

Stockholm University
Department of Political Science
Intermediate Course, Spring 1997
Seminar Teacher: Kristina Riegert
Seminar Assistant: Lisbeth Aggestam

THE MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE DRUMCREE CRISIS 1996

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE INDEPENDENT AND THE IRISH TIMES

By Eva Sahlström

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INTRODUCTION

In July 1996, Northern Ireland was brought close to a state of anarchy due to riots connected to the stopping of an Orange march at the Drumcree church in Portadown, Co. Armagh. The Drumcree crisis was a crucial event during a fragile peace process and the outcome was an even more polarized society making the chances of negotiating a peace in Northern Ireland very small.

This study will look at the media coverage of the event by comparing the coverage in one British and one Irish newspaper. As the Republic of Ireland through the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 has got a role in the future of Northern Ireland, the events there are of concern both to the British and the Irish public. Studies about Northern Ireland and media are usually concentrated around the reporting of terrorism, but this event did not involve any of the paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland. The controversies around the Loyalist orders' parades could on the other hand be more crucial to the peace process than the behaviour of the paramilitaries, as this issue is "a microcosm of the political problems of Northern Ireland ... a complex issue which has great capacity to polarise local communities and the whole of Northern Ireland society" (The North Report on Parades, 1997).

AIM

The aim of this study is to look for similarities and differences in the media coverage in the Independent and the Irish Times with the help of a content analysis, and to try and explain why there are differences.

HYPOTHESIS

A working hypothesis is that there will be differences in the coverage, both in the attention, and in the way the event is reported, and that these differences are connected to the differences of interest for Northern Ireland among the public in Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

QUESTIONS

The questions that this study will try to answer are:

- ◆ Why does the Irish Times write so much more about the event than the Independent does?
- ◆ Is the news value different between the two papers?
- ◆ Is the reporting biased and in that case in which way?
- ◆ Can the alienation of the Protestants in Northern Ireland be noticed in the reporting?
- ◆ How could the differences in coverage be connected to the interest among the public in Britain and in Ireland?

METHODS

THE MATERIAL

The empirical material for this study consists of articles from the Independent, a British newspaper, and the Irish Times, an Irish newspaper. Newspapers, especially elite papers, are in democracies playing “a central role in providing information to decision-makers and the attentive public If newsmen share a pattern of preferences as to what is newsworthy, and that pattern does not represent reality, they will present a distorted image of the world which may contribute inappropriate decisions and policies” (Peterson, 1995, p.280). Newspapers are also suitable material for an analysis of this size.

Both the Independent and the Irish Times are influential quality papers in their home countries, and neither of them have any political colour. The Independent has a larger circulation, 287,347 daily (The Europa World Year Book 1996), than the Irish Times, 94,000 daily (according to The Europa World Year Book 1996, but 104,000 according to themselves when questioned in April 1997). The Republic of Ireland has a very much smaller population than the UK though, and the Irish Times also estimates that about 30,000 people read their online edition on the Internet daily (Pope, 1997). The Independent does not have any edition on the Internet.

As the Irish Times is hard to get hold of in Sweden, their archive on the Internet was used. The editorial content in their online edition mirrors the printed paper on the whole, apart from a few sections and occasional features that are unique to the web edition and are not included in this study. The articles included in this study which appear on the front page or the home news section in the online paper, did so in the printed edition as well (Pope, 1997). The articles from the Independent were taken from their print edition.

From the Irish Times, the articles were searched for in their archive from July in 1996, using the search word “Drumcree”, which led to all articles written about the Drumcree crisis and what happened in connection to that. From the Independent, articles dealing with the Drumcree crisis were picked out using the same criteria from the same period. Both papers published most of their articles in the section that the Independent calls ‘News’, and the Irish Times ‘Home News’. Both papers have a similar section for articles written by either the paper’s own journalists or by people not belonging to the editorial staff. The Independent calls this section ‘The Commentators’ and the Irish Times calls it ‘Opinion’. Letters to the editor are not included in the study.

LIMITATIONS

From the beginning, the intention was to use articles from the whole of July 1996. However, as the Irish Times wrote about 150 articles on the Drumcree crisis during this month it turned out to be impossible for such a limited study as this. The Independent did not write more than about 40 articles during this time. To limit the material to a manageable size and still get as much material from the Independent as possible, the week July 8 to July 13 was chosen. The Drumcree march was stopped on July 7, so the day after was the first day the papers wrote about the stand-off. The stand-off lasted for four days, and when the march was finally let through on July 11, there were serious riots during that night which were reported in both papers on July 12 and 13. The Irish Times continued to write about Drumcree and its consequences to a great extent for the rest of July, but the Independent published only a few more articles.

Three articles were taken away as the connection to Drumcree was weak. For example, one was about the British telecom company Orange which was considering changing its name because of the negative connotations ‘orange’ had got because of Drumcree.

Thus, the material ended up with 89 articles, 65 from the Irish Times and 24 from the Independent. This is quite a small number of articles for an analysis, especially from the Independent, which means that the results should not be seen as definite. Such a limited study as this must always be taken with a grain of salt – to get statistically secure results a much larger amount of articles is needed.

As the material from the Irish Times is not taken from their print edition, it was not possible to compare the length of articles. On the other hand, this would probably not have been very informative either, as it is quite clear that the Irish Times has written far more than the Independent. For the same reason, pictures have been excluded from the study as well, which is more of a pity as it would probably have been of interest.

CODING

The articles have been coded according to a codesheet set up especially for this study. To make the empirical investigation easier and more useful to work with, the codesheet was transformed to fit into the software Microsoft Excel. The data was processed in the form of a simple database.

The articles were coded according to which paper they came from, which date they were published and in what section. They were also coded according to which primary and secondary actors that were quoted, directly or indirectly, which primary or secondary topics that were dealt with in the article and what consequences for the peace process and Northern Ireland's long-term future were predicted as the outcome of the crisis.

The reliability of the investigation was tested with the help of two persons coding five articles. For further details on the coding and the codesheet, look at Appendices, Instructions for the codesheet.

BACKGROUND

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Northern Ireland have since the end of the 60s been associated with violence, bombs and sectarian conflict. The sectarian conflict goes, however, much further back. Many of the Protestants in Northern Ireland originate from the Scottish and northern English Presbyterians who in the 17th century migrated to Ulster, the northern of Ireland's four provinces. The different religions and the fight over land set Catholics and Presbyterians against each other.

The Irish Catholics were throughout history severely persecuted and oppressed by the Protestant minority who for centuries had the political power. When Ireland in 1921 gained independence, the country was partitioned as the Protestants in Ulster refused to join the free state that was set up. To secure a Protestant majority in the north only six of Ulster's nine counties remained in the union with Britain. They were called Northern Ireland, or the Six-Counties, but Protestants usually still refer to Northern Ireland as Ulster.

In the 1960's, a civil rights movement started in Northern Ireland on the issues of universal local government franchise, and discrimination in the allocation of public housing. The movement soon became nationalist in character. Nationalists are usually Catholics, and they identify themselves as being Irish and often want a reintegration with the Republic of Ireland. The civil rights movement's marches clashed with the Orange order, one of the most important unionist organizations. The unionists – or loyalists – are usually Protestants, they identify themselves as being British and they most often want the union between Britain and Northern Ireland to remain.

In August 1969, the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary, the Northern Irish police force) were unable to handle the serious riots in West Belfast and Derry. These riots were calmed down with the arrival of the British army, but political violence nevertheless escalated and the army which was sent over temporarily has remained in Northern Ireland since. In 1972, the British government imposed direct rule from Westminster. Stormont, the Northern Irish parliament created when Ireland was partitioned in 1921, has not been in function again since then. In 1974, there was an attempt of a power-sharing executive for Northern Ireland, the Sunningdale Agreement, but this was made impossible by a general strike by unionist workers (The Ulster Worker's Council). There have been a number of unsuccessful ceasefires, but the Northern Irish society has throughout the years become more and more polarized. In 1985, the British and the Irish government set up the Anglo-Irish Agreement, securing a role for the Republic of Ireland in the future of Northern Ireland. There were massive protests from unionists opposing the agreement, but the agreement held despite this.

In August 1994 the IRA (Irish Republican Army) called a ceasefire and the loyalist paramilitaries soon followed. However, the British government and the mainstream unionist parties – but not the loyalist paramilitaries and the parties linked to them – did not accept Sinn Féin, the republican party, in the peace talks unless the IRA decommissioned their arms. The IRA refused decommission prior to settlement, the peace talks came to a deadlock and remained so until the IRA broke its ceasefire in February 1996. In July 1996, the disorder caused by the Drumcree stand-off reinforced the polarization of the society, and during this spring the peace process has been at a total standstill because of the British general election.

THE MARCHING TRADITION

The Orange order was set up in 1795 by Protestant farmers and weavers in Co. Armagh, as “a means of mobilizing lower-class Protestants for the defence of the institutions of state, the established Church of Ireland and landed property” (Patterson, 1996, p.3). The order has since served as a sort of unifying force for the different kinds and classes of Protestants. It is an association open only to Protestants, and it has played an important part in the politics between Britain and Ireland and continues to do so today.

The Orange order is probably best known for their marching tradition. Even though all groups in Northern Ireland are fond of marches and parades, the great majority of the marches are organized by the Orange order and its equivalents. They march from Easter to September, with July 12 as the highlight. This is a commemoration of the Battle of the Boyne when, in 1690, William III of Orange with his Protestant forces conquered James II and his Catholic forces.

Most of the marches are peaceful events, but some of them end up in violent confrontations, especially in July. The Orange order claims that their routes are “not picked to cause offence, but by and large are main arterial routes along which successive generations of Orangemen have peacefully paraded” (Grand Orange Lodge, 1997). But many nationalists feel offended whatever the Orangemen's intention is.

DRUMCREE

During the last few years the two flashpoints have been Garvaghy Road in Portadown and Lower Ormeau Road in Belfast. These areas used to be mixed, but as Northern Ireland is getting more and more polarized these two areas are now nationalist. The residents here do not want to see any Orangemen marching their streets, and in July 1995 a march was stopped by the RUC at the Drumcree church in Portadown. After a three day

stand-off, a compromise was brokered and the Orangemen were allowed to march in silence.

The behaviour of unionist leaders afterwards, triumphantly declaring that there had been no compromise but a victory for the Orangemen, made compromise the year after very hard to broker (Browne, 1996). Accordingly, in 1996 the Drumcree march was stopped again by the RUC, with a new stand-off at the church and a great deal of disorder during the stand-off. Loyalist mobs all over Northern Ireland rioted as a result, intimidating Catholic families and blocking roads. This meant that several towns were put under siege, bus and rail services were cancelled and tourists hurriedly left Northern Ireland. After four days, the RUC let the Orangemen march even though no compromise had been brokered, and shortly after a march on the Lower Ormeau Road was forced through by the RUC despite protests from the residents there. This led to nationalist riots and uproar all over Ireland with the Irish Taoiseach (prime minister) John Bruton and the head of the Catholic Church in Ireland, Cardinal Cahal Daly, being very severe in their criticism of the British government and the RUC. There was also a great deal of criticism of the RUC that they had hit back much harder towards the nationalist rioters, than they had towards the loyalists during the stand-off. There are very few Catholics in the RUC and this is not the first time the police force has been accused of being partial.

About 40 Catholic families left their homes during this period because of intimidation, about 2,000 plastic bullets were fired towards rioters, 2 persons were killed and many people were injured. The society became more polarized as a result. Many nationalists began to boycott small businesses owned by loyalists. An independent review of the marching issue was set up by the British government, and the result was presented at the beginning of this year, with suggestions of solutions to the problem. However, it is not likely that a compromise on the marching issue will be reached this summer. The Orange order has already refused to change some of their routes, and several Catholic churches and Orange halls have been burnt down during the last few months.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

People with little knowledge about Northern Ireland often describe the conflict there as a religious war. However, this is a misinterpretation and a simplification of the very complicated conflict that includes religion, but still has more to do with politics, identity and power than with religious principles.

Very likely, people's view of a religious war with two sides fighting each other is partly coming from the media. Arno describes the role of media organizations as one of storytellers. "The basic scenarios of conflict situations vary from one cultural tradition to another, and when a journalist writes about conflict or portrays it in visual form, ... the necessity of being intelligible to his audience forces him to rely on these inherent, elemental storylines" (1995, p. 320). With Arno's reasoning, the concept of a religious war can be seen as a mould that journalists use to make it possible for their readers/listeners/viewers to grasp the conflict. Neuman et al. use the concept of frames instead, and among their five basic frames that both the media and the audience use to make sense of the political world, the conflict frame is found (1992, p.64). The protagonists are divided into two polarized forces. In the example of Northern Ireland it is usually Catholics vs. Protestants, or republicans vs. the British Army. The conflict frame also includes an us/them perspective that can be seen in the reporting from Northern Ireland – they are fighting about religion, but their fight does not include us.

This simplification is probably necessary for the conflict to get into the news at all. According to Galtung and Ruge there is a threshold that an event has to pass before it becomes news. One of the thresholds to pass is unambiguity. "[A]n event with a clear

interpretation, free from ambiguities in its meaning, is preferred to the highly ambiguous event from which many and inconsistent implications can and will be made” (1995, p.252-3). When the conflict is described as a religious war with two polarized forces, it gets over the threshold to be reported about.

But as the conflict is far from unambiguous, it is likely that this threshold very often prevents Northern Ireland from appearing in the headlines. Apart from the violent beginning of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, when republican prisoners went on hunger-strike for the right to be recognized as political prisoners, it is not a conflict that gets much attention. Not even in the Republic of Ireland, where the media reports regularly about Northern Ireland as part of their home news, do people express much interest in what happens north of the border. Mark Brennock, reporter for the Irish Times, told Swedish newspaper readers in 1993 how frustrating he found it to work as a correspondent in the North. After six months in Belfast he was back in Dublin for a short visit and met a TD (*Teachta Dála*, a member of the lower house of the Irish parliament) who asked if he had left the Irish Times as he had not seen any articles written by him. During these six months, Brennock had written great many articles from Belfast, but the TD apparently did not read news about the North. Brennock’s experience is that he is not the only one who ignores these articles (Brennock, 1993).

DIFFERENCES IN INTERESTS

However, even though the reporters at the Irish Times feel despondency about their readers’ interest for Northern Ireland, there are reasons to believe that the interest still is bigger in Ireland than in Britain as the British public is not very interested in keeping Northern Ireland as part of the UK. As Gallagher points out, already the name of the state, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is emphasizing that Northern Ireland is not a part of Britain. And the British government stated in the Sunningdale Agreement 1973, in the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 and the Downing Street Declaration in 1993, that Northern Ireland could vote itself out of the UK and into a united Ireland. “Such a declaration ... was a clear sign that the people of Northern Ireland were not regarded as an integral or indispensable part of the nation, and even the most obtuse or trusting unionists could hardly fail to develop a suspicion that Britain would not be sorry to be rid of them” (Gallagher, 1995, p. 722).

Bruce gives an example on how Sir Patrick Mayhew, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, in an interview with the German magazine *Die Zeit*, said:

‘Many people believe that we would not want to release Northern Ireland from the United Kingdom. To be entirely honest – with pleasure.’ He immediately backtracked and added: ‘No, not with pleasure, I take that back’, and then repeated the orthodox line: ‘But we would not stand in the way of Northern Ireland, if that would be the will of the majority’. However, that he strongly hoped it was the will of the majority was made clear when he went on to say: ‘The province cost us three billion pounds per year. Three billion pounds for one and a half million people’ (Bruce, 1994, p. 66).

And it is not only British governments and their representatives who have expressed the notion of Northern Ireland not really being part of the UK. The British public seems to have quite cold feelings towards the loyal unionists and the province as such. According to Gallagher,

the British seem to look on Ulster Protestants as Irish people who through some quirk of history have managed to acquire a right to British passports. Opinion polls in Britain since the mid-1970s have shown a consistent majority in favour of a united Ireland and a withdrawal of British troops

from Northern Ireland; indeed the British hold these views more strongly than do Northern Ireland Catholics, never mind Protestants (Gallagher, 1995, p. 722).

A study made by Brendan O'Leary on opinion polls made in July 1991 in Northern Ireland, Britain and the Republic of Ireland shows that in "Britain first-preference support for an independent Northern Ireland (20 per cent) comes just behind support for a united Ireland (21 per cent), suggesting widespread British enthusiasm to be rid of Northern Ireland, but indifferences as to the means or the consequences" (1992, p. 146). Of the seven alternatives that respondents could choose between, 41 per cent in the Republic of Ireland chose integration of Northern Ireland into the Republic, 19 per cent favoured a "devolved government, jointly guaranteed by and responsible to the British and Irish governments" (p. 144) and 16 per cent an independent Northern Ireland. In Northern Ireland, 39 per cent preferred full integration of Northern Ireland into the UK, an option that is not even feasible according to the text of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Another 19 per cent wanted some kind of power-sharing devolved government within the UK, and 14 per cent full integration of Northern Ireland into the Republic of Ireland.

There were a few more alternatives, but these are enough to look at to conclude that the public in the three jurisdictions are not in tune with each other. Majorities in both Britain and Ireland prefer either a united Ireland, an independent Northern Ireland or at least a role for the Republic in Northern Ireland. But the majority in the jurisdiction in question, Northern Ireland, prefers to be connected to the UK. The plurality even wants full integration into the UK, despite that this is an alternative not even on the agenda.

PROTESTANT ALIENATION

Apart from the lack of support from Britain, the Protestants in Northern Ireland feel more and more threatened by the Catholics. Since the beginning of the 1970s, the amount of Catholics in Northern Ireland has risen from about a third of the population to about 40 per cent (Bruce, 1994, p. 49). Whereas it used to be the working-class Catholics who left Northern Ireland, it is now middle-class Protestants who are migrating. At the same time, the group of middle-class Catholics is increasing. Fertility is also higher among the Catholics, something the Protestant evangelicals see as a 'popish plot'. "Whatever explanation is favoured, the general image that now confronts all unionists is one of becoming a minority in what was once their land. And this holds even when unionists are thinking of the competing ethnic group not as a threat to the constitution but as competition for resources within Northern Ireland" (Bruce, 1994, p. 52).

Not only that the Catholic population is increasing, but many local councils have got nationalistic majorities in the last few years. This has been the case especially in the west of Northern Ireland as the Protestants have been moving east due to the segregation of the society. Whereas the word 'alienation' from the beginning was used to describe what the nationalists felt about living in Northern Ireland, it is now increasingly used to describe feelings among the unionists. This is shown in studies by for example Dunn and Morgan (1995) and Bruce (1994), showing that the central reason for the feelings of alienation is the Protestants feeling disadvantaged in comparison with the Catholics. Throughout Bruce's book *The Edge of the Union* (1994), evidently what many of his interviewees regret having lost, is the status of supremacy.

The Protestants' feelings of alienation give the marching issue as such a symbolic importance that is of interest for this study. To the marching men, the parades are part of the specific Ulster Protestant tradition. In their opinion, they have already had to give away so much to 'them', i.e. the Catholics, that this is something they are ready to fight hard for. Their position in the Northern Irish society is no longer as privileged as it used

to be, and successive British government have made many concessions to the nationalists' demands for a more equal society.

At the same time as the marching issue has become a symbol of civil rights for the Protestants, i.e. the right to march where they want to, this is an issue that also sets them apart from the rest of the UK. The old-fashioned Orange traditions stress the gap between the people in Britain and the Ulster Protestants. This makes the Drumcree crisis especially interesting to study, as it is likely that the Protestant alienation will be reflected in the coverage of the event.

WHY ARE THERE DIFFERENCES IN THE COVERAGE?

It is not necessary to make a content analysis to find the most striking difference between the coverage of the Drumcree crisis in the Irish Times and the Independent – namely the big difference in attention. Why does the Irish Times write more than twice as many articles as the Independent about the event? It is quite clear that Northern Ireland is not considered really as a foreign country in the Republic of Ireland, shown for example by the Irish Times putting articles about Northern Ireland under Home News. Many associations, political parties and the largest churches are also organized on a 32-county-basis (i.e. both north and south of the border).

It is, on the other hand, more surprising that the Independent does not show at least the same amount of attention, considering that this is an event occurring in the United Kingdom. Would there have been more attention if a similar crisis occurred in Scotland? Or in England?

But with the figures from O'Leary's study on opinion polls in mind, it can be assumed that the reason for the difference in attention between the Independent and the Irish Times is in concordance with the public's preferences. A large plurality in the Republic wants a united Ireland, and no one south of the border had no opinion at all about Northern Ireland, compared to 16 per cent in Britain. This makes it possible to conclude that many people in the Republic actually are interested in what is happening in the North. The lower British interest for Northern Ireland and the great support for solutions that would loosen the ties with Britain indicate that the British public may be less interested in reading about Northern Ireland in their paper. The relatively small number of articles in the Independent can then be seen as a manifestation of the low interest in Britain for Northern Ireland.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ARTICLES

Apart from the number of articles, there might also be differences in how they are distributed. Which days during the period do the papers write most of their articles? Does the Independent publish fewer articles every day of the period or the same number of articles on a certain day as the Irish Times?

An indication of what news value the event is given is also the distribution between the sections of the papers. Articles appearing on a paper's front page are granted high news value. Is the event considered important enough to be dealt with in an editorial? Is it dealt with in articles appearing at The Commentator's/Opinion pages?

THE ACTORS OF THE EVENT

The political landscape in Northern Ireland has become very fragmented and there are several political parties and paramilitary groups in both communities. Added to that are

parties like the Alliance Party and the Women's Coalition, who do not place themselves in any of the two communities. Apart from political organizations, there are several churches and organizations like the Loyal Orders (the Orange Order and its equivalents) and the Garvaghy Road Resident's Association. The RUC, the British army, the British government and the Irish government all have their part in the conflict as well.

Do all actors get an opportunity to be heard in both papers, or are there any differences here? It is likely that the Independent with fewer articles also has less space for different actors and therefore concentrates on a few. Schultz found in a study of the West German media "that 'reality' was overwhelmingly portrayed ... as simple, unambiguous and clearly contoured, but also that certain events with high news value were accorded complex, multi-dimensional and structured coverage" (quoted in Robertson, 1995, p. 335). If the Drumcree crisis is credited a high news value, it will accordingly be described contoured and multi-dimensional, which probably will result in several different actors giving their view. If the event on the other hand is given lower news value, it could be expected that there are fewer actors quoted in the articles, and that the concentration will be on the protagonists.

THE TOPICS DISCUSSED IN CONNECTION TO THE EVENT

The Drumcree crisis was not an isolated event. It was a part of the parades issue, a complex issue that has been controversial for many years. Moreover, it took place during a peace process that in two years time had not got very far and that had been severely shaken by the IRA breaking its ceasefire five months before Drumcree. Besides, an analogy can be made to the disorder caused by the Ulster Worker's Council's general strike in 1974 bringing down the Sunningdale Agreement.

Do the two papers put the Drumcree crisis in its context or is it seen as an isolated event? The fact that the Independent writes very little about the event in the weeks following the period in this study indicates that the paper treats Drumcree more as an isolated news item. Does the paper also discuss fewer topics connected to the crisis? Just as with the actors, it can be assumed that the crisis will be seen more as an isolated event if it is regarded as having a lower news value.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE EVENT

What implications did the Drumcree crisis have for the ongoing peace process, for tourism, economic investment etc in Northern Ireland? In 1995, Northern Ireland's first full year of peace since 1968, the number of holiday visitors increased by 68 per cent, increasing tourism revenue with about 20 per cent (O'Kane, 1996). During the Drumcree crisis the tourists fled and pictures of burning cars and stone-throwing Orangemen were cabled out all over the world. How many tourists feel like going to Northern Ireland this summer after what happened last summer? Which companies want to invest in Northern Ireland after last summer's disorder?

Now we know that the Drumcree crisis polarized Northern Ireland even more, and we know that this summer is likely to be at least as troublesome as the last one was. How much did the two papers discuss the consequences during those days when the disorder occurred?

WHAT IS FOUND IN THE EMPIRICAL MATERIAL?

As said before, the most significant difference between the Independent and the Irish Times is the number of articles, 24 articles in the Independent compared to 65 in the Irish Times. However, it remains to be seen if there are other differences in the coverage, for example if any actors or topics are favoured in any of the papers. Thus, the percentage of each coding variable in relation to each paper's total material will be compared.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ARTICLES

DISTRIBUTION DURING THE DAYS OF THE STUDIED PERIOD

Both papers start off the period writing only a few articles on Monday 8 July, but already the next day the Irish Times have increased their number of articles significantly. The number of articles increases during the week in both papers up to Thursday 11 July, when both publish about a quarter of the articles. After this day the Independent has fewer articles, but the Irish Times, on the other hand, publishes most articles on Saturday 13 July. This could depend on the fact that the Irish Times usually publishes a greater number of articles on Saturdays. However, as the paper continues its attention of the subject for the rest of July it is more likely that the paper's gate-keepers still find Drumcree of high news value.

At the Independent it seems like the interest is fading when the march has been let through, on July 11. Either this depends on the fact that the gate-keepers on this paper give the event less news value and therefore have less reason to follow up the crisis, or there is some other issue with high news value for Britain but not for Ireland that occupies space in the paper. However, during the studied period there was no more special news than a royal divorce and a state visit by Nelson Mandela, and neither of these occupied any great amount of space in the Independent.

Table 1: Articles per day (reliability = 1.0)

Date	<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>	
	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage
8	3	13%	2	3%
9	3	13%	9	14%
10	5	21%	11	17%
11	6	25%	15	23%
12	3	13%	9	14%
13	4	17%	19	29%
Total	24	100%	65	100%

DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN THE SECTIONS

The papers distribute the articles between their sections quite similarly. The only big difference here is that the Independent does not have any editorials on the crisis, which is extraordinary, considering the state Northern Ireland was in during this week and the consequences the crisis had for the peace process. The Irish Times has two editorials on the subject, the first on July 11 and the second on July 13. Both of them are dealing with how the crisis is affecting the peace process.

Table 2: Distribution of the articles in the different sections (reliability =1.0)

Section	<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>	
	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage
Front page	3	13%	8	12%
News/Home news	17	71%	48	74%
Commentators/Opinion	4	17%	7	11%
Editorial	0	0%	2	3%
Total	24	100%	65	100%

THE ACTORS OF THE EVENT

SIMILARITIES

Some articles have not had an actor who has got more space or been highlighted more than any other actor in the article, and in these cases only secondary actors have been coded. In the cases where there have been a primary actor (Table 3), both papers are most often quoting unionist/loyalist politicians and other persons, i.e. people not connected to any organizations or said to belong to any of the two communities. The fact that the unionist/loyalist politicians are coded to a greater extent than the nationalist/republican politicians is not so surprising, as the Orange order is so closely connected to unionism. Also, David Trimble, both the UUP leader and a Portadown Orangeman, is one of the most quoted actors and he has been coded as a unionist/loyalist politician in all cases.

Table 3: Primary Actors (reliability = .9)
Primary actors were not coded in all articles

Primary Actor	<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>	
	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage
Alliance party	0	0%	0	0%
Women's Coalition	0	0%	1	2%
Unionist/Loyalist pol	3	13%	11	17%
Nationalist/Republican pol	1	4%	3	5%
British pol	0	0%	3	5%
Irish pol	1	4%	8	12%
Orange order	0	0%	1	2%
Garvaghy Rd Ass	0	0%	1	2%
Church leader	0	0%	5	8%
RUC	2	8%	3	5%
Mediation Network	1	4%	0	0%
Journalist	3	13%	7	11%
Academic	0	0%	2	3%
Other loyalist	0	0%	0	0%
Other nationalist	1	4%	5	8%
Other	4	17%	7	11%
Articles with primary actor	16	67%	57	88%

On the other hand, both papers give other nationalists more space than other loyalists, i.e. nationalists and loyalists who are not speaking for any certain organization. This goes not only for the primary actors, but also for the secondary actors (Table 4). As the two protagonists in the crisis are the Orange order and nationalist residents this is quite natural as well. It is also mainly nationalists who are affected by the loyalist mobs' intimi-

dation during the stand-off. It is unexpected though, that spokespersons from the Orange order are hardly coded at all as primary actors in neither of the papers. One reason could be that David Trimble has been coded as a politician, but it is still surprising that no other Orangemen figure as primary actors. On the other hand, one of the other protagonists, the Garvaghy Road Residents' Association that represents the people living along Garvaghy Road Drumcree, also get very limited space as primary actors.

The Mediation Network, an independent organization that was set up in the 1980s to reduce conflict in Northern Ireland, helped to broker the compromise in Drumcree in 1995. It gets a very limited space in both papers – obviously it is not playing a big role in this year's crisis, maybe because the compromise it brokered the year before was not felt afterwards as a compromise by the parties involved.

Politicians from Britain and the Republic of Ireland have been coded to a quite small extent in both papers, especially in the Independent where there is only one article with an Irish politician as a primary actor. Both papers are prioritising politicians from their own country, except that British politicians actually get slightly more space as secondary actors in the Irish Times. Both papers also have their own journalists as primary actors to a quite great extent, in articles that are either editorials or found in the sections called the Commentators in the Independent and Opinion in the Irish Times.

Table 4: Secondary Actors (reliability = .93)

As secondary actors could be coded several times, the percentages in this table are not cumulative.

Secondary Actors	<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>	
	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage
Alliance party	0	0%	4	6%
Women's Coalition	0	0%	2	3%
Unionist/Loyalist pol	5	21%	14	22%
Nationalist/Republican pol	3	13%	15	23%
British pol	5	21%	10	15%
Irish pol	3	13%	7	11%
Orange order	7	29%	10	15%
Garvaghy Rd Ass	4	17%	7	11%
Church leader	3	13%	8	12%
RUC	3	13%	8	12%
Mediation Network	0	0%	1	2%
Academic	1	4%	1	2%
Other loyalist	3	13%	4	6%
Other nationalist	7	29%	11	17%
Other	3	13%	8	12%

DIFFERENCES

The Irish Times has a wider range of primary actors, giving space to spokespersons from the Orange order, the Garvaghy Road Resident's Association, academics and the four leaders for Northern Ireland's biggest churches, who together tried to mediate during the crisis. The Irish Times also give more space to nationalists who are not spokespersons for any particular organization. This difference probably depends on the fact that there is a lower percentage of articles in the Independent with a primary actor than in the Irish Times. The reason for that could be that despite the Independent writing fewer articles the journalists are trying to cover as many actors and topics as the Irish Times. An article in the Independent may then have several secondary actors, but no primary, whereas the Irish Times gives the journalists the opportunity to write several articles with

different angles. When it comes to secondary actors, more or less the same kind of spokespersons has been coded in the Independent in as the Irish Times.

The Alliance Party and the Women’s Coalition – the two parties mentioned in the articles that have no sectarian connections – get no space at all in the Independent. In the Irish Times, they both get a limited space, the Alliance party slightly more but only as secondary actors. Unionist/loyalist politicians get priority over nationalist/republican politicians as secondary actors in the Independent, whereas the Irish Times gives them the same amount of space.

The Independent has a higher percentage of articles with people from the Orange order, Garvaghy Road residents and other nationalists and loyalists than the Irish Times has. This indicates that the Independent concentrates on getting comments from the people directly involved in the Drumcree and the Lower Ormeau Road march.

THE TOPICS DISCUSSED IN CONNECTION TO THE EVENT

SIMILARITIES

None of the papers depict the Drumcree stand-off/march or the other Orange marches occurring during this period in a positive way. The articles where Drumcree or other marches have been coded as primary or secondary topics, are nearly all neutral or negative (Tables 6 and 7). One exception is a front page article published in the Independent on July 12, about how the Orangemen finally are allowed to march. Even if it gives ‘the grim statistics’ for the last four days of disorder and tells about the protests by nationalists, the huge headline trumpets out “The present is Orange”, clearly indicating that the Orangemen won a victory. Another exception is an article in the same paper, about the Twelfth of July march through Belfast, with the headline: “Nationalists riot as Orangemen triumph”, again indicating victory to the Orangemen. Both these two positive articles are more balanced than their headlines, also telling about the price paid for the marches – by both communities. But the headlines are screaming out an Orange triumph in a way that cannot be found in the Irish Times.

Table 6: Drumcree stand-off and march as primary and secondary topic.
The Drumcree march was not coded as a topic in all articles.

	Drumcree as primary topic				Drumcree as secondary topic			
	<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>		<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>	
	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage
pos	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
neu	3	13%	10	15%	0	0%	14	22%
neg	5	21%	18	28%	6	25%	12	18%
Total	9	38%	28	43%	6	25%	27	42%

However, there is one article in the Irish Times being positive about Drumcree – an article, published on July 12, from the Opinion section. The writer is Dr Clifford Smyth, ‘an authority on Orange folk culture and Orange history’, and his article is an excellent example on how Protestants in Northern Ireland reason. The Drumcree stand-off is only a secondary topic – the primary topic is the tradition of marching and its importance for the Protestants.

Table 7: Other marches as primary and secondary topics.
Other marches were not coded as topics in all articles.

	Other marches as primary topic				Other marches as secondary topic			
	<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>		<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>	
	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage
pos	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
neu	1	4%	3	5%	1	4%	5	8%
neg	0	0%	2	3%	1	4%	2	3%
Total	2	8%	5	8%	2	8%	7	11%

In both papers, the Drumcree stand-off/march are most common both as primary and secondary topics – hardly surprising as these have been the criteria for the selection of material (Tables 8 and 9). Marches, other than the one in Drumcree, e.g. the one along Lower Ormeau Road in Belfast, get little attention in both papers. The immediate consequences of the Drumcree stand-off and march, i.e. mediation, riots, roadblocks, families intimidated, tourists leaving etc are in both papers more common as secondary than as primary topics. Both papers also to some extent discuss the alienation of the Protestants, the Independent slightly more as a secondary topic.

DIFFERENCES

The Irish Times reports the Drumcree stand-off and march as both primary and secondary topics more so than the Independent. However, the most striking difference is the Independent's number of articles giving a background to the Orange order, the marching tradition, etc. A quarter of the articles in the Independent has this as the primary topic, whereas the only article with the background to the crisis as a primary topic in the Irish Times is the before mentioned article by Clifford Smyth (Table 8). However, one article in the Irish Times about unionist alienation also tells about the historical significance of Portadown for the unionists, thereby having background as a secondary topic (Table 9).

The unionist point of view is not represented in the background articles in the Independent. One of the three of these articles that are found in the Commentator's section is written by a journalist from the paper, John Lyttle, apparently of unionist origin, who used to enjoy the marches as a child. But he never really understood why he marched and still does not. He is also very critical of the position the unionists have had in Northern Ireland.

[T]he old men in grey suits, wearing bowler hats, white gloves and smug expression. I often wondered about those men. I wonder still. I seldom, if ever, saw them on the Shankill [Protestant working-class area in Belfast] but nevertheless these small businessmen, local council members, Unionist small wigs - the polite but poisonously rigid middle-class - ran the Orange order and, for a long time, ran Northern Ireland too, as if by divine right. From 1921 to 1972 the Six Counties had six Prime Ministers, all Unionist, all Orangemen, all pathologically certain that their allegiance to God, Crown and the Protestant Ascendancy meant they were ever special in English eyes, even after the civil rights marches of the Sixties, the closing of Stormont, the wooing of Sinn Fein to the conference table (Lyttle, 1996).

The two other background articles from the Commentator's are written by people not belonging to the Independent's editorial staff. Eamonn McCann, a journalist living in the Bogside (a nationalist working-class area in Derry), writes a very critical article about the tradition of marching, a tradition akin to "the tradition that persisted until the late Sixties in the southern states of the US that black people should ride at the back of the bus, or the tradition still 'honoured' in parts of the world today that husbands have a right to beat wives. It's all about walking over others" (McCann, 1996).

Table 8: Primary topics (reliability = .76)

Primary topic	<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>	
	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage
Drumcree	9	38%	28	43%
Other marches	2	8%	5	8%
Background	6	25%	1	2%
Mediation	2	8%	6	9%
Loyalist riots	1	4%	2	3%
Nationalist riots	1	4%	5	8%
Roadblocks etc	2	8%	3	5%
Families moving	0	0%	3	5%
Tourism/economy	0	0%	2	3%
RUC pressured	0	0%	2	3%
Analogy with UWC strike	0	0%	0	0%
Protestant alienation	1	4%	3	5%
Total	24	100%	60	92%

The third background article from the Commentator's is written by Garret FitzGerald, former Taoiseach of the Republic of Ireland (1996a). He sees the decision to let the Orangemen march as the latest example of how badly the British government treats the issue of Northern Ireland. The British government is repeatedly giving in to both republican and unionist threats and intimidation, in that way keeping bigotry and bitterness alive. FitzGerald claims that successive Irish governments have been more successful in dealing with threats from terrorists. As an example he gives the censorship of the IRA and Sinn Féin spokespersons on radio and TV, which was introduced in Ireland much earlier than in Britain, and special non-jury courts. People interested in human rights and freedom of expression might not agree with FitzGerald though.

The background articles that are found in the News section are mainly neutral, but the one giving the background to the Orange order stresses that the Order is not only anti-Catholic but also "consistently anti-ecumenical and opposed to religious integration" (McKittrick, 1996a).

When it comes to the other topics, the same pattern is seen as with the actors – the Irish Times has a wider range of primary topics, but the Independent writes about the same secondary topics as the Irish Times. The reason for this is probably just as with the actors – the Irish Times writes more articles over all about the crisis and the reporters have the luxury to write articles about one topic at a time. The Independent, in contrast to the Irish Times, compares the Ulster Worker's Council's strike in 1974 to the present crisis to a greater degree, which is connected to the Independent having more background articles.

One topic the Independent does not take up at all is the possibility that the RUC have been pressured by the British government to change the decision about the march, or that RUC officers have been threatened by loyalists. Irish politicians got quite upset over the fact that the British government handed over all the responsibility for the decision on

Sir Hugh Annesley, Chief Constable of the RUC, and meant that the government certainly was involved in the decision. It is more natural for the *Irish Times*, of course, to give space to what Irish politicians say than for the *Independent*. Still, the RUC did also tell the media about how their members had been threatened, and the *Independent* did not report this. That is significant, as much of the discussion around the Drumcree crisis evolves round the fact that the RUC gave in to mob rule.

Table 9: Secondary topics (reliability = .88)

As secondary topics could be coded several times, percentages of this table are not cumulative

Secondary topic	<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>	
	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage
Drumcree	6	25%	27	42%
Other marches	2	8%	7	11%
Background	1	4%	1	2%
Mediation	4	17%	12	18%
Loyalist riots	8	33%	16	25%
Nationalist riots	3	13%	11	17%
Roadblocks etc	3	13%	9	14%
Families moving	4	17%	7	11%
Tourism/economy	4	17%	2	3%
RUC pressured	0	0%	5	8%
Analogy with UWC strike	4	17%	4	6%
Protestant alienation	2	8%	3	5%

The *Irish Times* also writes more about the nationalist riots, both as secondary and primary topics. Most of those articles are published on July 12 and 13, days when the coverage in the *Independent* has decreased a great deal. This is quite conspicuous as the riots on the night of July 11 were very severe, and many of the reports from this night are stressing that the RUC hit back much harder at the nationalists than at the loyalists. A nationalist tells about how the protesters were chased away from Garvaghy Road when the march was going to be let through: “They fired more rounds [plastic bullets] in 20 minutes at us than in four days at the Orangemen - and they were aiming for us” (Moyes and Streeter, 1996a). The same kinds of testimonies are given from people in Derry and Belfast as well – according to Sinn Féin, 1,400 plastic bullets were fired the night after the march compared to 660 bullets during the four day stand-off (Grogan, 1996). The Taoiseach John Bruton complains about “the lack of impartiality in the way individuals were treated when residents were removed from Garvaghy Road and later in the protection of some areas from rioting and intimidation” (Brennock et al., 1996).

The *Independent* gives the eye witnesses of this night’s violence a chance to tell what they saw – but the low amount of articles from July 12 and 13 in the *Independent* shows that the overall news value the paper gives to the incidents is not as high as earlier during the week.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE EVENT

In some of the articles, the consequences of the Drumcree crisis have been coded. The crisis had immediate consequences for the peace process, as during the crisis some parties withdraw from the peace talks and the sectarian riots reinforced the deadlock of the process. Several people also commented upon how the event affected the process, for example there were speculations if the loyalist ceasefire would hold.

Apart from affecting the ongoing peace process, many people also commented upon the effects the crisis would have on Northern Ireland's future in the long run. Examples on this were how Drumcree would affect tourism, investments, etc.

SIMILARITIES

Both in the Independent and in the Irish Times it is clearly expressed that the consequences of the Drumcree crisis are negative (Table 10). The papers discuss the long-term consequences to a quite similar degree, in about a quarter of their material. In hardly any articles in either paper the consequences are expressed in a positive or neutral way.

DIFFERENCES

The biggest difference when it comes to the consequences of Drumcree is that the Independent only discusses the consequences for the on-going peace process in 17 per cent of their articles, whereas the Irish Times discusses it in 40 per cent of their material (Table 10). To connect the crisis with the peace process should be natural as a polarizing event like this quite likely has implications for the future. It is not easy to try and run a peace process when the actors of the process remind each other every July of how much they hate each other. To seek peace when mobs are intimidating people from the other community to such a great extent as families feel forced to move home is a hard task indeed. It is therefore surprising that the Independent does not relate the crisis with the peace process to a greater extent. This could indicate that the Independent is not following the peace process on a regular basis to the same extent as the Irish Times.

Table 10: The consequences of the Drumcree crisis (reliability = .7).
Consequences of the crisis were not coded in all articles.

	Consequences for the peace process				Long-term consequences			
	<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>		<i>Independent</i>		<i>Irish Times</i>	
	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage	Articles	Percentage
pos	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	2%
neu	0	0%	6	9%	1	4%	0	0%
neg	4	17%	19	29%	5	21%	13	20%
Total	4	17%	26	40%	6	25%	14	22%

In the Irish Times one article is positive about the consequences for the peace process. Kate Fearon from the Women's Coalition says: "The future of Ulster does not depend on what happens in Drumcree, as the Rev Ian Paisley has said. It lies at multi-party talks where unionist will be well represented" (Breen, 1996). She also believes women would be able to work out a compromise in Drumcree, emphasizing that it is mainly men who are involved in the acts of violence seen during the crisis. The Irish Times reports on one person who is hopeful about the future on a long-term basis, namely Archbishop Robin Eames (Church of Ireland). He comments about the church leader's mediation: "I believe that some of the proposals that were being put forward could have been built on. I believe that, in the long term, those proposals will come to pass We have got to keep hope alive and build for that future" (Irish Times, 1996, July 12).

DISCUSSION

The content analysis shows that the number of articles is not the only difference between the two papers. The Independent seems to adapt more to the conflict frame, concentrating on fewer actors, especially among the primary actors. Among the secondary actors, the protagonists of the conflict get most space, i.e. Orangemen and nationalists

who are not representing any organization. This could be a sign of the Independent simplifying the event to make it easier for the public to understand. The Irish Times describes the event in a more complex way, which together with the much higher number of articles indicates that the gate-keepers at this paper consider it to be of more importance.

The fact that the Independent reports less about the crisis when the Orangemen have been allowed to march, also indicates that the paper is fitting the event into a story-line. The march is then seen as the climax of the story. The Irish Times, on the other hand, regards the aftermath of Drumcree to have as high news value as the stand-off. Maybe this is because the paper connects the crisis to a greater extent with the peace process, thereby fitting it into another, bigger, story.

DIFFERENCES NOT COVERED BY THE CODESHEET

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The high number of background articles in the Independent also shows that the British public do not know as much about the subject as the Irish. There are other things, not covered by the coding, indicating this. The Independent explains every time the Twelfth of July is mentioned that this is the day when the Battle of Boyne is celebrated. The paper also uses explanatory comments like ‘the so-called marching season’.

The Irish Times never explains what the marching season is or what is special with the Twelfth – the paper obviously takes for granted that its readers know that much. The fact that the Independent needs to explain this corresponds to what is shown in the opinion polls – the British are not very interested in Northern Ireland.

PROTESTANT ALIENATION

This difference is also noticeable in the articles where the journalists are subjective, i.e. the editorials and the articles from the Commentator’s/Opinion sections. The two editorials, as well as several articles from the Opinion section, in the Irish Times deal with the consequences for the peace process. The articles in the Independent at the Commentator’s section deal instead with how much the unionists are out of tune with the rest of Britain – and the rest of the world. No unionist has got any article published in the Independent, in contrast to Clifford Smyth’s article in the Irish Times. Instead, the nationalist journalist Eamonn McCann gets the opportunity to depict the unionists as having reached a dead end.

The relative numerical growth in the Catholic population, the more remarkable growth in the size and self-confidence of the Catholic middle-class, the economic shifts that have made southern Ireland a junior partner rather than a poor neighbour of Britain in Europe, the impoverishment of sections of the Protestant working class that once could look to the Orange lodge for marginal advantage over Catholics, the internationalisation of the northern conflict generally, all this has made the chances of the ‘Orange State’ being reconstituted so remote as scarcely to be worth thinking about (McCann, 1996).

To McCann, the problem in Northern Ireland is the Orange tradition, that “testifies to the deep-rootedness of a social evil”. Clifford Smyth has a totally opposite view. To him, the right to march, is the right to be. He does not see the marches as a source of conflict, but says that there are “two tribes on this island and it is the unwillingness of the Irish, Gaelic and Roman Catholic tribe to offer acceptance and accommodate differences which is the source of the conflict” (Smyth, 1996). This point of view is not expressed in

the Independent. John Lyttle, who marched in Orange parades as a child, is in contrast very critical of the Orange traditions. He stresses how old-fashioned unionism is in Britain. “[E]ven if John Major has to rely on Unionist votes in the Commons, the English political system still sees them as anachronisms – simplistic 19th century minds facing 20th century complexities” (Lyttle, 1996).

The Independent also has a quite clear us/them perspective, with the journalists distancing themselves from the Orangemen. The descriptions of the Orangemen emphasize the peculiar way they are dressed, in dark suits and bowler hats. Not only is their way of dressing out of date, but their policies as well, and they cannot count with British support, as Andrew Marr comments:

[T]he more Unionist militancy, the more danger directed against the state, the weaker will the British sympathy and Britain’s desire to help be. Unless Unionism realises that political compromise is something to grasp, not something to fear, it will cut itself off from the modern world and make its eventual defeat inevitable (Marr, 1996).

These attitudes are in accordance with the attitudes found in the works of Gallagher and O’Leary – the British do not feel Northern Ireland to be a part of their country. This is also emphasized in the way Northern Ireland as such is described: “Northern Ireland is on the brink. But then, Northern Ireland is always on the brink” (Marr, 1996). One of the background articles, with the headline “Latest chapter in a troubled history”, is telling about the repeated disorders in Northern Ireland, giving the impression of a society where political violence is escalating repeatedly in an inevitable way (McKittrick, 1996b).

SIMILARITIES NOT COVERED BY THE CODESHEET

None of the papers show any real bias in their reporting. Instead, the journalists at both papers seem to know their subject well, and succeed in explaining what is happening. However, a quite surprising observation is that neither the Independent nor the Irish Times reflect very much on the fact that the British state during the Drumcree stand-off fails to protect its citizens. During the stand-off, the RUC explained why they could not suppress the riots with “We cannot be in two places at once” (Moyes and Streeter, 1996b). To its help to keep up order, the RUC has the British army who at the time of Drumcree had 17,500 troops in Northern Ireland. Another 1,000 troops were sent over during the stand-off (Millar, 1996). It can be questioned why the security forces with 25 years of practice had not prepared better for this expected disorder, especially as the forces seemed to find it more easy to be in two places at once when the Orangemen had marched and nationalists all over Northern Ireland started rioting.

The only one who actually comments upon the fact that the security forces failed to fulfil their function is Garret FitzGerald, former Taoiseach of Ireland. He has articles published both in the Irish Times and in the Independent with similar themes – the British government is giving in to violence, and while applying “different standards to public order and safety in Northern Ireland from those it would apply in Britain itself, [it] threatens the peace more than even the IRA have ever been able to” (FitzGerald, 1996b).

The Irish Times in one of its editorials criticizes the British government for bowing to the threat of force, but still concentrates on the immediate effects for the peace process. The Independent, apart from publishing Garret FitzGerald’s article, does not comment about its government giving in to the mob. What would the reporting in the two papers have been if forty black families in London had been forced from their homes by a rioting and intimidating racist mob? Or if forty traveller families (a group in Ireland with a travelling culture similar to gypsies) in Dublin were forced from their homes? Are sectar-

ian riots so common in Northern Ireland that people have stopped reacting over their consequences?

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

This is a limited study, with a small number of articles spread out over a very short period. It is possible that the differences in reporting between the two papers even out during a longer period. To conclude that there are differences between Irish and British media coverage about Northern Ireland it is necessary to do a much larger study over a longer period.

However, the differences shown in this analysis indicate that Northern Ireland is an issue of much more salience in the Republic of Ireland than in Britain. The Irish Times writes more about this crisis, more actors and topics are represented in the articles and Drumcree is seen less as an isolated event and more as an incident during the peace process. The Irish Times also concentrates to a great extent on the implications for the peace process, that, even if it has not been very successful yet, at least is an attempt of solving the conflict.

The journalists at the Independent do a good job when reporting about the incident. However, the high number of background articles and explanatory comments implies that Northern Ireland is a less salient subject in the British news than in the Irish. The Independent also concentrates less on the peace process and more on the alienation of the Protestants in Northern Ireland. This is a theme taken up to a quite great extent in the Irish Times as well, but in the Independent it is also implicit. The conflict frame with a clear us/them perspective stresses that there is an alienation. The unionists are depicted as being out of tune with modern Britain. If the Irish Times seems to concentrate on solutions for the conflict, the Independent has a less hopeful perspective – the Protestants are alienated, they will presumably be more alienated and Northern Ireland is always near, or on, the brink.

Agenda-setting by the media often takes the form of “giving priority to certain events rather than others in reporting” (Goldmann and Robertson, 1995, p.217). Clearly, this analysis shows that the Irish Times gives the Drumcree crisis more priority than the Independent does. According to agenda-setting theory, this means that the media makes Northern Ireland a less salient subject in Britain. However, as Neumann et al. shows (1992), the public get information about reality from more sources than the media. Presumably, the British media is not the only agenda-setter. British politicians are, for example, also clearly showing that Northern Ireland is not important, for example during the latest election campaign when a Scottish parliament was a bigger issue than the peace process in Northern Ireland. In fact, the peace process was not even an issue.

However, to establish who is setting the agenda in the case of Northern Ireland, the media or the politicians, is not really part of this study. Further research is also needed to establish connections between the media coverage of Northern Ireland and public opinion in Britain and Ireland. This study shows differences in the reporting between the Independent and the Irish Times, at least, and it is likely that these differences could affect public opinion.

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APPENDIX I – THE CODESHEET

- 1. Paper:**
- the Irish Times
 - the Independent
- 2. Date:** _____
- 3. Section:**
- Front Page
 - Home news/News
 - Opinion/the Commentators
 - Editorial
- 4. Actors (primary and secondary):**
- a) Spokespersons for org:**
- Alliance party
 - Women's Coalition
 - Unionist/Loyalist politician
 - Nationalist/Republican politician
 - British politician
 - Irish politician
 - Orange Order
 - Garvaghy Road Residents' Association
 - Churchleaders
 - RUC
 - Mediation network
- b) Others:**
- Journalist
 - Academic
 - Other Loyalist/Protestant
 - Other Nationalist/Catholic
 - Other person
- 5. Topic (primary and secondary):**
- a) Marches:**
- Drumcree stand-off/march
 - positive
 - neutral
 - negative
 - Other marches
 - positive
 - neutral
 - negative
- b) Other topics:**
- Background
 - Mediation/compromise
 - Loyalist riots
 - Nationalist riots
 - Roadblocks/cancelled services/closed shops
 - Catholics leaving homes
 - Effects on tourism and economy
 - Pressure towards RUC
 - Analogy with UWC strike in 1974
 - Protestant alienation
- 6. Consequences:**
- For the peace process
 - positive
 - neutral
 - negative
 - For Northern Ireland's future
 - positive
 - neutral
 - negative

APPENDIX II – INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CODESHEET:

When coding, always take consideration to the first impression a reader gets from an article. Headlines are important, and also what the article begins with, as most news articles are written after the pyramid structure, i.e. the most important first.

1. Mark which paper it is, either the Irish Times or the Independent.
2. Mark which *day* the article is published.
3. Mark in which *section* of the paper the article is published. In the Irish Times, news about Northern Ireland is sorted under *Home News*, the Independent do the same, but calls the section *News*. The Irish Times have one section called *Opinion*, the Independent calls it *The Commentators*. These sections consist of articles where opinions are expressed on the subject in question, written either by the papers' own journalist or by people not belonging to the editorial staff.
4. Mark one or several *actors* that is quoted directly or indirectly. Mark the *primary actor* with a '1', and *secondary actors* with 'x'. An actor is categorized as primary if most of the article deals with her/him, her/his quotes etc, or if this actor gets very much more space than the other actors. An actor mentioned in the headline is primary even if other actors would get more space in the article. The actors in an article that is not primary is marked as secondary. If all actors get about the same amount of space, mark all as secondary. If the article is an *Editorial* or from *the Opinion/the Commentators* section, the author of the article should be marked as primary actor, and no secondary actors should be marked. The editorial writer is marked as *Journalist*. If the author of an opinion article is presented only with a by-line, it is likely a journalist working for the paper and the writer is then marked as *Journalist*. If the author of an opinion article is presented with a title and short description, e.g. "Dr Garret FitzGerald, former Taoiseach of Ireland", it is likely someone not belonging to the editorial staff. Mark the writer of the article as a primary actor and choose suitable category, e.g. *Irish Politician*.
 - a) Under Other spokespersons for org, these can be marked:
 - ◆ Member of a political party in Northern Ireland. The parties are grouped accordingly: the Alliance Party and the Women's Coalition both form own groups. Unionist/Loyalist politician means someone from the UUP, the DUP, the PUP, the UDP, the UK Unionist Party, or an independent Unionist MP. Spokespersons from loyalist paramilitary groups, the UVF, the UFF or the UDA, are also put under this category. Nationalist/Republican politician means someone from the SDLP, Sinn Féin, Republican Sinn Féin or the IRSP. Spokespersons from republican paramilitary groups, the IRA or the INLA, are put under this category. David Trimble is always put under this category, even though he also is a Portadown Orangeman - but as the leader of the UUP, he is seen as a spokesperson for his party in the first hand. The same goes for Ian Paisley, who is marked as *politician* and not *church leader*, even though he is both.
 - ◆ Politician from Britain or the Republic of Ireland. Note that *Taoiseach* is the title used in Ireland for the prime minister, and *Tánaiste* for the foreign minister. It is the foreign ministry in the Irish government that is handling Northern Ireland issues. Spokespersons for the British or Irish governments are also marked here.
 - ◆ Member of the Orange Order.
 - ◆ Member of the Garvaghy Road Residents' Association.
 - ◆ Church leaders – these are either Cardinal Cahal Daly (RC), Archbishop Robin Eames (Church of Ireland), Dr Harry Allen (the Presbyterian Moderator) and Rev Ken Best (the Methodist President). These four played a special role as mediators during the crisis. Other priests are marked as Other Loyalist/Protestant or Other Nationalist/Catholic respectively, as they are usually local priests talking on behalf of their community.
 - ◆ RUC officer.
 - ◆ Person from the Mediation Network, the organization that brokered a compromise in the Drumcree stand-off 1995.
 - b) Under *Others*, following persons can be marked:
 - ◆ Journalists working for either the Irish Times or the Independent.
 - ◆ Academics.
 - ◆ Person belonging to the Loyalist/Protestant community but not being member of a party or any other organization.
 - ◆ Person belonging to the Nationalist/Catholic community but not being member of a party or any other organization.
 - ◆ Other persons who cannot be classified as belonging to any of the communities, i.e. spokespersons for Northern Ireland Tourist Board, hotels etc.

5. Mark one or several *topics* dealt with in the article. Mark the *primary topic* with ‘1’ and *secondary topics* with ‘x’. A topic is categorized as primary if most of the article deals with this topic, or if this topic gets very much more space than the other topics. If the topic is in the headline it is primary even if other topics get more space in the article. The topics of an article that is not primary is marked as secondary. If all topics get about the same amount of space, mark all as secondary.
- a) If the topic being dealt with is either about the Drumcree stand-off, the Drumcree march or other marches during these days, mark if the tendency of the article is *positive*, *neutral* or *negative* towards the topic. The tendency is positive if the article for example is talking about a victory for the Orangemen, ‘the present is Orange’ etc. The tendency is negative if the article for example is talking about violence in connection with the stand-off, implications for the peace process because of the march etc. If the tendency cannot be categorized as either positive or negative, it is marked as neutral. If there are several people quoted and they express different attitudes, the tendency that get most space is marked. If both negative and positive attitudes get about the same space, mark the tendency as neutral. When marking tendency, always pay attention to headlines, the beginning of the article and the first-hand impression. If the headlines screams out ‘Victory to the Orangemen’, the tendency is positive towards the Drumcree stand-off/march even though two residents at Garvaghy Road at the end of the article is expressing negative attitudes.
- ◆ Mark *Drumcree stand-off/ march* if the stand-off at Drumcree, or the march that finally was put through is a topic dealt with.
 - ◆ Mark *Other marches* if the article deals with other marches during this period than the one in Drumcree, Portadown, e.g. the march on Lower Ormeau Rd in Belfast.
- b) If the topic being dealt with is not the Orange order’s stand-off or marches, do not mark tendency. What is interesting here is how much the papers take up the different topics.
- ◆ Mark *Background* if the article for example describe how the Orange Order was founded, why the Orangemen are marching, the traditions of marching etc.
 - ◆ Mark *Mediation/ compromise* if the article deals with for example the Mediation Network trying to broker a compromise, meetings with the churchleaders for compromise etc.
 - ◆ Mark *Loyalist riots* if the article deals with riots, i.e. loyalist throwing stones, destroying property, the RUC and/or British army shooting plastic bullets at rioting loyalists.
 - ◆ Mark *Nationalist riots* if the article deals with riots, i.e. nationalists throwing stones, destroying property, the RUC and/or British army shooting plastic bullets at rioting nationalists.
 - ◆ Mark *Roadblocks/ cancelled services/ closed shops* if the article deals with roads being blocked, towns being under siege, shops in Belfast closed down in the early afternoon, bus and rail services being cancelled.
 - ◆ Mark *Catholics leaving homes* if the article is about nationalists/Catholics being intimidated during loyalist riots and feeling forced to move from their homes.
 - ◆ Mark *Effects on tourism and economy* if the article deals with how the Drumcree crisis affects tourism in Northern Ireland, and/or how the crisis is affecting future investments in Northern Ireland etc.
 - ◆ Mark *Pressure against the RUC* if the article deals with for example speculations about the RUC being under pressure by the Orange Order, Unionist politicians or the British Government to let the march through.
 - ◆ Mark *Analogy with loyalist strike 1974* if an analogy is made between the Drumcree crisis and the Sunningdale agreement/the Ulster Worker’s Council’s general strike in 1974.
 - ◆ Mark *Protestant alienation* if the article deals with how the unionists/loyalists are alienated from both the British and the Irish/nationalist society.
5. If there are discussion about what *consequences* the Drumcree crisis will imply, mark this. Also mark if the article gives the impression of the consequences being *positive* or *negative*. If there is no impression of either positive or negative consequences, mark the article as *neutral*.
- ◆ Mark *For the peace process* if there are connections to the ongoing peace process, for example parties leaving the Forum as long as the stand-off continues, speculations about loyalist paramilitaries ending their ceasefire or speculations about the IRA restarting their campaign in Northern Ireland.
 - ◆ Mark *For Northern Ireland’s future* if the article deals with how this crisis will affect Northern Ireland in the long run. Do not mark this one if the future being dealt with is the next week or tomorrow, e.g. that Northern Ireland will be ignited if the march is let through.