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| Institution: Edge Hill University |
| Unit of Assessment: 22 - Social Work and Social Policy |
| Title of case study: Influencing Debates on Post-Conflict Justice and Human Rights |
| <p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>The research has had impact through promoting bottom-up, community-based approaches to truth recovery as part of post-conflict transition and human rights advocacy. This has been most evident, in reach and significance, at local and regional levels within Northern Ireland as a region with unique circumstances (emerging post-1998 from armed conflict) and by influencing the attitudes and activities of community groups, human rights/victims' Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and lawyers involved in shaping truth recovery public policy. The work has had impact on governmental and statutory bodies and initiatives dealing with post-conflict victims' concerns and wider national and international civil society debates on truth recovery, human rights and the effects of counter-terror policing policies and practices in marginalised ethnic minority communities.</p> |
| <p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Post-conflict truth recovery for victims and survivors has risen to prominence in recent years for domestic and international policymakers. In Northern Ireland (NI), the Good Friday Agreement (1998) ended a conflict costing 3,600 lives. Dealing with a conflicted past, by focusing on outstanding victims' truth and justice issues, has been a significant and contentious area of debate and policy-making; evidenced in civil society activities, the creation and work of public bodies (i.e. Victims' Commission) and key policy initiatives (i.e. Consultative Group on Dealing with the Past). The underpinning research, on-going since 1998, emerged from a number of projects, research awards (total income of £130k+), networks and publications to inquire into community-based approaches to truth recovery in post-conflict transition, particularly in NI. The ethos and approach of the research also fed into comparative work and dissemination events with NGOs on the impact of counter-terrorism policies and practices. The discrete but interlinked projects have been carried out by Professor Mark McGovern while employed by the University (1990 onwards).</p> <p>1. The Ardoyne Commemoration Project (ACP): The ACP (1998-2002) was an innovative community-based project on post-conflict truth recovery in a part of north Belfast that suffered among the highest levels of conflict-related fatalities (99). Adopting a participatory action approach, the ACP worked with victims' families to co-generate the research material, and published a book (<i>Ardoyne: The Untold Truth</i>, Reference 4) that historically contextualised 300+ testimonies, promoting participation in truth recovery and acknowledgement as key post-conflict legacy issues and concerns for developing a human rights culture. The project was funded by the <i>Community Relations Council (NI) (CRCNI)</i>, <i>EU Structural Fund for Peace-building in Northern Ireland (EUSPNI)</i> and the <i>Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust</i> (£70k). This project (and 2 and 3) was conducted in equal collaboration with Prof Patricia Lundy, University of Ulster.</p> <p>2. Assessing Community-based Approaches to Truth Recovery: This research (2003-2006) reviewed and assessed community/'bottom-up' approaches to post-conflict truth recovery, exploring the implications for national/international transitional justice best practice. Funded by the CRCNI and the EUSPNI (£25k) it resulted in a report (Reference 5) academic publications (References 1, 2, 5, 6) and international keynote address invitations (Sri Lanka Transitional Justice Group, 2006; Greensboro Community Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2007).</p> <p>3. Attitudes towards a truth commission for Northern Ireland: This project (2005-2008) developed a module of questions used in the <i>Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT)</i> around attitudes towards a truth commission as a mechanism for peace-building for Northern Ireland. The NILT is the largest social survey of public opinion conducted in Northern Ireland. It resulted in publications (References 2, 3), launch presentations and research updates for <i>ARK Social and Political Archive/NILT</i>. The work was funded by the CRCNI and EUSPNI (£30k).</p> <p>4. Collusion, state violence and victims' perspectives in Mid-Ulster: This project (from 2009) explores state collusion in non-state political violence, focussing on cases in Mid-Ulster in 1980s-1990s. Competitively and peer-review funded by the <i>British Academy</i> (£8,440), it is conducted in collaboration with victims' families and the victims' organisation <i>Relatives for Justice</i> examining evidence of collusion, the impact on families and attitudes towards truth recovery.</p> |
| <p>3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)</p> <p>1. Lundy, Patricia & McGovern, Mark (2008) Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom-up, <i>Journal of Law and Society</i>, 35:2, 265-292 (international peer-reviewed journal:</p> |

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impact factor: 1.22, ranking: 45/139 in Sociology)

2. Lundy, Patricia & McGovern, Mark (2008) Truth, Justice and Dealing with the Legacy of the Past in Northern Ireland 1998-200', *Ethnopolitics*, 7:1, 177-193. (international peer-reviewed journal, impact factor 1.791)

3. Lundy, Patricia & McGovern, Mark (2008) A Trojan Horse? Unionism, Trust and Truth-telling in Northern Ireland, *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, 2:1, 42-62. (international peer-reviewed journal: impact factor 1.791)

4. Lundy, Patricia & McGovern, Mark (2002) *Ardoyne: The Untold Truth*, Beyond the Pale Publications: Belfast. (Funded by peer-reviewed Funders, CRCNI and JRCT: £70k)

5. Lundy, Patricia & McGovern, Mark (2005) *Community-Based Truth Telling and Post-Conflict Transition in Northern Ireland: An Assessment of the Ardoyne Commemoration Project*, Community Relations Council (Northern Ireland): Belfast. (Funded by peer-reviewed funders: CRCNI/EUSPNI: £25k)

6. Lundy, Patricia & McGovern, Mark (2006) 'Participation, Truth and Partiality: Participatory Action Research, Community-based Truth-telling and Post-Conflict Transition in Northern Ireland', *Sociology*, 40:1, 71-88. (international peer-reviewed journal: impact factor: 1.504, ranking: 28/137 in Sociology)

4. Details of the impact

Impact flows primarily from direct engagement with community, victims' and human rights NGOs involved with influencing policy/practice for post-conflict truth recovery in Northern Ireland (NI) Evidenced in key testimonies from representatives of stakeholder groups and bodies (as detailed below) the research on grassroots approaches to truth recovery, promoting victims' and survivors' concerns, attitudinal surveys and international models and comparisons on the effect of counter-terror policies and practices has informed understanding and had an effect on the activity, attitude, awareness and capacities of these individuals, organisations and constituencies.

a) The on-going impact of the ACP (1998-2002), first evident (and continuing post-2008) within the Ardoyne community and amongst victims' relatives more widely, is rooted in its participatory action approach (involving community members as co-researchers and over 300 victims' relatives in co-generative dialogue). The project and outputs (References 4, 5, 6) affected then, and continue to inform, the awareness, behaviour and capacity of victims'/human rights organisations in collaborative approaches to truth recovery.

This work is used by different individuals and groups in the legal and human rights sector. A *Partner of Kevin R. Winters & Co. Solicitor Advocates* (the largest criminal law practice on the island of Ireland, based in Belfast, and involved in some of the most high profile post-conflict human rights cases) writes 'by virtue of the pioneering work of the ACP we have had recourse and requirement to engage Professor McGovern both on a factual basis, and also on a collaborative basis' on certain cases and that 'the on-going research undertaken by Professor McGovern is crucial given the intricate tapestry that the web of collusion presents' and the role of such 'credible research cannot be overstated' (Factual Statement (FS) 5).

The *Deputy Director of the Committee on the Administration of Justice* (the leading civil liberties organisation in NI, sister organisation to *Liberty*, affiliated to the International Federation of Human Rights and winner of international human rights prizes) notes 'Professor McGovern's research, and in particular the ACP and the project *Collusion, state violence and victims' perspectives in Mid-Ulster*, has had a significant impact in informing, shaping and allowing the dissemination of CAJ's work to broader audiences, as well as influencing debates and attitudes on same'. Further, the 'work into collusion and covert policing also substantively influenced our decision to research the contemporary framework and accountability gap in relation to covert policing, which resulted in our landmark *The Policing You Don't See* report (2012)' (FS 1, Other Source (OS) 3).

b) Conducted for the CRCNI (the key statutory body promoting community reconciliation) the follow-up project assessed community-based truth recovery and produced a report (5) and additional outputs (References 1, 2, 3, 6) that continue, post-2008, to be employed by NGOs to inform attitudes, awareness and activities in truth-seeking policy debates.

References 1 and 5 are cited in the report of the *Consultative Group on Dealing with the Past* (2010), an Independent Consultation Group established by the British Government to report and advise on policy and practice in dealing with the past that reported to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Reference 4 is cited as one of the Group's 'research materials' (OS 2).

Outputs are also available as materials for truth recovery projects: i.e. *Healing Through Remembering: Everyday Objects Transformed by Conflict Project*, 2011 (HTR is a leading cross-community civil society initiative). The 'Everyday Objects' Project was a recent (2011-2012) arts-based project designed to encourage truth recovery and cross-community reconciliation. The 'resources page of the project website provides 'resources that may be of use for individuals and communities who wish to further explore resources which deal with the past' and makes directly available References 1, 5 and 6 (OS 5).

c) The attitudinal survey (2004-2006) of views on a truth commission for Northern Ireland was part of the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT), the most important NI-wide social attitude survey. A range of dissemination activities contributed to debates on truth recovery mechanisms, including the production of a widely distributed NILT research update (<http://www.ark.ac.uk/publications/updates/update46.pdf>). This work continues post-2008 to inform the on-going work, policies and practices of relevant NI-NGOs.

A Former Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Commission for Victims and Survivors (the statutory body responsible for meeting the needs and informing policy for conflict-related victims in NI) states the research 'has played a key role in framing the debate and shaping the development of mechanisms for dealing with the past in Northern Ireland for over a decade [the] work on community-based/bottom up approaches to truth recovery has had significant impact on the transitional justice landscape in the north of Ireland [and has] had a direct impact on the development of policy and the prioritisation of public resources to support victims and survivors. In dealing with the past... empathy with victims and survivors will, perhaps, be the best way to ensure that our tendency towards political rivalry, score-settling and sectarianism will be tempered by a wider spirit of compassion. Mark McGovern's work is in that spirit' (FS 3).

d) Collaboration with CAJ and RFJ resulted in co-hosting a symposium (2009), comparing Irish and Muslim experiences of counter-terrorism law and policy, and bringing together relevant representatives of human rights, victims and community organisations (i.e. *Islamic Human Rights Commission* (IHRC), *Coiste, CagePrisoners*). Funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (£9k) the work of the symposium was rooted in the ethos of grassroots truth recovery and earlier research and engagement. A published report (2010) was disseminated via the websites of several organisations (i.e. *CagePrisoners*, *IHRC*, *CAJ*) and of the leading London-based anti-racist think tank, the *Institute of Race Relations* (IRR). The research on community-truth recovery led to further collaboration with CAJ and an invitation as a plenary speaker on comparing Irish and Muslim experiences, to their 30th Anniversary Conference (June 2011). This addressed a 'mainly non-academic audience' of human rights, community activists and legal figures, including David Anderson QC (Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation) (OS 2).

e) Alongside on-going contact and discussion with relevant groups, the continued (and broadening) relevance of this work has been reflected in recent developments. On-going collaboration with IRR (stemming from the truth recovery work and the symposium organised with CAJ and RFJ) resulted in co-hosting a symposium (held in Tottenham, June 2012) comparing Irish, Black and Muslim experiences of policing. This involved speakers from human rights and victims' NGOs and legal figures from NI and their British-based Black, Muslim and Traveller community counterparts (i.e. human rights lawyer Gareth Peirce).

The *Executive Director* of IRR (a leading London-based anti-racist think tank, campaign group and publisher of the journal *Race and Class*) writes 'IRR first contacted Professor McGovern after reviewing his path-breaking report comparing the Irish and Muslim experiences of counter-terror policing, because it reflected the way the IRR works' and suggests that previous research while focussed on NI adopts 'frameworks that always open out to the universal application of lessons learned [and] also provided analyses and frameworks which have enabled organisations like ours to understand the current political [situation]. It is impossible to overstate his impact on our work in the UK and Europe (which in turn impacts on the groups we work with) [which] has been of paramount importance in informing our analysis of policing and counter-extremism. His ability to bridge the gap between the academy and the community is what makes his work so particularly valuable to us and those we work with' (FS 2).

f) The research on bottom-up truth recovery in NI led to an invitation as a plenary speaker to a conference (*Towards truth, justice and a political solution in Sri Lanka: what role will the Commonwealth and its 2013 Summit in Colombo play?*) hosted by the Commonwealth Advisory Bureau in November 2012, designed to inform the policy and practice of the Commonwealth for

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Sri Lankan transitional justice initiatives. The panel included Yasmin Sooka (member, UN Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Sri Lanka, formerly member of the Truth Commissions of South Africa/Sierra Leone) Other participants included a member of the 2011 Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group and international NGOs (including Amnesty International). The audience included policymakers, commonwealth officials and the 'London-based High Commissioners, their staff and senior staff from the Commonwealth Secretariat and Foundation' (OS 4).

g) Debate on dealing with the past is on-going within NI. Current work (2009-ongoing) focusses on collusion and includes a project, funded by the British Academy, conducted in direct collaboration with the victims' group *Relatives for Justice*. This research, examining victims'/relatives' perspectives on collusion and existing truth recovery mechanisms, produces academic outputs and materials of direct benefit to human rights/victims' organisations and legal practitioners.

The *Director of Relatives for Justice* (a leading Belfast-based victims/human rights organisation with branches throughout NI) notes that over the past decade RFJ 'including many of our members, has been privileged to work and partner with Professor Mark McGovern around a range of collaborative projects [and that] the work has had a beneficial impact [by having] directly empowered people to document their experiences whilst equally contributing to academic outputs and outcomes that influence how we address legacy more broadly. There can be no doubt that the work [...] has enhanced and has had added value to overall debate on the past in the north of Ireland... Direct benefits can also be seen in the bereaved and injured [ranging from] better family and peer relationships, improved health and wellbeing, confidence, participation and contribution to transitional debates [this is] crucially important as the voice of direct victims and survivors of the conflict is heard and contributes towards shaping how we collectively as a society agree participatory structures and processes [for] post-conflict transformation. [We] cannot over-emphasise the importance and value of his work at all levels' (FS 4).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Factual Statements

The following testimonials have been provided by key representatives of groups and bodies involved in human rights, truth recovery and victims' issues, mostly in Northern Ireland:

1. Deputy Director, Committee on the Administration of Justice (*impacts b, c, d, e, g*).
2. Executive Director, Institute of Race Relations (*impacts d, e, g*).
3. Former Commissioner, Northern Ireland Commission for Victims and Survivors (*impacts a, b, c, d, e, g*).
4. Director, Relatives for Justice (*impacts a, b, c, d, e, g*).
5. Partner, Kevin R. Winters & Co. Solicitor Advocates (*impacts a, g*).

Other Sources

The sources below relate to public or civil society organisations citing and/or providing research outputs as resources in relation to truth recovery policy and practice:

1. Consultative Group on the Past: Report on Dealing with the Past. See: http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/victims/docs/consultative_group/cgp_230109_report.pdf (*impacts b, c*).
2. Committee on the Administration of Justice, 30th Anniversary Conference: Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights, the Permanence of Temporary Powers: http://www.caj.org.uk/files/2011/10/31/Counter_terrorism_conference_report.pdf (*impacts a,b,d,g*).
3. Committee on the Administration of Justice (2012) *The Policing You Don't See* report: http://www.caj.org.uk/files/2012/12/05/The_Policing_you_dont_see_November_2012.pdf (*impact a*)
4. Commonwealth Advisory Bureau, Transitional Justice, Northern Ireland and Sri Lanka International Conference: See: http://www.commonwealthadvisorybureau.org/fileadmin/CPSU/documents/Publications/Sri_Lanka_report_FINAL.pdf (*impact f*)
5. Healing Through Remembering: Everyday Objects Transformed by Conflict Project. See <http://www.healingthroughremembering.org/everydayobjects/resources/> (*impacts a, b*)