

RE-INVENTING BELFAST? ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF RE -IMAGINING AND EXPERIENCING THE CITY

A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION, March 23rd 2010

Organised by Conflict in Cities and the Contested State, ESRC research project (2007-2012),

Queen's University

The face of Belfast is changing. One only has to look at renovated retail, office and recreational spaces in the city centre and along the waterfront; the spread of apartment buildings, 'signature' projects such as Victoria Square and Titanic Quarter; developments such as the Gaeltacht and the Cathedral Quarters and at plans to regenerate the more territorially divided and deprived parts of the city, e.g. the Crumlin Road Gaol and Girdwood Barracks...

Some questions arising from the above changes are:

- How are these changes impacting on the deep-rooted communal antagonisms which have long characterised the city?
- Are new divisions being created to replace or exacerbate existing divisions?
- How is the 'New Belfast' being experienced at the level of everyday life in the different localities which comprise the city – by different age groups, genders, social classes, income groups?
- What are the implications for policy makers – politicians, planners, civil servants, architects, business people?
- Is Belfast moving in the direction of being a 'Shared', 'Open' or Multi-cultural city?

Overview of the morning:

10:00 am	Coffee and introductory remarks
10:15	Belfast: different images, narratives, experiences – researchers from the <i>Conflict in Cities</i> Project talk about the different Belfasts they have encountered through the project.
11: 00	Discussion: The gap between professional approaches to the city and everyday life experiences
12:00	Buffet lunch

A summary of the proceedings will be sent to all participants.

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