

# Anger: Radicalised in Northern Ireland

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## Royalism/Loyalism

### What:

- ❖ Orange Order's ideology and culture permeates N. Irish society. I was submitted at work to an ideology of authoritarianism that promoted Catholics as untrustworthy and dangerous (McAuley & Tonge, 2007).
- ❖ It is this sort of ideology that perpetuated my belief around sacrificing myself for Queen and Country (Schmid, 2013).
- ❖ As a Protestant I saw myself as a conqueror; an attitude passed down through the generations, perpetuated by national and cultural identity.

### So What:

- ❖ The Orange Order saw the Good Friday agreement as a step towards a united Ireland, although these fears are not reflected in the agreement Orange Order membership increased (McAuley & Tonge, 2007).
- ❖ This reflected my Protestant resolve to fight for my country as I believed my ancestors did oblivious to the reality of two cultures living together.

### Now What:

- ❖ Describing the N. Ireland conflict in terms of two ethnic cultures in conflict simplifies the issue and prevents a proper understanding of the underlying contextual issues (McGrattan, 2010).

## Introduction

- ❖ This is an autoethnographical study into radicalisation utilising my experience of anger after leaving NI.
- ❖ I was politically radicalised in NI by my own culture that was unconscious to what they/we were doing.
- ❖ Three cultures involved; Royalist versus Nationalist cultures and the neutral culture I moved to.
- ❖ The aim is to generate new knowledge on Non-Violent Political Radicalisation using my own story.

## Method

- ❖ An autoethnographical approach following Rolfe's (2001) Reflective model; What? So What? Now What?
- ❖ A thematic analysis produced four themes; Anger, Radicalisation, Royalism & Social Development.
- ❖ Using theory & research I have critically reflected on these themes to develop new understanding on the little known cultural of Non-Violent Radicalisation (Schmid, 2013).
- ❖ I invite you the reader to find meaning from my story and analysis from your own perspective.

## Anger

### What:

- ❖ My anger produced aggression towards the Nationalist community driven by the ongoing rhetoric from public figures (Cloninger & Leibo, 2017).
- ❖ My anger increased despite living in a mixed community contradicting Tam et al. (2007) who found intergroup contact reduces anger.

### So What:

- ❖ Intergroup emotions such as my anger are more predictive of behaviour than attitudes towards the Nationalist out-group (Tam et al., 2007).
- ❖ My anger was something I was not aware of, however given the right conditions (a neutral venue) it surfaced.
- ❖ My anger needed to be addressed; the Process Model of Forgiveness begins with confronting and expressing anger (Tam et al., 2007).

### Now What:

- ❖ Despite the ending of violence, sectarianism is still rife in N. Ireland (McVeigh & Rolston, 2007); This needs to change.
- ❖ Interventions should focus on anger (Tam et al., 2007), however my anger could only be dealt with in a neutral venue away from sectarian rhetoric.

## Extracts from my story

"Do you not think he has a point?"

I felt enraged

"My countrymen are being killed by these type of people"

Anger I had towards a culture and people I did not know

Didn't allow me to think of anything but Queen and country

Kill or be killed for Queen and country.

More developed older social group, which rejected me

I missed two years of social development

An unprepared naive child thrust into an adult world

I was radicalised

## Precipitating factors

## Social Development

### What:

- ❖ I started work at 16 in Belfast within a sectarian Protestant culture but because I missed two years of social development I was effectively 14.
- ❖ Children in N. Ireland have an emotional attachment to their respective cultures (Goetze-Morey et al., 2009).
- ❖ Political violence is part of the ecology of group conflict in NI which includes social and context specific processes (Cummings et al., 2014).

### So What:

- ❖ I believe as I grew up my emotional security was negatively affected by exposure to sectarian violence in my society (Goetze-Morey et al., 2009).
- ❖ In N. Ireland Catholics were oppressed, therefore as I grew up I was unconsciously conditioned to see the Catholic community as less human than my Protestant in-group (Tam et al., 2007).
- ❖ My arrested social development left me open to the radicalisation that bred hatred and anger.

### Now What:

- ❖ Child educators and policy makers need to confront this issue of social development as a factor in radicalisation and violence in N. Ireland.

## Consequences

## Radicalisation

### What:

- ❖ Intergroup conflict not individual psychology drives radicalisation which came from a perceived threat to the Protestant culture I identified with.
- ❖ I was radicalised to opinion rather than action (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2014); Political radicalization is an increased preparation for and commitment to intergroup conflict (Schmid, 2013, p. 6).
- ❖ Finding a like-minded group after being rejected by my previous social group was a catalyst for my radicalisation (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008).

### So What:

- ❖ My radicalisation was the accumulation of beliefs that justify intergroup aggression and ultimately led to my propensity to sacrifice myself for my country (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008).
- ❖ My radicalisation came from a conditioned sense of injustice resulting in me falsely holding the Nationalist community responsible (Schmid, 2013).

### Now What:

- ❖ Political attitudes and infrastructure in N. Ireland perpetuate intergroup conflict, e.g. giving the Orange Order £100,000 to turn the 12th of July parades into a cultural festival (McVeigh & Rolston, 2007).

## De-radicalisation

- ❖ I was radicalised while living in a mixed community with catholic friends, however my experience in Belfast at work produced unconscious anger towards the people I was living happily alongside.
- ❖ Moving to England there was no political Loyalist or Nationalist rhetoric, providing the opportunity for my partner to inadvertently plant a seed of doubt by saying "do you not think he has a point".
- ❖ This new culture did not give me an alternative ideology as Bertram (2015) suggested is needed to de-radicalise me, this was possibly because I was radicalised to opinion and never chose violence.

## Final reflections

- ❖ I have no doubt, if I had not left NI I would still be infected with the political ideology that underlies N. Irish society. An ideology introduced socially in childhood and driven by Loyalism and Nationalism.
- ❖ If the British Government fail to see their part in this problem and the political hierarchies within N. Ireland fail to agree due to historic ideology that has resulted in the suspension of Government, then how can any individual find a space to deal with their unconscious anger and possible radicalisation.

## Limitations & Future Research

- ❖ This was a small pilot study with no scope for including experiences of other radicalised individuals.
- ❖ Research is needed into anger and the social mechanisms that perpetuate sectarianism in N. Ireland.

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