

Anna Sofia Suoranta

A NEW GENERATION OF PEACE?

Meanings of everyday peace among the
post-accord youth in Northern Ireland

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ABSTRACT

Anna Sofia Suoranta: A new generation of peace?: Meanings of everyday peace among the post-accord youth in Northern Ireland.

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Since the peace process in Northern Ireland began in the mid-1990s and especially after the signing of the 1998 peace accord, things have been improving for the locals, at least on some scales. The youth, however, are an over-looked age group at the mercy of their elders. Even if violence and conflict have not fully been overcome, peaceful acts and attitudes exist in the everyday. The youth, often left outside formal decision making and processes related to peace, are perpetrators of everyday peace through their attitudes and subsequent behaviors.

The aim of this research is to investigate the different meanings of everyday peace as told by the youth in Northern Ireland. The local meanings are sought from open-ended answers of 16-year-olds to the Young Life and Times survey from the years 2003, 2009, 2011 and 2018. Through the understanding of everyday peace created, this research seeks to further develop the theoretical understanding of everyday peace.

The answers are grouped to form three main themes that constitute the core meanings of everyday peace: blame deferral, respect and the future. In the theme of blame deferral, the youth identify problems for everyday peace, in the theme of respect they elaborate their respectful attitudes, and in the theme of future the youths' perceptions of their futures are elaborated. The results form a local understanding of everyday peace formulated from the open-ended answers of the youth in Northern Ireland.

The research concludes that the youth separate themselves from the previous generations and the tumultuous recent past of Northern Ireland, respect the diverse community of Northern Ireland beyond traditional divisions and are willing to construct a new generation of peace. The research also questions the binary of positive and negative peace through local meanings of everyday peace.

Keywords: Northern Ireland, everyday peace, youth attitudes, qualitative research, thematic analysis, the youth, generation

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List of abbreviations

ARK	Access Research Knowledge (The social policy hub that collects the YLT survey)
CNR	Catholic/Nationalist/Republican
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
EU	European Union
GCSE	The General Certificate of Secondary Education
IRA	Irish Republican Army
MP	Member of Parliament
NI	Northern Ireland
NICCY	Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
PUL	Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist
RAAD	Republican Action Against Drugs
RIRA	The Real Irish Republican Army
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
UDA	Ulster Defense Association
UN	United Nations
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force
YLT	Young Life and Times Survey

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1. Introduction

‘The era of peace’ in Europe has been a dominant narrative especially since the integration process leading to the formation of the European Union (EU). In 2012 EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize “for over six decades contributed to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe” (The Nobel Peace Prize 2012). Meanwhile, there are still areas within Europe where tensions are running high, Northern Ireland being one of them. The contested area is a part of the United Kingdom, but a section of the population feels that it should belong to the Republic of Ireland. In the just over two decades after the signing of a peace agreement in 1998, the wide-scale violence that dominated between the late 1960s to mid-1990s has ended. Since the 1994 ceasefires, Northern Ireland has been on the (rocky) road to building peace. The situation is relevant to research since, despite continuous efforts, Northern Ireland has not yet overcome its troubles. The process of peace and Northern Ireland’s prospects have been further impacted by the uncertainty and brought on by Britain leaving the European Union (Brexit) in January 2020.

In this research, the time after the 1998 peace agreement will be labeled as the post-accord era due to the distinction between that and a post-conflict or post-war situation. The difference can be found in the expectations and assumptions of the local people affected by conflict and tensions. The terminology of post-conflict and post-war may include assumptions and expectations of the end of violence. However, despite a formal agreement, there is no end-date to political violence (which includes politically motivated terrorism, rioting, etc.), structural violence (structures or institutions preventing individuals from having their basic needs met), or cultural violence (cultural symbols etc. used to support direct or structural violence), even if most of the direct violence does come to an end. A peace agreement does however create more opportunities for peace on all levels through a formal peace process and acts of everyday peace. (McEvoy-Levy 2006.)

Instead of the much-examined high-level accords, the level of the everyday is the primary focus in this research. The everyday is the lifeworld for people affected by tensions between and within communities. In Northern Ireland, the everyday is a particularly affected sphere due to the dividedness of some communities. The divide is described in the following way: “physical, cultural and mental [borders] remain features of everyday life for many people living in Northern Ireland” (McKnight & Leonard 2014, 167). In a segregated and divided society, like Northern Ireland, it is

important to understand the everyday as a part of a larger context and a part of the toolbox of the process of peace.

This research aims to shed light on the meanings of peace in the everyday of the generation that has had its formative years after the 1998 peace-agreement. Due to the precarious nature of the youth as an age group, they are often sidelined as actors whose opinions should be taken seriously. The level of the everyday is hence of importance, as it is the intersection of macro and micropolitics and the realm where the young operate through “developing alternative cultures, practices, and forms of resistance” (Ortuoste 2012, 287). The young are subject to consequences of conventional politics, structures, and micropolitics in the sense that they negotiate their own identities and place in the world (Philo & Smith 2003). Recently, youth involvement in peace and security as well as post-agreement situations have been emphasized (see United Nations Security Council 2015) and this research continues on the same path. Thus, the youth are studied from a position of seeing them as active and knowledgeable agents who “negotiate, assess and evaluate their everyday lives” (Leonard 2016). The attitudes of the youth in Northern Ireland have been recorded since 2003 in the Young Life and Times Survey (YLT). The answers to an open-ended question from this survey will serve as data for this research.

The main research question is as follows: *What are the meanings of everyday peace to the youth in Northern Ireland?* The main research question is divided into three additional questions:

1. *What are the problems for everyday peace in terms of blame deferring?*
2. *How do the youth define respect in relation to everyday peace?*
3. *What is the future like for the youth from the perspective of everyday peace?*

The research rests upon and challenges the previous meanings assigned to peace and violence. Namely, Johan Galtung’s (1969) divide of negative and positive peace as well as direct and structural violence. The term post-agreement era gives room for problematizing the nature of peace as negative (absence of violence) or positive (absence of direct and structural violence) since it does not contain as many assumptions of peace or violence as the terms post-conflict or post-war. Therefore, it gives room for finding meanings through the everyday. The categorizations of Galtung have been challenged by a more process-oriented understanding by Boulding (1988, 2), who suggests that unstable or stable peace has different phases with varying degrees of “justice, oppression, competence, enrichment, impoverishment, and so on.” These definitions rely on normative

constructions of peace and therefore look at what peace should look like and who should be participating in it (Williams 2015, 9–10).

Epistemologically, this research is positioned in social constructionism (Berger & Luckmann 1966; Hyvärinen 2010). In this tradition, ‘peace’ can be seen as context-specific (Skelly 2002) and overall a concept in existence through social interaction. Social constructionism does not seek to separate the world (of action) from the language used to report it but instead see the two as intertwined (ibid.). The interwoven relationship is further emphasized by the view that conflict can be seen arising from meanings and interpretations people assign to events and actions (Lederach 1995, 8). Formulating problems in peace research “in terms meaningful to suppressed and exploited groups and nations” (Schmid 1968) has been suggested as the direction that should be taken to steer away from supporting the status quo of the international power structure (Skelly 2002). This research has a normative stance of researching in order to create more understanding of the issues the youth find of importance in Northern Ireland and in that way contribute to conflict transformation. Through what the youth themselves say, this research seeks to find out what is and explore what ought to be (see Hansson 2014) in terms of peace in the everyday.

The research is divided into seven parts. A chapter on the conflict in Northern Ireland will follow the introduction. In this background section, the historical events and developments of the conflict as well as the peace process are outlined. Then, the theoretical framework that combines elements from research on generations, youth, the everyday, everyday peace, and community relations is introduced. The fourth chapter concerns the methodology, including problematizing the open-ended answers in the pre-collected survey, thematic analysis as the chosen method, and the ethical considerations, including the positionality of the researcher. The fifth chapter contains the results of the analysis of meanings of everyday peace. The answers to the research questions are then followed by a discussion in the sixth chapter on the change between the years examined and a reflection back to everyday peace. Finally, the thesis is concluded in the seventh chapter.

2. Conflict and peace in Northern Ireland

To understand the concept and local context of everyday peace in Northern Ireland, it is necessary to give some background to the past troubles and the recovery process. The discussion in this chapter creates the basis for understanding events during the conflict and their legacy in the post-accord era. It also delves into attempts to resolve the situation as well as the final peace process that commenced in 1994 when paramilitary ceasefires were agreed upon (see Mitchell 2011).

2.1. Background to the conflict

Protestant settlers from England and Scotland to the dominantly Catholic northern territory of Ireland (McKittrick & McVea 2002; McEvoy 2008, 8) in the 12th Century and again in the 17th Century set the scene for future troubles. Conquering land in Ireland was a part of the British imperial project, which set the power structure that led to sectarianism (McVeigh & Rolston 2007).

The introduction of the Third Home Rule Bill and the following so-called Home Rule Crisis in 1912 paved the way for the eventual governance of the Republic of Ireland independently of the United Kingdom and strengthened the dominantly Protestant north's desire to remain a part of the United Kingdom (McEvoy 2008). The Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 gave the 26 southern counties of Ireland *de facto* independence from the United Kingdom while the six counties in the north remained part of the union. However, the terms of the treaty led to a civil war in the newly formed Irish Free State between supporters and opponents of the treaty (ibid.). Full independence was achieved in 1937 (ibid.). In very simplified terms, the conflict that was to be fought some decades later in Northern Ireland was between the Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist (PUL) community, in support of remaining part of the United Kingdom, and Catholic/Nationalist/Republican (CNR) community, in support of a united Ireland. These identities, which were in reality much more diverse, will be discussed further on in this chapter and concerning the youth as an age group in chapter 3.1.

The Catholic minority felt that they were being oppressed by the Protestant majority in employment, housing, politics, and policing. The Catholic Civil Rights Movement started as a non-violent attempt to call attention to the disparities and was at least partially answered by Prime Minister Terence O'Neill's (of the Ulster Unionist Party) reforms. However, too little was done too late. The animosity between the two social and religious groups erupted into violence in the late 1960s (McEvoy 2008). Due to grievances on both sides, tensions ran high. The British Government brought its soldiers to

the streets of Northern Ireland in 1969 and the re-emergence of the IRA (as it had first emerged at the beginning of the 20th Century) soon followed to defend the CNR community. The terms used for the conflict range from a 'low-intensity conflict' (Deglow 2016) to 'war' (Hobsbawm 2007).

The parties to the conflict were the British Army, loyalist paramilitary groups, and republican paramilitary groups. The loyalist paramilitaries included groups by the names of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Ulster Defense Association (UDA) that also utilized the name Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF). The most notable republican paramilitary group was and is the IRA with its variations which include the Provisional IRA and the Continuity IRA (Morrison 2016, 598). The IRA nowadays operating is called the New IRA, which was formed in 2012 when the Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA), Republican Action Against Drugs (RAAD) and unaligned violent dissident republicans (VDR) merged (*ibid.*).

One of the most infamous events of the early conflict was a Catholic civil rights march in 1972 where British troops shot dead thirteen civilians. The day became known as Bloody Sunday, the events of which were investigated twice over the next 40 years to uncover the 'truth'. A few months later, also in 1972, the IRA killed nine people in Belfast by exploding twenty-one bombs in an event that would be known as Bloody Friday. These events serve as examples of the *cyclical violence* that would prevail over the coming decades. Cyclical violence means a continuum of (direct) violence perpetrated by the other side (as retaliation). Also known as 'the Troubles', the conflict lasted from the late 1960s until the peace process in the 1990s and finally the Belfast Agreement/Good Friday Agreement in 1998 (Darby 2003; McEvoy 2008).

The conflict spilled over the borders of Northern Ireland over to Ireland (unionist bombings by the UVF and UDA) and mainland United Kingdom (IRA and Provisional IRA bombings, most notably the Brighton bombing aimed at murdering Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher). The human costs of the Troubles were devastating: estimated 3,500 deaths, 42 000 wounded (Deglow 2016, 790; McEvoy 2008, 1), a divided nation, and a conflict that has not fully been resolved despite it formally ending in 1998.

PUL and CNR communities have alternate timelines of their histories, with different emphasis on events. The result is two parallel collective memories in support of their identities (see McGrattan & Hopkins 2017). National identities are expressed through cultural and social activities. The commemoration of the Battle of Somme of 1916 and other World War-related events as well as

marches of the Orange Order are used to emphasize the Britishness of the PUL community (McEvoy 2008, 10). Examples of such behavior on the nationalist side are commemorating the Easter Rising of 1916, celebrating the Irish language, and supporting the Gaelic Athletic Association (ibid.). During the Troubles, the youth supported subcultures that provided an escape beyond the PUL and CNR division, such as the punk scene (Heron, 2015).

The everyday during the troubles became increasingly segregated, as people either chose or were forced to live with their religions (ibid.). However, working-class CNR and PUL areas were separate from each other even before the establishment of physical dividers called peace lines (Boal 1982). The segregation was further emphasized by the dividing walls which were initially bottom-up structures built during the Troubles by the communities themselves (Leonard & McKnight 2011, 571) as the conflict was most pronounced in areas with spatial proximity to the other community (Fay, Smyth & Morrissey 1999, 134). These areas are also called interface areas. The walls have iron gates that close in the evening and therefore restrict the movement of locals (Heron, 2015). For the youth, these restrictions affected their gatherings: for example Belfast's center, where the cinemas, nightlife were located, was off bounds (ibid.). The threat of violence on civilians was also present at times for those willing to risk going out (ibid.). In terms of community relations, predictably, this created a separate but simultaneous existence.

Interpretations of the causes of the conflict range from the most dominant ethnonational interpretation (as explained above) to Marxist and colonial ones. In brief, the Marxist explanation emphasizes the need for imperialist Britain to withdraw from Northern Ireland. As a consequence, the Catholics and Protestants would overcome their differences in class solidarity, which would allow for the creation of a united socialist Ireland. The colonial interpretation is similar in the way that it sees the root of the cause in British involvement in Northern Ireland. Especially popular among republicans, this interpretation sees the Troubles as a continuation of the struggle against British occupation. (McEvoy 2008, 14–19.)

The modern everyday cityscapes in the large cities of Northern Ireland, namely Belfast, Londonderry/Derry, and Portadown, are characterized by the presence of murals and peace lines. They are concrete manifestations of a troubled past and conflicted present and serve as reminders that the situation remains difficult between the communities. Since the erection of the first bottom-up peace lines they have been reinforced by officials and more have been erected (Leonard & McKnight 2011, 571).

2.2. The peace process

Attempts were made to resolve the conflict from as early as the 1970s. The early pursuits were mainly focused on re-establishing the political system in Northern Ireland, which had fallen apart in the midst of the conflict. In 1972 political power was transferred to Westminster, meaning that direct rule was established. After a series of talks, the Sunningdale Agreement was signed in 1973 and the first power-sharing executive was formed. It was not to last, however. The second major attempt was the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985, in which it was agreed that Northern Ireland's status could only be changed by a majority of the Northern Irish people. (McEvoy 2008, 72–85.) This was to be one of the cornerstones of the final successful Belfast/Good Friday Agreement.

The lead-up to the peace agreement in the 1990s saw another two agreements. The first being the Downing Street Declaration of 1993 that further emphasized the right to self-determination, called the 'consent principle'. Following the ceasefires of the IRA and the Combined Loyalist Military Command in 1994, the second set of agreements, the Framework Documents of 1995, were agreed upon by the British and Irish governments. (See McEvoy 2008, 115–119.) As a lasting legacy, those paramilitaries who did not agree with the ceasefires or the peace agreement remained active and are therefore labeled as dissidents.

As an example of how the use of words matters (and "how to do things with words" see Austin 1962), there is controversy over what to call the peace accord: the Belfast Agreement or the Good Friday Agreement (Wolff 2005, 64). Hereinafter in this research, the accord will be called the Agreement for not to take a stand on this dispute. The peace accord is divided into several sections that delve into addressing the past and the peaceful future of Northern Ireland on an institutional level and the level of identities. In addition to the right to self-determination concerning identities and that the people of Northern Ireland have the right to democratically choose to leave the United Kingdom and join the Republic of Ireland, an essential aspect of the reconciliation process is the promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society, including for example initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing. (*The Belfast Agreement* 1998).

The power-sharing agreement between unionist and republican political forces was made official in the Agreement in 1998. As a part of the agreement, the devolved Northern Ireland Assembly (also known as Stormont due to its location) was created to be a democratically elected body that would protect the interests of all communities. It would have an inter-dependent relationship with the

North/South Ministerial Council (for cooperation on the island of Ireland) to an extent that neither would succeed without the other. (*The Belfast Agreement 1998*.) In the early years, the Northern Ireland Assembly was suspended several times. As in the decades before the Agreement, direct rule was reintroduced after a political stalemate in 2002. This meant that the matters concerning Northern Ireland were transferred to be decided in Westminster. In 2006 after multi-party talks, adjustments to the Agreement were made official in the St Andrews Agreement. After five years of direct rule, devolution was restored in 2007. (McEvoy 2008, 160–169.) The latest major suspension of the Assembly started in January 2017 following the republican Sinn Féin’s discontent over how the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) had handled the so-called green energy scandal (McCormack 2020). The standstill lasted until January 2020. In the three years of the suspension, direct rule was not introduced, but instead, civil servants (with their limited powers) handled the running of the country. Wolff (2005, 2–3) argues that the power-sharing system in use is not a sustainable conflict resolution mechanism for Northern Ireland due to structural issues and the capabilities of the implementors, although, as he states, it was the only viable option for peace at the time. However, the Agreement provided a suitable framework for the power sharing to function with some additions (later addressed in the St. Andrews Agreement) and if implemented by politicians with a long-term vision for peace (Wolff 2005, 3).

During the years, several attempts have been made to bring the communities into contact with each other. For example, the Peace Bridge in Londonderry/Derry offering a passage from the predominantly Catholic west bank and the largely Protestant east bank of the River Foyle brings the communities together through a mundane shared space. The overall experience that the youth have is not of peace but existing separate from the ‘other’ (Marijan 2016, 68). This separation also extends to schooling. There are four types of schools in Northern Ireland: controlled schools (Protestant), grant-maintained schools (Catholic), voluntary schools (predominantly either Protestant or Catholic), and planned integrated schools (integrated schools in which the number of Catholics and Protestants is roughly equal) (McKeown & Cairns 2012, 71). Within the controlled and maintained schools, there are mixed schools, which have at least a 10% enrolment of children from ‘the other community’ (Blaylock et al. 2018).

In addition, the division is physical at least for the most marginalized communities and the youth growing up in them have not felt the relief of a society free from conflict, despite social and economic issues being addressed (Tam et al. 2008). Instead, the youth live under the paramilitary influence,

mistrust of the police force, segregated schooling, and segregated residential areas. However, the symbolic division in the everyday persists for many if not most in Northern Ireland (ibid.).

During the peace process, policy changes have been made to address the discrepancies that initially led to the circumstances where the conflict started. Those include for example educational reform and establishing a new independent police force to replace the old PUL dominated one. Starting from 2005, there have been a series of policy papers on good community relations by the governments of Northern Ireland, which have been criticized due to their vague nature (McKnight & Schubotz 2017, 219). For example, the Shared Future policy document from 2005 “dances around and hints at but never quite articulates in detail the link between ‘identity’, ‘culture’, ‘celebrating differences’ and ‘good relations’ in a democratic society” (Komarova 2008, 19). The peace process, in general, has been criticized due to its hegemonic peacebuilding practices as a part of the “European peace project” (Michell 2011, 74). Alternatively, the peace process has been characterized as a “liberal peace lite” (Mac Ginty 2011, 13). Mitchell (2011, 95) argues that in a peace process where transformation is the keyword, the reality is that it is about “disciplining disruption” and “intensive state-building.”

The European Union has been a major funder of the peacebuilding process, allocating funds for different peace projects in Northern Ireland through their Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) since the 1990s. The funding rounds started in the mid-1990s with PEACE I, followed by PEACE II, PEACE III, and PEACE IV, ending in 2020 (Knox & McCrory 2018, 8). The newest round of funding to follow PEACE IV is called Peace Plus, which focuses on a prosperous and stable society in Northern Ireland and the Irish border region (SEUPB 2020). But as Brewer et al. (2008) have pointed out, the funding in itself does not further sustainable peace without a formal truth commission or other form of truth recovery. Informally, however, there have been several projects aiming to address the past and/or move towards a better future. The range of these efforts has been from peace education and artistic performances to building new shared spaces. Identities are also changing as the peace process moves forward.

The understanding created by the history of the conflict must be further deepened in relation to the youth’s identities. Identity formation is relevant concerning everyday peace as it is one of the foundations of social attitudes and therefore has an effect on behavior on the individual and group levels (Smith & Hogg 2008). McEvoy (2008) makes the point of diverse national identity beyond the PUL/CNR dichotomy. The Troubles are sometimes mistakenly termed as a religious conflict between the Catholic and Protestant communities and even though the conflict did have religious aspects, it

was not fought over religion alone. In addition, there were social, economic, political, and ethnic factors that intertwined with the religious aspect (Leonard & McKnight 2011, 570). The parties in the conflict are often discussed through their religions for the sake of clarity and religion is thus used as an ethnic marker. In this research, the names for the communities are PUL and CNR where possible.

The complex nature of the identities is highlighted when looking at the preferred future constitutional status of Northern Ireland: not all Catholics are in favor of a united Ireland and not all Protestants agree with remaining as part of the United Kingdom (McEvoy 2008). The stereotypical picture that is often painted of the situation includes the conception that everyone identifies as loyalist or republican when the reality is not as black and white. Among the basic questions in the peace process is to figure out how to accommodate and cope with the competing nationalisms (McEvoy 2008, 13). Further questions pertaining to the peace process includes religions, territorial allegiances, and local and national identities that still affect the situation in Northern Ireland (Hayes & McAlister 2013 in McKnight & Schubotz 2017, 218).

However, a third alternative to the PUL and CNR communities is nowadays observable: A previously nearly nonexistent Northern Irish national identity is emerging in the speech of citizens and the political elite. The new Northern Irish identity is seen as inclusive and a preferred option especially for the post-agreement generation (McNicholl, Stevenson & Garry 2019). The new identity also means that the new generation no longer identifies as strongly as the previous generations as either PUL or CNR (see Smith 2018, 76). This development can be seen as a success of the peace process. It also problematizes the traditional divide and opens up avenues for future research not focused on the dichotomy. The role of identity in relation to attitudes and behavior is explored in more depth in the following chapter.

3. Theoretical framework: the everyday of the post-accord generation and everyday peace

The youth of Northern Ireland encounter not only the present day but also the history of violence. Thus, their everyday life is at least partly built on the troubled past of the country they are living in. Although they live in a chain of generations, the emerging post-accord generation also needs to build its own generational identities. But what is understood by the concepts of everyday and everyday peace? In this chapter I will first define these concepts and then turn to the other important concepts of the thesis, namely, the youth and the generation of the youth. I will also describe the concept of community relations in relation to the everyday of the youth and everyday peace. The focal point of the chapter is everyday peace, which provides the theoretical framework for the empirical analysis in chapter 4.

3.1. The everyday and everyday peace

The concept of the everyday originates from the philosophical tradition of phenomenology, namely from the work of Edmund Husserl (1859–1938). In Husserl's definition, the concept of everyday is a fundamental part of the spontaneous world of practices which are taken for granted in 'natural attitude' (Dorfman 2014, 36). The everyday can be defined as follows:

The everyday as foundation is the background against which any significant activity occurs. It is the physical and mental, bodily and cognitive basis upon which life constantly takes place. Accordingly, the everyday is not a static, motionless and frozen ground, necessary for 'real' activity which is separate from it, since it is constantly influenced and changed by every activity. (Dorfman 2014, 1–2).

A prominent theorist of the everyday Michel de Certeau describes practices of everyday life as repetitive, distinctive, and unconscious (1984). He approaches the everyday through the distinction between *strategies* of *producers* (power structures, institutions) and *consumptive tactics* of the individuals. The *consumer* (individual) utilizes *tactics* to comply with or oppose the environment set by the *strategies* of the *producer* (De Certeau 1984). As one of the early theoreticians of everyday life, his works have been built upon later when researchers have been formulating definitions of the everyday and its uses in peace research (see Roberts 2011; Richmond 2009, 2010).

Another theorist of the everyday, Henri Lefebvre, saw the everyday as an under-researched area when compared to such areas as technology and production (Lefebvre 1998, 2002, 2008). Research on the

everyday was to some extent born out of critique toward an existing dominant trend in its field, in this case, structuralism in sociology (Ghisleni, 2017). To Lefebvre, the everyday and especially everydayness, the mundane boredom that is shared by all in society, relate ultimately to consumerism and the desires created by production (Elden 2004; Carabelli 2018, 101). However, the everydayness also relates to the unchanging day-to-day frozen in place by routines. It holds the potential for change, as no day can be completely identical to the other (ibid.). Through questioning the everydayness, the consumeristic sphere of our everyday could be fought and overturned (Elden 2004). The parallels to the local turn are evident in resistance (in the everyday) to liberal practices. The everyday sphere has been later explored in detail in the fields of sociology and cultural research (see Moran 2005) and it is a rising field in peace and conflict studies through the shift in focus due to the local turn.

What is important to note is that the youth in Northern Ireland are living in the taken for granted environment of the everyday but are nevertheless active in constructing and influencing their own lives and identities. The idea of the everyday in phenomenology is highlighted also in peace research and especially in the research approach of everyday peace. In this research approach peace and peacebuilding are said to come into being in the mundane or sphere of the everyday (Väyrynen 2019, 1). The everyday is a political space, where the individuals can collectively seek meaning and organize themselves in response to violence, exclusion, and conflict (Berents & McEvoy-Levy 2015, 117). It is seen as the “habitus for individuals and groups, even if what passed as ‘normal’ in a conflict-affected society would be abnormal elsewhere” (Mac Ginty 2014, 550). This notion is shared by Berents (2015, 194) who states that “[c]ommunities that are profoundly affected by ongoing violence and insecurity cope with these risks not as something extra-ordinary, but as part of everyday life.” In brief, the everyday “refers to the ways people make their lives the best they can, manipulating with whatever tools and tactics are at their disposal the surrounding natural, social, economic and political structures, local and global, that empower or constrain their lives” (Roberts 2011, 413).

The origins of the concept of everyday peace are in the so-called ‘local turns’ in peace research that took place in the 1990s and in the 2010s (see Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013). The overall goal of the first local turn was sustainable reconciliation within societies (Paffenholz 2015). Theoretically the local turn was based on the ideas of Galtung (1969) and Freire (2012) among others. The ideas of Galtung (1969) were drawn upon concerning structural violence and peacebuilding (Paffenholz 2015). The potential of Freire’s (2012) dialogical and reciprocal approach in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was recognized in building cultures of peace. In practice the turn was a response to harsh and failed interventions based on liberal ideals undertaken by the UN, e.g., in Somalia, Rwanda and

Bosnia (Leonardsson & Rudd 2015). According to critique, liberal peace represents a western hegemonic top-down approach to building and maintaining peace where the foundations of peace are based on liberal democracy and a (free) market economy (ibid.). As a solution researchers and practitioners of peace emphasized the voice and actions of the locals in order to address the failings of liberal peace. Local agency, knowledge, and expertise were stressed over the imposed alternatives due to the possibilities of sustainable peace thriving on the local level (Lederach 1997, 94). The notion of everyday peace resembles Elise Boulding's (1990) concepts of the culture of peace and 'peaceableness': peaceful behavior that exists in all societies (that will be discussed in detail later).

The second local turn took place in the 2010s (Paffenholz 2015). This time, the emphasis was placed on resistance to the practices of liberal peacebuilding and emancipatory local agency (ibid.). Mac Ginty (2013), a prominent name in the second local turn, claims that the shifted focal point provides alternative tools for technocratic peacebuilding (standardization of conflict analysis, focus on bureaucratic infrastructure and material culture, an exclusive group of peacebuilding actors) which do not take into account the local contexts and people.

The ever-evolving peacebuilding has been influenced by the shifts in focus on the institutional and practical levels (Leonardsson & Rudd 2015). Since the 1990s, the UN has also shifted its focus and emphasis has been put on local governance, local ownership, and building local capacity (ibid.). In addition, the change in perspective brought by the local turn(s) has not only been practical but required a change in the conceptual framing of the actors (Bliesemann de Guevara 2010, 121; Boege 2012).

The relationship between the international and the local is an often-critiqued grey area of the local turn literature because they are presented as polar opposites instead of spheres in constant interaction. As an alternative to the international–local -division, a hybrid model has been proposed. Proponents of the hybrid model suggest that as it combines the local with the international and the liberal with the illiberal it will be a functioning way of governance. As a counterargument it has been said that this connection of the local and the liberal practices is a failed attempt, for this linking connects the local to the liberal, that is, to its original object of criticism. The hybrid model has even been called neo-colonial. (Paffenholz 2015.) The geographical understanding of the local has also been challenged by stating that it is all encompassing: the local as everyday practices of individuals and communities expands from a personal level to a transnational level (Mac Ginty 2011).

The local turn brought new research agendas placed in more localized contexts into the forefront. This has in some ways been unfortunately superficial, especially in the global South, due to the lack of collaboration with the local researchers (Ojendal, Schierenbeck & Hughes 2018). In this research, such problems are not as prevalent due to the utilization of the vast amount of local research conducted in Northern Ireland. Due to the local turn, the meanings of peace have become understood in more local and context-specific ways. Local indicators of peace (Mac Ginty 2013) have been developed to answer the need for less technocratic approaches to building peace. In terms of the localized focus, community relations can be understood as a part of the everyday, as is done in this research. Community relations and everyday peace are tied together through the youths' encounters with ingroup and outgroup members in their day-to-day lives. Therefore, they hold attitudes (elaborated in the results chapter) that have an influence on their behavior and the use of tactics concerning members of different communities, as in community relations. This relationship is explored in more detail later.

For everyday peace to exist, peace does not have to prevail on the society level, therefore, as a concept, it questions the traditional division of peace and conflict as separate entities. Boulding (1990, 37, 48) uses the term 'peaceableness' to describe peaceful everyday behavior that can be found in every society, even those formally engaged in conflict. The argument has later been supported by Das (2006) who agrees with this sentiment in saying that even in extraordinary conditions, ordinary life keeps going. Boulding (1990, 37) discusses the everyday through local peace and conflict resolution cultures and that have formed over time within social groups. Subsequently, the breakdown of "communication and lack of common conflict management practices between ethnic groups and the larger states of which they are a part" (ibid.) are identified as contributing to inter- and intrastate violence. The concept of 'peaceableness' is related to a wider phenomenon and understanding of a culture of peace. Peace is viewed as an active process rather than a state of mind or a static condition (Boulding 1989, 146). The contemporary understanding of everyday peace as agency (Mac Ginty 2014, 449–550; Williams 2015, 20), emphasized by the second local turn, therefore further develops Boulding's idea of the process. On a larger scale, a need for the formal peace processes to engage with the everyday process of peace is viewed as intrinsic for sustainable peace to be achieved (Richmond 2009). Richmond elaborates on the understanding of the everyday as:

... a space in which local individuals and communities live and develop political strategies in their local environment, towards the state and towards international models of order. It is not civil society, often a Western-induced artifice, but it is representative of the deeper local-local. It is often transversal and transnational, engaging with needs, rights, custom, individual, community,

agency and mobilisation in political terms. Yet, these are often hidden or deemed marginal by mainstream approaches. (Richmond 2010, 670.)

Richmond (2010, 676) stresses the modern state's responsibility for the individual as he argues that it is necessary to define everyday life as resistance to institutionalism and elitism in a situation where, from the citizens' point of view, institutions and the elites have lost contact with a social contract. A parallel can be drawn to de Certeau's ideas of the agile tactics of the individual and rigid strategies of the institutions. Richmond's approach is found too limited by Berents (2015), who claims that it is unable to grasp the world of those who experience the local everyday situations of violence, marginalization, and conflict on a day to day basis. Knowledge and recognition of structural forces affecting the everyday of the locals are vital to understanding the relationships between people and how they hold their communities together (*ibid.*). In this research, the understanding is constructed through the spheres of influence of the youth, their complex identities, the relationship between the attitudes in the data and the potential consequential practices in the everyday, and finally a discussion on the linkages between current events and the data.

In addition to the everyday being repetitive and unconscious (as seen by de Certeau), it holds the potential for solidarity, resistance, innovation, improvisation, and creativity (Berents 2015, 195; Mac Ginty 2014, 555). A belief in the future relates to resistance (Berents 2018), peaceful or not. As demonstrated in this chapter and the upcoming chapter 5, everyday peace goes beyond the binary of war and peace, as violence in some forms relates to both (see Björkdahl & Buckley-Zistel 2016, 2) and therefore offers a new perspective to the Galtungian (1969) positive and negative peace (see Berents & McEvoy 2015, 118; Mac Ginty 2014). The anticipation and memory of violence are intrinsically linked to peace as a process (Williams 2015, 88). Disruptions to everyday peace, like terrorist attacks or other acts of violence (Williams 2015, 181), do not halt the process, since ideally everyday peace is an embedded state of mind that reflects to day-to-day behavior. Everyday peace can also be seen as a collection of coping mechanisms of the local population (Mac Ginty 2014; Williams 2015). And, as Williams (2015, 14–15) notes, while communities of “apparent difference” perhaps do not form friendships between each other, they develop a “commonsensical pragmatism” or “indifference” in regard to negotiating how much role prejudices were given in their everyday life.

Mac Ginty (2014) has developed a typology that rests on the basic assumptions of everyday peace. The main division of the typology is between inter- and intragroup levels; the five main categories of social practices (avoidance, ambiguity, ritualized politeness, telling, and blame deferring) operate on both levels. The most important category in the typology is avoidance. Avoidance means that various

practices of everyday peace can be so small that they go unnoticed, but in fact are made to avoid potential threats and warn others of those threats (Berents 2015, 196). The category includes also the avoidance of contentious and sensitive topics, such as religion or politics, in particular company. Another form of avoidance is averting situations and people that may lead to conflict. On the intragroup level it means avoiding “community gatekeepers and radicalized figures” and on the intergroup level having little to do with ‘the other’. Conflict geography, such as peace walls dividing unionist and republican areas in Belfast, enables this behavior. The final four forms of avoidance are: displaying no interest in the ongoing situation, escapism into youth subcultures, drawing no attention to oneself, and living in the present. (Mac Ginty 2014, 555–556.)

The second category of everyday peace is ambiguity in a deliberate manner. It includes concealing signifiers that could identify a person’s affiliations. As they may sometimes be difficult to conceal, a conscious response can be to ‘not see’ the signifiers to avoid conflict. The third category is ritualized politeness, often in cooperation with the category of avoidance, where on the intergroup level semi-scripted interactions take place in order to negotiate tensions (see also Williams 2015, 14), careful to avoid escalating conflict. The fourth category is ‘telling’, which means social identification and looking for categorizing features of others to determine their affiliations. It is a type of silence and discourse (McCormack 2017, 57). Telling relies on cultural knowledge and social learning in making evaluations of others features and the surrounding areas (ibid.). The goal is to pick up offensive or threatening cues and take action. Finally, the fifth category is blame deferring, where an outsider or a minority within the group is shown as responsible so that the whole group would avoid blame. (Mac Ginty 2014, 556–557.)

Mac Ginty’s categories are not the exclusive way to formulate everyday peace. Another typology is presented by Williams (2015) who found that everyday peace manifests itself through tolerance, indifference, coexistence, acceptance, and friendship. Tolerance is seen as “an attitude that is intermediate between whole-hearted acceptance and unrestrained opposition” (Scanlon 1998, 54). Indifference, coexistence and acceptance are focused on maintaining the status quo (Williams 2015, 143–146). Acceptance is already a tentative step towards meaningful contact and respect towards the ‘other’. Friendship is seen as behavior beyond mandatory interactions with members of the other community, for example spending time together outside school (ibid.). Even through Williams’ (2015) research on everyday peace was conducted in India, parallels can be drawn to the situation in Northern Ireland. Williams’ study includes investigating community relations through everyday peace between two religious groups. Both in this research and Williams’ study, the situation is further

complicated by a minority-majority setting, occasional violence, problematic representation, and past grievances. Therefore, the argument (related to secularism in India) that in order to reproduce peace on a national level, “spaces for tolerance, freedom, respect and equality need to exist between different communities” (Williams 2015, 3) is applicable also in the case of Northern Ireland. In terms of this research, the most important manifestation of the everyday peace, taken from these two studies, is respect as a mental state, vital to the nature of peace as a process, a process consisting of meanings, attitudes, and the subsequent behaviors for the benefit of sustainable peace.

A further aspect of everyday life and everyday peace that is built upon is community relations in practice and theory. By nature, peace (and conflict) require interaction, for example, interpersonal interaction or interaction on the intergroup and intragroup levels. Theoretically, everyday peace and community relations have not previously shared an explicit link, even though community relations are often taken for granted as a part of the research setting in empirical research on everyday peace. In divided situations, community relations have proven a useful and descriptive way of investigating of intergroup relationships. As with everyday peace, community relations come into being in the mundane. Therefore, it is meaningful to theoretically combine community relations to everyday peace. In practice, the link exists on a day-to-day level in interactions and attitudes toward the other community or communities. Furthermore, everyday peace is a part of a skillset of social interaction in divided and non-divided situations (Mac Ginty 2014; Boulding 1990). Due to the divide in Northern Ireland, as long as it exists, it is not viable to explore what everyday peace means to the youth without considering it at least partially through community relations and intergroup relations. On a very practical level, community relation links to everyday peace through the everyday of the youth. In their daily lives, they negotiate their being in the sometimes turbulent, sometimes calm community relations. Therefore, community relations are a part of the lifeworld in which also everyday peace occurs.

A dominant theoretical tool in community relations literature is *the contact hypothesis*, which has also been called *the behavioral model* (see Knox and McCrory 2018). The basic idea of the contact hypothesis theory is that bringing members of different groups together under suitable conditions can help reduce prejudice (Allport 1954). A body of literature on community relations in Northern Ireland agrees with the positive potential of the contact hypothesis and its practical applications (see Hewstone et al. 2006; McKeown & Taylor 2017; Devine & Schubotz 2014; Blaylock et al. 2018). A study conducted through surveys in the adult population found that contact is a vital part of any

solution to the conflict, not only in terms of improving intergroup relations but also more forgiveness toward past events and positive strategies for the future (Hewstone et al. 2006).

The practical applications of the contact hypothesis in Northern Ireland include initiatives to bring children and young people together across the divide as well as the EU led PEACE I-IV Projects. Holiday schemes were introduced during the Troubles to provide PUL and CNR children with an option away from the city during the so-called marching season between the months of April and August (McKeown & Cairns 2012). In education, attempts have been made towards integration (ibid.). Research on their impact on intergroup contact and positive relations concluded in favor of the positive effects of the contact hypothesis (ibid.).

The contact hypothesis has also been criticized. It has been argued that spatial proximity of groups can cause defensiveness (Young 1990) and therefore drive the groups further away from each other. The ‘favorable circumstances’ of the everyday life are often interpreted too idealistically (McKeown & Cairns 2012). Furthermore, it has been argued that contact between groups does not necessarily improve attitudes toward the whole outgroup or transform them for the better at all, certainly not as fast and as permanently as negative contact shapes attitudes (Valentine 2008). Even Allport (1954, 264) himself recognized the negative potential of the wrong kind of contact in reinforcing prejudice and negative emotions. Therefore, the critique presented is not unfounded.

A challenger to the dominant contact hypothesis in terms of community relations and peacebuilding is a *social transformation model*. It emphasizes the need to change political institutions, transform unequal situations for the better, and tackle the human rights issues of the minority population. In addition to the contact hypothesis (and the behavioral model) and a social transformation model, a third option, a hybrid between the two, has been proposed to develop community relations in practice. It combines the contact hypothesis (and the behavioral model) with the social transformation model into *the common needs model*. Its basic idea is to find the common needs of the two communities and address them collectively. It is said to improve community relations in an organic way. (Knox & McCrory 2018.)

Despite the criticisms, the contact hypothesis has remained much used since its creation in the 1950s. Creating positive (or favorable) environments for people from different groups to meet is at the core of the ‘better community relations through contact’ research. The applications of the contact hypothesis have developed alongside the local turn in peacebuilding. The contact hypothesis has been

applied as a tool to encourage youth to engage in peacebuilding efforts and civil society in Northern Ireland (McKeown & Taylor 2017). Building (everyday) peace between communities brings the focus from peacebuilding efforts on formal levels to the local communities. Everyday peacebuilding is therefore seen as more respectful in giving room for the localized practices and boundaries which are found together with the communities. (Marijan 2016.) On the other hand, the attempts to better community relations through peacebuilding in the everyday “simultaneously emancipates and entraps, enriches and depletes, enhances the quality of life and tightens control over it” (Richmond & Mitchell 2012, 21). Therefore, negative community relations should not be sidelined as insignificant.

Negative community relations that exist alongside the peaceful ones have been researched for instance through violent crime in the postwar era in Northern Ireland. The micro-level analysis of post-conflict societies found that the situation includes low trust in the policing authorities in a postwar public security gap. As a comparison to the postwar period, the crime statistics the time of the Troubles show that even through large-scale political attacks (particularly by anti-government groups) have decreased after the signing of the Agreement, the quality of peace is still questionable. Because police forces have a dual position of preventing “ordinary crime” as well as counterinsurgency, affected communities lack trust in the police. Even through extensive reforms have been made in the form of security sector reform, the public security gap remains. An important conclusion is that there is a correlation between how much violence an area experiences during conflict and how much violence there is after it. Consequently, particular attention should be paid to those at-risk areas. (Deglow 2016.)

3.2. The generation of the youth

The youth as a category is socially constructed along with other age categories, which are “embedded in personal relationships, social practices, politics, laws and public policies” (Honwana 2012, 11). The most commonly used age range for the youth is between 15 to 24 as defined by the United Nations (UN). This involuntary state between childhood and adulthood has been labeled as ‘waithood’ (Honwana 2012, 4). The youth in this research have a shared experience of the post-accord era. The everyday must be seen from the preceptive of the youth specifically, as it differs from the everyday of an adult: Even as there are similarities, the meanings of everyday peace that arise from the youth need to be understood in the context of their everyday lives (Scourfield et al. 2006).

To further highlight the significance of the everyday of the youth, the influences that shape their daily lives are elaborated. The attitudes of the youth are not formed without influences from the various social contexts: they can be divided into three spheres, where the young person is shaped on a systemic level, institutional level, and on the level of the lifeworld (Fornäs 1993), which in short means the usually self-evident and ordinary, taken for granted world of the everyday (Husserl 1970). In the context of this research, the relevant spheres on the system level are the state, whether that be the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland. This level influences the everyday of the youth from the top-down. It is a contested sphere due to national identity and the troubles of the past. On the institutional level, the important spheres for the youths' everyday are free time and education (Fornäs 1993). These are visible on the day-to-day level and especially prevalent for youth when compared to adults. The youth in Northern Ireland have the practical knowledge on which areas are neutral and which contested and therefore utilize space according to those unwritten rules (Roulston & Young 2013). On the level of the lifeworld, the influence of peers and family as well as communities are significant. It is the mundane sight where interpersonal interaction happens and therefore holds the potential for peaceful attitudes and behavior. These spheres of influence on the lives of the youth give grounds for understanding the day-to-day of the youth and consequentially, the meanings they assign to everyday peace.

Building on the understanding of youth and their everyday, exploring identity formation in a troubled society deepens the knowledge required further along with this research. Identity formation in itself is a significant phase in a person's development that feeds from the influences of the surrounding society and reflects upon attitudes and behavior. The complex realities concerning (national) identity, (past) conflict, and (moments of) peace between individuals and communities create a difficult field for identity formation. However, especially in the day-to-day, a person can belong to many groups without a contradiction (Sen 2006, 24). For example, being a 16-year-old, living in north Belfast, eating vegetarian, and being a fan of indie music all fit into the identity of one person without conflict.

In Northern Ireland, collective identities of PUL and CNR communities have traditionally been strong and expressing them of importance (Schmid et al. 2010). That is not to say that the collective identity is the only significant building block, as demonstrated by the example above, but to suggest, yet again, the influence it has on the youth. The connection between collective identities and their influence on attitudes has been found to be significant: attitudes are grounded in social consensus (within a) group and they are socially constructed and enacted (Smith & Hogg 2008). Due to the link between attitudes and behavior, the group-based perspective creates an interesting avenue for

thinking of behavior as a result of a group attitude. This is especially relevant to note in the context of Northern Ireland, where the cleavage between communities is traditionally deep.

In research related to peace, the point of view of the youth remains undervalued and under-researched (Berents & McEvoy-Levy 2015, 115). The youth can be said to be structurally marginalized from making a significant impact on the world around them (through formal political participation) while still often being well aware of the surrounding situation (Berents 2015, 196). The action of youth happens often on the 'private' level (or the level of the lifeworld), in the community that surrounds them, where contributions are possible (Berents 2015, 198; Berents & McEvoy-Levy 2015, 118). The realm also extends to the 'public' (for example in organizing large scale protests and in so doing claiming the sphere) which blurs the divide between public and private (ibid.). The context of the everyday for youth is not only the local but also the global (Berents & McEvoy-Levy 2015, 121). This brings a new dimension to the understanding of the everyday as local in the traditional sense.

The youth live in a chain of generations and as part of that chain they also construct their own generation. According to Mannheim (1952), a generation is formed through a substantial event that happens during the formative years of a young person's life, between the ages of 17 and 25. The age group, therefore, creates a community of experience that shares a similar worldview (ibid.). The formative years can be seen to extend to 16 (as Devine & Schubotz 2014 have done), especially if contrasting Mannheim's age group with the generally agreed upon age range of youth (15 to 25). As the youth create their common shared worldview in a society that is not engaged in a violent conflict, the worldview would be a peaceful one – in theory. But in the case of the emerging post-accord generation of the youth in Northern Ireland this is complicated by the temporal closeness of the conflict and the idea of 'triple reality of events' (Langer 1991, 195). According to Langer, this idea of triple reality of events manifests in the following way: "they happened, they were remembered, and they were heard". Although Langer's research is on the Holocaust and its aftermath, it is at least to some extent applicable to other traumatic contexts and scenarios and relates to generational remembering and reproducing the memory (of conflict and trauma) collectively. Therefore, the reality of the shared worldview of the emerging post-accord generation of the youth in Northern Ireland, if there is one, is a complex one in the concrete contexts of their everyday lives. The analysis aims to explore if there is a change between those who were children during the Troubles but had their formative years after the Agreement was signed and those whom themselves have no memories of the violent conflict.

The theoretical framework includes the concept of a generation since due to Northern Ireland's recent troubles, the generational differences in experiences of war and peace differ. The youth researched in this thesis are a part of the so-called 'generation of peace'. However, as they still have everyday experiences of polarization, segregation, and violence (McKnight & Schubotz 2017, 216) it has been suggested that a better way to describe the generation would therefore be the post-accord generation (McKeown & Taylor 2017, 415). McKeown and Taylor (ibid.) see the post-accord generation as those born after the agreement of 1998. In this research, applying Mannheim's theory, the term extends also those who were born before the agreement and had their formative years after 1998. The emerging post-accord generation has been investigated so far from the point of view of political socialization and identity formation among youth in the Ulster loyalist community (McAuley 2004). In an article published 14 years after McAuley's, similar terminology was used but a shared identity between the communities had emerged (McNicholl, Stevenson & Garry 2019).

The problems the emerging post-accord generation identify in terms of everyday peace are partially connected to their attitude formation. Attitude, according to Galtung (1958, 95–97), can be negative (hatred), neutral (detachment), positive (love), or something in between. It includes assumptions and feelings (Galtung 1996, 71–72). It has also been defined as a "mental and neutral state of readiness" (Allport 1935) providing a framework within which subsequent decisions are made (Lingle & Ostrom 1980). The attitude-behavior link has been explored in the past especially in the field of social psychology. Early theories on attitudes and behavior linked them so intrinsically, that one would not exist without the other (see Allport 1935). This has later been challenged but the theoretical connection between the two has remained (Fazio 1986). The attitude-behavior relationship has been labeled as a process that results in different behaviors according to the type of attitude an individual possesses and is further influenced by for example perceptions, memories, and events (Fazio 1986). As the survey data used in this research contains attitudes of the youth, the link to peaceful or violent behavior must be established to highlight the significance of this research.

In peace research the meaning of attitudes has been dealt with as part of Galtung's ABC-model of conflict formation (Galtung 1958, 78–101; 1996, 70–73). The model consists of three parts: the manifest behavior (B), the latent attitude (A), and contradiction/context/conflict (C). The theoretical model can be used to model conflict transformation: attitude from hatred to neutral or positive and behavior from violent to non-violent. The attitude-behavior connection in Galtung's model is related to the idea of everyday peace as an active process and a form of agency.

As a conclusion to the theoretical framework, the review of the literature indicates a gap in research (on the population level) regarding the everyday (peace) of the youth. The research that has been conducted on the everyday level in Northern Ireland (but is labeled as research on the micro-level, see Deglow 2016; Balcells, Daniels & Escribà-Folch 2016) is often focused on the extremes and violence and therefore does not fully represent the day-to-day level. The focus on the local level and agency benefits from the theoretical lens of the everyday. In an ideal situation, through everyday peace, the local *meanings* of peace can be discovered (Mac Ginty & Firchow 2017, 37) and harnessed for building peace in practice. Through combining approaches from different traditions, as outlined in this chapter, this research creates a frame for discovering local meanings of everyday peace.

4. Research methods: Open-ended survey data and thematic analysis

The methodology of this research and the logic behind choices made in the following chapters are described in this section. The data is explored through information given by ARK, the social policy hub of Northern Ireland that compiles the survey. Open-ended questions as a type of data are investigated and the method of thematic analysis and its use in this research is expanded. Finally, the ethical considerations, the researcher's positionality, and the limitations of the research are discussed.

4.1. Pre-collected survey data

The data used in this research derives from a survey compiled yearly by ARK. The Young Life and Times Survey (YLT) maps the attitudes of 16-year-olds in Northern Ireland. The social policy hub ARK is a joint effort by The Queen's University in Belfast and Ulster University and its primary purpose "is to increase the accessibility and use of academic data and research" (ARK 2019). The aim of the YLT survey is as follows:

All too often the opinions of young people are ignored when decisions are made about many of the issues involving them. However, the Young Life and Times Survey gives young people the chance to tell us about their experiences of school, and their views on politics, sectarianism and other social issues. (ARK 2018.)

The survey is cross-sectional, which means that the people answering the questions are different every time (Devine & Lloyd 2019). Change on the population level can, therefore, be observed. The survey includes some permanent questions, for example about community relations, but some of the questions asked differ from year to year, since the participants are asked for suggestions on the next survey's topics (Young Life and Times Survey 2017, 1) and because the different sections receive funding from for example the Department of Education, the Department of Justice and Queen's University of Belfast, and the funders have a say on what is asked in the survey (Young Life and Times Survey 2017, 3).

The survey has been conducted in its current form (separate from the Life and Times Survey of the adult population) since 2003. In addition to the statistical information, the survey has open-ended questions, one of them regarding community relations. The question asked of the 16-year-olds is: "*Is there anything else you would like to say about community relations in Northern Ireland?*". (ARK 2019.) The answers to this question will be examined in this research through the theoretical framework of everyday peace. In the survey, the two communities are labeled as Protestant and

Catholic, which some of the respondent's critique when given the opportunity in the open-ended question.

With a population-wide cross-sectional survey, observations of change on the individual level cannot be made. The downside of using a pre-made survey is having no influence over what is asked. Posing a different question to the data then limits the relevant answers. However, compared to conducting a survey for the purposes of this specific research, using a pre-made survey has the advantage of getting a large number of responses (around 800-1500 completed YLT surveys) each year from varying backgrounds and communities. Even with leaving out the irrelevant answers given to the question in the survey, the volume of answers to analyze remains significant. Through this survey data, observations about day-to-day lives of the youth cannot be made, the same would apply to conducting interviews on the topic. What can be observed, however, are the *meanings* given by the youth to everyday peace. The youth construct a reality of the everyday as they observe it and how they wish the situation would be. There is no telling whether that is 'the truth', it is also not the purpose of this research to seek an 'objective truth' but the youths' meanings of everyday peace. This data is suitable for looking at meanings of everyday peace due to the interconnectedness of community relations with the everyday and peace. It also provides a natural way for the youth to discuss what is significant for them at that moment. This is useful in investigating truly mundane perceptions of everyday peace since in principle the questions do not restrict their answers. It should be noted, however, that the youth do not use the concept of peace or everyday peace in their open-ended answers. Those are the analytical tools and theoretical resources used to analyze the empirical data of this thesis.

4.2. Open-ended questions

Roel Popping (2015, 25) states that open-ended answers are "statements[,] -- linguistic interactions[,] often framed by a sequence of questions (open and closed)." A pre-made open-ended question within a survey must be seen as a part of the logic and context of the survey and cannot be handled as independent. For that reason, the research also draws on earlier findings made on the basis of the survey and uses the statistical information collected in the survey to determine the years examined.

There are three types of open-ended questions: the technically open-ended, the apparent open-ended, and the really open-ended. The least structured of the three is the really open-ended, which the data in this research represents. This type is usually accompanied by a (set of) closed question(s) and the really open-ended questions ask the respondent to elaborate on their answer to the closed question(s).

It is possible that a really open-ended answer cannot even be understood without the closed question(s), for example, if the open-ended question simply asks the respondent to elaborate with a “Why?”. (Popping 2015, 25–26.) Due to this logic, the closed questions regarding community relations (introduced later) are included as background for the open-ended question.

The really open-ended questions allow for a (long) detailed answer but on the other hand, may result in a (short) answer that has little value for the analysis. The answers received are often descriptive in nature, exhibiting their knowledge, explanations, and motivations based on for example facts, attitudes, or motivations. Really open-ended questions are good for theory development and are often used at a pilot stage. (Popping 2015, 26.)

Paul Lazarsfeld (1935) identified six main functions of open-ended answers: clarifying the respondent’s meanings, singling out decisive aspects of an opinion, discovering the influences behind an opinion, determining complex attitude questions, interpreting motivations, and clarifying statistical relationships. In this analysis, at least three out of the six are relevant: discovering influences behind an opinion, interpreting motivations, and clarifying statistical relationships (through comparing the qualitative results to the quantitative data).

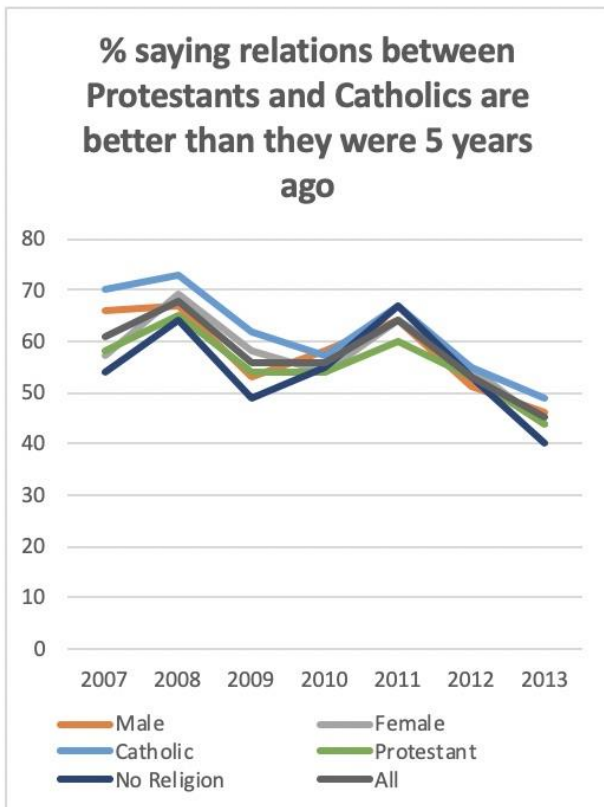
Open-ended questions have the **voluntary element** of answering because the section is non-mandatory. Examining open-ended answers reveal the scale of answers beyond an average demonstrated by statistical information. The open-ended question provides a platform for the youth to be heard, especially if they believe their point of view is being otherwise sidelined. As few respondents commented in their answers:

“We don't have a lot of say for being young adults. Teachers and other adults stick together and don't want your point of view.” (2009) and *“Young people should get to have their say more like this survey where the governments take the time to listen to their thoughts and feelings.”* (2011).

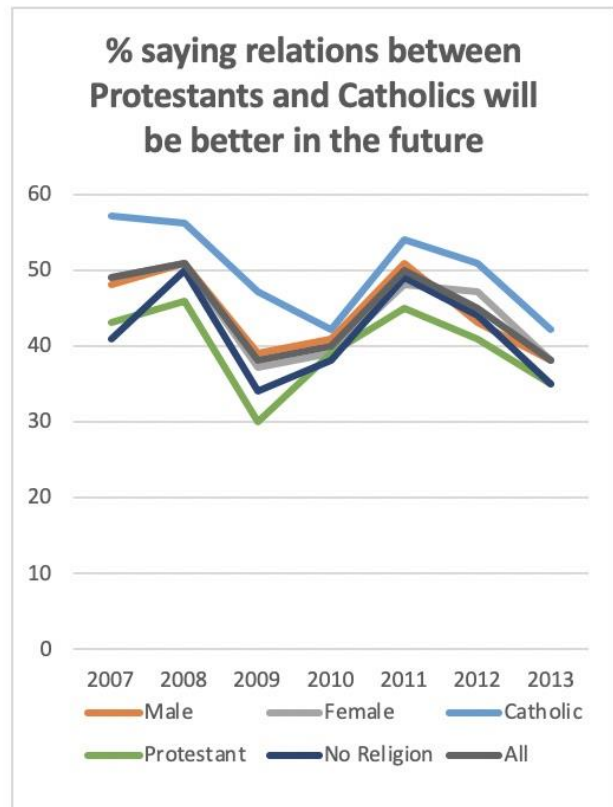
Therefore, it is important for this underused piece of data in an otherwise well-researched dataset to be analyzed and the voices of the youth heard and brought forward, as per the aim of the survey. The statistical information will serve a purpose in this research, although its role will be descriptive and supportive in the analysis of the open-ended questions. The descriptive statistics are ready-made by ARK and therefore no statistical analysis was done on the data. They present the numbers of observations and the point is not to compare their significance through numbers. The statistics also serve to demonstrate the changes in responses concerning the themes.

The analysis was conducted using thematic analysis methods applied to the answers to the open-ended question. The first step was to choose the years for analysis. Previous statistical analysis, to the review of the history of the peace process, and previous research on the topic, were relevant to making this decision. The years chosen for the analysis are the first Young Life and Times survey from 2003 (respondents born in 1987), 2009 (respondents born in 1993), the median year 2011 (respondents born in 1995), and the latest from 2018 (respondents born in 2002). The oldest and newest questionnaires have been chosen because when looking at change in the meanings youth give to everyday peace, getting as much distance between the two answers is potentially interesting in terms of results.

In addition to the years 2003 and 2018, 2009 and 2011 were chosen for the analysis. The two graphs (Graph 1 and Graph 2) on the following page were used in deciding the years. The median year between 2003 and 2018 is between 2010 and 2011. 2011 shows a positive peak in attitudes toward the past and future of community relations. The year 2009 was chosen since it represents a dip in attitudes compared to the surrounding years. The graphs also demonstrate that attitudinal change has not been linear and even between the two significant high points, there were lows. The respondents who answered the 2003 survey were born in February 1987, the 2009 respondents were born in February and March 1993. The 2011 respondents were born in February and March 1995, making them the first set of respondents born after the 1994 ceasefire, and the 2018 respondents were born in January, February and March of 2002. (See Schubotz 2003; 2009; 2011; Schubotz & McKnight 2018.)



Graph 1 Past community relations



Graph 2 Future community relations

Table 1 demonstrates the number of total surveys sent out, how many of them were answered and how many meaningful (excluding “no” and “N/A”) answers there were to the open-ended question. The percentages show that even as the amount of total sent out surveys and returned filled out surveys fluctuates, the percentage of open-ended answers remains around 30%.

Years	Total surveys	Completed	Response rate	Open-ended answers	Response rate
2003	1971	902	45,8 %	305	33,8 %
2009	3798	856	22,5 %	258	30,1 %
2011	3869	1434	37,1 %	433	30,2 %
2018	5152	1152	22,4 %	334	29,0 %

Table 1 Survey answers in the chosen years

4.3. Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is suggested to be a foundation method for qualitative inquiry (Braun & Clarke 2006, 78). There have been debates over whether it is its own scientific method, or a tool utilized in many other qualitative methods over the last several decades (Braun & Clarke 2006; Braun, Clarke & Weate 2016; Nowell et al. 2017; Terry et al. 2017). In this research, the method is understood as separate from other qualitative methods.

Thematic analysis can be described as a theoretically independent method of analysis (Terry et al. 2017, 7). It does not limit how a researcher collects or samples their data (Braun, Clarke & Weate 2016, 191). Due to that, it is most of all a method and not a methodology. This allows for applications to many theoretical frameworks and paradigms (Clarke & Braun 2017). The purpose of thematic analysis is to identify patterns across a dataset, the sample size should be sufficiently large (Clarke, Braun & Weate 2016). Thematic analysis is a fitting method for a wide range of data types, including textual data from a survey. It is well suited for identifying (reported) patterns in practices and for looking at people's perspectives on a topic (Braun, Clarke & Weate 2016, 193).

Thematic analysis is also a part of the big Q/small q debate, which concerns all qualitative research. Small q relies on a positivist approach, where knowledge derives first and foremost from experience and observation (Terry et al. 2017). The small q approach particularly concerns data creation and in thematic analysis aims for coding reliability (see Boyatzis 1998). The big Q allows for a more flexible and creative analysis process than the small q and is the one Braun and Clarke (2006) have developed and the one used in this research.

In this research, the analysis began in a deductive "top-down" manner and then moved onto an inductive "bottom-up" approach. The deductive model was derived directly from Mac Ginty's (2014) categorization of everyday peace, with its five subcategories of avoidance, ambiguity, blame deferral, telling, and ritualized politeness. This initially allowed for fewer interpretations of semantic meanings in the data. There is a division in thematic analysis between semantical and latent analysis (Braun, Clarke & Weate 2016, 192). The beginning of an analysis is often done on the semantical level, where codes label what is explicitly stated. The latent codes capture what is implied. (Terry et al. 2017, 9–10; Elliott 2018, 2852; Braun, Clarke & Weate 2016 192.)

In this research the aim is to see through the thematic analysis if the existing theory on everyday peace offers a sufficient lens for this specific context in Northern Ireland or if other themes emerge as more significant from the data. In addition to the main research question, in the analysis I will ask 1) if the youth construct other meanings of everyday peace than in existing theory, and see 2) if there is a change in their meaning-making between the years examined.

In my analysis I applied a six-phase process of thematic analysis (see Terry et al. 2017, 12–25). The process is not one way but often involves going back and forth between phases. Phase one is **familiarizing with the data**, the second is **code generation** where the data becomes more familiar

to the researcher, the third phase is preliminarily **constructing themes**, and the fourth **reviewing potential themes**. **Defining and naming the themes** is the fifth phase followed by the final sixth phase of **producing the report** where the final analysis is developed. The checklist for the thematic analysis process is outlined in Table 2.

The first phase is about making preliminary analytic observations, through which the second phase, the process of coding, begins. Codes are the smallest units of analysis and the point to deduct the data and organize it into patterns. Coding is described as “an organic and flexible process where good coding requires detailed engagement with the data” (Terry et al. 2017, 6). In thematic analysis not every line of data must have a code while on the other hand, one sentence may well have many codes. A good code contains sufficient information about the content of the data so that there is no need to refer back to the raw data (Terry et al. 2017, 17). Toward the end of phase two, the researcher ends up with a list of codes that “identify both patterning and diversity of relevant meaning within the dataset” (Terry et al. 2017, 18).

A “good code” has been described by Boyatzis (1998, 1) as capturing the qualitative richness of the phenomenon. I started the first coding process by determining a priori codes for the five main types of everyday peace (from Mac Ginty’s typology). The codes also included the year from which the piece of data was collected. The pattern for a code in this is survey year + letter(s) to identify the everyday peace category, for example, 03AV (for an observation related to avoidance in the data from 2003). In addition to the five codes, I created a category for possible new and relevant everyday peace-related observations and another category for mentions of current events that helped in grounding the observations in their time. As the coding progressed, the categories for new and interesting findings grew in number and became more thematically defined. In the end, I needed to go through the data twice to become fully immersed and to make sure that everything necessary was recorded. In practice, this meant that the analysis produced different categories of meanings of everyday peace than suggested by Mac Ginty (2014), which was the conceptual framework at the early stage of the empirical analysis. The first two phases were completed with the help of the qualitative data analysis program ATLAS.ti.

The third phase of the analysis included actively identifying and forming patterns of the codes created in the previous phase. The research question guided what kinds of clusters were or were not relevant in the analysis and helped with not getting lost in the rich and interesting data. Theme development was essentially combining codes into larger patterns and identifying a central organizing concept that

was shared among the codes in a theme. This once again helped with keeping the focus on what is relevant and what is not. At this point, however, the theme development was only beginning, and the themes likely to be readjusted as the analysis developed. A good theme is distinctive and has little spillover to other themes. (Terry et al. 2017, 18–21.) In this stage in the research, four themes were identified: blame deferring, respect, avoidance, and future.

Phase four started by reviewing the preliminary candidate themes collected in phase three. In this phase the themes became more closely defined and if necessary, some thrown out as irrelevant in relation to the research question. Avoidance was integrated with other themes as it did not meet the requirements set for an independent theme. At this stage, the whole picture of the research was checked to make sure the themes work well with the codes, data, and the research question. Firstly, the themes were examined on whether they capture the meaning of the codes clustered under them. The reviewing also involved revisiting the dataset to ensure the path to the codes and themes is logical and relevant. Checking that the themes correspond with the research question led to adjusting the question and making additions to it. This is due to the perhaps unexpected nature of the data, which is not known when the research question is decided on (Terry et al. 2017, 21–22). At this stage, the themes were finalized. In terms of software, the phase called for creative space for observing the themes and therefore the program of choice was an Excel chart.

Phase five included a shift from seeing the themes as lists of codes, as in previous phases, to a more interpretation focused stage. It included forming a story about the data through the collected themes. In this process, it was useful to write descriptions or abstracts of the themes to see if they are solid enough on their own to constitute a chapter of the analytic story. This process tests the depth and appeal of the theme, in other words, whether or not there is enough to say about it. As a consequence of this exercise, a theme may need to be adjusted, removed, or integrated into a subtheme. (Terry et al. 2017 22–23.) No major edits to the main themes needed to be made anymore.

The final sixth stage was writing the report. Terry et al. (2017, 25) list it as its own separate phase since it involves piecing together the data, analysis and previous literature to answer the research questions. Extracts from the data were used both analytically and illustratively to form the results of the research. The analytic use has an active role in tying the extracts to the literature and if they were removed, the analysis would not make sense. The illustrative way involves using extracts as part of the analytic frame to illustrate some key parts of the ‘story’ and if removed, the argument of the analysis would still make sense.

The checklist for good thematic analysis is as follows:

Phase	No.	Criteria
Transcription	1	The data have been transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts have been checked against the tapes for 'accuracy'
Coding	2	Each data item has been given equal attention in the coding process
		Themes have not been generated from a few vivid examples (an anecdotal approach), but instead the coding process has been thorough, inclusive and comprehensive
	4	All relevant extracts for each theme have been collated
	5	Themes have been checked against each other and back to the original dataset
	6	Themes are internally coherent, consistent, and distinctive
Analysis	7	Data have been analyzed – interpreted, made sense of – rather than just paraphrased or described
	8	Analysis and data match each other – the extracts illustrate the analytic claims
	9	Analysis tells a convincing and well-organized story about the data and topic
	10	A good balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts is provided
Overall	11	Enough time has been allocated to complete all phases of the analysis adequately, without rushing a phase or giving it a once-over-lightly
Written report	12	The assumptions about, and specific approach to, thematic analysis are clearly explicated
	13	There is a good fit between what you claim you do, and what you show you have done – i.e. described method and reported analysis are consistent
	14	The language and concepts used in the report are consistent with the epistemological position of the analysis
	15	The researcher is positioned as <i>active</i> in the research process; themes do not just 'emerge'

Table 2 The checklist for good thematic analysis (Adapted from Braun & Clarke 2006, 96).

4.4. Ethical considerations and limitations

Even though the data collection process did not involve personal contact with the youth in Northern Ireland, it is relevant to consider a few ethical points about the use and limitations of the data and the researcher's positionality. The responsibility of ethical data collection lies with ARK and as they have given free access to the wider audiences, the main responsibility of a researcher is to consider how the data is utilized and what a researcher does with that privilege.

In the context of this research, the ethical choices that must be considered relate especially to the role of the negative, racist, and prejudiced remarks that are a part of the rich dataset. In terms of everyday peace, they are a part of the opposing forces that cannot be discarded on the basis of not being positive enough, as this would direct the research into a biased territory. Including the negative is a part of the

responsibility a researcher has toward their subjects (Dauphinée 2007, 64–70). In this research, the negative attitudes have been included but they do not receive such attention as the constructive attitudes. Furthermore, identifying an attitude as right or wrong may lead to ignoring their subsequent or secondary effects (Dauphinée 2007, 94–95) or reinforce the negative (peace) versus positive (peace) binary. In this research process, special care has had to be taken to write about the communities in an equal manner and avoid biases in favor or against a community.

Reflexivity is in order to situate myself in terms of the research setting. As a researcher and an individual, the divided situation (of the everyday) in Northern Ireland is difficult to grasp. The historical closeness of a conflict is also unimaginable from the point of view of a Finn. My interest in Northern Ireland started during my bachelor's degree in international relations and in my bachelor's thesis, I researched the conflict formation of the Troubles on the basis of ready-made interviews. Northern Ireland was interesting to me initially because it is situated not only in the peaceful European bubble but also within the United Kingdom, yet I had heard so little about it. The accessibility and language of the data were also undeniably factors that had influenced the choice of the area. When transferring to peace and conflict studies, the point of view of the system level dominant in international relations got a contender from 'the local' and the everyday levels and allowed the idea for this research to form.

Being an outsider to the conflict situation, the data gathering, and the respondents has allowed for a level of detachedness and less emotional burden than looking at for example interviews. The data presents fragments of people's lives and therefore the responsibility of creating the story of meanings assigned to everyday peace lies with me.

5. Results: Blame deferring, respect and the future

The thematically organized analytical story of the open-ended survey answers consists of three main categories of what everyday peace means to the youth: blame deferring, respect, and the future. In addition to the main themes, each theme has its subthemes (as evident from Table 3). Blame deferring includes four subthemes that are generations, politics, area, and ‘the other’. The theme of blame deferring, and its subthemes, represent everyday peace through Mac Ginty’s (2014) theory. They are the factors that inhibit peace from prevailing in the everyday, according to the youth. The subthemes are representative of the combination of deductive and inductive analysis in this research.

Unlike blame deferring, the themes of respect and the future are derived from the data (on the basis of literature on everyday peace) and are found to be descriptive of the youth’s meanings of everyday peace in this context. They filled out the gaps that were not covered by Mac Ginty’s (2014) categories. Therefore, the research moved from normative constructions of peace to the direction of the local, where the respondents themselves observe and elaborate on their everyday. Those clues were then picked up and formed to represent the local meanings of everyday peace for the youth with the aid of a wide understanding of everyday peace. Respect includes cross-group friendship, neutrality, and pointlessness. The future includes hopes for (integrated) education as well as cross-community action, forgiveness, the transformation of symbols and dividers (such as murals, flags, and peace walls), and seeing the potential in themselves in affecting change. These themes were chosen because they reflect the theoretical point of view of everyday peace. As described in the previous section, after the first round of analysis of the data, themes outside the initial theoretical thematization started to rise as significant.

Main themes	Subthemes			
Blame deferring	Generations	Politics	Area	‘The other’
Respect	Cross-group friendship	Neutrality	Pointlessness	
The future	Integrated education and cross-community action	Forgiveness	Transformation of symbols and dividers	Youth as agents of change

Table 3 The main results of the analysis

Those who have taken the time to answer write mostly about the mundane and that the survey has not gathered too many answers from the extremes of sectarian and racist attitudes (they will be briefly addressed in chapter 6 ‘Discussion’). Nevertheless, the results give room for even contradictory statements made by the youth within a theme. The relevance of the local context within Northern

Ireland in relation to which kind of community you live in and where the community is located is prominent in the answers.

In this chapter, the data is considered through the everyday peace perspective and the important discussion on what has happened around the years examined is left to the sixth chapter. The division is made so that the focus remains on elaborating the meanings of everyday peace and only then followed by a more general discussion on the influence of the national and international levels on the everyday of the youth. However, it must be noted already at this point how intertwined the everyday is with the happenings outside their immediate everyday (locally, nationally and, internationally). The sense of “normal” is quite different than it would be in other contexts: *“It is probably as good as anywhere in the world. It's not perfect but it's fairly good.”* (2018). From an outsider’s point of view, the situation would not be classed as particularly good. Comparison with Scotland highlights how the normal can be very different very nearby: *“My brother is in Scotland and it doesn't matter what religion you are. He shares a flat with a number of boys with different beliefs. That's the way it should be.”* (2009).

The data challenges the binary of positive and negative peace and highlights especially positive peace as a utopia. A respondent describes the situation in Northern Ireland in 2009 in the following words: *“Just because there is no rioting on the streets like things used to be 10-15 yrs ago, doesn't mean it doesn't go on. It a sort or "dirty war" now, behind closed doors, on social networking sites and in the night clubs.”* (2009). Another describes the situation as having greatly improved *“although I would say that there is a long way to go before we reach peace.”* (2009). In this answer, peace is understood as an inherently positive concept and the respondent does not recognize this in their surrounding area.

5.1. Blame deferring

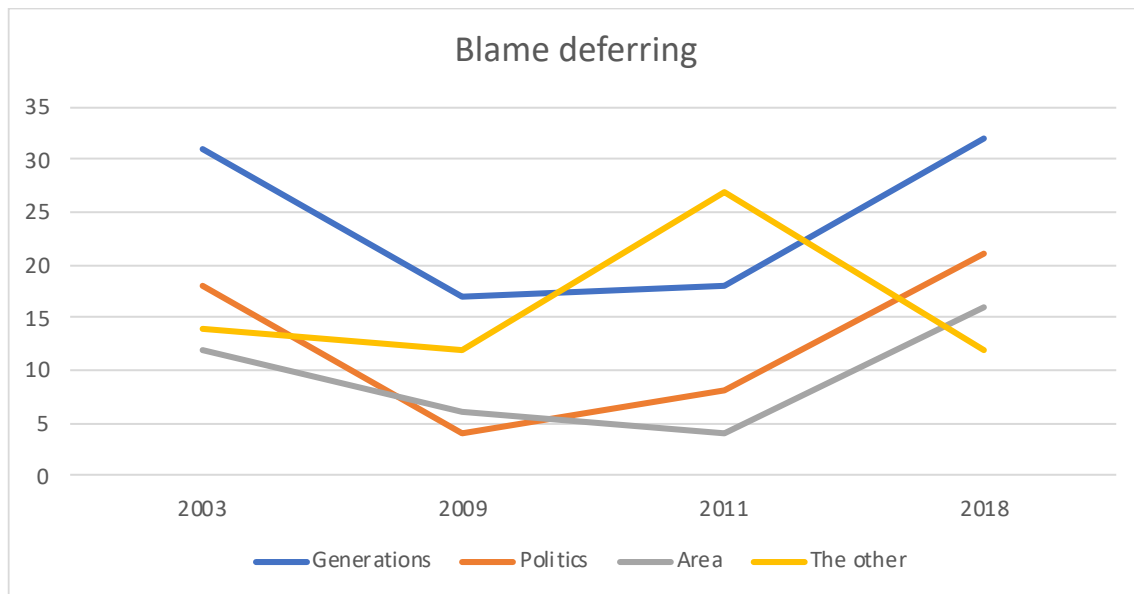
There is a recurring theme of the youth explaining what some of the challenges to everyday peace are and why it is not them but someone other. The two subcategories of deferring blame within and outside of community identified by Mac Ginty (2014) are grouped under a subtheme labeled ‘the other’. The subtheme also includes paramilitaries, which in some communities are the minority that the youth want to separate themselves from. In addition to ‘the other’, the youth name generational factors, politics, and the politicians as well as the area where one lives as things and people to blame. Generations include the older generations and peers of the youth. Politics and politicians also encompass policing, which is a highly politicized topic etched in the grievances of the past. The

subtheme of area includes respondents' views on the influence of rural and urban living and specific areas the youth see as problematic. In terms of everyday peace, these are concrete problem areas that influence negatively on community relations and everyday peace. In deferring blame, the youth distance themselves as a post-accord generation from the previous generations affected by the Troubles.

The category of blame deferral will be understood as blaming not only to appear more socially acceptable (Mac Ginty 2014), but also to note that attitudes, positive or negative, are not acquired out of thin air but they are influenced by peers, family, prominent community figures, areas (of residence) and political developments. The quest for finding meanings of everyday peace starts therefore from pointing out where changes need to be made in society or in the minds of the locals or where the youth see problems for everyday peace stemming from. As a part of the analytical story, this is the origin.

As elaborated in previous chapter, the main purpose of the statistics and graphs is to demonstrate the relationship between the years examined and the fluctuations in the numbers of answers. In graph 3 on the following page the generational aspect is mentioned often in 2003 and 2018 and less so in 2009 and 2011. A similar trend (but with smaller volume) is observable in deferring blame onto politics and politicians along with mentions of areas. Mentioning 'the other' hit a major peak in 2011 and then declined to the levels common in 2003, 2009, and 2018. The possible reasons behind these fluctuations are investigated in the Discussion chapter 6.

Aspects of the everyday have also been mapped in the YLT survey's closed questions. As background to the results of the qualitative thematic analysis, a few of the statistics concerning the everyday are presented in the following subthemes. As the open-ended questions shed light beyond the statistical information, to get an idea of how the youth have answered the open-ended questions, the statistics related to the subthemes are presented. The statistics explored focus on the frequency of socializing and nature of contact with the other in a cross-community project, contact preferences in neighborhoods, and school and finally perception of the youth's influence on local decision-making and PSNI's ability to keep the area safe.



Graph 3 Number of observations in each subcategory of ‘Blame deferring’ by year

5.1.1. Generations

The youth find themselves influenced negatively by the older generations. As Langer (1991) points out, an event is lived (in this case by the older generations), it is remembered, and it is told. The generations of conflict include several generations, at least the parents and grandparents of the respondents as well as other older family and community members. Intergenerational cultural learning (see Sharma 2017) from these older generations carry on the legacy of the divide to the lives of the youth: *“Everyone in the older generations is prejudice openly and they're driven [b]y hate.”* (2018). Another respondent feels nearly as strongly that the older generations are the primary reason for difficulties between some communities. Another states: *“Old habits die hard. And older generations run the country”* (2011). Two respondents in 2003 agree that hate and bad relations are harbored by those who have lived the Troubles and *“as the last generation dies off you will find that relations will get better.”*

There is a shared claim that their generation (the post-accord generation) is ‘better’ than the older generations: *“young people are very tolerant of diverse backgrounds yet due to old prejudices sticking around due to influences of the older generation relations cannot improve much more.”* (2018). As this quote demonstrates, for the youth, the concept of community relations extends beyond the two communities.

Another strand of answers deals with the way children are raised and that parents, grandparents, and other community members teach their children the prejudiced attitudes: “*young people are racist because they have seen their parents behaving in a racist way to a person from a different background.*” (2011). In a few answers, the youth describe the influence families have on the youth and children and as a result, they do not grow up questioning the divide but have sectarian values without knowing why.

However, the older generations do not receive all the blame: A portion of the youth also name their peers as having particularly bad relations. A respondent in 2018 explains that the situation is bad between the youth, even more so than with the elderly. This sentiment is shared in 2011, 2009, and 2003 however with a connotation that it is a minority that does this, not them¹ or their friends. It is also implied that the youth are perceived as troublemakers and therefore deferring blame onto the minority of youth that causes trouble: “*it is only a minority of hoods² who give this poor impression of us*” (2003).

In the typology of Mac Ginty (2014), *generational* blame deferring is categorized under shifting blame onto outsiders. As this subtheme has demonstrated, generational blame deferring is a form of everyday peace where the youth point out how the older generation or their peers keep up bad relations and utilize the tactic to point out they themselves like to uphold good relations. The observations made in terms of generational blame deferring also connect to the meanings of everyday peace through the nature of peace as an active process (Boulding 1989; Mitchell 2015). The link with everyday peace and violence is too closely bound in the eyes of the youth. The memory of the Troubles lives in the present day-to-day. Older generations and some peers are seen as unable to keep the process moving in a desirable direction, presumably towards a utopian positive peace.

5.1.2. Politics

Politics reflect the big cleavages of the surrounding society (PUL vs. CNR) instead of following the “right-wing” versus “left-wing” divide. A respondent believes that “*These politicians do not want to see an equal NI, because their very support base is centered around sectarian beliefs.*” (2009). The history of the Northern Ireland Assembly has been unstable with several suspensions in the lifetime of some of the respondents. The youth’s discontent towards the political system and the political

¹ The singular they is used in the analysis because the gender of the respondents is unknown and irrelevant in this context.
² Hoods being the local name for joyriding youth that are linked to criminality, especially in Belfast.

parties is evident regardless of the year in question. Topical events of the time are discussed in the answers relating to politics. In terms of everyday peace, the link with politics is on the practical level of decision-making or lack thereof.

In 2018 the youth comment particularly on the Northern Ireland Assembly's lengthy suspension. The politicians are viewed as childish and as responsible for the standstill of the positive development of community relations in general. *"Not much is gonna change without Government. What's the point of different political views without politics?"* (2018). However, the disagreements that lead to the suspension between 2017 and 2020 were not unique and therefore also in the other years the politicians are regarded with dismay: *"The Stormont government is hurting [the forgiveness process] by their own inability to work together for a better Northern Ireland"* (2003). In 2018 a respondent writes that as long as the opposing political parties quarrel and disrupt the country, community relations cannot be good. The youth call for consensus in Northern Ireland's politics to set an example for the surrounding society. A similar sentiment is shared by another respondent 15 years earlier:

If MP's would quit arseing about and fighting with each other they may be able to work something out for the better. It seems to me that they are more concerned about digging up dirt on their opposition than working together with open ears. (2003).

As an illustration of the political climate, an answer in 2011 describes an incident involving the then Mayor of Belfast, Sinn Féin's Niall Ó Donnghaile (only 25 years old at the time), refusing to give an award to a young female army cadet (see McCaffery 2011). *"Politician[s] make relations worse sometimes e.g., mayor of Belfast refusing to give a duke of Ed award to a[n] army cadet!"* (2011). One answer calls for people to decide for themselves who to live among and who to socialize with instead of letting politics determine it. The general conclusion on the attitudes toward the politics and politicians of Northern Ireland is of discontent and disbelief towards the elites. This reflects to the idea of studying the everyday as resistance to elitism (Richmond 2010) and further to the tactics of the individual as resistance to the strategies of the institutions (de Certeau 1984). Resistance to the situation at large constitutes as a form of everyday peace (see Berents 2015).

Policing is clustered with politics due to its close link with political developments in Northern Ireland. In 2003 a respondent blames bad community relations on the lack of a trustworthy police force. Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), a predominantly Protestant organization, was renamed as the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in 2001 with a 50:50 hiring policy from both communities (McEvoy 2008) from 2001 to 2011 (Belfast Telegraph 2019). Despite these changes, the mistrust

(especially from the Catholic community) persisted at least until 2007 when Sinn Féin voted to support the PSNI (McEvoy 2008). The rise of the Violent Dissident Republican (VDR) activity (2008–2011) has coincided with Sinn Féin’s decision to support the PSNI. As a consequence, dissident republicans (in opposition to the peace agreement) felt more and more marginalized. Still, in 2011, a respondent finds community relations to be problematic due to “*Community Police officers who side with the other religion --*”. As Table 4 demonstrates, in 2018, the divisions between religions and those without religion concerning the question “Does PSNI keep this area safe?” are not significant. In the strongly agree and agree options the difference is not significant, although the number of CNR respondents agreeing with the statement is slightly smaller than PUL or non-religious respondents. In the disagree and especially the strongly disagree options, the percentages are all altogether smaller but the CNR community stands out as disagreeing with the PSNI keeping their area safe.

	%			
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion	All together
Strongly agree	7	7	7	7
Agree	37	43	43	41
Neither	31	30	32	31
Disagree	11	9	10	10
Strongly disagree	10	5	3	6
I can't choose	4	6	6	5

Table 4 Does the PSNI keep the respondents’ area safe?

Source: adapted from ARK, https://www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/2018/Community_safety/PSNISAFE.html

Despite the current number of police officers from the CNR community being around 30% (Belfast Telegraph 2019), Table 4 shows that there is trust in the PSNI keeping the respondent’s area safe. “*Policing with the community*” being the slogan for the PSNI, the line between peace and violence is precarious, in particular in the CNR instances due to the prejudice deriving from the past. For some, the police represent peace and for others violence in their everyday.

In terms of everyday peace, the politics subtheme is based upon the youth’s discontent towards the system and representation. As politicians and the police are not seen as a part of local communities by the youth, the subtheme widens Mac Ginty’s definition of blame deferral. They could fit into the ambiguous shifting blame onto outsiders -category, but it is more specific than that. The youth point out the problem that is on a different level. The politicians and the police influence their everyday, but they are separate from it as representatives of the flawed system.

5.1.3. Area

The segregated urban residential spaces sometimes divided from each other by peace lines are a persisting problem for (everyday) peace between communities. Some suggest that the same segregated areas date back to the colonization of Ulster in the 17th Century (Robinson 1982) and that little has changed since (Roulston & Young 2013). *“It is very split. There is areas of my town that is known as a 'Protestant' or 'Catholic' estate”* (2018).

There are some structural issues that the youth find to restrict their encounters with members of the other communities. Some find that their areas are so separate from other communities that they do not have opportunities to meet ‘the other’. There are a few that say they are open to meeting people from outside their community and some say that they feel most comfortable among their own. A few respondents agree that *“There really aren't many opportunities to meet new people from other backgrounds”* (2009).

The ‘peaceableness’ of rural areas is contested in literature as it is in reality since rural communities differ from another. Boulding (2000) gives an example of a rural community in Northern Ireland where non-violence prevailed even during the Troubles through deliberate action to bridge the divide. On the other hand, it has been suggested that despite constant encounters with the other community in the rural setting, communication relied on ritualized politeness and avoidance of contentious topics, and no friendships were formed between communities (Harris 1972). In the post-accord era, the respondents find that the rural areas are more peaceful than the urban areas:

In my area there are not many problems with religion but in more urban areas there are a lot more problems. (2009)

In rural places, small towns etc. people live and work together successfully but perhaps there will always be certain divides. The main problems are in places like Belfast where people continue to hold sectarian opinions. (2003)

Significant levels of segregation do not occur in all urban communities. On the other hand, some residential areas carry the legacy of the conflict heavily. Areas in Belfast, most notably Shankill and the Falls, are sights of horrific violence that is carried in the collective memory of the community and the individual members. In Londonderry/Derry, such areas are Bogside and Creggan. This is also explained by a respondent: *“In cities and town especially L[ondon]Derry/D[erry] and Belfast*

tensions could be at their worse due to conflict always being there” (2018). These are also often the areas experiencing high levels of crime and in the forefront of the public security gap (Deglow 2016).

In terms of problems for everyday peace, the segregation of areas is seen as a rising issue in 2018 (see graph 3). As Table 5 demonstrates, the neighborhood diversity preferences of the youth have (mostly) increasingly been favoring mixed religious areas. The exact question asked of the youth was “Would you prefer to live in neighbourhood with people of only your own religion?” The trend of preferring to live with only members of their own religion has also been in decline. 2018 represents a turn as less youth want to live in a mixed neighborhood than in the previous year of 2011. What this adds to the blame deferral theme, is the context of what kinds of trends relate to preferences regarding areas of residence. As divided cities and areas reduce natural contact between residents and are therefore problematic, it is helpful to note, that when looking at the whole entity, the youth do have wishes for joint neighborhoods. However, as the open-ended answers show, not all areas are free for youth to venture into and therefore Williams’ (2015) call for peaceful everyday spaces is relevant. It has been applied in Northern Ireland for instance in the building of the peace bridge in Londonderry/Derry to tackle the experience of existing separate from ‘the other’.

Year	Neighbourhood diversity preferences			
	One religion	Mixed	Other	Don't know*
2003	35 %	53 %	5 %	8 %
2009	24 %	60 %	6 %	10 %
2011	22 %	64 %	7 %	8 %
2018	21 %	61 %	5 %	12 %

* includes the unanswered

Table 5 Neighborhood diversity preferences

Source: adapted from ARK, <https://www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/results/yltcomrel2.html>

5.1.4. ‘The other’

A significant number of answers deal with ‘the other’. This subcategory correlates partly with the definition of blame deferral given by Mac Ginty (2014): ‘The other’ refers to individuals or groups outside the respondent’s own community or a minority within the community. The difference here is that it is not only used by the respondent to shift blame to appear more socially acceptable but also, as with the other subcategories of blame deferral, as a way to point out where the youth identify problems. The common denominator among the answers is that the youth find fault in ‘the other’ and wish to separate themselves from the behavior and attitudes of ‘the other.’

The most often mentioned version of ‘the other’ is a minority group within a community. According to the youth, these minority groups hold sectarian values, perpetrate violence, and are generally stuck in the past. The many answers about the small minority can be summarized with an answer from 2009 “*It is only an idiotic minority trying to drag us back to hell.*” In this answer the attitudes towards those opposed to the process of peace are evident.

Paramilitaries are also grouped as ‘the other’. In 2003 a respondent states that paramilitaries take care of problems better than the police. Another respondent in 2003 also talks of paramilitary controlled estates. Although they are not mentioned after 2003, the intimidation and control of paramilitaries remain a part of the everyday for some (especially those living in working-class social housing estates) to this day (Deeney & Rutherford 2019; Heenan & Birrell 2011, 27). The year 2009 saw a rise in casualties that can be directly traced to be results of Loyalist and Republican paramilitary action, momentarily ending the declining trend of paramilitary violence (Police Service of Northern Ireland 2012; Police Service of Northern Ireland 2018). “*I strongly feel that these so called IRA are trying to destroy the peace process but they have no community support at all except from the people committing these crimes.*” (2009). In 2018 a respondent tells of events in their street where some unionist paramilitaries have lived and the car of a Sinn Féin representative has been burned. The respondent also says that even through both instances have been appropriately dealt with by the police, “*this just shows how Northern Ireland can't escape the past*”.

There is a tendency of the youth separating themselves from both (religious) communities and place themselves outside the divide. “*Protestant and Catholic communities sometimes make Christianity look bad because of their prejudice --*” (2018). The third group of youth place themselves in one group and blame the other (or its extreme’s) for the trouble caused to community relations. One respondent claims in 2011 that new generations of loyalists are to blame for stirring trouble, another in 2003 that they are prejudiced toward the Protestant community only because members of that community are prejudiced towards the respondent’s Catholic community.

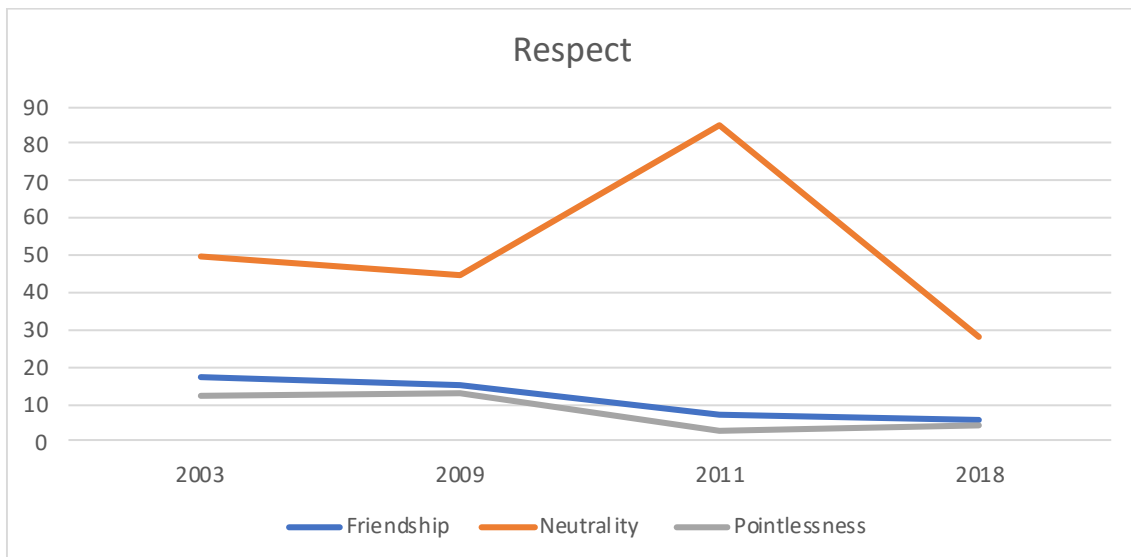
5.2. Respect

Finding responses that formed the category of respect in such a large number was perhaps the most surprising result of all, considering the more negative macro image of the situation in Northern Ireland. The range of attitudes classified as respect consists of indifference, acceptance, tolerance, coexistence, and friendship (William 2015) but also encompasses some of Mac Ginty’s (2014) forms

of everyday peace. These attitudes extend to a widened understanding of everyday peace shared by some youth which also includes other minority groups beyond the PUL and CNR communities in Northern Ireland. The survey responses were molded into three subcategories: cross-community friendship, neutrality, and pointlessness. As Graph 4 demonstrates, out of the three, neutrality is by far the largest category each year and has a significant peak in 2011. There is a declining trend in the youth discussing their friendships and the pointlessness of the situation. This could be seen as a sign of some positive attitudes becoming normalized and embedded in the everyday.

In the first subcategory, friendship is not measured but instead looked at as a meaningful and natural form of overcoming a divide between communities and extending peaceful attitudes into behavior in the everyday. The subcategory of neutrality, in addition to original observations, has absorbed a few of Mac Ginty's (2014) everyday peace categories. Some statements originally coded as avoidance, ambiguity, and ritualized politeness turned out to better fit a broader category of neutrality. The final subcategory of pointlessness supports the two others by highlighting the youth's attitudes on how senseless the situation is. In general, respect in this research is seen as a positive umbrella term for the subthemes elaborated above. In earlier literature, especially *the show of respect* has been seen as ceremonial and insincere (Goffman 1956; Whitman 2000). As stated before, this research the behavior related to the attitudes of the youth cannot be evaluated. Even so, in relation to everyday peace, the insincere show of respect as defined by Goffman and Whitman reflects the extreme form of ritualized politeness that only serves to maintain a façade of good manners. In this research, respect is seen as going beyond appearances to a deeper level of acceptance and tolerance.

As meanings of everyday peace are sought from the answers, the overarching conclusion is that for the youth, respect on the mundane level is a tool for separating themselves from those they view as causing the conflict (outlined in the previous theme of blame deferring). It is also a sphere where they can forge friendships in which to perform peaceful acts. A need for things to change for the better is observable from the answers. The subcategories have a natural overlap as they all relate back to the main category of respect. In the analytical story, this is the middle, where the story forms a bridge from the problems identified in the first theme to the final theme of the future. This category also answers the research question on meanings of respect in the everyday. The theme of respect paves the way for answering the final research question on the future of everyday peace.



Graph 4 Number of observations in each subcategory of ‘Respect’ by year

5.2.1. Cross-group friendship

Forming friendships is viewed as a successful outcome of meaningful contact between communities (Roulston & Young 2013). The subtheme builds upon Williams (2015) view of friendships as a form of everyday peace. The youth demonstrate an awareness of how things are generally viewed through negative community relations and therefore seek to challenge that assumption through their generation’s own experiences and attitudes. A respondent explains about their cross-community friendships “*I find that the community in which I live is welcoming towards my friends even though it is mostly Protestant*” (2018). Another states that their best friend is Catholic while the respondent is Protestant and that this divide has no effect on their relationship. The majority of respondents who describe their friendships express that they have friends in other communities and see everyone as equals, as exemplified by this answer: “*Most of my fri[en]ds are a different religion and come from different community backgrounds and this doesn't change my opinion on any of them.*” (2009).

A gap or a contradiction between generations and communities is identifiable from the answers of the youth. Some respondents have overcome the divide and made friends beyond their own community but are confronted by the structures and attitudes in place that inhibit the relationship: “*I have mates that live in other communities and I can't go to them because I am afraid of walking there. I would like to make friends with other communities and work with them*” (2003). Another respondent also from 2003 describes a similar situation where they treat their friends from the PUL community (‘the other’) in the same way as their Catholic friends *except* for talking about politics or football. Avoidance (see Mac Ginty 2014) is seen as a necessary tactic (see de Certeau 1984) employed by

individuals for personal safety (McGrellis 2005) or comfort. The avoidance of a topic or an area are examples of an intricate knowledge required to maintain the status quo in a sensitive situation. In this sense, the interwoven nature of peace and conflict is evident. They exist simultaneously and do not prohibit the other from existing, for better or for worse.

The answers classed as avoidance and elaborated on in the previous paragraph also reflect that friendships do not occur in a social (Blaylock et al. 2018) or spatial vacuum. They happen among other relationships and are therefore prone to influences of the system, the institutions, and the lifeworld (see chapter 3.1. and Fornäs 1993). In terms of spatiality, friendships take place and are formed for example in schools and the free time activities and therefore involve the before-mentioned influences. They involve physically moving from one area to another if visiting the friend outside formal activities. If the friend belongs to another community, this involves a level of potential threat to the youth. The youth employ tactics out of necessity in order to avoid escalating the situation unnecessarily. It is noteworthy that depictions of the everyday that were classed as avoidance in this very practical way were more common in 2003 than in other years.

Cross-community friendships are mainly evident in the data through the predictable PUL and CNR division but also with other communities. A few respondents noted that they have friends from diverse backgrounds and that they have a curious attitude toward the differences. *“I socialise with many people from different backgrounds than myself and find that I strongly appreciate their influence on my life.”* (2011). This subcategory shows the overlap between categories as this answer also demonstrates attitudes of tolerance and friendly curiosity that could also be classed as neutrality.

It is important to acknowledge that cross-community friendships in Northern Ireland may not be born out of thin air and can be seen as results of successful peacebuilding measures. *“I personally only came to be friends with people from the opposite religion in recent years and I have to admit, that I was quite foreign to people from the other religion at first. --”* (2003).

A natural place in the lifeworld of a teenager for making friends are school and hobbies. In Northern Ireland still only 7% of children attend mixed-faith schools (although the number was half that 20 years ago) (NICIE 2020). It has been demonstrated that cross-community friendships are more often formed in integrated schools (Blaylock et al. 2018). The segregation has also extended to free time activities however the youth are breaking the barriers. A respondent described their highland dance

group's good relations and collaboration with an Irish dance group. The dividedness of the everyday and the context-specific knowledge it requires is painfully evident in these answers.

5.2.2. Neutrality

As in the other categories of respect, many of the responses in the neutrality subcategory demonstrate the ability of the youth to move on from the past and live side-by-side: "*I just mind my own business and treat everyone the same.*" (2011). Equal treatment is a recurring topic within neutrality. As it is a major grievance of the past (especially concerning the CNR community), it is not a surprise that it is brought up. The similarity of the two communities is highlighted by a respondent writing "*we are all humans --.*" (2003). Another respondent highlights the equality argument in asking "*Isn't everyone supposed to be equal in the eyes of god?*" (2011). Religion is seen as both as the big dividing issue (although in some cases it simply serves as the marker of a group) and as something to be kept private in order for things to improve.

McGrellis (2005, 64) states that peace and tolerance are sometimes only observed through a "process of polite denial of aspects of identity and difference." This conclusion is similar to Mac Ginty's (2014) of avoidance, ambiguity, and ritualized politeness. The three include, in varying degrees, the ideas of concealing, evading, and limited revealing with the goal of keeping things civil. Those observations have in the light of the data been classified as neutrality.

Neutrality is also manifested through tolerance and indifference: "*To put it crudely, I just don't care about [community relations].*" (2009). The traditional idea of tolerance reflects negative attitudes toward 'the other' (Vogt 1997). Tolerance is defined as restraint towards something disliked or threatening in order to "maintain a social or political group or to promote harmony in a group" (Vogt 1997, 3). As this definition relies on the negative assumptions, it has been challenged and moved in a more positive direction. Tolerance therefore also includes the right to live a chosen lifestyle and communicate diverse opinions (Corbett 1982). Many respondents voice their tolerance toward the perceived 'other' in terms of community, ethnicity, and sexuality: "*I don't care if they are black, white, gay or straight if they treat me nice I'll do the same back*" (2011). Another positive definition of tolerance includes valuing differences and diversity in the various groups (Mummendey & Wenzel 1999). A respondent confirms this by stating: "*I think it would be really boring to stick to your own group of people because you wouldn't learn anything, like for example about their background, their history etc.*" (2009).

The youth consider neutrality as a personal attitude but also the shared attitude of their communities and residential areas:

I feel a sense of belonging in my own community and it made me very happy when many of the neighbours got together for a barbeque and spent some time together. The backgrounds of those attending was not at all important nor mentioned. (2018).

In the tight-knit communities of Northern Ireland, the conflict and trauma were and are lived most of all as a community. Therefore, it is noteworthy to everyday peace when the youth find respectful attitudes and behavior in their community in support of their personal attitudes and behavior.

5.2.3. 'Pointlessness'

What unites the findings in the pointless subcategory is the sense of disagreeing with the sectarian atmosphere. The extent of how senseless the youth see the situation in Northern Ireland ranges from not understanding why sectarianism exists to finding it totally unacceptable. The most common observation is that the divide is found to be pointless. A respondent explains people are and will grow to be tired of bomb scares, attacks, riots, and murders that relate to sectarianism and therefore people reach the conclusion that the divide is pointless. Another states: *"Don't see the point in fighting over religion or what colour of clothes people might be wearing, people should be able to live together and get on, not caring who is what"* (2003). This statement now only demonstrates how the youth wishes for respect, at least to the extent that people could coexist, but also how the past is in the present for the youth through symbols. For example, traditionally, the color orange is associated with the PUL community and green with the CNR community.

The not understanding the situation manifests through statements such as *"I still don't understand sectarianism - what makes Catholics different from Protestants so that violence is caused?"* (2009) and *"Can't understand why everyone has to fight and disagree, they should concentrate on world peace and poverty"* (2003). The latter especially draws the discussion away from the PUL vs. CNR community relations in Northern Ireland to the 'big issues' or the common needs shared by all communities.

The youth present arguments as to why the division is senseless. One respondent maintains that both religions in the end believe in the same things and the division is due to trivial issues. Another respondent questions the sense of having children leaving primary school choose between taking two

different tests (or both or none) to determine the rest of their school journeys. The respondent predicts this will “*highlight a difference in the communities that is not really there*” (2009). The state-run transfer test was abolished in 2008 resulting in the split system, with non-denominational schools favoring one test and Catholic schools favoring the other (Black 2016). A third respondent says, “*At times I feel that the divide in Northern Ireland is completely uncalled for as everyone has to walk up the same streets and work alongside one another.*” (2003). The respondent addresses mundane practices perhaps figuratively, but also historically these have been some of the sore points of the sectarian divide.

Finally, there is a section of answers that highlight the situation by statements such as “*Fighting sucks!*” (2009) or “*Why do people have to make such a big deal about what religion they are? It's stupid and petty.*” (2003). The youth are therefore beyond making arguments as to why the division is pointless and instead use direct, to the point language to get their meaning across.

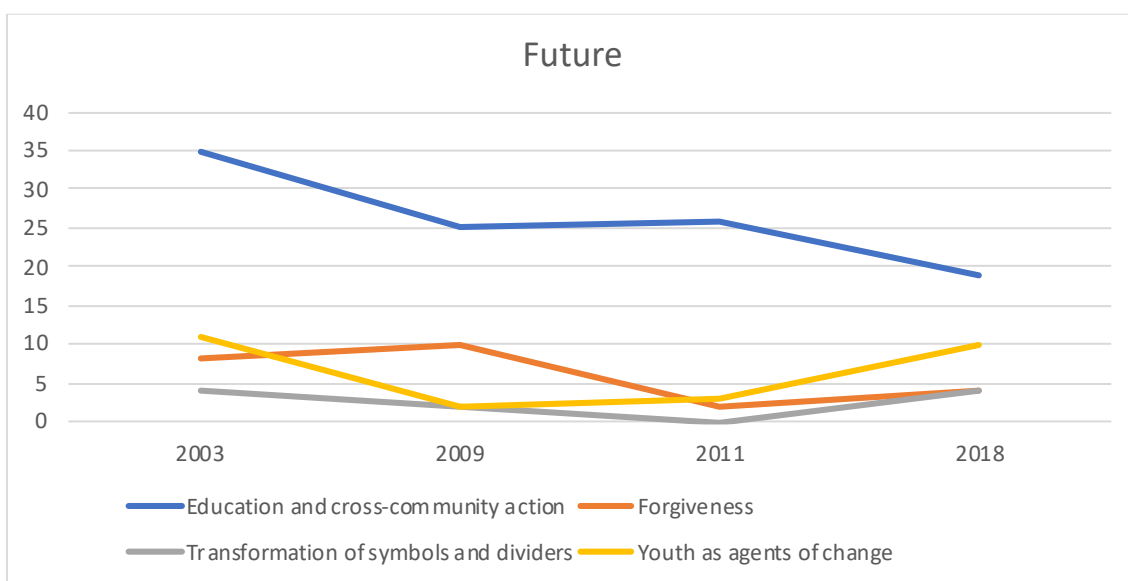
5.3. Future

Theoretically, the theme is derived from the idea of everyday peace as seen by Berents (2018, 141): “The future is conceptualised as a site of potentiality and resilience by many young people, grounded in experiences of the present”. The theme of the future was formed through words like *hope* and *should*. The future was therefore often not the word mentioned but implied. The theme is divided into four parts but could also be seen as two. The first three subthemes, (integrated) education and cross-community action, forgiveness, and transformation of symbols and dividers are parts of **what** the youth want to see changing in the future. The last subtheme of youth as agents of change is a part of a question **by whom**. In terms of the analytical story, this is the last part that explores perceptions of the future and meanings given to it in relation to everyday peace.

The everyday is a site of natural attitudes (see Husserl 1982), *doxa*, where many things are self-evident and taken for granted (Heller 1984, 204). In the data, this is reflected in statements like “*I believe the division which has existed, still exist and will likely exist for the majority of my lifetime within Northern Ireland.*” (2018). This assumption of what has always been still is and what will be is shared by many across the years examined. When this status quo of the everyday is questioned, the respondent has moved to *epistémé*. The everyday knowledge is challenged and presented with counterarguments. Ultimately this questioning may not lead to change but back to the conclusion of

the *doxa*. The respondent’s belief in a better future is an example of this. The ability of the youth to say what they want of the future is an overlooked form of resilience (Berents 2018).

Graph 5 shows that the subtheme of education and cross-community action has the largest number of answers despite its decline. The most answers concerning forgiveness were in 2009, and after a dip in 2011, it shows a careful ascend. The transformation of symbols and dividers also hit the bottom in 2011 but show signs of re-emergence. Youth as agents of change had its lowest point in 2009 and by 2018 has climbed to a number near the times it was mentioned in 2003. The contexts that can be seen to affect the answers will be examined in chapter 6.



Graph 5 Number of observations in each subcategory of ‘Future’ by year

5.3.1. (Integrated) education and cross-community action

The main topic discussed concerning what should be done to achieve a better future is *meaningful contact* between the communities. What the youth would like to see being done in the future is more education, both through school and otherwise, to bring the communities closer together. A respondent describes their own experiences of having gone to an integrated school and feels strongly that schools should not be segregated due to them creating problems and hatred in Northern Ireland. They also believe integrated education be the easiest way to improve community relations. A few respondents share the notion that they should be more widely available: “*I went to an Integrated Primary School and ALL schools should be like that.*” (2018). For the process of everyday peace, contact in the school between the youth of different communities is deemed significant: “*Education is the key to a future where understanding & tolerance reign. Without it life is set to continue in this downward spiral!*”

(2003). Another respondent mentions education in general as key and finishes by saying “*Understanding = harmony.*” (2011). Schools in Northern Ireland can be seen as either haven from controversies and conflict or, especially in the case of segregated schooling, sights of conflict reproduction (McGlynn 2009, 20).

Religious education is mentioned as needing development. Another finds that teaching has helped and the divide being patched by the religious teaching in their school: “*People just need to be informed of how actually similar Protestantism and Catholicism is because when we learnt about Catholicism in school, some were genuinely shocked about how similar they are.*” (2018). A respondent explains that their school has Catholic religious education as a compulsory topic in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) tests. This is considered “*discriminatory, as people who feel uncomfortable with this indoctrination would choose not to go to this school, resulting it remain[ing] for only Catholics*” (2011). Although religious education is a compulsory topic to be taught, the schools get to decide whether it is a mandatory subject to be taken as a GCSE (BBC Bitesize 2020).

The respondents discussed the need for cross-community programs and other kinds of positive cross-community involvement, especially for the youth. It is evident that there is a need for such events and spaces. The answers range from “*We need more cross community projects*” (2011) to more detailed suggestions and experiences of such events. The recommendations are not only limited to fellow youth but the older generations as well: “*The activities shouldn't just be held in schools but also in workplaces for adults*” (2018). A rural resident describes their experiences of little opportunity for contact with those outside of the immediate community, however “*[i]t has improved recently in my area with the development of a 'Drop-In' centre which aims to integrate young people more.*” (2009). Segregation in the rural setting has no peace walls that physically divide areas. In an analysis of Young Life and Times survey datasets from 2005 to 2009, Devine and Schubotz (2014) found that rural youth were more favorable to segregation than their urban counterparts. The findings also confirm that those who go to integrated schools and live in mixed areas (and have therefore had meaningful experiences) are more likely to reject sectarianism (ibid.). Therefore, the establishing of a place for meaningful contact in a rural setting seems to have helped with developing positive attitudes, at least in the eyes of this respondent.

The youth seem to believe that meaningful contact between communities creates positive results. This idea is in accordance with the contact-hypothesis, that has been widely applied in peacebuilding in

Northern Ireland. Therefore, it is possible that the youth have internalized the idea of positive contact equaling better community relations and subsequently peace in the everyday. Nevertheless, their experiences of contact in this data are overwhelmingly positive.

5.3.2. Forgiveness

Two preconditions for understanding and moving forward to a peaceful future are identified by the youth. The first is education: *“We can’t just forget the past and move on we need to be educated about the troubles and what actually happened, the honest truth not some lies that have been created to make one side not seem so bad and cover what they have done. Maybe then we can understand each other and move on.”* Recovering the truth is a contested topic. Some, especially in the nationalist community, favor the idea of a truth and reconciliation process in the style of South Africa to resolve past grievances (Smyth 2003). However, on the basis of the answers in the survey, the truth may not be the ultimate end-goal for the youth. Instead, finding an understanding of ‘the other’ so that peaceful coexistence would be possible seems significant.

The second precondition is forgiveness. *“Peace would happen if they would just forgive and forget”* (2003). For meanings of everyday peace, this creates yet another example of how the youth see themselves as separate from those they see still recreating the conflict. In the process of forgiveness, the symbols, rituals, and commemorations that recreate the conflict in the present are also adversely helpful for healing from the conflict (ibid.). As there has been no formal truth and reconciliation process the forgiveness process is still underway at least on the intergroup level (ibid.). Even though the youth themselves also call for moving on, they are unwillingly made to be conflict actors themselves from an early age (McEvoy-Levy 2007, 91). The still segregated schools, easily identifiable school uniforms (that call for ‘telling’) for example allow for the collective recreation of the conflict to this day (ibid.). The issue is also brought forward in remarks that call for forgetting the past and moving on. Therefore, both the tactic of avoidance regarding the past divisions and also a willingness to advance to something new are present. Moving on is often suggested to those actively engaged in intergroup conflict. It has proved difficult due to the long shadows of the past in the present day through symbols and for example the commemoration of certain dates (Cairns et al. 2005).

The past 20 years have seen apologies on an individual level and on a national level. Public apologies have been most notably given by the IRA in 2002 (apologizing for the injuring and killing of non-

combatants) and by David Cameron in 2010 (after the release of the Saville report that found the British Army's actions during Bloody Sunday in 1972 condemnable). "*Sometimes people still live in the past, and can't move on or say sorry.*" (2011). Forgiveness has been recognized as the first step which could then be followed by reconciliation (Hewstone et al. 2006) in a peace process.

5.3.3. Transformation of symbols and dividers

A view of the future of a respondent 2003 includes positive developments but with the exception of "*rioting on occasions e.g parades and football matches*". Parades are expressions of politico-cultural identity are examples of "culture as a site of struggle" (McQuaid 2015, 25). They are also part of the trans-generational collective identity memory (ibid.). Parades are held on both sides during the so-called marching season in the summer. They are an important yet controversial expression of the unionist culture, organized by organizations such as the Orange Order, the Royal Black Institution, and the Apprentice Boys of Derry (McEvoy 2008).

"I don't want to see any flags polluting my village in the summer, it's not normal and they're horrible looking. I also think the orange order should be banned. Not because I have any sectarian views towards them but I think they deliberately antagonize Catholics --" (2009).

Other cultural symbols include flags and murals. Flags are used as territorial markers or reinforcers of identity (see Melaugh 2013) and the Union flag of the United Kingdom is used by the unionists and the Irish tricolor by the nationalists. There was even a political dispute involving protest concerning how often the Union flag should be flown at Belfast City Hall (see Halliday & Ferguson 2016). Murals that decorate especially the most segregated areas in large cities are another sight of territorial marking, remembering, and recreating. A respondent notes that "*There is a very clear and obvious difference between celebrating one's culture and using it to perpetrate fear.*" (2018). Murals used to be commonly created by paramilitary organizations but during the peace process, they have begun to be replaced by murals promoting reconciliation and peace (Mitchell 2011). "*-- things like flags, parades, murals should all be banned on both sides.*" (2018).

Peace walls are also topic recurring as something the youth are hoping to disappear in the future. The dissembling of the walls will be a step of the peace process where the politicians will answer the call of some of the local communities. It will also test the peace line communities. The youth see the walls as unnecessarily divisive and the physical barrier as a cause of problems: "*Whilst peace walls are erected, there is always going to be lingering decision between two communities. Always going to be*

physically de[vided]” (2018). The issue with the walls is brought up by youth starting from 2009. Another youth calls for the takedown of the walls and adds that “*Generations to come may never meet someone from another religion because of it.*” (2018). In 2009, when the Government’s timetable for taking down the walls was still a few years away³, a respondent even feared there were going to be more walls erected. Leonard and McKnight (2011) explored the attitudes of 14-15-year-olds regarding peace walls and found that the youth had a wide range of attitudes concerning the existence of the walls. The answers were categorized into six discourses: the inclusionary-, exclusionary-, necessary-, ineffective-, temporary- and invisible walls. The physical dividers are only present in some youth’s everyday and therefore not discussed often in the data. However, for those whose lives they do influence, they appear to be seen as a part of the exclusionary narrative of peace walls. For those living in an area bordering a wall are affected in terms of less contact with those on the other side of the wall (ibid.). Concerning everyday peace, the consequences of enduring division is that the attitudes of the youth develop accordingly and may have a negative influence on their behavior.

5.3.4. Youth as agents of change

Without formal political representation on the elite level and often being spoken for rather than being able to speak themselves, the field of operation for the youth lies largely in the everyday spaces and encounters (Berents 2015). The youth see themselves as being in a transitional phase in the times of change in Northern Ireland (see McGrellis 2010) and recognize their responsibilities regarding that change. A respondent feels the heavy burden of this duty: “*Northern Ireland is socially, economically & politically broken. As a young person I feel like it should be my job to help fix Northern Ireland*” (2011). For the youth, resistance can reside in everyday routines (Berents 2015). Creating ways of empowering existence in the day-to-day beyond the reach of the state (ibid.) is an example of the youth’s opportunities concerning acts of everyday peace.

This transitional nature of youth, also called ‘waithood’ (Honwana 2012), includes going beyond (and even transgressing) the norms of childhood and navigating adult-centric structures of society (Berents 2015). Recognizing and most importantly finding space for the agency of the youth is paramount (ibid.). Instead of potential positive contributors to society, a respondent explains that the youth are seen as troublemakers by the authorities: “*The police assume if you are hanging around*

³ The Northern Ireland Assembly has agreed to taking down all peace walls by 2023 (BBC News 2013), however this promise was made before a 3-year suspension.

town at night, you're up to no good" (2011). This is a prime example of age-based exclusion or targeting (Berents 2015). However, the respondents themselves see their generations potential to affect positive change: a respondent calls for the right to vote for younger than 18-year-olds, as the decisions made affect their futures. The lack of opportunities to be heard is found troubling: "*Young people are angry and feel like they are not being listened to*" (2018). Table 6 was created on the basis of two tables made by YLT on the answers to the questions "Do you feel that you have any influence when it comes to any of the local decisions made in your neighbourhood?" asked in 2018 and "How strongly do you feel that you can influence decisions that affect your area?" asked in 2003. It highlights the powerlessness the youth experience concerning local decision-making especially in 2018. Only 11% of respondents felt that they had influence over local decisions made in their neighborhood. Correspondingly, 81% felt that they did not have influence and 8% chose the "don't know" answer. In 2003, the question was asked differently and therefore featured more choices for the youth. This has resulted in more answers in the option of neither. However, the largest category remains disagree, which means the youth do not feel that they have influence over decisions made over their area. These statistical observations serve to support the subtheme, as the table is calculated from all the answers to the question in 2003 and 2018 and therefore has a wider scope than the open-ended answers.

Year	Ability to influence local decisions			
	Yes/Agree	Neither	No/Disagree	Don't know
2003	24 %	34 %	42 %	1 %
2018	11 %	–	81 %	8 %

Table 6 Influence over the local decisions

Source: adapted from https://www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/2003/Social_Capital/INFLDEC.html and

In de Certeau's tactics and strategies, the youth are classed in the same category as adults through both groups being consumptive individuals. In the framework of everyday peace, on the other hand, the division is not only possible but relevant to make in order for those stuck in 'waithood' to be seen and heard as active parts of the process of peace. The youth have agile tactics in terms of everyday peace, sometimes perhaps more agile than their seniors on the very local and the private level. In order for those tactics to become strategies (of an institution), they must be heard on other levels in addition to the everyday. For this, there are institutional ways for youth to get involved before voting age such as the NI Youth Forum, the NI Youth Assembly, NI Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) Youth Panel, and Belfast City Council Youth Forum (Nidirect 2020) but perhaps the larger problem is seeing beyond youth as troublemakers in a state of 'waithood'.

The youth in general in this subcategory express an ‘us and them’ attitude toward the older generations that in their eyes are the ones slowing progress (see chapter 5.1.1). One respondent generalizes that the youth are more tolerant and have better relations “*with little help from their elders*” (2018). The youth separate themselves as a generation of change from the generations who experienced conflict and the generations to follow are predicted to live in a more peaceful society. “*My age group is working together to improve relations, so hopefully it will make a difference*” (2011). This idea of peace as agency and a process is essential to local meanings of everyday peace. Theorized by the likes of Boulding (1989) and Mac Ginty (2014), this finding ties the attitudes of the youth to a theoretical discussion that ultimately comes back to the everyday of the locals.

6. Discussion

The data gives a varied account of the meanings the youth in Northern Ireland – the post-accord generation – assign to their everyday. This demonstrates the value of variety in the respondents and therefore supports the use of open-ended survey data to answer the research questions. As per the logic of qualitative analysis, the research does not seek to give a generalization of the situation in Northern Ireland but offers a qualitative empirical interpretation of it from the youths' point of view. The qualitative analysis was supported by descriptive statistics, that is, counting the number of answers in each theme. From the youth's answers, the themes of blame deferring, respect, and the future rose as significant.

A significant result of the analysis is the change in the youth's interpretations of the divide between the two communities (PUL and CNR) separated by various contradictions. After critical examination the conclusion is that open-ended answers in the 2003 survey are somewhat different than those given in the later surveys (2009, 2011 and 2018). However, the differences are not as great as one would think and as some earlier research on the dataset would suggest (see Devine & Robinson 2012). Based on the exploration of change and the earlier analysis, it can be said, that increasingly, the divide is left behind by the post-accord generation and the youth seem willing to construct and belong to a new generation. The perception of community relations has also seen a change as it is increasingly seen as extending to all communities in Northern Ireland. *The characterizing feature of that new generation is its independence from the divisive attitudes and its willingness to not only live with the divide but actively participate in bringing the communities closer together in the everyday and beyond.*

There are significant commonalities between all of the years examined in the analysis. The differences lie especially in the forces opposing everyday peace: in racist remarks, stories of violence, and negative events influencing the everyday lives of the youth. There are also differences in future scenarios concerning peace. The changes seen by the youth on the national level reflect their everyday. Seeing the worsening of the situation is especially common in 2018 due somewhat to the Northern Ireland Assembly stalemate and most of all to the then looming Brexit and the possibility of a hard border. The youth see that without a functioning political leadership the future is uncertain. There is a shared call for consensus in politics to set an example for the society voiced by respondents in 2003, 2009, 2011 and 2018. Concerning peaceful developments, the border issue is seen as a potential site of renewed violence: *“I fear Brexit and the Irish border could make the violence of the*

troubles come back” (2018). The possible implications of Brexit are further discussed in the conclusion. As a counterweight to the negative outlook on future developments, the youth also present their wishes for a better future in 2018 in a similar manner to 2003. A better future is also discussed in 2009 and 2011.

The scenario of things staying the same is prevalent in 2003 and to an extent in 2018. In the case of 2003, the relatively recent peaceaccord influences the future scenarios and if one were to believe in the worsening of the situation in 2003, it would likely mean believing in re-escalation into violence. Therefore, the belief in things staying the same is expressed in statements such as: “*N[orthern] Ireland will never be peaceful*”.

The year 2003 differs from the other years in what is assumed normal and unchanging. One of Mac Ginty’s forms of everyday peace, ‘telling’, in 2003 includes descriptions of not being able to go out in certain areas or not being able to wear certain things without fear of what would be done to that person. Telling is present in other years as well but the perceived repercussions of doing things in the wrong way are more severe in 2003. Overall, the forces opposing everyday peace (such as sectarian threat) are more closely related to the times of the Troubles in 2003 than in the other years.

The year 2011 is interesting in terms of the trends with the numbers of answers concerning everyday peace. Referring back to Graph 3 (on blame deferring) and Graph 4 (on respect), both experienced a rise in answers concerning ‘the other’ and neutrality. As Graph 5 demonstrates, 2011 in general had fewer answers concerning the future. This is also the case with future scenarios may they be positive, neutral, or negative. It is somewhat contrary to the positive outlook on the future the answers in 2011 otherwise exhibit in Graph 2 (on community relations). The question explored is also different but even so, the differences are illustrative of the variation between the average created through statistical analysis of the questionnaire answers and the qualitative clustering of the voluntary-by-nature open-ended answers. A similar difference is observable in 2009, where Graph 2 on community relations shows a dip in the belief in a better future, whereas the positive future scenarios concerning the future of peace (in the everyday) are equal in amount to 2002 and 2018 in the open-ended answers analyzed. What could have had an overall influence on the feeling toward the future in the 2009 questionnaire was the economic crisis, explored in the upcoming section.

The changes and connections with current events are observable especially concerning education, immigration, and indirectly the economic crisis. In education, the difference is evident between 2003

and 2009. When in 2003 a respondent states: “*Also I did history GCSE one month ago. The NI section made me want to join politics and to represent the Catholic community.*” (2003). As in the results, education has arisen as a contentious but important topic concerning everyday peace and the future of peace. After the Troubles, the teaching of history was a potential minefield and therefore teachers avoided talking about it altogether (Crow 2004). By contrast, in 2009 a respondent writes “*From learning about -- the troubles for GCSE history, I think I learnt more about the conflict between Protestant and Catholic communities.*” (2009). Two points are distinguishable from this quote, firstly, that the respondent positions themselves outside of the divide and secondly, that either something has been done about the teaching or that the individual has less bias about the Troubles as the respondent in 2003.

Immigration arose as a prominent topic and a sight of negative attitudes in 2009. The trend of talking about immigrants continued to 2011. At the same time, on the economic front, the financial crisis resulted in Northern Ireland being the hardest-hit area in the United Kingdom and therefore having the deepest recession and the slowest recovery from the crisis (Campbell 2018). The recession after the financial crisis of 2008 has been shown to correlate with hardening attitudes toward immigration (see Isaksen 2019) Europe wide. A topic that seems to be particularly of concern to respondents in 2009 and 2011 is how immigrants hold jobs in Northern Ireland. As there is no physical border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, the happenings on one side influence the other. As in Northern Ireland, the number of Polish immigrants in Ireland rose as of the 2004 expansion of the European Union opened the borders to eastern and central European immigrants (McGinnity & Kingston 2017). A respondent states: “*Most people I know are racist, but we are all just people*” (2009). In 2011, the Polish population is mentioned either by a member of the Polish community talking of the bullying and prejudice they face, someone taking a stance on the outside and observing the racism, or by respondents themselves writing about the racist attitudes they have against the Polish minority. One respondent sees the Polish as an exception to racist attitudes in general: “*I don't think very many people are racist but in particular do not like the Polish community.*” The increase in racism in Northern Ireland has been noted earlier by Mussano (2004) who suggests that racist attitudes have always existed in Northern Ireland but have been masked previously by sectarianism. However, this is not to suggest Northern Ireland is a particularly racist area, but that the link between sectarianism and racism is close and the decline in one raises the other to be more prominent. It has also been suggested that sectarianism has not disappeared but rather exists alongside racism (McVeigh & Rolston 2007). Indeed, sectarianism has been named as racism and the two therefore being the flipsides of the same coin (ibid.). By 2018 at the latest, the concept of community relations

had expanded beyond PUL versus CNR and there were no longer statements as hateful as in the two preceding years.

Current events not captured by the data in 2018 due to them happening after that include the killing of a 29-year-old reporter Lyra McKee by a member of the New IRA and the rising trend of support for a united Ireland even among the PUL community due to Brexit. As Northern Ireland voted to remain in the EU referendum (BBC News 2016), the possibility of joining the Republic and therefore remaining in the EU has arisen as a more realistic opportunity (Duggan 2020). The latest 2011 census marked a tipping of the scales in the Protestant majority Catholic⁴ minority ratio in favor of the Catholic population and it is predicted that the Catholic community will become the majority in the next census in 2021 (Gordon 2018). This may also have an effect on more support for a united Ireland in the future.

As stated many times before, the youth, regardless of the year in question, wanted to distance themselves from the earlier generations that were engaged in the conflict. They see themselves as the generation after which there will be no more divide and that the generation that follows them will be better than any before. This idea grows more prominent the more years have passed after the conflict. This finding agrees with recent research (see Blaylock et al. 2018; Smith 2018; McNicholl, Stevenson & Garry 2019), the traditionally divided identity is challenged by a third identity outside CNR and PUL. In the future, this could be one where a person's identity is at a natural intersection of many groups, as it is also now, but with less concern over what a person can and cannot identify as.

Already in 2004, an inquiry on young people's views on sectarianism (based on the YLT survey) found some similar key changes (Ewart & Schubotz 2004) the youth want to happen as this research has. The topics were: more integrated schools, more informal mixing between schools, more cross-community contact, better facilities and activities for mixing (inclusive sports), banning territorial markers (flags, murals, etc.), and finally, more acknowledgment of compromises, commonalities, and commitments to a peaceful future (ibid.). The finding of Ewart and Schubotz (2004) support the argument that the generation of peace has existed since the early 2000s. On the basis of the analysis, no great difference between the years is identifiable and therefore the post-accord generation can be

⁴ The names used for the communities in the census are Protestant and Catholic due to measuring religious communities.

said to extend to those who had their formative years after the peace agreement but were born before it.

Some of the criticism pointed toward everyday peace includes that everyday peace accepts the conditions of conflict in which it is employed as a survival tactic to minimize the harmful effects of conflict instead of delving into transforming them. Due to the acceptance of the situation, it may in some cases stall the process of peace. (See Mac Ginty 2014.) In this context, the youth, due to their age, only accept the divide because they feel their powers to change things to be limited. They employ tactics to minimize harmful effects but also emphasize their generation's willingness for a better future.

It is also true, that the everyday operates within a larger power-structure and context. The issue with this is that everyday peace is seen as manifesting in small islands of civility while the larger context in the society is of structural violence. As this research has demonstrated, the everyday is linked with its surroundings and there is no claim that it should be handled as isolated. Therefore, even though everyday peace is local, whatever local may be, starting from a family or a group of friends to neighborhoods and communities, it is in constant interaction with the national and global in many fields of life.

The data presented opportunities for considering everyday peace beyond the framework presented in chapter 3. The youth make statements that can be regarded as humorous. As humor is context-specific, the risk of it not being understood is great (Hart, 2007). It is ambiguous by nature, and therefore the meanings and most of all the resistance aspect is in the eye of the beholder (ibid.). Humor also relates to attitudes through the emotions attitudes contain (see Galtung 1958). In divided situations, humor can unite but also cause divide when for example a joke is socially unacceptable (Hart 2007). The observations grouped as humor were initially marked as entertaining to the researcher and their context often needed additional information. This was not only due to the Northern Ireland specific remarks but to the age group and youth culture beyond the researcher's understanding. As an example of this, the statement "*sub2pewdiepie*" from 2018. The meaning ties the respondent to global youth culture, as it is meant as encouragement for others to start subscribing to a Youtuber. In terms of resistance to the situation at large, an answer from 2003 highlights the humorous yet severe attitude to the shadow of the Troubles in the youths' everyday lives: "*Prove to me that the VIRGIN Mary got pregnant. Then maybe religious things may take effect in my life.*" Most of the statements were perhaps not intended as humor but as a way for the youth to voice their

resistance to their surrounding situation. Humor as a form of resistance links to everyday peace through its practical use as a coping mechanism against oppression, prejudice, and the reigning power structures. Humor has also been regarded as a “true weapon of the weak” (Hart 2007, 1).

Humor studies have been applied to peace and conflict research especially through studies on non-violent action and protest (Sørensen 2008, 2017). In this case, as the survey data offers insights into attitudes and not behavior, action cannot be evaluated. Instead, the statements are seen as a part of the significance of the survey as an outlet for the youth as well as a meaning of everyday peace. In addition to being context-specific and a way to show resistance, humor is a derivative of everyday social interactions and situations and therefore fits the epistemological foundations of this research in addition to the framework of everyday peace well.

Thorough defining humor as a form of everyday peace as well as the deconstruction, reformulating, and enriching of Mac Ginty’s (2014) categories in the previous chapter, it can be said that the categorization of everyday peace is not complete as it was presented in chapter 3. The wide understanding of everyday peace formed through the results and discussion in this research question the mainstream understanding of everyday peace. Even though Mac Ginty’s (2014) the categories were embedded into the themes formulated in this research, the data has also given opportunities to produce more positive-nuanced themes and point out the limitations of the categories of everyday peace.

The local is not the same for all respondents of the YLT survey. For some, everyday peace is undoubtedly a survival tactic, as demonstrated by the suitability of Mac Ginty’s (2014) categorization as a starting point for this research. The analysis shows that ‘peaceableness’ exists also in the formally peaceful post-accord Northern Ireland. The youth display a level of agency that surpasses the idea of everyday peace as a coping mechanism and is in some parts closer to everyday peace diplomacy (Mac Ginty 2014). In this research, everyday peace is a set of attitudes that (hopefully) reflect to the respondents’ behavior in the everyday. The age category of the youth adds another layer of potential difficulties for their ideas on everyday peace being heard. On the other hand, it allows for out of the box ideas, for instance challenging the dividedness of intergroup relations (ibid.) and therefore and for building everyday diplomacy and sustaining peace beyond the official processes. It has been found that the youth want to be seen as ‘organic intellectuals’, diplomats, and negotiators (McEvoy-Levy 2007). In the context of this research, everyday peace is about pointing out where changes need to happen, respect towards others, and a better future.

7. Conclusion

The deep-rooted divide in Northern Ireland has sparked much interest in the research community. This research has delved into the meanings assigned to everyday peace by the youth during the 20 years after the peace agreement of 1998. Firstly, the youth find fault in the divisive structures, attitudes, and people in influential positions (in families, communities, and politics) that hinder the process of peace. Secondly, the youth bring forward their respectful attitudes and subsequent behavior through explaining about their intergroup friendships, through how tolerant they are and how little they care about the divide and how pointless it is. Thirdly, the youth talk about their wishes for the future, which include more mixing in schools and free time, forgiveness in order to move on, transforming divisive symbols and physical barriers, and finally discuss themselves as the makers of a more positive and peaceful future. The conclusion is that during the peace process, the youth have begun to construct a new identity beyond the old divide and therefore form a generation of peace. The meanings of everyday peace work toward that goal.

Brexit has already influenced perceptions of the constitutional future of Northern Ireland on the population level. Furthermore, on the basis of this research, following the development of attitudes, the fear is of renewed violence and not much positive is seen as a potential outcome of Brexit. This has been somewhat lessened by the disappearance of the threat of a hard border between Ireland and Northern Ireland. If the constitutional status of Northern Ireland is changed in the near future by a referendum (as the Agreement permits), the fear of renewed violence relates to the re-emergence of loyalist paramilitaries. The power structure would have then changed to please the republican paramilitaries and rendered them unnecessary, except in terms of 'defending' the CNR community. The continued funding from the EU for the peace process is needed to ground peace on every level, starting from the everyday, so that the anticipation of violence does not prove to be a reality.

As the analysis has revealed, the youth observe a variety of social problems that concern them in their daily lives pertaining everyday peace. They are often described as problems that they must face as individuals. However, these problems cannot be solved by the youth alone. As sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (2000, 39) has stated, these issues cannot be resolved with the resources available to the individuals in the everyday. These private issues need to be brought into a junction of the private (life-politics) and public (Politics with a capital 'P') where they are translated into the language of public issues and solutions are sought collectively (ibid.). The issues the youth face are located in

the field of life-politics. This lack of public space is typical for the age group but arguably also for the people of Northern Ireland as one community.

Everyday peace in the context of this research must be understood as a part of a large set of tools in peacebuilding. In terms of youth, everyday peace is a tool for those who have little power to challenge the system and therefore have to in some ways accept the status quo until they are out of 'waithood' and of an age where their voices are better heard. The importance of encouraging the youth to be a part of peacebuilding processes and finding new ways to support peace in the everyday cannot be emphasized enough. As the youth demonstrate an increasing ability to see past the divide, perhaps in time, as they grow to have a voice in society, it could be possible to retire naming the two communities and therefore enforcing their apparent difference. In the spirit of constructionist thinking, the language used to describe reality also actively shapes it. However, this requires a larger change in the society of Northern Ireland (as demonstrated by the answer to the research question on problems identified by the youth).

This research's normative goal was to bring forward new paths for continued research and potentially contribute to change. This research has in many instances found reasons to question the binary of the two communities in Northern Ireland as well as the binary of peace and violence. The data has, therefore, proved a fruitful ground for constructing local meanings of peace that are not restrained to normative constructions of peace as identified in the introduction. Through this research, the link between behavior and attitude cannot be observed in practice, and hence, it would be interesting to explore that relationship through further research. The concept of everyday peace that has been built upon and combined with earlier literature creates a comprehensive view of what everyday peace is in the context of Northern Ireland's youth. Humor as a form of everyday peace particularly in the case of Northern Ireland is an unexplored field and therefore could be further explored. These findings could be further investigated and developed through fieldwork in Northern Ireland.

There are ultimate situations of the everyday that transcend all divides because they are so fundamentally unchanged. They are situations such as death, suffering, struggle, guilt, and change (Jaspers 1951). Yet, sometimes they are forgotten:

In our day-to-day lives we often evade them, by closing our eyes and living as if they did not exist. We forget that we must die, forget our guilt, and forget that we are at the mercy of chance. We face only concrete situations and master them to our profit, we react to them by planning and acting in the world, under the impulsion of our practical interests. But to ultimate situations we react

either by obfuscation or, if we really apprehend them, by despair and rebirth: we become ourselves by a change in our consciousness of being (Jaspers 1951, 19–20).

Everyday peace is a natural process worth supporting and a change in the hearts and minds of the people is needed to further sustainable peace in the society. According to my empirical analysis, the post-accord youth have ideas and readiness to be that change. They are ready to overcome the divisions harbored by the older generations and keep the hope of peace alive.

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