

B. The Current Research: Methodology

This section will outline the aims, objectives and methodology of the present study.

1.1. Aims and Objectives

The current research had 4 aims and objectives. They were:

- 1.1.1. To provide insights into the methodology and processes adopted by the Ardoyne Commemoration Project
- 1.1.2. To examine the positive and negative implications and impact of engaging in such community-based 'truth-telling' processes for peace building, conflict resolution and intra/inter community relations in Northern Ireland.
- 1.1.3. To critically evaluate the impact and perceived value of the ACP 'truth-telling' initiative on five groups of respondents;
 - Participants in the project
 - Members of the project
 - The wider Ardoyne community
 - Representatives of mainly nationalist community/victims' groups outside Ardoyne
 - Representatives of mainly unionist community/victims' groups outside Ardoyne
- 1.1.4. To examine the work of the ACP within the context of international and national 'truth-telling' initiatives

1.2. Research Process

The research was qualitative in character, based mainly on a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews. These provided the primary material for the production of this report.

- 1.2.1. **Interviews:** Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour. They were conducted in a location of the interviewees choosing (usually at home or place of work). Interviewees were given prior notice of the purpose and question schedule for the proposed interview. Most interviews were recorded (on mini-disc) although in certain circumstances (see 1.2.4. below) notes were taken and written up afterwards. The researchers also carried out most of the interviews, although research assistants conducted a number. The interviews were carried out between May 2003 and March 2004.
- 1.2.2. **Interviewees:** There were five main respondent groups:
 - **Relatives/Participants in the project:** 30 individuals who had participated in the project by providing their testimonies were interviewed. They were selected in the first instance as a representative cross-section of the 300 people who had been involved in the project. A number of variables were considered to ensure that the respondent group is both valid and representative including: agent responsible for death; status of victim; date and circumstances of death; gender and age of respondent; extent and nature of the impact

of the death on respondent. The in-depth knowledge of the interviewees developed during the long-term and direct involvement with the ACP was called upon to ensure a representative sample, permit access and the consideration of ethical and methodological issues in the conduct of the project. The research was also specifically designed to provide for the inclusion of interviewees who may have had little opportunity in the past to voice their experiences or who expressed unhappiness with its outcome. Interviews were therefore carried out with 2 people who had not given testimony either through choice (in one case) or because they had not been contacted by the project. The researchers also relied on their contacts in local community and victims' organisations. Advertisements were placed in the local media (including local newspaper, community newsletter and church bulletin) to invite any other comments or responses to the work of the ACP. The interviews addressed the experience and impact of the Ardoyne Commemoration Project on the respondents. These interviews were conducted throughout the research period.

- **Members of the Project:** The second group of interviewees (4) were people involved in conducting the research undertaken by the Ardoyne Commemoration Project. Almost all of these respondents were also members of the Ardoyne community with little or no prior experience of carrying out such work. The interviews examined the development of research skills and experiences amongst the respondents. They also explored the impact of conducting the research on these interviewees.
- **The wider Ardoyne community:** In order to assess wider attitudes to the work of the project 6 individuals representative of various local groups and organisations were interviewed. This included members of different community groups and social institutions (i.e. Catholic Church). These respondents were selected as reflecting different social/political sections of the local community. Most of these interviews were carried out in the early stages of the project.
- **Representatives of mainly nationalist community/victims' groups from outside Ardoyne:** 6 members of community/victims' groups representing people from mainly nationalist communities were interviewed. These included members of human rights organisations, victims' organisations and community activists. Half were from different parts of Belfast and the rest from other parts of the North. These interviews were conducted between August and December 2003.
- **Representatives of mainly unionist community/victims' groups outside Ardoyne:** 6 members of community/victims' groups representing people from mainly unionist communities were interviewed. These included members of victims' organisations and community activists. The majority of these interviews were carried out in the latter stages of the project, although ongoing contact had been made from the initial phase. Given the local orientation of the project it was decided that there should be a concentration on reactions within the neighbouring protestant/unionist communities. Therefore a number of community representatives were included from the Greater Shankill area. It also became evident during the conduct of the research that there was a need to interview people who had been from Ardoyne/Oldpark area but who had to move to other parts of the city

as a result of intimidation and/or heightened levels of community tension.

1.2.3. **Interview Question Schedule:** The interview schedule differed slightly for each of the respondent groups but followed a general pattern. The areas covered included:

- Personal experience of the ACP. This was directed at those involved in the project. Issues addressed included: pre-interview contact, conduct of the interview and post-interview support.
- Personal response to the book and the launch. Awareness of the response within the community/ies
- Issues arising from single identity work and the role of insiders/outsiders in community-based 'truth-telling'
- Perceived impact upon community relations
- Perceived role of community-based 'truth-telling' on conflict resolution and transition
- Understanding of general attitudes to 'truth and justice' issues

1.2.4. **Interviews, Anonymity and Ethical concerns:** A number of ethical and practical concerns influenced the way in which the interviews were carried out including:

- **Anonymity:** To facilitate potentially critical responses from all of the respondent groups it was decided that the anonymity of the interviewees would be maintained. This proved to be particularly significant in regard to the respondents from mainly unionist groups and/or areas.
- **Recording Interviews:** While the majority of the interviews were recorded some were not. In a few instances interviewees who had provided testimonies to the ACP preferred not to be recorded. However, the vast majority of these and respondents from mainly nationalist groups/ communities were happy to be recorded. This was not the case for members of mainly unionist groups/communities. The great sensitivity in discussing the issues covered in the research was clear from initial contacts and this was accentuated by the changing political environment (i.e. Assembly elections in November 2003). In order to make these interviewees feel more comfortable and in direct response to specific requests, it was therefore agreed not to record these interviews. Findings from these interviews are therefore based on notes taken and written up after the interview was completed. As a result these findings contain fewer direct quotes.
- **Research Assistants:** A number of the interviews were carried out by research assistants. There were several reasons for this. The main researchers were closely identified with the project. There was therefore a concern that this might influence findings. To see if this was the case the research assistants were employed to observe whether there was a significant difference in responses. While this did not generally seem to be so it may be significant that a number of these interviewees sought assurance of members of the project as to the credentials of the research assistants.

1.2.5. **Archival Research:** The research also involved the collation and analysis of documentary and archival materials dealing with other relevant information. This included material detailing different international models of 'truth-telling' in promotion of reconciliation and post-conflict transition and the compilation

of any comparable evaluations of community-based 'truth-telling' processes. It also involved the collation and analysis of material detailing the policies and strategies developed in relation to the provision of services for victims and relatives bereaved by the conflict within Northern Ireland.

C. The Current Research: The Findings

C.1 Responses from ACP Participants, Project Members and Representatives of the Ardoyne Community

1.1 Introduction: The Dialogue Within

- 1.1.1 This chapter outlines and provides insights into experiences of participating in the ACP 'truth-telling' process and the ways in which it affected and impacted upon individuals, their families and the wider Ardoyne community. Various international studies have suggested beneficial consequences of engaging in 'truth-telling' processes⁵⁴. Despite the recent popularity of such approaches theorists and practitioners are increasingly acknowledging there is limited empirical research on their impact and benefits. Concerns have been raised that such measures are routinely implemented in transitional societies without adequate knowledge of their effect or value on victims, perpetrators or society as a whole and that there is a real dearth of any serious empirical research to inform such processes.⁵⁵
- 1.1.2 This chapter seeks to assist our understanding of the impact (both positive and negative), role and benefits of such a process at the individual and community level. The general discourse on conflict resolution and peace building points to the need for a set of processes operating at different social levels. The ACP model represents a 'bottom-up' community participatory approach. This research seeks to generate important knowledge on the ways in which community-based 'truth-telling' processes may, or may not, offer a viable mechanism for 'dealing with the past' and contribute to broader peace building and conflict resolution measures.
- 1.1.3. **Participants' Perspectives:** The Ardoyne Commemoration Project (ACP) was set up to document and to 'give voice' to the experiences of relatives and friends of victims of the conflict in the Ardoyne community. Because of the ongoing nature of the conflict, victims' names and the traumatic circumstances of their death were often forgotten or overshadowed by further tragedy and loss. As mentioned previously, recent government policy documents have acknowledged that victims of the conflict had 'a right to remember' as a necessary element of reconciliation⁵⁶ and 'the diversity of victims' experience, culture and lifestyles must be recognised and respected'.⁵⁷ The aim of the ACP was to place previously unheard experiences of victimhood and conflict bereavement into the public sphere and to contextualise the circumstances of their death.

⁵⁴ See for example, Hayner, P. (2000) *Unspeakable Truths: Confronting State Terror and Atrocity*, London, Routledge; Henkin, A.H. (ed) (1998) *The Legacy of Abuse: Confronting the Past, Facing the Future*; Kritz, N. (ed) (1995), *Transitional Justice, How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes*; Siegel, R.L. (1998), 'Transitional Justice: A Decade of Debate and Experience', *Human Rights Quarterly* 20, pp.438-439.

⁵⁵ AAAS and CSV (2002), *Empirical Research Methodologies of Transitional Justice Mechanism Conference Report*, Stellenbosch, South Africa, p. 1.

⁵⁶ *Agreement Reached in the Multi-Party Negotiations* April 10th 1998.

⁵⁷ Victims Unit, OFMDFM (2002) *Reshape, Rebuild, Achieve*.

1.1.4 This chapter examines the views and perceptions of the following sample:

- 30 individuals that participated in the ACP 'truth-telling' process (including bereaved, friends, eyewitnesses & others were interviewed).
- 2 individuals who either chose not to participate or were unintentionally excluded from the process (victim's relatives).
- 6 local people from the Ardoyne community not directly involved in the project (including members of community organisations, victims' groups, truth & justice campaigning groups, religious and political leaders, 'ordinary people').
- 4 ACP project volunteers.

The findings from these groups of respondents are presented together in order to provide an overview of perspectives from within the Ardoyne community.

1.2 Bearing Witness, Telling 'Truth'

1.2.1 For many relatives the denial of 'truth' and an enduring sense of injustice was a key factor spurring them to participate in the project and 'tell their truth'. This desire or need to provide testimony has connotations that go beyond merely 'telling one's story' and may be better described as 'bearing witness'.⁵⁸ Many participants expressed this in terms similar to those described elsewhere, where speaking of the past becomes a form of 'doing justice'.⁵⁹ In these circumstances 'truth' is used to denounce or challenge a perceived injustice and to set aright an official account. As two respondents explained:

At the end of the day you wanted the truth of what did happen to your loved ones to come out, and I thought it was a perfect opportunity to give an interview. Everyone in my family that was interviewed felt that same way. That it was time the truth was told, you know, to get it across.

I suppose there are certain circumstances where people who have never ever had the opportunity for truth or justice, whether it's through the courts or any other means, well, it's their opportunity to get it down on paper and have other people read about it.

1.2.2 What is apparent from many of the interviews was that some relatives had never been told 'the truth' about the circumstances of the death of their loved one. Added to this, important events and key details about certain killings had never been acknowledged or indeed collated by official discourse. These untold events, and the perceived injustice, have remained unresolved and a focus of deeply held grievance. Uncovering the 'truth', clarifying events and public acknowledgement of wrongdoing were seen as an essential part of the 'healing' process and a step towards 'closure' for a number of interviewees. Here's how the following respondents put it:

I think one of the difficulties in any conflict is that if you are going to have any deep healing you have to get some expression of truth even if it is only my truth. It doesn't have to be your truth. It doesn't have to be a shared truth. But before I can actually be healed I have to feel that

⁵⁸ Perks, R. and Thomson, A. (1998) *The Oral History Reader*, Routledge, London.

⁵⁹ Yudice, G. (1996) 'Testimonio and Postmodernism' in G. Gugelberger (ed) *The Real Thing: Testimonial Discourse and Latin America*, Duke University Press, London.

somebody's heard my story and if they haven't heard my story then I'm not open to letting it go.

Like Bloody Sunday, I mean for all them years the Brits said it didn't happen, that they were all gunmen. Like the Springhill massacre, it's the same sort of story. They are saying that the people were lookouts for the gunmen and looked up to them, even though there were priests murdered, and there were children murdered here. They've just tainted everybody, and that is what they put out in the media, and that's what the world believes. And I think it's up to us to sort of trap the argument, to pull that down and to pull the screen down. You know, I don't think it's going to be easy, but I think it needs to be done for people to be able to move on.

- 1.2.3 Many relatives have a deep and fundamental need to know 'the truth' irrespective if the death was the result of state, loyalist or republican actions. It is also clear that, for some participants, being given the space to tell 'their truth' was itself a form of justice. Here's how the following interviewees put it:

Some [relatives] see their justice as somehow somebody coming along at some stage and telling the truth. But also other people see their justice as them being given the space to tell their story, that's their justice. So there is different levels, I think when you talk to so many different families and victims they have a different thing about justice but generally it is around truth-telling.

Surprisingly for a lot of the people conflict resolution comes out of the fact that they were able to tell their version of the truth and that's their conflict resolution. You know that's their inner sort of thing - well there's closure there now.

I think you are going to find lots of people very happy with what's there [in the book]. To say my son's story has been told and I'm happy with that. At least it will be there for people to look at and know the truth, their truth.

- 1.2.4 There was a sense for many respondents that participating in the ACP had a positive impact on relatives because it enabled them to challenge what they perceived as the 'denial of truth'. Such a process, it has been suggested, may assist in 'restoring dignity' because it 'seeks to give the victim a full role in the telling of the story of a past of gross violations'.⁶⁰ Certainly the issue of restoring dignity arose in many of the interviews. It was also frequently remarked, although with a somewhat different meaning, that 'the dignity of the people who had suffered had shone through in the book'.
- 1.2.5 For a very small number of interviewees the question of establishing 'the truth' appeared to be less important. For at least one relative there was also a sense of cynicism about the value of 'truth' and whether or not some protagonists to the conflict could ever disclose it:

It's like the whole thing around this peace, the South African stuff, the truth commissions, people are saying well sure if you find out what's the

⁶⁰ Dyzenhaus, D. (2000) 'Justifying the Truth and Reconciliation Commission', *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 8:4, pp.470-496.

point, so what? So what if the Brits say 'yes we did it'. We know they did it, so what? It wouldn't make any difference to me whether they said 'yes', or 'I'm sorry', or whatever, because you would never believe them... And I would say there's a load of people would say, 'I don't want truth, I want revenge'.

- 1.2.6 A very large number of interviewees talked about the important role the process had played in 'setting the record straight' and putting on record 'what really happened'. Many spoke of the grief caused by sections of the media due to their insensitive and often inaccurate reporting of events. Compounding this, some respondents felt that not all victims were treated and represented fairly by sections of the media. A number of individuals recalled how hurt they had been when they had read previous publications on 'the troubles'. This was, at least partly, because the authors had printed incorrect details concerning their loved one, without consent, causing families further hurt and distress. As the following quotes explain, participating in the ACP gave them the opportunity to tell their version of events and was regarded by many as an opportunity for ordinary people to 'write back'.

A particular author had written a book in which he spoke of the killing of my father, but the author had never spoken to anyone in the family or verified anything. The information he published was in fact incorrect. He talked about my father being hit with a volley [of shots] and quite a few other personal things about our family that are totally incorrect as well. So I thought that maybe with a book like this it would maybe help to correct the balance.

Other books that you've bought, I've read most of the books, and you knew that they didn't get it direct from the families, they picked it out of paper clippings. But they (ACP) went and interviewed the families, you know what I mean, and they got the truth.

I felt angry and annoyed that here we had a publication, 'Lost Lives', that possibly was going to go down as the definitive book in relation to how people died and the circumstances surrounding their deaths. I looked over a number of cases that I knew personally, the families that I knew, the victims that I knew, the circumstances that I knew through my own experience and they were wrong.they didn't go near the families, they didn't check with the families, a lot of their stuff was taken straight out of papers, straight from news reels, second hand sources and stuff like that.

Here we have so much untruth, so many lies whether it be deliberate or whether it be just laziness or complacency or whatever. It didn't really matter what the excuse was but here they had so many lies about good people who had died in certain circumstances and people were never going to know the truth, other than maybe the families. You were saying something has to be done; this can't go unchallenged.

- 1.2.7 The above quotes illustrate the importance of giving ordinary people the opportunity to challenge what they perceive as inaccurate accounts of the past. Indeed, many respondents stated that their reason for wanting to take part in the ACP was precisely because of the way they were treated by sections of the media and the perceived censorship of events over the years. Here are some typical responses:

All that crap that has been written for thirty years, you know, about 'he was a terrorist' or 'she was a terrorist' or 'he deserved or she deserved it' or whatever the case may be. This was an opportunity for people, particularly the families, to say that I am happy that I've done this [participated] and I'm happy that this story is finally being told and listened to and that it's out there competing with all this crap that's been written.

To me I think it was basically to put it all down on record because nobody ever told the truth about what happened here. Most people who came in to tell a story about Ardoyne only came in to tell this sensational story about violence or about the IRA or about whatever. But this was a way to make sure that ordinary people got their side of the story. I think that was demonstrated because each death no matter who it was, was included. You [ACP] interviewed people who knew a different side to the person other than what the BBC said.

The story, it's coming from the ordinary man and woman on the street and it's their story and their telling it how it was and it's not coming from any biased reporter or other group.

- 1.2.8 Such sentiments suggest that participating in the ACP process was in some sense 'empowering' because it gave control over what was written about victims to their relatives and friends. These voices and their experiences had previously been ignored or excluded. To many it meant that their version of history was out there competing with other versions of events. For many interviewees this helped redress the balance and the negative image sometimes constructed of their community.
- 1.2.9 A key impetus behind the desire to 'bear witness' for many interviewees was to ensure that younger and future generations would be able to read what happened to the people in Ardoyne from the community's perspective. According to the following respondent:

It's done something for everybody. Everybody got something out of it and even with my kids... we tend to forget that my kids wouldn't have known a lot of the people. That generation gap has now been filled.

- 1.2.10 As a result, the recovery of historical memory and ordinary peoples' participation in writing 'their own history' was seen as one of the most important aspects of the work of the project. Almost all of the interviewees expressed this view, that 'telling their story' really mattered to them. Notably many argued that the importance of this was in the fact that they had narrated their own story, as opposed to someone else telling it for them. Equally significant to many relatives was the fact that their loved one was no longer simply a statistic and that the book brought the person 'back to life' by telling something of their character and life:

I think the success of the book was that it allowed people's own voices to tell the story. That's where everybody could identify with it because it was very much their story, it wasn't somebody else's telling it. It was how they felt and saw things, and it worked for them, and people became real again. They no longer were just a statistic or a name on a wall, and it brought people to life again.

This is really giving a voice to people who haven't been heard before so that's where the big difference was. You had a table of events in Lost Lives which only re-quoted whatever was said at the time... But in this book it gave a voice and it was the genuine voice. This is adding something. It was the truth of people who were there, who were involved with it and who felt loss. So it was a totally different context, a far more important book and you would wish that every community was able to repeat it.

1.3 Recognition and Acknowledgement

- 1.3.1 Many of the respondents expressed the view that recalling traumatic memories was an emotional and sometimes difficult process for them and their families to undertake. Most of the bereaved had never spoken publicly about the death of their loved one and the personal cost to their family, friends and community. Their stories had been essentially private and unspoken. Despite the difficulty in recounting these traumatic experiences it was generally viewed as an important and necessary thing to do in order to have it recorded, documented and put into the public arena. A key issue raised by participants was that until then no one had taken the time to listen to their experiences and acknowledge their loved one. In effect their accounts had been bypassed, overlooked or ignored. A valuable outcome of the project was therefore the at least partial public recognition and acknowledgement it gave not only to the victims but their relatives. The following quotes reflect such views:

My husband is dead, what, 21 years and nobody has ever come to ask us anything at all about it. So it was to let the rest of the world see and that this was how much we had been through in the Troubles. And at least it's there; it's in print. Books are going to last for years and they are going to be there well after the people are gone.

I thought that it was important that my side of the story about what happened to my late husband was down on paper, and that is what actually developed out of the book.

I didn't find any healing in it what so ever. As I say, I found it more upsetting but worthwhile because you knew your story was going to be told. It will help in some way later on, maybe in the future.

- 1.3.3 Indeed, the most frequently cited strength of the book was that it provided recognition. The idea of acknowledgement is often discussed in terms of the state and a broadly defined civil society. While such macro contexts were undoubtedly important here what was very noticeable was the importance of acknowledgement at other, more localised levels. A process of acknowledgement within the Ardoyne community itself was a highly significant feature of the work of the project for many, particularly given the prevalence of certain internal tensions and divisions (see 2.5 below).
- 1.3.4 In similar vein for some individuals it was immensely important that other members of both their immediate and extended family (and particularly children and grandchildren) were able to read and understand something of the circumstances of what had happened. Such harrowing events were often not shared or articulated by survivors and relatives, particularly by those that had

witnessed the killing of a loved one. The therapeutic value of this sharing of information, particularly within families, was raised by many of the interviewees:

I only had the two brothers, the one that was killed and my other brother. And it [the interview] was the only time I ever heard him speaking about it [the killing]. Now, he didn't want to do the interview and we sort of persuaded him into doing it because he knew him more as, not a brother, but as a friend I'd say. He told us wee things about him... But that was the first time he had ever spoken about him and that was important. I found out a lot about my brother through the interview and I think it was good for us, for him to talk.

Do you know what really sort of got me... it just shows you... although we were the same family and had the same father killed my sister sees it completely different to me, which I thought was good because she said things that I didn't know, and I said things that she didn't know. So as I say, it took the book to bring it out, she would never talk to me about it. I think an awful lot of families do that.

At the time, well, whenever I was doing my bit for the book it sort of helped me along trying to accept what had happened, you know. And by me telling my side of the story... Other people were afraid to ask me what happened, when he was killed... so when they read it they couldn't believe it, what I'd actually seen or witnessed, you know.

- 1.3.5 Closely tied to the question of recognition was the desire for remembrance. Again this was a primary factor motivating individuals to participate in the project. Giving testimony was regarded as a beneficial thing to do, not necessarily because the experience was therapeutic or cathartic, but because it brought a tangible outcome. That is, 'a human face' was put on statistics and the community would 'collectively remember'. This sentiment is illustrated in the following quotes:

It was those little stories about the person... you know that this person wasn't just dead. And that's the difference. You see, you get that Lost Lives book that's basically a statistician's dream but you know very little about the people involved and again that's what came through and I think that's what resonates throughout the whole book.

A lot of people have died and because it covered such a span of years, thirty years, a lot of people had forgotten about a lot of other people that had died. It was very, very important that Ardoyne as a community didn't forget all those people who had died as a direct result of the conflict and not only for Ardoyne as a community but also for the families.

I said to myself... 'How are we going to be remembered in ten years time or twenty years time in relation to the conflict over the past thirty years?' You know are we going to be completely written out? Is somebody going to write a book somewhere about the conflict and you are not going to hear about the like of some of these victims and what happened and all the other people who died?

1.4 Was the Process Therapeutic?

- 1.4.1 There has been a considerable amount written on the possible therapeutic value of participating in 'truth telling' processes. Clearly this is a highly sensitive area given that such work is not only dealing with the experience of violent bereavement but also raises critical questions over the conduct of all combatants in the conflict. The aim of the ACP was also to try and tell something of the life, as well as the circumstances of the death, of the victim. This obviously invited people to speak of memories that they may often have suppressed or found little opportunity to discuss openly in the past. In addition, what came more to the fore as the project developed was the experiences of the relatives and friends of the victims in the aftermath of their loss.
- 1.4.2 There is always the danger that 'stirring up' memories and strong emotions could have a negative and traumatic effect on those giving their intimate testimonies. It is clear that giving testimony was an emotional and traumatic experience for some. At the same time, and as earlier discussed, it was regarded by most as a necessary thing to do. As the following quotes indicate, the topic of closure provoked some fairly blunt and conflicting responses:

What's closure? What, you don't talk about it anymore? No there's no such thing as closure. Closure is a nice way of society saying, "for fuck sake dry your eyes and go on", that's what closure is. Closure is not about you, closure is about everybody else, that's what closure is about. For you it's about learning to live with a new situation and dreaming about the past. Closure is definitely someone else's agenda because how can you close on something that's in your head. How can you ever forget your brother or your mother or father or your sister? You can never forget about them and they will always be who they were and they will always be them...that's not closure it's learning to live with it and learning to live in a manner that's good for your health rather than being unhealthy, always being depressed about what happened.

I wouldn't say it leads to complete closure but I don't think you could ask for any more. How close to closure can you get out of the book to be honest with you? No it's not closure for me... it's not closure... that book won't close it for people. A while back I had to go and get my head straight, get my head fixed, and then the book came out. That was another stepping stone for me and it's still not one hundred per cent but I'm a lot happier now than what I was before the book was written, and I'm sure there is a lot of people the same. So I think it worked for me and I'm sure it's worked for other people... It's all been a stepping stone for me. Hopefully one day there will be a closure to it.

- 1.4.3 Some respondents clearly found the interview process helpful and therapeutic. It was important to some respondents that they have a stranger to talk to and someone to 'simply listen'. This echoes the point made earlier, that some relatives find it difficult to talk to each other about their traumatic experiences. Here's what the following respondents had to say:

After the interview I felt sad. Just very sad. But glad that I'd done it because it's a thing that happened and my family all know that happened and it was nice just to get to sit and talk about it, you know, I don't really discuss it much with my family or my children because you

find that your own family hurt as much as you do, so it's nice to talk to a stranger about it.

I think telling the story is a bit of counselling. A big part of counselling is actually telling your story and listening skills. So if somebody is listening attentively to a person telling their story and they thought that it was the first time this person was really talking... there's empathy there. Then that's counselling in itself.

- 1.4.4 It was felt that sharing similar stories was positive and helpful to relatives; that such a process had practical benefits for other victims' relatives who had experienced similar loss. Such sentiments are reflected in the following quotes:

Death in general is bad but death by murder and the way some people died was quite horrific. For us as a family, who are non-political, we were just trying to retell a story of how our family was coping with the situation and what we were dealing with on that day. Maybe that would help other people who were going through the same sort of stuff, to recognise the same things.

I found reading some of the stories, you say to yourself, 'God you are still bad. But when you read some of the stories, some people really have suffered... [there have been] multiple deaths in one family... and you wonder how they are actually coping with it.

- 1.4.5 Other respondents linked the idea of a healing process not only to the moment of giving their testimony but also to the end product; the book itself:

I think it's a good thing, it heals you, for want of a better word, when you see it down in writing. Knowing that other people are going to read it and know the things had happened really.

- 1.4.6 For a number of relatives and others the launch was an important collective community event that performed a healing or therapeutic role. As one interviewee recalls:

I will never forget the launch. I had zero expectations of the launch affecting me....it was one of the most extraordinary nights because the reaction was just so incredible. I mean there was just incredible sort of energy... the whole place was just packed. I just heard story, after story, after story that night. But there was something there that night that was just extraordinary, so to me the launch almost became like part of the story. But the launch wasn't just an event to say well how do you get the book out there, this was far more significant, there were people who travelled to be there, there were people who wanted to meet Albert Reynolds, there were people who wanted to meet each other. And so to me the launch was... like in religious terms it was like a religious experience, it wasn't just a launch. It seemed to unleash a whole energy. I felt that night that the amount of energy in the room was just incredible.

- 1.4.7 There was a very small number of individuals who were inadvertently excluded, either because they were not contactable at the time, or their names were simply not given by relatives, or friends, as a person to be interviewed. In emotional terms this clearly had a detrimental effect:

It was a friend who comes from Ardoyne that told me about it [the book] and I asked her could I have a loan of it, and she did, and that's how I knew anything about it. Well I read the part about [blank] and it did me an awful lot of harm. The fact that... well it brought all the memories back and the fact that I wasn't even consulted about the book and didn't know anything about it. I felt so left out and hurt. So I gave the book back and I was sorry that I had got a loan of it... I would have participated; I would have yes, for [blank's] sake, not for mine but for his sake. You know I just felt I didn't even exist, and I thought maybe it was because I didn't come from Ardoyne that I wasn't to be part of it. That's the way it felt.

1.4.8 The above quote illustrates that great care should be taken when identifying potential interviewees. It was suggested that perhaps a way round this would be to publicise widely and invite people to volunteer themselves or suggest others as participants.

1.4.9 There were a number of people critical of the possible 'therapeutic' claims of 'truth-telling'. A key issue raised was that it was harmful to 'reopen old wounds', and, better to 'let sleeping dogs lie'. The reason for this reticence was linked to a variety of factors, including the impact on community relations (see 2.6 below). Some respondents also questioned the therapeutic value of such a process and disputed the 'healing' potential in telling one's story. The following quotes typify such viewpoints:

There are people who say that's a good thing [telling your story], I don't know who in the hell ever worked that out. You know therapeutically it's supposed to be good. I don't think so... is it? Well I don't like feeling like that, put it like that. I mean if I had a choice to have loads of situations where you don't sit and feel like that, then I would choose for those situations rather than to be sitting going: 'Oh shit, how do I deal with this'? So if you were looking at it like that, then it's a bad thing to do. I mean, I wouldn't choose to live like that. Why would you whenever normally, and throughout your life, you just worked out other strategies to make sure to cope with that, so you have coped... We don't know if it is a good thing or not. We haven't played the whole thing through to the end, so you don't know until the end, and then you might come back and go, 'Shit I shouldn't have done all that'.

It set off a whole series of other things people probably didn't think about, once you start talking about emotions as opposed to rational stuff... The way we work things out is quite rational and then whenever you do things that unlock all those emotions it can sometimes be very, very difficult. I think that was demonstrated on the day of the launch. I suppose we should have had counsellors and all that type of thing there to say to people, 'by the way this is what is going to happen here'. It was like going to a wake. It was worse than going to a wake it was like going to the funeral. If someone had asked me a question on that night I would have started crying. Everybody was looking at each other going 'Oh God'. It was like letting the genie out of the bottle.

- 1.4.10 A particular concern for a small number of respondents was that 'delving too deeply' into the past could lead to painful self-reflection and perhaps a re-evaluation of one's own role in the conflict. Here's how two interviewees put it:

I think it [the book] makes you be not so flippant about violence. All of us would have accepted... nobody would talk like that now. I think it made you actually look at it [the conflict] and go, 'shit, were we all part of that'? How did we all get talked into that'? While all this idealism and all might be great, nobody actually showed you that book first and then said, 'Now'?

People who inflict find it hard to read about people who have been inflicted on if you know what I mean... That's the main thing, you always have to believe what you're doing is right, and what you did was right, and I think maybe participating in the book, or whatever, could have put a few doubts on that, and I'm being honest with you that's the last thing that anybody wants is doubts.

- 1.4.11 Despite the above comments the same individuals saw the value in 'truth-telling' processes on a wider social level and in particular the positive contribution to intra- community conflict resolution.
- 1.4.12 Indeed it was particularly noticeable that the topic of the therapeutic value of 'truth-telling', more than any other, produced conflicting, contradictory remarks. Over the breadth of interviews conducted it was clear not only that opinion was divided on the therapeutic benefits of engaging in community 'truth-telling' but that people were divided on it in themselves. On numerous occasions respondents changed their mind at different stages of the interview. Here are a few examples to illustrate the point:

I'm sure there are people there who felt very hollow when it [the book] came out. I'm still at a loss as to how this has moved it on for me... [And later] Well now I can put this to bed, and at least there's testimony there of who he was, and what it was, and what happened to him, and thank God it's been done and I'm really glad of that.

Obviously it can be quite emotional [doing the interview] because it just opens up not one thing, it opens up a range of things and it does leave you susceptible to thinking about other things and getting into it... all sorts of things that you have to start considering and I just didn't want to do it. Sometimes you just want to close these things off [And later] I think one of the most beneficial things out of it all has been the process that was there. I think that the launch, the whole day in the hall, and what came out of it... I think the Father Troy thing [apology] that came out of it, that whole process has been a healing thing. There's such a demand for people wanting it... and it created a huge buzz and people talked about it. I think all that was very beneficial and I think the whole process it went through has been of the bigger benefit.

- 1.4.13 Other respondents noted the great problems and difficulties with 're-opening old wounds', but felt that it was necessary to deal with the past in order to 'move on':

Well the only way to cure a wound is to open it up. That's the way I look at it. If you just keep burying it you're kidding yourself. I was lucky

enough in the long run that I was able to deal with it earlier; but I would say people know they haven't dealt with it; and then if they feel they are able to talk about it, they are actually curing themselves. They are getting it out instead of bottling it up, they are getting it out of themselves. So I think it would work that way for everybody.

You know sometimes it [telling ones story] is good in one way but it is also not good. That's the reality. For loads of people it will have reopened wounds... which is difficult. But then sometimes maybe that's what's needed to bring closure to them. If something really hard has happened to you it's going to open up a wound again and you are going to have to deal with it... but I mean that's the only way I suppose you recover when it opens up the wound and you think positively and then move on from it.

Some people maybe have buried their emotions and you have opened up a can of worms basically by re-telling the whole story, but for some people maybe that needed to be told. For some people maybe they haven't been healed, maybe they haven't been able to move on, and maybe by telling their story for the first time, maybe they have never told it before, that has helped in the healing process. I think the healing process to be honest with you is a lifetime.

- 1.4.14 There can be little doubt that being interviewed about sensitive and traumatic events in their lives was clearly an emotional and difficult experience for many people. This was particularly evident in those cases where individuals had a relative or someone very close to them killed:

After the interview I felt drained, emotionally drained. I felt like that for days after. Because you are actually going back to years ago and sitting deliberately thinking of your loved one, and what their character was, and everything about them. And then in the middle of that you know they're gone... I actually even took the route that the funeral went on the day that we buried them, and there were bombs all over this place and trying to get them buried... It took me down that road again.

You're casting your mind back to very unhappy times. Happy times at first because you are explaining the character of your brother and what he was like and what he was like as a big brother and born into a big family... and then the reality of them being murdered on you and the cruel nature of it. I felt terrible for days after it to be quite honest with you, I did.

Everybody wants the truth to be told, but there's some people that delve into it so much it starts to do their head in, you know. One man actually says to me, 'I just want to dig a hole and bury it all', because it's still too hard to handle for people. Because you're talking about years ago, to some people that sounds like a lifetime, but if it has come to your door, and it's your brother or sister, or mother or father, it never goes away, obviously. And, to me, some people prefer to let go and get on with your life the best way you can. You know just bury it in a big hole.

- 1.4.15 Taking account of the possible detrimental effects of re-visiting such events and the potential of secondary traumatising raises profound ethical questions and concerns for any project taking on such work.

- 1.4.16 Some respondents felt there was a gender dimension to 'telling one's story' and that it was more difficult for men 'to talk'.

I think men tend to put a seal on it to a certain degree and they have a harder time dealing with it. I think women in general can talk much more openly about their issues. They have always been like that. For men I think we find it more difficult to because we see it as a sign of weakness to divulge too much about our feelings, like we're too soft.

It challenges even gender things because most men don't want to cry, so you'll stand there and you'll bite your lip, and you'll go, 'I hope somebody phones me here so I can get out of this because I can't handle this'. Right, so there's a whole crisis that is going on even inside... I don't know if it is a good thing or not.

- 1.4.17 Because of the varied and conflicting accounts in relation to this theme the researchers explored the topic in depth with several individuals who work with victims, have a caring or counselling role, or pastoral responsibilities in the community. Their jobs brought them into daily contact with a wide range of residents. Amongst such respondents the general consensus was that it was a good thing for individuals to be able to talk. An important factor was that the interviewees were trusted people from within the community who had experienced similar events and could empathise with relatives. Here's what one of them had to say:

I didn't hear anyone saying that they tore their hearts asunder and then they [ACP] left us high and dry. I think there was an awful lot of healing done by people one to the other. You know, like to like, almost instead of professional to client. I think it was in the talking and in the exchange. I think an awful lot of healing took place that way; that people had, as it were, somebody to say, to 'do you know I feel exactly the same'... And that was good, I thought, because people did talk and that doesn't always happen.

- 1.4.18 Not only was the giving of testimony a cause for concern, quite a few interviewees expressed the view that they found the book too traumatic to actually read. This appeared to be related to the closeness of the subject matter to relatives' own experiences. Again, the potential problem of re-traumatisation has to be kept in mind here. The following is a not untypical response:

I have read very little of the book and deliberately have read very little of the book. It just depressed me and I just didn't want to read it. I read a few things. I didn't even go to the ones that I knew because... I remember one night I read it and I didn't want to read it any more, and I put it to one side and I haven't read it. Now I've read the preface and all those things. I haven't went into the stories, so I haven't done all that in any great depth. For me maybe it's because there's a personal part. It opens up all sorts of things that you have to start considering and I just didn't want to do it.

- 1.4.19 All that said, most of the interviewees also talked about the benefits of the project for the community in general. There were a number of aspects to this. It was said that the process played a positive role in creating space for the

community to come together collectively to grieve and to demonstrate support for relatives who had experienced feelings of isolation over the years. The following quotes typify such viewpoints:

Through my own personal experience, when I have talked to people who have went through the grief process, they find when people stop talking to them about their loss it isolates them. They feel excluded and they feel that they [the dead] were only a name to everybody else. Like 'they were real to me and was I the only person that loved and felt this loss because other people don't want to talk about it now'. I think by doing the book you are showing people that they did mean something that there was a great genuine sharing of the grief. We can never share it the way a family shares it but in the community sense that this community did care and there is great evidence that this community does have that feeling. So it did all of those things, and I think it's a helpful process.

The book had a massive impact. There is a new confidence, particularly in the people who had someone killed...they now recognise that it isn't just them who feel this, that there is nobody alone. That it was a shared grief, a shared emotion for everybody.

- 1.4.20 In similar vein the work of the project was regarded as an important step in helping the community come to terms with over three decades of political violence and loss:

The community cried for days and weeks afterwards [book launch]. I was talking to a couple of friends and they were at a christening, and they all started talking about the book, and they said that they were all crying their eyes out because they had known so many people who had died, and they hadn't realised the impact it had had on their lives until they'd just seen it in front of them in book form.

- 1.4.21 In addition, respondents commented that networks of support had been renewed or developed, within and between families, as a direct consequence of the project. On at least three occasions, that we know of, eyewitnesses made personal contact with relatives to share, for the first time, information about events leading up to the death of a loved one. Although the incident took place many years before the information was still welcomed by the families. This sharing of information was important to families because it enabled them to piece together events that took place prior to the death. It is clear from interviews that in many instances relatives knew very little about the circumstances of the death. This is probably due to the trauma and confusion in the circumstances of that time. A surprising number had never spoken to eyewitnesses or individuals who had been with their loved ones when they died. Consequently such information was never shared or disclosed to many relatives. The bringing to light of such sensitive information was said to be extremely important to relatives and regarded as a positive outcome of the project.
- 1.4.22 The type of collective support described above was, for some members of the ACP, a desired outcome and rationale for setting up the project in the first place. As a founding member of the group explained:

I always thought that it would be a great sort of bond for all the families involved. You know that they weren't alone in their suffering, which can happen I think. And I think that was borne out by the testimonies. That people feel somehow that they were alone even though they were in the midst of three thousand other deaths throughout the six counties. [It was important to find out] that there were other people who were going through the exact same emotions, the exact same feelings. So I felt that it was very, very important for the families of those who died.

1.5 Dealing Intra-Community Tensions

1.5.1 Clarifying the circumstances of deaths by a wide range of agents to the conflict can address issues of division not only between but also within particular communities. As discussed more fully below, the question of inclusivity was a key, and (certainly initially) fraught, issue for the ACP. Respondents were at pains to point out that Ardoyne is not a homogenous community. There exist fairly typical community divisions caused by disputes within and between families and personal grievances of a longstanding nature. There are also more complex intra-community divisions that are a consequence of the conflict and how it was played out in the local community. Those most frequently cited by respondents were the tensions between republicans and 'the Church', and to a lesser extent disputes within and between 'factions' of the republican movement. It is perhaps worth giving some brief background information in order to contextualise the discussion that follows.

1.5.2 During the late 1970s and 1980s community development issues sparked bitter divisions within the Ardoyne community. On the one hand local republicans felt they were deliberately excluded from many community groups and forums. They also viewed the channelling of public funding through church organisations as part of a British state 'pacification' strategy; the church being regarded as a 'safe pair of hands'. On the other hand non-republicans and in the main church-led bodies were suspicious of republican intent and that resources should not be used for political purposes. This situation and the perceived alignments created tensions, disputes and bitter divisions that resonate in the community to this day. Here's how one respondent put it:

People describe Ardoyne as a republican or nationalist community... There are people in Ardoyne who are not nationalist, never mind republican. We are not a catholic community. The number of practising Catholics is probably twenty odd per cent at the best. It's a divided community, with different opinions... there's divisions there that aren't healed yet. But you have got all these kind of labels stuck on to a community, so you need to come away from that. We are all these different individuals, we share common things at different times, but not always.

There's a lot of struggles going on and has been a lot of struggles going on within Ardoyne for the last thirty years. There's more than one war going on in Ardoyne.

Undertaking the sensitive work carried out by the ACP was fraught with difficulties given such disharmony within the community.

- 1.5.3 But perhaps the greatest hurdle for the ACP, and one of the most difficult issues to grapple with, was the legacy of intra-community violence. A number of conflict-related deaths involved individuals within the Ardoyne community being held responsible for killing members of their own community. Thirteen local people were killed by various republican organisations. In a number of these cases outstanding issues remained and relatives sought explanation of events and circumstances surrounding these deaths. When, for example, the issue of including alleged informers in the book was first raised it provoked heated discussion and emotional debate within the ACP. According to respondents, this had to be handled with great sensitivity as it had the potential to split the committee and jeopardise the project. Working through such issues became a learning process in itself, as the following committee member explains:

First of all a major challenge was sorting out who actually were the victims because within republican areas, you had people for instance who were shot by the IRA as informers and that was an issue because some people were saying there is no way we are acknowledging this person because this person was an informer... So you were faced with this type of challenge... And you began to realise that this isn't going to be easy... You knew there was a tricky road ahead and that you needed to sort of go through this. You needed to argue it out, you needed to listen to the arguments, you needed to debate it and discuss it, you needed to keep an open mind as much as possible. Even though sometimes you disagreed with something... at a later stage you were able to come back to it with a fresh mind after listening to someone's point of view, or somebody else's argument, you were able to have, I suppose you might call it, the maturity to change your own mind and say well alright even though I argued against this at the last meeting, or thought at the time it was wrong thinking about it, they're right.

- 1.5.4 Intra-community dynamics made the question of inclusivity and 'truth-telling' a sensitive and controversial issue. These were among the most difficult cases the project encountered and the importance of establishing trust was key to the management of the project. Here's how one respondent put it:

Some of them [the cases] were very, very tricky. Very, very delicate and very tricky. But I suppose the key to it all was being sensitive, trying to understand where people were coming from, and trying to, in your own head, thrash out a path that allowed that particular family member, or somebody else on the other side, if you want to call it, of that dispute, to come with you on that path without compromising their position. So it was like walking on eggshells at times, and as I say the whole thing was about maintaining dignity and maintaining respect and trust. It was very, very important you got the trust of the people very, very important. If you hadn't had the trust of the people that you were interviewing the project was going nowhere.

- 1.5.5 It is clear that the subject matter was challenging for the ACP. For some participants it stirred painful memories. For others it provoked much soul searching and self-reflection. Although not fully aware of its significance at the time, the project volunteers were engaging in a process of community conflict resolution. As the group 'matured' it became apparent that this was in fact the essence of the project. The following quote from one of the founding members of the project provides some insight into this process:

You had to be strong enough to go through all the disagreements and arguments and not take it personally. No matter what is said between individuals at any given time during any particular meeting you are able to walk away and say well don't take that personal, that is part of this whole process of trying to get this to work; and sometimes you had to work on things...I mean that was the strategy developed with all the families you were talking to... What's the problem, what's the obstacle, right let's get round it. And sometimes you had to do that internally as well within the whole structure that you set up yourself.... But you began to realise that the strength of the project was actually going to be the things you thought were the weaknesses. You know the things you were scared of, the things that you were scared to handle, and scared to touch, and scared to deal with, actually became your strengths.

- 1.5.6 Most respondents talked about the value of the actual process. They remarked upon the ways in which the ACP made space for all of the voices to be heard and that it directly addressed issues of division within the community by opening up avenues of understanding through clarification of past events and the voicing of previously unheard experiences of loss. According to many respondents, therefore, amongst the most valuable outcomes of the ACP was providing the basis for a local mechanism to advance intra-community conflict resolution.

I think the most beneficial thing out of the project, out of it all, has been the process... it began a process... and there's a way to deal with things. That might not have happened. If we actually talk about things, you can challenge people and you can make them accountable and I think the most beneficial thing that it did is it did that.

The project started so many processes from when it first began... All the discussions that went on, and the way that all the problems had to be ironed out, and then the actual launch of it, and there's still an ongoing process. You are still talking about an ongoing process

- 1.5.7 The above quotes suggest that the ACP played a key role at a number of different levels in promoting conflict resolution. Respondents shed further light on the specifics of that process. They suggested that it stimulated individual self-reflection and initiated a shifting of long held positions and viewpoints, as the following quotes illustrate:

You understand again, you relive some of the suffering again and that's the only way you can say it. I think it's good. I think that's part of maybe learning to move on. Particularly I found it good for me because if we are to take advantage of whatever political progress has been made it's about learning not to repeat the mistakes.

It even highlighted that there were divisions that our community make between the republican dead and the dead. All those things then became more acute and people were looking at it and saying maybe it's not right to do things the way we traditionally did things... but that challenges you inside your head...

- 1.5.8 Numerous respondents were also of the opinion that the process opened up a space for community dialogue and debate. Such positive outcomes were not confined to the immediate aftermath of the book but appear to have had a longer-term impact. Some eighteen months after the book was launched a number of positive spin-offs were said to have emerged. These included a thawing of long-standing community divisions that facilitated previously opposed individuals and groups coming together, for the first time in several decades, to discuss community matters. The following quote from a community activist provides an insight into such processes:

There are a number of things that we are all involved in now; I'm not saying they wouldn't have happened, but I think it [the project] has made it much easier to do these things. Issues have been dealt with that we haven't had to deal with. Issues have been brought out in the open and have been addressed in some way. Maybe not all of them have been resolved. But there are things if the project hadn't happened, could be an open sore now. I mean we are involved with people from the church, and people from other organisations, that have been sort of diametrically opposed to the other, that are coming now and trying to sit down in dialogue and discuss what the past thirty years means to us. There is acknowledgement that everybody is answerable to things, and everybody has things that they shouldn't have done, and I'm not sure if it [the project] started that process, but it clearly brought it out into the open.

- 1.5.9 Almost without exception respondents suggested that the mending of divisions between church and local republicans was a positive outcome of the book. According to respondents, a key moment was on the night of the book launch when the Rector of Holy Cross chapel publicly apologised to a well known republican family for the way in which the church had conducted events surrounding the burial of their loved one. This was regarded as a highly significant event and a symbolic step towards mending the longstanding church and republican rift. It struck a cord with those we interviewed. Perhaps it is worth quoting at length the Rector's reflections on the event because it gives an insight into the specifics of the case and the impact it generated:

It was one of those absolutely providential moments. I had the book the day before and I knew in launching the book that you have to refer to something in the book and I was reading through as I say, glancing, just scanning at that stage the stories and I found that passage in the Marley story, where Mrs Marley described the reception of the body at the church, the lack of light, the lack of candles and then that incredible sentence, "I heard afterwards, the priest didn't even want us there". I just thought to myself that's printed and that's truth, and that can't be changed, you can't turn the clock back, but it can't be left hanging there... that's part of our history, that's part of our story and address that.

But that seemed to me to encapsulate an area of life that was very, very sad, that not only had you the death of a person, not only had you three days in which they weren't even allowed to be buried... What really saddened me was that there weren't voices strong enough in the church to stand out in the middle of the road and say I'm demanding that this man be buried on the day his family want him buried, and for that I felt I had to apologise. It has received severe

criticism from some people particularly clergy. But the vast majority of people, 99% of it, have been extremely positive. I still get people coming up to me about it. I think there is a bigger issue. This wasn't a criticism of an individual priest, or this wasn't a criticism of an individual community, or the individual bishop, or anybody, what I was saying is the church failed. Some people say if the book did nothing else it occasioned that and that's enough.

- 1.5.10 A further, frequently mentioned, significant moment relating to the launch, was the ACP public statement that unambiguously addressed the issue of accountability and, in particular, the role of republican movement in bringing 'truth' and acknowledgement to relatives of victims. As one respondent recalls:

I think it was very important on the night of the launch...it wouldn't have been right not to acknowledge the fact that republicans, particularly the IRA, had been responsible for a number of deaths... there was discrepancies there, and there was problems there, and that needed to be aired. It's difficult but it needed to be done, that's my opinion. But those things are difficult for republicans... you don't want to be alienating people... particularly when you are in a republican stronghold and maybe people haven't come through the same sort of internal process that you have done in your own head... You know I looked across that room that night and I guessed there were people there who were probably members of the IRA, there was other people there who maybe used to be members of the IRA, there was people there who were supporters of the IRA... But I think in doing that sort of thing that it helps the process on. It helps people, even if it encourages people to question certain things.

- 1.5.11 According to respondents these events, and the process in general, were helping to push the boundaries on a number of previously 'taboo' or highly sensitive subjects. As the following interviewee put it:

Through the whole informer thing, the book actually liberated people's thoughts because you were quite happy that they were there and that they were able to cry and do all the things and have all that support. Because it was as if whenever it actually happened to them, while people would have sympathised or empathised with them nobody ever showed it here but secretly they did. ...when somebody was killed...you know their brothers and their sisters and their ma and their da and even most of the time you knew the person who got killed... So it was good because there was that healing process that has to happen in the district.

I think it was very therapeutic for a lot of people because...you know not every case was cut and dried; there were some very sensitive cases where it was a death within the community, by people within the community and the therapeutic nature of that, in bringing it forward and being able to talk was enormous.

- 1.5.12 Closely associated with this was the view that it had created a new confidence and willingness to speak publicly about difficult issues. The following quotes are typical of such sentiments:

People are now standing up and able to speak publicly about death, people who probably hadn't been able to speak about it before, particularly things that happened within the community, that space was opened up.

I think the book has more effect than telling the story. It has given people maybe a confidence to go forward to look at other things and if it's doing that it's doing a good job.

I think it began a process and people did stand up and say 'Well, hang on a wee second this is what happened to me'. So that thing might not have happened. You went through this whole process and thought that there's a way to deal with things. If we actually talk about things you can challenge people and you can make them accountable. And I think that was one of the first things that did that. It was, 'everyone is accountable here'... and it needs to be everybody.

I was glad the like of [Ardoyne relative], who lost his relative very early in the conflict, was able to get up and talk at the conference. He said it was the first time he has ever actually spoke publicly about the controversy over the death; and I don't think that would have happened unless the book had happened and gave them that kind of confidence.

- 1.5.13 At the same time there is now a growing recognition that every party to the conflict should be made accountable. Here is how one interviewee described it:

One of the things that came across is that everyone is answerable in this. I'm not here to attack the Brits only, or anybody else only. We all have a case to answer. And therefore now in other types of forums you know people might be freer to challenge and say, 'what about such and such that did that? We all have things that need to be resolved here'. So I think that is a very important part of the project.

- 1.5.14 Similarly, according to respondents the project provided those most marginalised by the conflict within the community a vehicle to address longstanding issues of hurt.

If the British Army kill you, or the RUC kill you, technically there is a public route where you can go through and challenge that... People would question how good that route is but there was something there. There was something tangible; you could go to court, or the European Court of Human Rights and different places. But when the IRA kill somebody there is no real route as such....and it's hard for people... But I think in doing that sort of thing [the book] it helps the process on. It helps people, even if it encourages people to question certain things. I just think that it is a combination of all those things that pushes the thing out... the republicans that I know by and large would say you are one hundred per cent right. These are issues that need to be addressed and we need to address them.

- 1.5.15 From the above discussion it is clear that respondents were of the opinion that one of the major strengths of the project was that it played a significant role in conflict resolution at a number of different levels within the Ardoyne community. Overall this was regarded as a positive outcome and an important contribution to peace building and dealing with the past. Addressing such intra-community

tensions, it was felt, was often ignored in the 'typical conflict resolution initiatives' that tend to focus exclusively on cross-community relations.

- 1.5.16 It is also true to say that for a number of respondents there were issues around the perceived political slant of the book. This was related to a number of factors and can be linked in some ways to the community divisions discussed earlier. The concerns expressed were mainly related to the perceived political affiliation of the individuals involved in the ACP (and therefore by definition the project) and distrust of the wider political process. Either way, for some respondents the project aroused considerable suspicions and prompted a 'cautious welcome' from others. As the following quotes indicate, there were concerns about the underlying political motives of the project. This in turn fed into unease about being 'used in some bigger political game plan'.

A question that people would ask is why now, why? It seems to be like somebody had given permission for it to happen. You know in the not so long distant past these things wouldn't have been talked about. Why now? So that would sort of add fuel to the fire if you like, the feeling that there's something political behind this. So they would ask why now, what's the difference, is there some sort of statement getting made here and that wee bit of leverage to make the statement?

I suppose after what everybody has come through in Ardoyne they are entitled to be suspicious. All the false dawns and hopes and promises that people have made that turned to mush. So people I think don't expect too much of other people, and people expect to be... for want of a better word 'fucked' by other people... 'here's somebody who wants to fuck me over but at least they are asking me first'. Do you know what I mean, there's a game in that; that they ask... And if it doesn't happen, then maybe you're pleasantly surprised and think isn't that nice.

And there would have been suspicion that this is a potential card that could be played down the line. This is the worry. Basically, you know, a trade off. You don't talk about this; we don't talk about that. People are very suspicious.

No I think it's a... coming together of events more than anything else. I mean you had all these announcements and then there's certain things happened, and certain people took up certain positions within the community, and they seemed to be delivering a different role to what you perceived them to be doing. You look at people and say can they really ride two horses, and that's said about me as well. It's said about everyone. I know him, I remember him when he had no arse in his trousers and now he's standing with a suit on. People are like that. It's people themselves, peoples' own perceptions.

- 1.5.17 To some degree suspicion of a hidden political agenda was, for some respondents, linked to the perceived political affiliation of certain members (and by implication the whole) of ACP:

There were two people that said that the reason why they didn't want [to participate] was because they definitely thought it was a political connection. They had fallen out with that political connection, if you know what I mean, and I could see the reason why. I said no it's not political.

I mean, we're just a really divided society, and a really divided community within a community. It's just that our community is so close-knit... there are people who like and people who dislike. If there's somebody on, say, that committee who were doing that project, and you knew there was maybe a dislike somewhere, you become very distrusting. It's just human nature...

The reality is you also have to balance out who went and asked what, and who did they go and ask and how they were perceived. So it's how they went and asked, or how comfortable people felt in giving the responses that they felt they wanted to give.

- 1.5.18 For some individuals the book launch confirmed suspicions about the political slant of the project. Here's how a few respondents saw it:

My son went to the launch. He wasn't happy and when I heard about it, I wasn't happy either, it was too politically orientated. It should have been done more in a community-based manner. That was one of the reasons I didn't go, I was dubious about the situation, about what would happen. My son went because a friend of his also was there and he felt a bit more comfortable going with his friend. But when he got there and saw Albert Reynolds and the various other.... political representatives – and it was very much one [sided] well, Sinn Fein, aligned, as far as he was concerned.

[At the launch]...when you think about the top table the people who were signing the books... why they were signing the books nobody knows. Were they asked to sign...? Well people obviously asked them I didn't see them grabbing peoples' books out of their hands and signing them. Did people think that's what had to happen? Again I don't know but for those who were suspicious that confirmed it. For those who weren't suspicious they were happy to see it you know, and you have to accept that both those sections of our community were there and both of them were either being aggrieved or being elated. So in this bracket if you like, in this victim's survivors bracket, those who have been affected in this way... you can't please all the people all the time.

There was that very clear presence from a particular constituency. For those who believed it was some sort of a political game being played or some sort of a ...now it's all about a political springboard for us into a political dimension. I think some people felt that they were being used again... So there's a bone of contention right away between the community ownership and the individual ownership of the event. The community ownership is very hard to please; it's blood lust and bitterness.

1.6 Dealing Inter-Community Tensions

- 1.6.1 With regards to inter-community division there are those who would argue 'truth-telling' processes are merely raking up the past and adding to tension and division. In order to move on we need to draw a line under the past and 'forgive and forget'. In general, this was not the opinion of the majority of

respondents interviewed. In contrast, it was felt that the past needed to be addressed in order for 'society to move on'. Here's how the following respondents explained it:

If we are to really move forward and this surely is what the peace process is about, there has to be an admission that not every thing you did was done right. Not every side had all the truth, all the angels weren't on the nationalist side say, all the devils weren't on the loyalist side. But where we had right on our side it has to be told and where we were wrong we have to admit it. Now that's very difficult, it's much easier to say, well listen it's better to say nothing and move on from here. Well if the whole community is ready to do that I have no desire to rake the past believe me. I mean it's as tough or as simple as that. So I would be very happy to hear people saying yes you raked over it, there seemed to be blame because of the telling of the story, well yes that's what the telling of the story does, and if we are able to cope with that then I think we've done a good job. I don't know if there is an alternative.

It's in everybody's interest that there is political stability created. That there's some sort of political solution created to ensure, or to try and ensure that the killings cease, and that if you do deal with it, the roots of political violence whether it be from the British State, or whether it be from anybody else, that if you deal with that, and you confront that, and you create a solution around that, then you are creating a future for you yourself and for your children and for your children's children.

1.6.2 Although, respondents felt there was a need to deal with the past, the way in which this could be achieved, apart from engaging in similar community projects, seemed unclear to many. A comparison was frequently made with the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the unsuitability of such a process for Ireland. This usually developed into a discussion about the danger in raising expectations.

1.6.3 Respondents were asked if they thought the work undertaken by the ACP could damage community relations. As the following quotes show, this question produced, in the main, a sense of frustration:

Why would you even mention cross community? Why would you not just see the people in the book as people who have been hurt and they have a story to tell? Why would you bring that up? Obviously because it fits your agenda and if it doesn't fit your agenda that story is coming out because it doesn't fit the story that you have been peddling. It also fits your agenda of them being in a pigeonhole – 'this is the way that they all think anyway'. So why would you not just open up the book and say look at the way those people were hurt?

When you attribute something to someone, their supporters or people think that's criticism, it isn't very welcome and what they do is put the barriers up so all the rest of the information doesn't go through. I have told my story many times. But when I attribute it to one section of the community or the other, the other section of the community put barriers up because they thought you were attacking them. You are not allowed to talk about some things because if you say it you are [seen to be] attacking. You are not allowed to say the UDA killed, or

the UVF killed, or the IRA killed, or the Brits killed, or the Peelers killed, or whoever killed. You are not allowed to say that because there is support for that general consensus of political persuasion in the arena. So they don't want to listen to it, so they put the barriers up. They miss the whole thrust of what you are trying to say and the whole thrust is... you see it's much of a much-ness, death is much of a much-ness.

If you had written that book and never called it, 'Ardayne, The Untold Truth', and just called it 'The Untold Truth', and put no attribution down to the people it was about, they would read it differently. The person who turned round and said, 'Well, look you haven't even included', would have read the paragraphs or the pages about the inclusion of the people who he thought was excluded.

Read the story as a story, don't read it as 'fuck, they're all taigs in there or they're all republicans or they're all loyalists or they're all Brits'. Read it as a human being. Once you read it as a human then all the human emotions will come out. But what I do know is that people who have similar backgrounds have this empathy with each other and once they throw away the politics of it all...you know whatever it is, the bit that sort of divides you and the bit that unites you, that there is somebody belonging to you has been taken away and the things that you had, they are all bits that unite you. And though you never agree with them politically there is some empathy there of the heart, and once that happens that's one of the barriers getting pulled down. But they have to hear it, they have to read it, and they have to read it in a way that's not - look sure they're only getting at us...they can't do that. Once you do that then you are beat I suppose.

It's about one community... That's the reality of it. It's about one community and that's what it is. It's a community telling a story in a way... If you are telling a story about here, it's about here, and that's what it's about. You know if somebody else wants to do a similar process somewhere else and it's beneficial to them fair play to them let them do it. Let them work away. I think this is for here and it helped.

- 1.6.4 There was a general consensus that the community relations drive to 'continually seek balance' was in many respects a 'naïve concept'. A number of respondents remarked that they found 'the two tribes' analysis frustrating and 'simply an inaccurate analysis of the conflict'. It was repeatedly said that the sensitive nature of community 'truth-telling' within a divided society actually determined the most appropriate approach, and for many respondents that was single identity work. It was further suggested that 'the time is not right', 'communities would have their guards up' and a cross-community approach was in many ways not conducive to genuine 'truth-telling'. Here's how two respondents saw it:

In my opinion in trying to accommodate... and this is what I think happens with all the cross community stuff, is that in order to try and create this sort of 'look at us we are brilliant some of my best friends are Protestants' type of thing, or 'some of my best friends are Catholics', you lose out on the truth. The truth is the first victim in that

whole thing. Whereas I think you should never lose sight of the fact that what you are trying to establish here is the truth and everything else is a by-product of that. So I don't think it would work.

I don't agree with that whole balancing act. The story was quite clear. It says this is all we are looking at - just people who were residents of Ardoyne. If one hundred people died who were residents of Ardoyne then that's the story. So, do we need one hundred Protestants now? That's crap.

- 1.6.5 Nevertheless, there was a very strong opinion that similar projects could be beneficial in various communities whatever the religious or political affiliation. The perceived benefits were that it might encourage community self-reflection and examination and that such a process could possibly lead to acknowledgment and taking responsibility for their 'role in the past'. The following quotes are typical responses:

I definitely think I would like to lift a book from people in Glenbryn and read it. I wouldn't be scared to read that. I wouldn't be scared, from anywhere, Shankill Road, I wouldn't be scared to read it. The only way you are ever going to resolve this is... people aren't going to talk but if they are reading books they might learn something out of books without directly talking to people. I know plenty of them were killed as well, went through the same thing as us, and I think the more books that are done in areas the better.

You know from the person who says 'we have been suffering for eight hundred years' to the person saying 'it's those Fenians down there'; if people are able to tell 'the other side' of that story in their community, or with help from our community because of our strength in having achieved this, then that would be a marvellous thing. If there was even a smaller version in another community that was in some sense affected by this... I think it's important to allow people, even if it's only sort of to half justify why I reacted badly to you- but it's a step in the right direction. If we could get a story told, and even if we could swap each other's books, we might eventually get somewhere but I think it's terribly important that the story be told.

I do think it has a role to play [in conflict resolution] and I would love to see it being read by people in the loyalist community and I would love to get their comments. After reading our book, if we read their books, would we have a greater understanding of them? The whole thing of walk a mile in my shoes, it does have some truth there and if they would read the story from our perspective and open their minds to it... now maybe they won't, but maybe some will, and it's worthwhile for that, in trying to give people a different outlook and trying to say to people is that what you thought at the time. I haven't read Chris Ryder's book on the RUC and I probably will... I think it's worthwhile understanding the experience of another community and I think that tells a great story of what this community came through, and if it affects them, if it has any impact on them, I think it will be positive.

If people had read that book particularly in the twenty-six counties they would have a greater understanding of why people here believe things

that they believe and that's what it's all about: trying to inform and educate.

1.7 The Value of Inclusiveness

- 1.7.1 For a number of interviewees the question of equality of victims had become a highly contentious issue. A number of respondents were critical of the 'victim's agenda' and felt that it had been manipulated by some politicians for broader political purposes. A key issue raised was the emergence of a 'hierarchy of victims'; the implication that there was a distinction that needed to be made between deserving and un-deserving cases. Many participants in the project saw nationalists (particularly those killed by the state) positioned at the bottom of the hierarchy, or that, their loved ones were not regarded as victims at all. This is how one relative put it:

The relatives and families of people killed by the state have been excluded and marginalised... And the Bloomfield Report came about...and it was an opportunity to address on a parity basis, an equal basis, the hurts and pains of everyone, indeed reflect on the conflict. But that didn't happen. What he did was he further sowed the seeds, led the foundations for the perpetuation of the myth that the Loyalists and Republicans were the bad guys, but basically it was Republicans and, you know, the security forces were there trying to hold the line...And I think that he should've bridged the gap, he should've set the level playing field and tried to do that. Instead he just fell into that orgy of exclusion and marginalisation.

- 1.7.2 It is clear some relatives felt frustrated, angered and dis-empowered by what they perceived as a process of exclusion and marginalisation. A key strength of the ACP, for those individuals, was that it offered the opportunity and 'empowered' them to express their views and challenge the 'hierarchy of victimhood'. This is how one interviewee saw it:

The bottom line basically was that everybody who died as a direct result of the present conflict was a victim. It shouldn't matter whether it was the person who was shot dead as an IRA informer, or the person who happened to be shot dead in crossfire by the IRA, or the one that the British soldier killed, or the RUC killed, or the loyalists killed, every single one of them was a victim.

- 1.7.3 For virtually all interviewees the ACP was addressing and challenging the issue of equality of victimhood *within* the Ardoyne community. The project was seen as inclusive because all of those people from Ardoyne who had been killed as a result of the conflict were included.
- 1.7.4 Almost all interviewees made reference to the inclusion of individuals killed by republicans and in particular those killed as alleged informers. This was regarded as a major strength of the project, 'very progressive' and 'a positive step towards mending old wounds'. Such views are reflected in the following quote:

I was worried that the book may have been seeking to excuse or apologise for certain actions, or whitewash certain things. It didn't and

again it's great testimony to the book that it sought to honestly tell all the stories for good or for bad.

- 1.7.5 There were a number of interviewees that felt there had been 'silences' within a community like Ardoyne. For years there has been a reticence to discuss fully and publicly certain events and issues that have touched on many aspects of the conflict. In many respects this, it was said, was borne out of a 'secrecy is survival' mentality, the result of decades of surveillance. Many respondents felt that the project had helped break down this 'culture of silence' and challenged the hierarchy of victims that had developed within the community. And as discussed later, in a number of instances the project provided a mechanism for such information to be disclosed and shared. There was a general feeling that the ACP had established a significant measure of 'truth' regarding such local issues. As the following interviewees explained:

They [relatives] talk about justice in terms of, well I mean it's not that you are looking people to go to jail for the rest of their lives, but you are looking people to tell the truth and admit what they done... And, well I think in some cases, yes, that did happen [in the book], there's no doubt about that, it did happen. It happened internally with a lot of stuff. But there's a lot of the other stuff that involved British soldiers responsible for killing people, and RUC responsible for killing people, and the collusion stuff, obviously people haven't got the truth there but that's what they are looking, that's what they see as their justice.

There are tremendously expensive tribunals both North and South of the border where you have a huge correct legal procedure but maybe a very guarded telling of the truth... You could have a sort of Saville enquiry time for the pain here in North Belfast, in Ardoyne, and you could have people coming in from the legal, social, psychiatric, and we could have a massive investigation, and at the end of it I'm not sure we would have done any more than the book done.

- 1.7.6 The inclusive nature of the book and the importance of acknowledging all of the community's victims equally, were overwhelmingly regarded as positive outcomes of the book. Many felt that it made an important contribution to building intra-community relations. The following quotes are typical of responses:

What seemed to me to be a huge part was that unblocking almost of a whole emotion of a community, and giving the community a voice, and as it were almost defining the community without barriers; which I thought was terribly important. It didn't say in the book that this is for people who were shot by a, b or c - no... these were people who died, whether they got shot or blown up by whoever; it was to tell their story.

So not only did it [the book] document the fact that somebody died as a direct result of the conflict but it also acknowledged the family as well. No matter what anybody did, guilty or not guilty, or no matter what reasons they did it for, their families are still there, and their families need community support and community acknowledgement.

What's good about the book is that you had republicans and you had civilians. There has been hundreds of things written in commemoration of republican volunteers who have died, and I think the good thing

about the book was it got the whole Ardoyne as one, and the people who had civilians that were killed, I think it gave them that wee bit of respect. They were able to tell their story, it wasn't just republicans telling the story.

- 1.7.7 As members of the ACP committee explained, the question of inclusivity was not without its problems. The legacy of political violence in a small close-knit community like Ardoyne, and the nuances of the divisions that resulted, presented the ACP with a number of unforeseen difficulties. Members of the committee who were interviewed talked frankly about the problems they encountered and how they navigated a number of highly sensitive and controversial issues. This question was also seen very differently by representatives of the unionist community (see B.2.4 below).

1.8 Participation, Ownership and Single Identity

- 1.8.1 Without doubt community participation and local ownership stood out as important aspects of the ACP process for a large number of participants and, indeed, the representatives of the wider community. On the whole respondents felt that the sensitivities of the project necessitated the use of insiders and individuals that were respected and rooted in the community. In an area that has experienced decades of surveillance and what is regarded as less than accurate reporting on the community, distrust of outsiders 'who ask questions' is a reality. For respondents this was closely associated with the issue of access and trust. As one member of the ACP explained, 'if we didn't have the trust of the people we were interviewing, the project wasn't going anywhere'. The rooted-ness of the project was, unequivocally, looked upon as the key to the project. The following quotes are worth citing at length because they give an insight into the process:

If somebody had sat down who's an outsider and asked 'what have you got to say', you might have been very guarded. There's this thing about how more relaxed you are with someone you know, and at the same time you could be actually uptight with someone you know because you don't want to say in front of this person. There's pros and cons to all those. I'm just glad that the person I spoke to was someone I felt comfortable enough with to say what I felt. All I can say and this is clearly my experience, I would have felt more comfortable sitting down and talking to someone who, and I didn't know [blank] particularly well, I knew she was somebody from my own community. I knew right away that there were things I wouldn't have to explain that she would understand some of the things I was saying. I would have been pretty guarded in what I said if it had been an outsider and it also meant that I would have had to explain myself. You know I mightn't want to get into all that.

Well I suppose people still censor themselves because people don't feel safe in their community yet. But you still have to have your baggage. You still have to come along and say 'I'm so-and-so, you know my ma, or you know my granny, or you know my aunt'. So our area works different from most other areas in that it is all to do with kinship and all those things. If your family aren't from here then you'll never find out anything. That's the way it is... It's deep rooted and the

book explains all that. So it's a different way of unlocking that, but I think you got the key of it right because it was people from here...

Oh definitely, people felt more comfortable with them because they are from their own community and felt they knew the people's suffering and knew most of the victims themselves.

- 1.8.2 As mentioned earlier [see section 2.7], the reverse of this is that the use of insiders could have led to more guarded responses and hindered inclusion of particular issues and events. However, as one respondent reflected:

Could the group or the project have done anything different? I don't believe so. I think no matter who you would have got, there would have been criticism. And whether it was people from outside the area...it would have been don't talk to them you don't know who you're talking to, or people from inside the area, so you can't win. It's with us, or against us, sort of style, and people decide whether you are with them or against them.

- 1.8.3 A further aspect of participation that was frequently mentioned was the importance of having editorial control over testimonies. Without exception respondents strongly endorsed the method of 'handing back' and the sense of control this allowed.

The good thing about the project was it was the first time that people were asked. They had control and they were able to say what they wanted, and when the testimonies were given back... I know from my neighbours that people said, 'I don't want that in and it doesn't read the way I meant it'. So they took it out and that was giving them back control and they were happy enough with that. So in a way it helped them to describe who they are and what their feelings might have been at that time. So that was good in that aspect definitely.

The fact it was done like that... the like of my participation in it... I thought I was given an opportunity to review what I had said in the interviews, make any editorial changes on my own comments was a very... I wish in all the other interviews that I've given I had the same rights but it's the first time it's ever happened. I think it's a very good process and obviously good practice.

- 1.8.4 It was pointed out by some respondents that the flip side of this could be that given the close knit nature of the community and the fact that participants were aware their testimonies would be shown to other participants in their case, it is quite possible this led to self-censorship and caution and therefore partial accounts.

- 1.8.5 Despite the 'safeguard' of editorial control, at least one individual expressed strong misgivings about giving their testimony and a few individuals talked about 'unspoken' pressure and self-censorship. The reasons for these misgivings appeared to have been linked to a number of things, in particular concern about the 'private' becoming 'public'. The respondent spoke of the very personal nature of his story and the intimate memories shared. On reflection, 'opening-up' made him feel vulnerable and anxious that his testimony might expose him to public ridicule. It is perhaps worth mentioning that his published testimony was in no way controversial but the circumstances surrounding the

death of his loved one were. The following abstract from the respondent's interview is interesting because it raises a number of issues. In particular it reveals feelings of insecurity that were not necessarily articulated, or picked up on, during the interview and/or the 'handing back' process. There may have been some underlying concerns about perceived community divisions. Whatever the circumstances, it is clear that the individual felt threatened about articulating certain personal details. The following quote speaks for itself:

I feel that the book kind of left you. You laid yourself bare and open to criticism because you were talking about your private life with somebody and other people would read it and go 'what a load of crap', and you just don't need that. I think that some kind of memorial or something in the form where people were recognised and invited, and basically made a fuss of. You know, maybe that kind of thing rather than where you had to tell your innermost feelings to have your loved ones recognised... There's the remembrance quilt that is going about, now that's an excellent idea because that's a persons own personal thing but with no words to it. Nobody can read between the lines, nobody can put anybody down for it. There's a big thing about telling your story, but not everybody wants to tell their story.

- 1.8.6 In spite of such reservations the respondent concluded that the book was a good thing because it provided an opportunity for recognition:

But the book is a good thing, I mean; it was all my kids were ever going to get... and the launch. Because they are never going to get anything else, any other kind of recognition. So in that respect, yes, the book was good. But just for me personally, because I've had an awful lot of trauma... it just left me feeling very vulnerable. I just felt, 'have I done the right thing?' I felt very vulnerable afterwards because I didn't know what was going to come out of it, even though I was going to read the transcript.

- 1.8.7 The above case illustrates that careful consideration must be given to the way in which very sensitive cases are processed. It also raises questions about the 'embeddedness' of the project and the reliance on 'insiders'. Several respondents had critically reflected on this aspect of the project and they were of the opinion that it might have been problematic for some individuals. This is how the following individuals explained it:

Did people open the door fully and if not why not...? What might have been some of the barriers for people not opening those doors fully, I think, may be about how they perceived some of the people who were doing the questioning. That would have been a barrier to how far they were going to let people in, and also answering in a manner that they thought the interviewer wanted them to answer. Say for example.... you belong to an organisation that's been responsible for... whatever, and I don't want to get on the wrong side of you, because I know you have got that sort of power, so I start talking to you in a way that's conducive to the discussion... So people are always screening, they are always watching.

Everybody likes pigeonholing other people. That way they feel comfortable because everything is in its place. Something that's not in its place you are not too happy with it. So if somebody came up, say

yourself, came up to my door, rapped the door, and I knew you, and I said 'there's Joe Bloggs he's been working in this area, he thinks a particular way, he drinks with certain people, he does all that there'. It's very dependent on who the person is who's asking you what sort of answers that you are going to give.

- 1.8.8 Another respondent was of the opinion that within families there may also be a number of issues at play that could determine who actually gets to speak on behalf of a family, and perhaps what they can or cannot say.

There are families and different things are at play. Who is the strongest in the family, who's the most talkative, who sets the agenda for the family? I'm not talking... I don't think you should talk and that's it over... So lots of things at play, and lots of layers of stuff, and lots of screening and everything else.

- 1.8.9 The above quotes raise a number of ethical and methodological issues. In particular, the full implications of using 'insiders' to conduct interviews should be balanced against the possible negative impacts. It needs to be kept in mind that the community-based nature of the project, the sensitive issues involved, and the way in which people's testimonies were shown to other participants as part of the 'hand back' process, might just as plausibly have led to guarded and partial accounts.

- 1.8.10 It was suggested that perhaps different routes (i.e. e-mail) could be made available to participants to give their testimonies. A list of project volunteers, and contact addresses, could also be made available to participants. This would mean that participants had a choice of interviewer ('insider or outsider'). The same respondent remarked that participants might not feel confident or comfortable about raising certain issues, and that, 'involvement does not necessarily mean people are comfortable being involved'. Some individuals might feel 'pressure to do your bit' or run the risk of appearing 'not to care enough to give testimony'.

- 1.8.11 While bearing in mind the above points, overwhelmingly, it was suggested that participation in the process, and in particular editorial control, created a sense of ownership at the individual and community level. According to many of the respondents the end product (the book) became a symbol of community pride. This point is reflected in the quotes below:

Lots of peoples' houses in Ardoyne will have a big painting of the Ardoyne Church. Most of them don't go to the chapel but they have to have the church on the wall. Why? Because it symbolises something and the book has now become a symbol of something. You know it's a symbol of people in Ardoyne doing their own thing, saying their own thing... people have bought into it.

For the first few weeks that the book was published that was the whole topic of conversation no matter where you went, even on the road. People were coming in 'have you read the book?' and 'Is there any books left?' and they were running to the monastery and the monastery had actually run out of the books and had to bring more in. I think it had a big impact on the community.

I was fascinated at the size of the book and how much was in it and how detailed it was. I'd thought they're doing a book and we'd get a wee paperback thing, you know what I mean? I was really surprised when I saw it and how professional, that's the word, it was. It made you feel proud, not proud that you are in it, but you know what I mean, that somebody from your own community did that.

You'd be in a house and they would say, 'do you know Jimmy so and so' and I would say 'I don't think so'. 'Well do you know in the book'... and they didn't have to say what book. In the book... and they would define the person with the relationship to somebody in the book. That was interesting to me...

- 1.8.12 The sense of pride was also reflected for some interviewees in the amount of books that were sent overseas to relatives and friends. As the following quote describes:

I work in the post office and the amount of books that was posted overseas! Australia, Canada, America, everywhere, England, hundreds of books went. When I seen the amount of people that posted books away to foreign countries, you know what I mean, worldwide the book is going to be recognised.

- 1.8.13 A number of respondents remarked that the community was 'worn out' from years of political violence, demonisation by sections of the media, and recently sectarianism that had 'sunk to new lows'. The area was, in addition, undergoing internal social problems that had left the community feeling depleted and uncertain about the future. In this context the book was seen as a constructive thing that generated a positive image of the community. Several made the point that the book, and its launch, had rekindled a positive sense of collective identity. The following quote puts it succinctly:

It had a massive impact and it gripped everybody in the area and there're very few things that do that. You can think back to maybe five or six things in your life that had the same kind of impact. When internment happened the whole community was affected. The most recent thing probably apart from the book was the Holy Cross [school] issue. It brought people together... they all kind of way came round and said this [the book] is very, very good. It had that effect.

- 1.8.14 It appears from the research that participation and editorial control did create a sense of individual and collective ownership of the book. For many this was regarded as a fundamental strength and positive outcome of the project. Some respondents felt that, through engaging in the process, they had also 'regained control' in a much broader context and that this may also have contributed to a greater sense of self-confidence. In turn, the responses suggest that the experience of participating in the project was a means to 'shake off' what they perceived as the negative label of victim-hood that personified 'helplessness, passiveness and powerlessness'. Providing testimony was seen as a way of being pro-active in many interviews. It may also have contributed something to a more positive sense of self, at both an individual and community level.