klandermans, 2004; Stern, Dietz, Abel, Guagnano & Kalof, 1999; Van Zomeren, Postmes & Spears, 2008). The latter approach has been deemed more relevant to the study of long-term activism among individuals highly committed to a particular cause (Flacks, 2004; Schwebel, 2008) and is, thus, the approach most relevant to the topic of this thesis. This approach is associated with the study of the life histories of long-term activists, seeking to understand the interaction of their biographic experiences and the development of their personal ideologies (see Della Porta, 2000; Flacks, 2004; Nasie et al., 2014).

Scholars have identified a number of psychological factors that explain individuals' differential participation in social activism. To an extent this relates to Klandermans and Oegama's (1987) notion of mobilization potential, being that pool of individuals who are predisposed to regard a particular cause or message positively. Such motivations are believed to be important because they provide an internal impetus for individuals to overcome social barriers to participation (Klandermans & Oegama, 1987; Klandermans 2004). While proponents of the resource mobilization approach argue that grievances can be taken for granted in an unequal social system (Jenkins, 1983), scholars taking a psychological approach have demonstrated that individuals decide to participate in social activism due to a variety of motivating factors. These psychological features include identity (Flacks, 1990; Poletta & Jasper, 2001; Snow & McAdam, 2000), values or ideology (Flacks, 2004; Stern et al., 1999), perceived costs and benefits (Klandermans & Oegama, 1987), perception of personal efficacy (Passy & Guigni, 2001), and specific framing of grievances (Benford & Snow, 2000; Swank & Fahs, 2011).

In particular, a number of scholars have identified a tripartite model of motivations for participation in social activism. Knoke and Wright-Isak (1982) described motives as alternately utilitarian, social or normative, while Klandermans (2004) used the terms instrumentality, identity and ideology. Similarly, Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen (1991) explained motives for voluntary action as alternatively egoistic, social or altruistic. Although using slightly different language, they

effectively point to the role of self-interest, group ties and normative beliefs in predisposing individuals to become involved in certain forms of activism. It has also been noted that different movements attract individuals on the basis of different values (Stern et al., 1999), and thus, individuals can be expected to be drawn to participate only in those forms of activism that resonate with their personal beliefs and values, or that are likely to benefit them personally.

Individuals making a long-term commitment to activism are believed to be strongly motivated by personal values and group identity (Downton & Wehr, 1998; Flacks, 1990; Schwebel, 2008). A number of studies have sought to shed light on how long-term activists develop and maintain their motivations through their life course. Values learned in the family home have been found to be associated with acting on those values as an activist in later life (Flacks, 1990; Nasie et al., 2014; Schwebel, 2005). It has also been noted that developing a personal identity as an activist can contribute to sustained commitment to a cause (Della Porta, 2000; Downton & Wehr, 1998). In particular, peace activists have been found to be strongly motivated by personal values, to an extent that they are willing to accept considerable personal costs for adopting a position outside the mainstream (Della Porta, 2000; Schwebel, 2005; Nasie et al., 2014).

This field of scholarly inquiry, then, provides a framework for assessing the findings presented in chapters 4 and 5, including how they contribute to furthering debate in this area. All three forms of motivations – self-interest, group ties and normative beliefs - can be seen at play across both samples. This study strongly suggests that worldview, identity and framing come together in the formation of a primary concern that directs individuals' efforts. Moreover, in the case of intergroup peacebuilders, internal moral motivations would seem to be strongest given their expression of normative concerns about societal divisions, and their willingness to accept the difficult personal consequences of lessened ties to their a religio-national in-group. Alternatively, group ties would seem to be a stronger source of motivations for within-group activists given their focus on activism designed to contribute to in-group wellbeing, perhaps overlapping with self-interest and normative beliefs where group loyalty is seen as a source of personal wellbeing and an important moral value. At the same time, individuals in both samples may also be motivated in part by instrumental concerns, in that they all hope to contribute the realization of their

preferred vision of a society in which they can feel included and where they believe their interests will be protected.

Overall, then, this study confirms the importance of individuals' intrinsic motivations for participating in social activism, particularly in overcoming the barriers to engaging in intergroup peacebuilding in a protracted conflict. This study makes a contribution by linking a number of psychological features in a comprehensive explanatory framework, and tying these directly to certain socialization experiences within and beyond the family home, In particular, the existing literature in this field has given only limited attention to the role of worldviews and personal traits in explaining individuals' participation in social activism. Thus, this study highlights new avenues for future research in this field regarding motivations for social activism, especially as this relates to how individuals respond to the challenging social environment of a protracted conflict.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study was shaped by a concern to gain insights that can contribute to more effective psychosocial peacebuilding practices in societies affected by protracted conflict. More specifically, the purpose of the research was to understand how individual-level differences in motivation to build cooperative intergroup relationships emerge in a protracted conflict. Thus, the study has led to the development of a framework that explains how differences in motivation regarding intergroup peacebuilding have developed among civil society activists living in the protracted conflict of Northern Ireland. In line with the precepts of CGTM this framework emerged from data gathered in the field and has been developed to a level of conceptualization that is abstract of time and place, subject to the principle of modifiability (Glaser, 1998), as outlined in chapter 3.

The findings presented in chapters 4 and 5 took the form of two parallel and interrelated theories which were then further intergrated into a single framework entitled "explaining individual-level differences in motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflict", as depicted previously in figure 13. Thus, a complex picture of interrelated factors was offered in answer to the research questions. However, drawing on these grounded theories and the subsequent discussion of their relation to wider academic literature, some key findings can be stated, assessed for their trustworthiness, and considered for their implications for knowledge and for peacebuilding policy and practice.

This final chapter, therefore, begins with a summation of the key findings resulting from this study and the conclusions that can be drawn from them. It then considers the trustworthiness of these findings and conclusions in light of the strengths and limitations of the research methodology employed. Next, the implications for knowledge and future research are discussed, and recommendations are presented regarding peacebuilding policy-making and practice in protracted conflicts. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the prospects for the transformation of protracted conflicts, in the light of the insights provided by this research study.

7.1 Summation of Key Findings and Conclusions

Drawing on the two grounded theories presented in chapters 4 and 5 respectively, three key findings can be elaborated at a heightened level of abstraction. As these relate to the research questions addressed by this study, those questions are restated below for clarity. These key findings in turn lead to the conclusions that can be drawn from this study. The key findings and related conclusions are presented in this section.

7.1.1 Key finding 1: Intergroup peacebuilding activism is supported by a universalist mindset.

Research question one asked "how do some civil society actors living in a protracted conflict develop high levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding?" While a more complex answer to this question was presented in chapter 4, one key finding that can be drawn from an understanding of this process is that peacebuilding activism is supported by a universalist mindset, termed a shared humanity mindset in this study.

Individuals in the intergroup peacebuilders sample made many statements displaying adherence to universalist principles, and this could be linked to their high levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. The individuals in this sample displayed a much stronger adherence to a universalist worldview than individuals in the within-group activists sample who engage in within-group activism primarily and who have conditional or low motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. In particular, it was observed that a universalist worldview supported individuals in this sample to question narrow constructions of group identity and to form a sense of identity that was inclusive of the religio-national out-group. Related to this then, their conflict framing was more inclusive of the out-group and led individuals to the conclusion that improving intergroup relations would contribute to the betterment of society for all citizens.

Thus, it can be seen that the collection of universalistic psychological features conceptualized in this study as a shared humanity mindset supports motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding activism. These psychological features work to

develop a primary concern with the quality of relations between groups, shaping a commitment to engage in activism based in building relationships across religio-national identity lines.

7.1.2 Key finding 2: A particularist mindset is associated with weak motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding.

Conversely, research question two asked "how do some civil society actors living in a protracted conflict become motivated to engage primarily in within-group activism rather than intergroup peacebuilding?" The first part of chapter 5 presented a grounded theory in answer to this question, examining the interrelated role of personal traits, socialization experiences, worldview, identity formation, conflict-framing and development of a goal for social action. Again, the overall picture is complex. However, one key finding that can be drawn from this grounded theory is that the particularistic mindset that supports within-group activism is not associated with high levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding.

As explored in chapter 5, individuals in the within-group activists sample made multiple statements displaying a particularist orientation towards social life, conceptualized in this thesis as a group distinctiveness mindset. The individuals in this sample displayed a much stronger adherence to particularist psychological features, such as an increased sense of responsibility towards the in-group, than individuals in the intergroup peacebuilders sample. At the same time, while within-group activists displayed high levels of motivation to engage in within-group activism that they believed would contribute to in-group wellbeing, they were notably less concerned with intergroup relations and their life histories demonstrated much less engagement in building cooperative intergroup relationships. Specifically, it was found that the group distinctiveness worldview was associated with higher levels of personal identification with the religio-national group and with a framing of the conflict that focuses on in-group suffering and out-group responsibility for wrongdoing. Asociated with this was a primary concern to protect and advance in-group wellbeing in the face of perceived hostile forces in the wider society, with willingness to engage in intergroup peacebuilding dependent on a belief that it will advance, and not threaten, this primary concern.

Therefore, a particularist, or group distinctiveness, mindset is associated with low levels of motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding. These psychological features support individuals in the development of a primary concern of improving in-group wellbeing that to an extent explains their lessened concern with the quality of intergroup relations, at least where cooperative intergroup relations are not seen as providing any tangible benefit to the in-group. Moreover, any perception that intergroup peacebuiding efforts might result in some disadvantage to their in-group, including symbolic threats to identity and culture, is likely to result in individuals who adhere to this mindset becoming opposed to such activities. Their willingness to engage in intergroup peacebuilding is therefore highly conditional on demonstrated benefits to the in-group.

7.1.3 Key finding 3: Different activist motivations and behaviors are associated with different socialization experiences and the development of particular personal traits.

The comparative dimension of this study was brought to the fore in research question three which asked "what are the key differences between those civil society actors in a protracted conflict who are primarily motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding and those who are primarily motivated to engage in within-group activism?" While a more complex answer to this question was presented towards the end of chapter 5, one key finding that can be drawn is that different socialization experiences and personal traits support different forms of social activism. Or, to state it more directly, an individuals' decision to engage in a particular form of activism, in a given set of social circumstances, can be partly explained by their prior experiences of socialization, as well as the extent to which they have developed certain personal traits. Thus, differences in socialization and personal traits help to explain why individuals respond differently to the experience of living in a protracted conflict.

The data collected from both samples revealed different patterns in how intergroup peacebuilders and within-group activists had been socialized in the family home, in their later life experiences and in the extent to which they displayed particular personal traits. Intergroup peacebuilders' commitment to peacebuilding activism could be seen to have been partly shaped by exposure to univeralist ideas

within the family micro-culture, by transformative encounters with out-group members, and by personal or familial exposure to diverse cultures. It has been further supported by their development of the personal traits of moral autonomy, openness to complexity and reflexivity. Conversely, within-group activists developed a commitment to within-group activism at least partly in response to exposure to particularist perspectives in the family micro-culture and negative experiences of out-group members that were not counterbalanced. They are further supported in their within-group activism by personal traits of group loyalty values, adherence to in-group narratives and an emotional reactivity that may prompt them to wish to challenge perceived threats to in-group wellbeing.

In both cases, then, these differences in socialization experiences and personal traits were associated with differences in overall mindset and ultimately with engagement in different forms of activist behavior directed towards different social goals. Thus, it would seem that socialization experiences, particularly to the extent that they encourage or discourage the development of certain personal traits, are an important mechanism explaining why individuals living in a protracted conflict become motivated to engage in different forms of social activism. Experiences at the individual level that shape adherence to different mindsets can thus be seen as ultimately constitutive of social conditions as the development of differences in mindset would seem to support quite different forms of social behavior. In the particular case of protracted conflicts, socialization experiences and the development of personal traits, were found to support or discourage engagement in the important activity of building cooperative intergroup relationships among civil society actors, a factor likely to have significant implications for the possibility of achieving conflict transformation and sustainable peace.

7.1.4 Conclusions.

A first conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that individuals' motivations to engage in particular forms of social activism do not emerge arbitrarily or purely circumstantially, but rather are influenced by previously developed psychological features that emerge throughout the course of a life lived in a particular

social context. Combining the findings in this study with wider research regarding individual participation in social activism, it can be seen that individuals are motivated to engage in forms of activism that are congruent with their worldview, sense of identity and understanding of society and that they will be less motivated, if at all, to engage in forms of activism that do not coalesce with their mindset. Mindsets, then, are an important influence on social behavior, and are themselves at least partly shaped by socialization experiences. Thus, this study provides insight into how socialization practices can shape the civil society sphere, by encouraging individuals to become social activists with very different concerns and goals.

It can also be said that adherence to different mindsets has important social consquences in protracted conflicts. This study suggests that it can be predicted that levels of adherence to particularist or universalist psychological features among a population will have consequences for the quantity and quality of relationships between members of different identity groups within a society. It can be expected that where many individuals have developed psychological features similar to those described in this thesis as comprising a shared humanity mindset, this will support the establishment of numerous cooperative relationships between members of different identity groups. It may even support intergroup cooperation to become a widespread social norm. It can also be expected that where few individuals adhere to these psychological features, but many adhere to the features of a group distinctiveness mindset, most civil society actors will be little motivated to engage in building cooperative relationships with out-group members and instead will focus on meeting in-group needs, in competition with, or even in conflict with, out-groups when required.

This has important implications for social cohesion in societies containing a diversity of ethnic and / or religious identity groups, particularly in societies affected by protracted conflicts where intergroup relations are often characterized by mistrust and hostility and where social segregation between identity groups is often the norm. Therefore, providing socialization experiences that support the development of a universalist mindset, and that discourage the development of a particularist mindset, can be identified as a peacebuilding intervention with the potential to make an important contribution to the transformation of protracted conflicts. By increasing individuals' motivation to engage in building cooperative intergroup relationships, providing such socialization experiences can be expected to contribute to creating

social spaces for dialogue, supporting innovative collaborations that can resolve localized conflicts, and perhaps could even come to be reflected in voting patterns rewarding centrists who favor a shared polity based on mutual respect and a desire to cooperate in support of the common good.

7.2 Revisiting Trustworthiness and Transferability

As examined in chapter 3, CGTM has its own unique criteria for assessing quality and rigor; fit, relevance, work and modifiability (Glaser, 1998). However, it has also been argued that because grounded theory approaches are primarily employed in qualitative research projects, grounded theory studies can also be assessed for trustworthiness along similar principles to qualitative research, namely in terms of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Sikolia, Biros, Mason & Weiser, 2013). What these models for assessing research rigor share in common is a concern to arrive at findings that are as likely as possible to accurately reflect happenings in the social world, and can thus form the basis for actions likely to successfully resolve social problems or concerns. Trustworthiness, then, is based on taking measures to ensure that the research project follows a clear and logical processs so that resulting explanations of social phenomena are as accurate as possible.

Transferability, meanwhile, refers to the extent to which findings are likely to apply to other contexts beyond that where the research took place. While quantitative research typically pursues a high standard of generalizability, other research paradigms have addressed this concern in different ways. Within qualitative research, the term transferability has emerged to refer to the degree to which qualitative research findings can be deemed relevant to other contexts and it is usually seen as being dependent on the degree to which contexts are similar (Krefting,1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This is not dissimilar to Glaser's (1998) notion that a well-developed grounded theory can be applied to other settings where people are also concerned with the same substantive area. Thus, transferability is a useful concept for considering to

what extent the present research gives insight relevant to other societies experiencing protracted conflicts.

7.2.1 Trustworthiness of the research findings and conclusions.

A number of actions were taken throughout the course of this research study to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings and resulting conclusions. Research interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim leading to extensive and detailed data. The process of memo writing functioned as an audit trail for reflecting on researcher decisions as well as documenting the emergence of theoretical linkages. Interview data was triangulated with other sources such as field notes and documents supplied by participants, and served as a point of confirmation for developing theory. Theoretical sampling, as described in chapter 3, allowed for the inclusion of negative cases that in turn contributed to refining theoretical understanding of likely causal mechanisms.

Furthermore, the resulting two grounded theories were compared against relevant academic literature, as in chapter 6, which provided substantial confirmation of a number of elements in those inductively derived explanatory frameworks. Thus, the insights provided in this thesis as to the interrelation of mindsets, motivations and social behavior can be said to both accurately reflect the data collected, and to be largely congruent with research findings emerging from related fields of scholarship.

7.2.2 Transferability of the research findings and conclusions.

Northern Ireland has substantial psychological, social and cultural features in common with other regions experiencing protracted conflict. These include collective narratives providing oppositional interpretations of history, political instability, a largely segregated society and widespread adherence to group identities formed in opposition to one another. Although Northern Ireland has witnessed a twenty-year cessation of paramilitary violence and a relatively stable political peace agreement, all

of the research participants have lived through times of political violence. Hence, while the political peace process has likely facilitated civil society efforts at peacebuilding in Northern Ireland in recent years, it is worth noting that the motivations of interview participants were often developed in times of violent conflict. Many of the participants in this study were closely involved in, or impacted by, the violence of the Troubles and all of them had their lives indelibly shaped by the social circumstances of those times. Therefore, the findings in this thesis have a degree of transferability to societies experiencing identity-based protracted conflicts, whether or not they are currently experiencing an outbreak of intergroup violence.

Ultimately, the question of the transferability of the thesis findings must relate to an understanding of CGTM and its precepts. In line with these precepts, the two interlinked grounded theories presented in this thesis were developed to a level of abstraction offering an explanatory framework that is independent of a specific time and place. From a CGTM perspective, then, the findings can be seen as transferable to other societies affected by protracted conflicts, subject to the principle of modifiability. Thus, it is expected that the theoretical framework presented in chapters 4 to 6 can be usefully applied to similar contexts of protracted conflict, and that the recommendations deriving from this study have relevance for a number of societies experiencing protracted conflict, not only Northern Ireland.

7.3 Implications for Knowledge and Future Research

This study makes a number of contributions to knowledge regarding individual-level causes of peace, offering an understanding of how strong motivations to build cooperative intergroup relationships can emerge even in the unsupportive context of a protracted conflict. As a result, the psychological features of individuals, and by extension groups, living in protracted conflicts should not be seen as homogenous and fixed. Rather psychological support for conflict continuance is not inevitable across populations in a protracted conflict, as this thesis demonstrates that some individuals can become motivated to engage in intergroup peacebuilding, even in such unsupportive contexts.

In particular, the insights presented in this thesis as to the importance of mindsets and how they can be variously developed challenge any assumption that the only solution to protracted conflicts is to manage competition between inevitably opposed identity groups. Instead, it has been also shown that in this study that individuals born into a protracted conflict can broaden their social identity beyond in-group boundaries and construct a sense of identity inclusive of the out-group, as supported by a universalist worldview. This suggests that individual-level psychology can be an important point of peacebuilding intervention in protracted conflicts, perhaps particularly when political processes are failing to resolve or transform the conflict.

Moreover, with individual-level psychological processes linked to different forms of social behavior in a protracted conflict, it can be argued that changes in individual psychology, if sufficiently widespread, can be expected to result in important consequences for social cohesion and for the capacity of civil society to contribute to conflict transformation. Relational peacebuilding interventions deserve then to be taken seriously for their potential to contribute to positive social and political change, although more research is needed as to exactly which interventions are most effective and in which circumstances.

The findings reagarding the influence of psychological features on action by civil society actors have a number of implications for theory relating to peacebuilding and conflict transformation. In terms of civil society peacebuilding, it points to the need to recognize that certain psychological features can provide an internal motivation to engage in intergroup peacebuilding, capable of overcoming the external barriers presented by a deeply divided society. These internal motivations are not conditional on perceived benefits to the in-group nor do they depend on the approval of the wider in-group, and can, thus, underpin a life-long commitment to peacebuilding, even through changing circumstances. Increasing the number of individuals so motivated may thus offer a pathway to a sustained contribution to conflict transformation from locally based civil society actors in protracted conflicts.

Moreover, although an evaluation of the effectiveness of peacebuilding practices did not fall within the scope of this study, it can be seen that differences in mindset were closely associated with the quantity and quality of intergroup relationships formed by individuals in their personal lives as well as in their activism work. Discussions of the factors supporting conflict transformation, then, might

usefully attend to the role of mindsets in contributing to, or diminishing, conflict as these psychological features have been found to be closely associated with willingness to engage in building the cooperative intergroup relationships on which sustainable peace depends.

The findings from this study also suggest that further research into individual-level differences in attitude and behavior among populations experiencing protracted conflict may yield fruitful insights into how psychological features supportive of building cooperative relationships and pursuing peaceful compromise can be encouraged by peacebuilding interventions. In particular, the role of primary socialization in the family, which has been recognized for its important contribution to human development in other fields, deserves to be more fully investigated for its potential to variously support conflict continuance or intergroup peacebuilding in protracted conflicts.

As this study has been limited to a single case of Northern Ireland, the concepts presented in this thesis could benefit from comparison to grounded theory methodology research in other societies affected by protracted conflict. This may yield some new information on cultural particularities unique to each protracted conflict that could be incorporated into a revised grounded theory explaining how individuals develop their mindsets and motivations regarding intergroup peacebuilding. However, as noted in the previous section, the congruence of the findings resulting from this study with wider academic literature suggests that these findings are highly transferable to other contexts of protracted identity conflict.

7.4 Recommendations for Peacebuilding Policy and Practice in Protracted Conflicts

Protracted conflicts present significant challenges to peacebuilding. Such conflicts have been noted to become central to the lives of participants, shaping the collective psychology in ways that inhibit the search for peace, and taking on a self-sustaining quality (Bar-Tal, 2007; Bar-Tal and Halperin, 2011). The findings in this thesis, however, show that this process does not take place equally among all society members and, thus, is not inevitable. Rather, it is argued here that transformation of

protracted conflicts can be supported by individual-level psychological interventions, where these achieve a sustained and profound shift in worldview and identity-formation, and where these interventions reach sufficient numbers of individuals for the building of cooperative intergroup relationships to become perceived as a new social norm. As a result, a number of actionable recommendations for peacebuilding policy and practice in protracted conflicts are put forward in this section.

7.4.1. Aligning social policy towards the development of universalist mindsets.

The notion of governments enacting policy aimed at shaping the psyche of citizens is likely to attract charges of social engineering, and perhaps even of the kinds of brainwashing more usually associated with authoritarian rule. However, even overtly liberal governments are already involved in shaping the collective psychology of citizens through such activities as mass education, housing policies, funding of charitable and voluntary organizations, promotion of social policies such as multiculturalism or assimilation, and sponsorship of national rituals of celebration and commemoration (see Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011; Standish, 2015; Worley, 2005). Cumulatively, these can be expected to exert some influence on how many individuals understand themselves as citizens in relation to the state and to one another. Policy-makers are, then, in a position of some power with regards to choosing to encourage or discourage the development of certain mindsets in citizens. This power is not absolute, of course, nor should it be. However, it is suggestive that social policies could be aligned to incentivize and support populations to adhere more strongly to universalist psychological features in contexts where there are dangerous levels of division between identity groups, as is the case in societies affected by protracted conflicts.

In particular, this study found a strong explanatory role for socialization experiences in shaping the mindset of individuals. Motivations to engage in intergroup peacebuilding were found to be supported by early exposure to universalist ideas, opportunities to encounter diverse cultures, and transformative encounters with out-group members. There are ways in which such experiences could be encouraged

by educational policy. The potential for national education systems to shape the mindsets of new generations has been noted (see Korostelina, 2012b; Standish, 2016). Thus, for example, educational policy could provide for mandatory, carefully managed encounters between children from different identity groups. The national curriculum could be tailored to include promotion of universalist values such as human rights and equality across multiple subject areas, and to ensure that students learn about similarities between identity groups as well as differences. Integrating schools would normalize daily contact and cooperation, and ensure students have opportunities to encounter divserse cultures and perspectives.

Housing and social policies could also be adapted to incentivize greater mixing between identity groups, encouraging the formation of mixed-group housing associations to resolve practical issues of common concern (see Muir, 2011). Funding could be provided for the large-scale replication of local-level cooperative projects found to be effective in reducing intergroup hostility and violence. Governments could sponsor rituals celebrating an overarching and inclusive sense of identity for the whole society.

Such changes may require substantial input of effort and financial resources for a sustained period of time. However, any costs need to be set against the costs of continued social segregation and vulnerability to outbreaks of violence. In Northern Ireland, for example, the financial costs of social division have been estimated at 1.5 billion pounds per year (Deloitte, 2007). Added to this are conflict-related costs to human wellbeing such as trauma, youth criminality and low social trust.

At the same time, however, it is not appropriate to directly suppress particularist adherence to group identities and cultures. In ethical terms, any direct oppression of individuals' sense of cultural belonging would be highly questionable, while in practical terms it would be likely to provoke a violent backlash and risk escalating the conflict further. Rather, alongside the gradual promotion of a universalist outlook, individuals strong in a particularist mindset could be encouraged to engage in those forms of intergroup peacebuilding they can be convinced are likely to contribute to the wellbeing of their in-group. Thus, for example, social policy could reward within-group activists who begin to build cooperative relationships across identity dividing lines with increased funding or policy concessions. Moreover, the promotion of universalist ideals would best be as inclusive as possible of diverse

group identities, providing an overarching and inclusive framework for participation in a diverse but cooperative society.

In the particular case of Northern Ireland, a number of peace-supporting policies are in place but much more could be done. Limited efforts have been made at providing for integrated social housing (Northern Ireland Housing Commission, 2010) and supporting shared education (Meredith, 2015), while largely external donors have funded a proliferation of local-level peacebuilding projects. However, all of this has operated as something of a third way, creating new spaces for dialogue and mixing that nevertheless have not received sufficient governmental support to become a new norm capable of supplanting social patterns of segregation. Rather, segregation in Northern Ireland continues largely unchallenged in the education system and there has been a general failure to erradicate patterns of intimidation and territorialism in existing social housing areas (Nolan, 2014). This may be enabled by the consociational political system instituted in Northern Ireland as a result of the peace process, as this divided-but-equal system would seem more likely to reify norms of particularism rather than incentivizing interdependence (see Horowitz, 2008). More, then, needs to done and section 7.4.3 below provides some concrete action points that could be undertaken in Northern Ireland.

7.4.2 Maximising the effectiveness of relational peacebuilding practice in protracted conflicts.

Unlike externally driven state-centric interventions, relational peacebuilding is highly reliant on identifying locally based individuals who are willing to participate. Indeed, in order to successfully contribute to developing sustainable peace in a society, such psychosocial interverntions would need to involve large numbers of individuals, in particular those occupying positions of relative influence within their communities.

In protracted conflicts, psychological and cultural barriers to making peace with perceived enemeies can mean that attempts at relational peacebuilding are often small-scale, taking place on the margins of mainstream society. However, the findings in this study suggest strongly that inculcation of the psychological features comprising a universalist, or shared humanity, mindset can heighten motivations to

engage in intergroup peacebuilding even in a context of protracted conflict. Thus, there is a potential for relational peacebuilding efforts to contribute to building sustainable peace in societies affected by protracted conflict, but these are most likely to be effective when applied across whole populations, as in the case of widespread education efforts through schools and mass media. It is, thus, most likely that a long-term project to develop wider adherence to universalist values and new social norms of cooperation would gradually increase the willingness of populations to engage in building cooperative intergroup relationships.

In particular, this thesis provides a useful framework for peace education practice in protracted conflicts. While a number of scholars have noted the challenges to achieve durable impacts from peace education programs in protracted conflicts (Hammack, 2006; Saloman, 2011), this may be because such interventions tend to concentrate at the level of conflict framing, through legitimization of other narratives, and as a result they likely do not achieve lasting change in individuals' worldview and identity formation. This thesis suggests that achieving the latter is likely to result in a more sustained reorientation of attitudes towards the conflict and the out-group. It also indicates that such changes to an individuals' identity and worldview can result from transformative encounters with out-group members that have a strong humanizing effect and that awaken moral questioning with regards to in-group identity and in-group violence. The findings presented in chapter 4 regarding socialization also suggest that peace-supportive attitudes may be supported by sustained contact with role models who exemplify universalist values, by contact with diverse cultures and by developing personal capacities to undertake independent moral reasoning and to engage with intellectual and emotional complexity. Ultimately, however, such peace education interventions would benefit from being mainstreamed into the formal education system and the national curriculum in order to make the maximum possible contribution to conflict transformation.

On a smaller scale, the findings outlined in chapter 4 also have implications for evaluating the objectives and effectiveness of psychosocial peacebuilding interventions in protracted conflicts. This thesis suggests that inculcating a universalist worldview, and the supporting personal traits of moral autonomy, reflexivity and openness to complexity, can provide an important basis to peacebuilding praxis that is likely to result in individuals broadening their sense of identity and becoming more motivated to build cooperative intergroup relationships.

It could be valuable, therefore, for practitioners to consider how a universalist worldview can be encouraged by their work. In particular, assessing changes in participants' worldview and identity formation may provide a useful guide to evaluating the long-term impact of peace education interventions (see Danesh, 2010; Ross, 2014).

Moreover, this thesis indicates that success in psychosocial peacebuilding interventions should be measured not only in terms of attitudinal change but by also assessing whether individuals to go on to engage in peace-supportive social actions. As indicated by the findings in this study, individual-level psychological features can make a contribution to building sustainable peace when they motivate social behavior such as building cooperative intergroup relationships. The ultimate aim of psychosocial peacebuilding interventions should perhaps be configured, then, as motivating participants to become active intergroup peacebuilders in their local communities and in society at large.

This study also provides support for the value of intergroup contact, particularly sustained friendships and transformative encounters where the humanity of the other is recognized and experienced first hand. The belief in essential sameness exhibited by the intergroup peacebuilders supports Allport's (1954) contention that intergroup contact can be more effective in reducing prejudice when there is a focus on similarities. It further adds a dimension for consideration when evaluating the effectiveness of intergroup contact interventions, suggesting that recognizing the humanity of the other and questioning group norms of out-group derogation may be important indicators that positive psychological changes are taking place. Again, this can provide a useful framework for both shaping contact interventions and assessing their effectiveness.

7.4.3 What needs to be done? Action points for building peace in Northern Ireland.

A number of peace-promoting policies could be enacted in Northern Ireland. Recent moves towards collaboration and sharing in the education system are to be welcomed, but should be viewed as a first step towards an ultimate goal of an integrated education system that would foster positive intergroup contact and

adherence to a superordinate identity as citizens in a shared society. The educational curriculum should also be aligned towards encouraging the development of a universalist mindset and a commitment to active citizenship in students. Further efforts to counter intimidation and territorialism may enable social housing areas to host a more diverse array of residents, leading to an increase in intergroup contact. It is also important to reform the current political system to incentivize greater cooperation, although this may a lengthy process and difficult to achieve. More immediately, however, in the Northern Ireland Assembly, the particular voting rights currently enjoyed only by those elected representatives who identify as either Unionist or Nationalist should be expanded to middle-ground and non-aligned political parties, giving public acknowledgement that they represent a centrist constituency with equally valid political concerns. Most importantly, improving the quality of intergroup relations in Northern Ireland should be prioritized through development of a comprehensive government strategy to achieve this, backed by substantial resources.

In the area of relational peacebuilding practice by civil society actors, a number of types of interventions can be expected to contribute to improved intergroup relations in Northern Ireland. In order to encourage individuals to move from a particularist to a universalist mindset opportunities to have humanizing encounters and build genuine, sustained friendships with out-group members need to be provided. Storytelling and dialogue projects between members of different groups can also be an effective method of fostering such attitudinal change (see Bland 2001; Senehi 2009). Storytelling in mixed identity settings can also help participants to reevaluate their narrative about past conflict and their vision of the future (Senehi, 2009). Northern Ireland should consider, then, adopting Senehi's (2009) recommendation that storytelling projects infuse civil society as a means of impacting shared knowledge across society. At the same time, peace education is also an important intervention that should be more widely applied in Northern Ireland. A peace education strongly grounded in a universalist worldview (see also Danesh, 2010) is likely to be successful in encouraging the development of a broadened sense of identity and more inclusive conflict framing in participants. This can be expected to have valuable impacts in terms of socializing the next generation to be more motivated to form cooperative intergroup relationships. Overall, peacebuilding practitioners in Northern Ireland should recognize the distinctiveness and value of

their own universalist worldview and seek educational opportunities where they can inculcate those basic values in others. This deeper level of psychological engagement by participants can be expected to result in more sustained changes in attitude, and to motivate behaviors supportive of greater integration between identity groups in the spaces where people live and work.

7.5 Prospects for the Transformation of Protracted Conflicts

This thesis is not intended to suggest that relational peacebuilding efforts carried out by civil society actors are a panacea to the problems facing societies affected by protracted conflict. Such societies will contine to present serious difficulties to peacebuilding practitioners and to policy-makers who wish to support the development of sustainable peace. There are likely to continue to be a number of protracted conflicts around the globe that persist well into the twenty-first century, even as new forms of violence and warfare proliferate.

What this thesis can contribute is an indication of an area for peacebuilding intervention in identity-based conflicts that seem to be highly resistant to resolution, where the psychology of the populations involved is making a substantive contribution to the continuance of conflict. In such contexts, efforts at changing mindsets may yield changes in both attitudes regarding the conflict and in social behavior, even where other forms of peacebuilding are failing. There are some grounds for hoping, then, that the transformation of protracted conflicts can be led by widespread changes in mindset among individuals.

This thesis ultimately suggests that individual-level psychology should be an area of concern for peacebuilders, and that education and socialization practices should be engaged with for their potential to contribute to building more peaceful societies. A focus on such efforts can be expected to significantly enhance the capacity of civil society actors to contribute to conflict transformation, even in that most challenging of contexts – protracted conflicts.

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Appendix A: List of Participants and Biographical Information

Sample: Intergroup Peacebuilders

Pseudonym	Biographical overview	Social Activism
Claire Connor	Grew up in Catholic West Belfast, working-class family. Later moved to Protestant-dominated Coleraine. Involved in Community Development work before Good Relations work.	Good Relations Officer for community development network. Largely working with Protestant cultural groups.
Mary Hancock	Grew up in Protestant working class family in Derry-Londonderry. Husband seriously injured while serving as police officer.	Leading storytelling dialogues between victims and perpetrators. Running a cross-community drop-in center.
Fiona Maguire	Grew up in mixed marriage family, raised Catholic in Strabane area. Seriously injured in IRA attack.	Volunteer leading storytelling dialogues (as above) and youth education.
Tom McIvor	Grew up in Protestant working class family, Shankill Road area. Witnessed death of neighbor, and had a number of friends killed.	Began in Christian youth work, later involved in community relations training and founding integrated schools as volunteer. Range of later work including delivering diversity training and evaluating peacebuilding projects.
Gareth McNeill	Grew up in Protestant working-class family in Carrickfergus. Lived in London before returning to N. Ireland and getting involved in cross-community youth work.	Cross-community youth work, work with Loyalist groups to amend cultural practices. Involved in cross-border educational projects.
John Mallon	Grew up in Catholic working-class family in Bogside, Derry-Londonderry. Experienced army harassment before moving to England. Later returned to N. Ireland and got involved in sports and community work.	Facilitates single identity and cross-community dialogues on issues relating to conflict. Uses art-based activities to encourage expression and communication.

Amy Curran	Grew up in Protestant working class family. Moved to Canada early in life but returned to East Belfast in teens. Had mixed marriage. Lived in London then returned to N. Ireland. Began campaigning for integrated schooling, then involved in women-focused peacebuilding work, including involvement in political peace process.	Facilitates cross-community dialogues on conflict issues.
Malachy Dougan	Grew up in Catholic working class family in Derry-Londonderry. Witnessed Bloody Sunday. Worked in fathers' barber shop with many Protestant customers before it was bombed by IRA.	Began working in cross-community youth work, followed by becoming a mediator of conflict-related disputes. Also leads youth education initiatives and mediation trainings.
Ryan O'Sullivan	Grew up in middle-class Catholic family on edge of North Belfast. Father from Republic of Ireland, mother from Protestant background. Involved in riots as teenager and almost killed by loyalist paramilitaries. Later involved in community work in Protestant East Belfast.	Working cross-community with communities in interface areas to solve problems and cooperate on issues of mutual concern.
Gerry Dunne	Grew-up in Catholic working-class family in Creggan estate, Derry-Londonderry. Witnessed Bloody Sunday. Developed sympathies for pIRA cause before later transformational encounters with Protestant individuals. Worked previously as teacher and youth worker.	Leading storytelling dialogues between victims and perpetrators of conflict violence, promoting cross-community understanding.
Liam Mullan	Grew-up in rural Catholic family in South Armagh. Travelled widely. Outspoken critic of pIRA in own community. Began working on issues of men and mental health.	Cross-community youth worker also runs cross-community men's group as volunteer.
Steven Walker	Grew up in Protestant working-class family in mixed housing estate in Belfast. Later joined UFF as paramilitary and spent	Community development worker with strong cross-community links. Working with young people to develop

	time in jail as a result. Had transformative encounter in prison and since active to promote peacebuilding between his community and others in the city.	more informed political thinking. Now moving into restorative justice.
Cheryl Graham	Grew up in Protestant working class family in Portadown. Still lives in same housing estate. Began in community development work, became increasingly cross-community.	Building relationships between rural communities on cross-community basis. Delivers prejudice reduction training.
Seamus Murtough	Grew-up in working class Catholic family in Belfast. Father a dedicated Irish Republican. Later imprisoned for pIRA offences. Since release has got involved in community development work, cross-community.	Community development worker with strong cross-community links. Working with young people on a cross-community basis to dialogue and build relationships.
Allison Chambers	Grew-up in Protestant working class family, East Belfast. Spent some time in West Belfast at school due to family break-up. Worked as teacher before involvement in Irish language.	Promoter of Irish language in Protestant East Belfast. Teaches cross-community classes in Irish language.

Sample: Within-group Activists

Pseudonym	**Biographical Overview**	**Social Activism**
Janine Hodgins	Working-class background in Protestant family. Former member of security forces.	Active member of Orange Order, promotes Ulster-Scots culture and heritage.
Walter Kearney	Working-class background in Catholic family. Studied at art school.	'Bogside Artist' - painting murals commemorating conflict-events in Bogside area of Derry-Londonderry.
Tim Kearney	Working-class background in Catholic family. Now committed nondenominational Christian.	As above

Jack Keane	Working-class background in Catholic family. Grew up in Derry-Londonderry, lost brother on Bloody Sunday. Worked as engineer.	Works at museum to commemorate conflict-related events in local community. Also involved in pursuing justice for victims of state violence.
Brian Toner	Working-class background in Catholic family. Studied Irish history at university.	Co-founder and manager of museum to commemorate conflict-related events in local community. Also involved in pursuing justice for victims of state violence.
Fionn MacAnnadh	Working-class background in Catholic family. Attended Irish-language school in West Belfast.	Advocate for Irish language community in West Belfast to develop culturally and economically.
Sam Armstrong	Working-class background in Protestant family, Shankill area Belfast.	Restorative justice worker, Shankill area of Belfast.
Alice McLean	Rural background in Protestant family.	Speaker of Ulster-Scots and advocate for promotion of Ulster-Scots language and culture. Member of Orange Order.
Victoria Neill	Background in Protestant family heavily involved in marching bands.	Organizes collaboration between Protestant marching bands and advocates for them in weekly newspaper column.
Sarah Crawford	Rural background in Protestant family.	Local councillor elected on behalf of Unionist party opposed to Belfast Agreement.
Norman Granger	Working-class background in Protestant family, minority community in Derry-Londonderry. Former member of security forces.	Community worker on behalf of Loyalist prisoners. Deputy leader of Progressive Unionist Party.
Conn O'Kane	Working-class background Catholic family. Grew up in Creggan estate, Derry-Londonderry. Imprisoned for IRA offences.	Advocate on behalf of taxi drivers, based in Catholic-dominated area.

Mary Mullan	Working-class background Catholic family. Brothers imprisoned for IRA offences.	Working with, and advocating for, victims of violence in Catholic-dominated area.
Bill Thompson	Working-class background in Protestant family, minority community in Derry-Londonerry. Involved with loyal orders.	Advocate development of local Protestant community, and for preserving Protestant heritage in city.

Appendix B: Interview guide

Before the first interview begins, the information sheet and consent form will be presented and any questions or concerns addressed to the satisfaction of the participant before the process continues.

Researcher will ensure that the participant understands the purpose of the research, the risks and benefits to themselves, and has given informed consent.

Remind participant they are in control – they can choose what they talk about and how they talk about it. Should give thought to what they feel comfortable to reveal.

First part of interview:

Prompt: Please tell me your life story….

(*Spontaneous follow-up questions will be asked when the participant finishes, to check for clarifications and to seek more detail on information shared which seems particularly relevant to the research questions*).

Second part of interview:

Areas of questioning to include… (sample sub-questions are provided in *italics*)

Early Experiences:

- *What is your earliest memory?*
- *What can you tell me about the family / community you grew up in?*
- *When did you first become aware of the divisions in your country?*

Early childhood and family upbringing

- *Have there been any experiences in your family upbringing that particularly influenced you?*
- *How was the conflict talked about in your family when you were growing up*?

Socialization in wider community

- *What kinds of beliefs and narratives about other social groups did you encounter at school / in your local community?*
- *Did you have any role models who inspired you to get involved in your work?*

Experience of conflict

- *How has the conflict in your country affected you?*
- *What have been your experiences of the division in our society?*

- *When did you first become aware of any divisions in our society?*

Motivations for activism?

- *Tell me how you got involved in this work*
- *What motivated you to start working on this issue/ these issues?*
- *Was there a 'turning point' that got you started in this work?*

Perception of own and other social groups

- *How would you describe your sense of group identity? Do you feel a strong sense of belonging to a group?*
- *What is your impression of your own group?*
- *How do you view other groups in your society?*

Doing the work

- *Most rewarding / challenging experience?*
- *What keeps you motivated?*
- *When someone involved in your projects 'gets it', what do they understand*?
- *Describe a difficult experience in your work…. What past experiences or influences helped you to cope?*

Values

- *What do you see as your most important personal values?*
- *Tell me about a time when you acted out of your values, or had to make a choice based on your values…*

Worldview

- *Please speculate on what you see as the purpose of life*
- *How would you say a person can be successful in life?*
- *Is there a religious or philosophical framework which helps you make sense of life?*

Views on humanity and human relationships

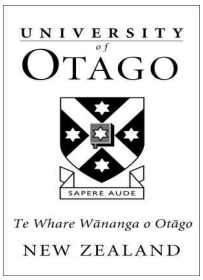
- *How would you describe human nature?*
- *How would you like to see people in this country treat each other?*

Personal philosophy of peace and conflict

- *Do you think we are at peace?*
- *How do you think peace can be achieved?*
- *What is your perspective on the conflict in Northern Ireland?*

Appendix C: Information Sheet for Field Research Participants

Reference Number: 14/044
3rd August 2014



INVESTIGATION INTO COMMUNITY ACTIVISM IN A DIVIDED SOCIETY

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

This research project is designed to gain understanding about how civil society activists in divided societies develop their motivations. The intention is to get insight into the values, worldview and life experiences which inspire individuals to work in difficult circumstances. These findings could contribute to new ideas for peace-building work in societies experiencing long-term conflict. To achieve this I will be conducting life story interviews with peace workers and peace activists from countries which have experienced or are experiencing violent conflict between religious or ethnic groups.

The project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for Rachel Rafferty's PhD in Peace and Conflict Studies. This study seeks to recruit 10-15 people who do community work in a society experiencing significant ethnic and/or religious division. Some participants will be contacted via email addresses that hey have provided on websites related to their work. Others will be contacted through the personal networks of the researcher. In order to be a suitable participant, you should have grown up in a divided society, and later spent some years working on community projects in your home country. There is no payment for taking part, but I will be happy to share my research findings with you, and I very much hope that they will be useful to you in your continuing work.

If you choose to participate you will be asked to share your life story with me (the researcher) in a face-to-face interview either in person or using a Skype conference. This interview will last roughly two hours. I might also contact you by email after the interview to ask a few clarifying questions, and to verify the transcriptions of your interviews. At this stage you can correct or withdraw any information. In total, the process will not take up more than 3-4 hours over your time,

over the 6 months of the study. How much time you give, and when you give it, will be up to you.

This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes your life experiences, your personal values, and any ideas or beliefs which have motivated you to work for peace. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. In the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

Your participation in the research project is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without any disadvantage to yourself. If requested, I will delete any data you have given me, and cancel your participation in the study. Apart from the information you give me in interviews, I might learn about you from a few other sources – from observing you in your work, from information published in the media or on the internet or from photos which you choose to share with me. I will tell you about any extra information which I gather in this way, and you can choose whether or not you are willing to have it included as part of the data collected by this research project.

All questions and answers will be in English, so it is important that you have a good working knowledge of English, and that you feel confident that you understand the language used during the consent process which will also be in English.

Excerpts from the information you give me may be published as part of my overall findings from the research project. You may be happy to be identified openly in future publications. However, if you choose to remain anonymous, all possible efforts will be made to protect your anonymity. I will do everything I can to ensure this, including changing your name and changing the names of any person, place or organization mentioned during interviews that might make it easy to identify you. However, you should be aware that there is always a slight possibility that someone who knows you well might be able to identify you from the information you give about your life story.

You should also consider whether you feel comfortable to reflect on your experiences of growing up in a divided society where you may have directly or indirectly encountered violence or other disturbing experiences. I understand there is a small risk you may find it emotionally uncomfortable to revisit such memories, and I will minimize this risk by placing you in control of the interview process. You need only answer the questions which you feel comfortable to do so, and you can avoid any area of questioning with a simple request.

Any personal information which I record about you (for example, name, location, age etc) will be stored only on my personal computer which is protected by a password known only to me. Your personal information will be stored separately from the transcripts of your interviews, in a different physical location from your name, contact details, and other personal information. Your identity will be given a

letter code, and the file which matches your name to your letter code will be kept on a separate computer at the university (also password protected).

The information which you share in interviews will be digitally recorded in an audio format, and then transcribed in a document so that I can analyse it later. All the data collected from participants during this study will be kept for at least five years in secure storage.

There is no payment for taking part in this study.

If you have any questions about this project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Rachel Rafferty	and	Dr Katerina Standish
Peace and Conflict Studies		Peace and Conflict Studies
Tel:0064 3 479 4546		Tel: 0064 3 479 4546
rafra668@student.otago.ac.nz		katerina.standish@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.