Fighting without Guns? Political Autobiography in Contemporary Northern Ireland

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If it is the case that 'memoir has become *the* genre in the skittish period around the turn of the millennium',[1] then perhaps it is not so surprising that this genre has been well-represented in recent writing about the conflict in Northern Ireland. George Egerton has argued convincingly that political memoir is best understood as a 'polygenre', and that the 'difficulty of classifying memoir in tidy categories […] should not stand as an argument for diminishing its significance or impeding the development of a helpful body of criticism'.[2] Drawing on the work of Roy Pascal, Egerton insists that we can distinguish between political autobiography and memoir 'according to whether the focus is primarily inward, on the development of the self, as in the case of autobiography, or more external, on others, on events or deeds, as with memoir'.[3] Given that politicians' public lives are largely dominated by external events, it might be argued that they typically produce memoirs rather than authentic political autobiographies. Of the works studied in this chapter, some certainly contain sufficient authorial reflection on the development of the self, through the medium of a political career, to be interpreted as genuinely autobiographical, at least in part. And while a debate about definition and classification can be useful in constructing the parameters of this research, there is always the danger of neglecting the substance of autobiographical writing about the 'Troubles' by pursuing a semantic and theoretical cul-de-sac. In this essay, therefore, 'political autobiography' will be used in the popular sense of writing by protagonists or ex-protagonists of political life in Northern Ireland during the course of the 'Troubles', where this writing focuses on both external developments in the political and/or paramilitary world, and (at least, to some extent) the internal 'world' of the authorial self.

The argument of this chapter is predicated on the belief that Northern Ireland's perceived movement towards a 'post-conflict' phase of development has given fresh impetus to the long-established tradition of political autobiography and memoir produced by the history of Anglo-Irish relations. Indeed, there is already evidence to suggest that protagonists who were involved in the 'Troubles', whether as political or military actors, feel that the time is now ripe to tell their 'stories' to a wider public, to explain their motivations, and to try to shape the debate over the rights and wrongs of the conflict. This debate constitutes a critical aspect of political life in contemporary Northern Ireland, for competing struggles to *interpret* the conflict, its genesis and its outcome – if, indeed, it is definitively over – may prove to be a significant element that could become a substitute for the continuing prosecution of the conflict itself. The recent spate of publications chronicling the life stories of those closely involved in the 'Troubles', whether strictly autobiographical or not, raises a number of crucial issues to do with authorial motivation, the authenticity of the narrative voice, generational difference, and the diversity of experience reflected in 'parliamentary' as opposed to 'paramilitary' memoirs. This chapter will investigate some of these themes with reference to autobiographies published during the last three decades or so. The selection of authors is not meant to be either

exhaustive or representative, but will be illustrative of some key aspects of Northern Irish political autobiography. These texts may be described as 'political' in that they are intended to validate and promote the writers' particular political parties or ideological perspectives, whether in the present, the past, or both. Of course, these purposes may be complex and indeed contradictory, for there are examples of protagonists radically changing their political beliefs and allegiances over time, and of living a 'double life', ostensibly supporting the objectives of an organization, while secretly working to subvert these very same objectives.

Before we begin our discussion proper, it is necessary to make a few preliminary points about the scholarly uses of political autobiography. For contemporary historians and political scientists, the relevance and utility of studying Northern Irish autobiography is twofold. First, the process of writing one's life story in a scenario of recent traumatic conflict can be viewed as an effort to narrate or embody a 'collective aspiration', and can thus shed light on a broad set of political and organizational issues, alongside the expected subjective insights of conventional autobiography. Second, although professional historians, accustomed to the rigorous demands of a disciplined historiography, have displayed an understandable tendency to downplay the significance of political memoir, there is often a paucity of other reliable or authorised documentary evidence from which to work. In these circumstances, reliance upon the historian's usual injunction to collect, collate and evaluate documentary material may not always yield a complete picture. Indeed, it may be said to be in the nature of the Northern Ireland conflict, where a good deal of 'political' activity (particularly, but not exclusively, the use of violence for political ends) has been necessarily clandestine and conspiratorial, that much of what is now accepted by historians as 'conventional wisdom' has been gleaned from memoir and personal testimony. So while these accounts must be treated with due caution, and should not be automatically accepted as authoritative, not least because they are often mutually contradictory and sometimes internally inconsistent, they must be recognised as a genuine and valuable resource for researchers.

Some protagonists, especially those who have played leadership roles in various paramilitary organizations and associated political parties, have been the subjects of recent autobiography or biography, among them Gerry Adams, Martin McGuinness and Joe Cahill of the Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin, Gusty Spence and David Ervine of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Progressive Unionist Party, and Michael Stone of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) - Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF). These prominent activists have often been represented (and represented themselves) as spokesmen for larger organizations or communities. That is to say, in portraying themselves and their immediate or extended families as having been personally affected by the 'Troubles' – through family dislocation, the threat of violence or the legacy of actual violence – they act as the embodiments of communal political identities, shaped by resistance and suffering. In this they are conforming to what Roy Foster describes as the 'particularly Irish phenomenon' of conflating personal biography and national history. As he argues:

> the individual's experience as a kind of national microcosm comes up too insistently in Irish history and fiction not to be worth examining […]. This

> process can conceal […] very large and untested assumptions; it can also run the danger of collapsing alternative history into anecdote and psychobabble (or anecdotal psychobabble).[4]

With these cautionary words in mind, it is my intention here to examine the uses and abuses of written autobiography (as distinct from oral testimony) in the particular circumstances of a society emerging from a protracted, bitter and bloody conflict, underlining the 'mesh of nuance, complexity and contradiction involved when the stories of nations intersect with supposedly emblematic individuals'.[5] None of these issues are especially novel in discussions of Northern Ireland's evolving historical narrative and its relationship to the broader pattern of Anglo-Irish relations, through which prism the struggle to reshape and resolve this narrative must ultimately be understood. However, while this essay will occasionally infer this broader context, its main focus will necessarily be narrower.

Truth and reconciliation, or enduring conflict and spin

There is an ongoing, and increasingly prominent, debate in Northern Ireland about how best to remember or commemorate various aspects of the 'Troubles', a debate which is part of an ideological struggle to control the past and shape present and future narratives. While it is possible to argue that the most appropriate form of remembrance would be simply to forget the past and try to move on from a *tabula rasa*, this surely represents mere wishful thinking. A number of these thorny issues, as well as exercising government officials and ministers, have also had a deep popular resonance. They range from the general question of how to define 'victims' rights' in a political climate where 'perpetrators' and 'victims' are by no means universally acknowledged as such, to the suitability of models of 'truth and reconciliation', and include such specific problematic instances as the future (and by extension the past) of the site of Long Kesh or the Maze prison.[6] It is perhaps inevitable that this interlocking series of debates should be a central element not only in the recent political manoeuvrings of parties and protagonists, but also in their literary exercises, where two distinct trends are evident.

On the one hand, there may be a sincere effort on behalf of protagonists to draw a line in the sand, to move away from sterile ideological antagonism and inflexibility towards a self-critical reappraisal of previous commitments and shibboleths. On the other – and there is probably clearer evidence of this trend in the autobiographies under consideration here – writing in this genre and at this juncture may involve a large measure of self-justification, coupled with a display of continuing antagonism towards traditional enemies. Fionola Meredith, in an insightful interview with Richard English, author of a recent major study of the IRA based largely on interviews with republican activists, makes a telling point:

> Why then should we accept the 'authenticity' of their self-reflexive accounts as holding any more significance, insight or weight than a more 'objective' analysis? The experiential narrative offered by 'someone who's been through it' can be as

> duplicitous and untrustworthy as it is vivid. The truth-claim based on experience is often furthest from veracity.[7]

Meredith goes on to conclude that 'the most fundamental impulse in the stories of those who have committed politically-motivated violent atrocities will nearly always be self-justification. That's the difficulty with narrative accounts – their need for legitimacy means that the truths they offer are partial, loaded and incomplete'.[8] According to this view, the autobiographical design represents a more or less subtle attempt to use memoir as a proxy weapon in the ongoing ideological conflict. In short, for those who have played an active role in the 'Troubles', and who belong or have belonged to paramilitary organizations, autobiography can serve as an alternative, textual means of conducting the struggle and engaging the enemy by the force of argument rather than by the argument of force.

Although it is not the case that all of the recent political autobiographies to emerge from Northern Ireland have been written by paramilitary-linked individuals, it is nonetheless significant that this group has been largely to the fore. As Andrew Gamble points out, '[t]he political memoir has become an expected rite of passage for political celebrity, and also a highly profitable one'.[9] This element of celebrity (or notoriety), allied with a widespread unease about the financial gains that erstwhile paramilitaries might make from writing sensationalist accounts of their exploits, has been the subject of lively debate in recent times. Clearly, the perception that these individuals' active role in violent conflict is over has helped to convince them that the time is right to grapple textually with past actions and events, many of which have been too sensitive to discuss previously. However, it is still highly probable, except in the most self-critical cases, that these individuals will find it difficult to be absolutely frank about activities that were, after all, often illegal, and unlikely to cast them in a favourable light. And, of course, emotions continue to run high in an atmosphere where ideological differences over past deeds are never far from the surface of political discourse.

In reading these political autobiographies, therefore, we need to be alert to 'the deliberate gap in the narrative: the momentous elision, the leap in the story'.[10] The act of self writing often tempts authors onto the paths of 'vindication, exculpation and the byways of personal interest', whether intentionally or subconsciously, so that the sensitive reader needs to be ever mindful of the impulse towards 'reductionism, bias, the creation of a persona, special pleading and outright dishonesty in promoting or defending personal interests'.[11] It could be argued that 'political scientists should be like detectives, searching out the one true account of what happened', but since 'reality is constructed and experienced in so many different ways, determining what *actually* happened in any final sense is an aspiration impossible to achieve'.[12] While this may appear to political scientists and historians as a limitation of the genre, radical post-modernist criticism argues that insights can still be gained through the appraisal of autobiography in literary or psychological terms, 'with the development of identity and the presentation of personality serving rightfully as its principal function'.[13] The historiographical and literary dimensions are conjoined in the study of political autobiography, and critics should be aware of both of these elements, and adjust their scrutiny accordingly. As

Egerton puts it: 'With all the distortions to which this type of personal historiography is prey, the potential for honesty, accuracy and insight remains; for historians "truthfulness", however old-fashioned, ultimately stands as a fundamental critical concern in the evaluation of memoirs.'[14] So while there is almost always evidence in political autobiography of the tendency 'to retroject perspectives and motives, to rationalize behaviour, to attribute present meaning to past experience [….], to find a unity and pattern in the disorder of past political strife',[15] these issues of motivation and intentionality need to be interrogated. Whether being deliberately self-serving or manipulating the historical narrative for contemporary ideological purposes, 'the memoirist is almost invariably self-betrayed into the hands of the later historian'.[16]

One further point is worth noting: the autobiographies considered here are generally those of well-known public figures, recognised as emblematic of their communities. Smyth and Fay have edited a collection of 'personal accounts' by 'ordinary' people affected by or involved in the 'Troubles', testimonies which provide a rich and often moving source for understanding the ways in which public conflict impinges upon the lives of private citizens (although many of those interviewed cannot be categorised simplistically as 'victims').[17] Further growth in autobiographical writing of this kind, often attached to local and oral history projects, may well provide a useful means of addressing the legacy of the conflict in Northern Ireland. For example, the Ardoyne Commemoration Project has produced a monumental work, identifying some 83 people from the area who were killed during the 'Troubles', and interviewing several hundred family members, friends and residents, in order to ascertain the stories of these individuals' lives and deaths, and those of the bereaved.[18] Similarly, Joanne O'Brien's *A Matter of Minutes* (2002) features interview testimony and photographic portraits of 33 people whose lives were directly affected by the events of Bloody Sunday in 1972.[19] While this kind of autobiographical writing is not the primary focus of this chapter, its historical, political and potential therapeutic value should not be overlooked.

The ghostly autobiographer

One of the key questions prompted by the recent crop of political autobiographies in Northern Ireland relates to the authenticity of the authorial voice. In some cases there is little doubt that author and subject speak with the same narrative voice. Gerry Adams, for instance, was already a writer of some repute before he published his two volumes of political autobiography, *Before the Dawn: An Autobiography* (1996) and *Hope and History: Making Peace in Ireland* (2003). These were preceded by *Cage Eleven* (1990), a book based on his 'Brownie' articles written while he was an internee and then a convicted prisoner, and published in *Republican News* between 1975 and 1977. Although Adams gives the real names of some of his fellow internees in the book's introduction, he later claims that 'the main characters are fictional, but they and their escapades are my way of representing life as it was in Long Kesh'.[20] What is unclear, however, is the primary purpose of his fictionalising method: to evade, embellish or manipulate aspects of the truth. While casting little light on this question, Steve MacDonogh, Adams's editor and publisher, nevertheless characterises his literary development as a gradual movement away from factual writing towards fiction. Introducing Adams's *Selected Writings*

(1994), he explains that while *Falls Memories* (1982), a local history of a nationalist area of Belfast, has 'qualities of fiction', and *Cage Eleven* 'hover[s] between fact and fiction', *The Street and Other Stories* (1992) is 'more decidedly fictional'.[21]

In *Before the Dawn*, however, Adams's propensity to merge fact and fiction provoked controversy when he 'tried to capture in a short story something of the harsh reality of the campaign waged by the IRA against Britain's armed forces as they patrolled the streets of my home town' in the early 1970s.[22] Although this 'story', which recounts the internal moral questioning of an IRA sniper before he shoots a member of a British army patrol, is written in italics, it is not explicitly presented as pure fiction, the product of imagination rather than experience. Fintan O'Toole criticised the evasiveness of Adams's narrative style, saying: 'it is striking in itself that the IRA campaign on the streets of Belfast is not represented by bombs tearing civilians apart in restaurants, by children blown up on their way into the Falls Road baths or by "informers" having nail-studded clubs aimed at their flesh'.[23] There was, of course, a political rationale behind this approach; Adams could only present such details in 'fictional' form because of his steadfast denial that he has ever been a member of the IRA, despite the incredulity and derision of critics. Nevertheless, the strength of the critical reaction that greeted this aspect of his autobiographical style seems to have had an impact; certainly, no similar episode appears in *Hope and History*.

However authentic or otherwise these 'fictional' interludes in Adams's memoirs, there is little doubt that he himself is the author of the book.[24] By contrast, Michael Stone's autobiography, *None Shall Divide Us* (2003), is presented *as if* Stone himself had written it; his name alone appears on the cover and title page. However, in the introduction, journalist Karen McManus claims some sort of authorial status when she states: 'to my critics, of whom I expect there will be plenty, I would say just one thing: I do not intend this book to be a glorification of the life of Michael Stone. I do not intend this book to glamorise his life as a paramilitary.'[25] It is not unusual for autobiographies to be 'ghosted' by sympathetic journalists, of course, though such works tend to have celebrities or sportspersons as their subject, or individuals not otherwise known for their literary dexterity. It is also usual for this relationship between 'author' and ghost-writer to be made plain to the reader. In the case of *None Shall Divide Us* there is considerable ambiguity, implying that 'ghost' in this context may also refer to something insubstantial or immaterial in the text. Two ghostly aspects suggest themselves. First, there is the recurring presence of the dead, both the victims of Stone's actions and other loyalists, often killed as a result of internal feuding; second, Stone adopts a fantastical approach to alleged planned activities of the UDA, providing significant (though unverifiable) detail about aborted operations and potential targets, but often ignoring the actual history of violent attacks carried out by loyalists which had real consequences and claimed human victims. As one reviewer shrewdly recognised, 'this is not a psychological portrait of a killer, but it is the raw material from which such a book might be written. Everywhere there are stories which an astute reader will understand better than the writer and his assistant have done.'[26]

The prospect of further sensationalist 'confessions' of the 'as told to' variety from notorious protagonists in the Northern Irish conflict has been raised by reports of publicity agent Stephen Richards' desire to add republican and loyalist (ex-)paramilitaries to his roster of (ex-)criminals in Britain.[27] Indeed, Stone and Johnny Adair, the infamous ex-UDA leader in West Belfast, will apparently soon be available for 'event launches, private audiences, and after-dinner speaking', alongside the provision of 'anti-terrorist security advice'![28] This trend towards the conflation of celebrity, violent crime and sensationalism is now well-established in mainstream British popular culture, as evidenced by the glamorisation of gangsterism in recent films such as *Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels* (1999) and the huge growth in the 'true crime' genre. In the context of Northern Ireland, a variation on this theme has been the growth of memoirs by former British Army and security force personnel, and it was probably inevitable, though nonetheless regrettable, that (ex-)paramilitaries would also haul themselves onto the bandwagon. During the summer of 2003 it was reported that a victims' group, Relatives for Justice, was seeking legal advice to try and prevent Stone from profiting from publication of *None Shall Divide Us*, but the Northern Ireland Office issued a statement indicating that the Proceeds of Crime Act 'does not cover the writing of a memoir, however profitable'.[29]

The final, telling example of the ambiguity of the authorial voice in Northern Irish political memoir relates to Roy Garland's 2001 biography of Gusty Spence, former UVF figure and leading Shankill loyalist. Garland is both personally and politically close to his subject, and much of the material in the book consists of edited transcripts of the men's 'conversations', a word Garland uses advisedly, arguing that '"interview" seems much too formal a description of our many discussions'.[30] The copious use of this form of autobiographical testimony, reproduced in the first person, and the relative lack of interpretative text from Garland, means that the reader is constantly encouraged to read this book as if Spence himself were the author. Garland's obvious admiration for his subject does not prevent him from stating that 'in writing this book it has not been my intention to glamourise or lionise Gusty Spence, nor would he want this',[31] and it is certainly no hagiography. However, it could be that greater critical distance between biographer and subject would ultimately have left less room for ambiguity concerning who was really directing and narrating the project. In the case of both Stone and Spence, the authentic 'voice' of the subject has clearly been mediated or filtered by a journalist/biographer, a fact which the reader needs to consider when passing overall judgment on these books. What is much more difficult to discern, however, is the precise nature of the relationship between mediator and subject. Who is really in control of the structure and content of the narrative? Who speaks through whom? Paradoxically, it does seem as though Spence might enjoy a greater degree of control over the narrative structure of Garland's 'biography' than Stone does over his own 'autobiography'.

The Assembly and the armalite

In many respects recent political autobiography from Northern Ireland can be understood as a sub-genre of the growing trend for politicians worldwide to recount their 'inside' stories of government or party intrigue. In the case of Northern Ireland, however, locally

elected politicians did not hold ministerial office between the prorogation of Stormont in 1972 and the formation of the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1999 (with the exception of the brief power-sharing Executive of January-May 1974). Consequently, the focus of their memoirs is necessarily different. In an earlier era, Unionist Prime Minister Terence O'Neill published a conventional autobiography in 1972, as did his successor Brian Faulkner, whose *Memoirs of a Statesman* (1978) belongs to the mainstream genre of British cabinet ministerial memoir. At a sub-prime ministerial level, however, many of the elected politicians who have published autobiographies have also played prominent roles in extra-parliamentary politics, whether involving paramilitarism or not. Examples include Social Democratic and Labour Party founder-member and short-lived minister in the 1974 Executive, Paddy Devlin, who was interned for IRA activity in the 1940s, and Bernadette Devlin (no relation), who was an activist in the student-based People's Democracy civil rights movement before her election to Westminster for Mid-Ulster in 1969. It is notable that in the former's *Straight Left* (1993) and the latter's *The Price of My Soul* (1969) there is little scope for the discussion of policy-making and decision-taking that is the staple of memoirs by London- and Dublin-based politicians. And while there are stories of internal party manoeuvring and policy formation – Paddy Devlin devotes many pages to the Sunningdale negotiations and his experiences as a departmental head in the Executive – these are overshadowed by the frustrations engendered by violent conflict and the political stalemate it perpetuated.

In some senses, this stalemate grants Northern Irish political autobiographers the freedom to concentrate on 'what might have been' rather than the minutiae of 'who said what to whom and when'. In a peculiar fashion, the absence of parliamentary events to rationalise, explain and order into a coherent narrative leaves something of a lacuna, which is often filled by the autobiographer's own imaginative scheme. From their different perspectives, both Faulkner and Paddy Devlin underline the pathos surrounding the fate of moderate politicians and parties eschewing the use of violence in the 1970s. Faulkner, having seen his power-sharing scheme fatally undermined by the Ulster Workers' Council strike, and his party reduced to minority status within unionism, nonetheless remains confident that 'we will come back to this point again'.[32] Given his untimely death before the publication of his memoir, we can only speculate as to his likely frustration at the failure of the 'reasonable majority' of unionists and nationalists 'to make its influence effective' (281), a failure that was to last for the best part of two decades. It is equally tempting to imagine how Faulkner would have reacted to the Belfast Agreement, and to the post-Agreement travails of David Trimble. Writing from a socialist perspective, Paddy Devlin also laments his inability to break the tribal solidarities that have hamstrung political development in Northern Ireland: 'I don't really know how much I achieved in my career. I have a great feeling of disappointment that a labour movement did not emerge to break the cycle of sectarian conflict.'[33] This sense of political stagnation represents the 'gap in the narrative' forced upon an unwilling subject, largely due to the unyielding persistence of inter-communal conflict.

Both men remain unapologetic about their commitment to failed political initiatives, but share a self-critical attitude to their earlier beliefs and actions. For Faulkner, there is the frank and depressing realisation that 'Unionists are to blame for their lack of generosity

when it lay in their power to be generous, for being frightened and negative in their politics when a positive approach could have tapped the potential of the whole Ulster community' (282). The valedictory tone is obvious, even though he might still have harboured hopes of making a political impact. His critique of his earlier readiness to accept the 'old dogmas' of unionism is heartfelt, and there appears to be a genuine effort to grapple with change, personal as well as political: 'I have not tried to reinterpret everything I did in the light of the views I now hold. It has seemed more valuable to set out my reasoning at the time for taking particular actions, whether or not I would now go along with that reasoning' (282-3). Devlin, conversely, is highly critical of his past affiliation with militant republicanism and his aggressive personal style, but although it remained his 'greatest wish that some day in the future a labour movement will effectively assert itself in Northern Ireland' (290), he realises that this socialist dawn is as far, if not further, away than ever. One of the political lessons that both men draw from their experiences is the need for moderates of all hues to support each other. Devlin is unstinting in his praise for Faulkner's courage and leadership, hailing him as 'by far the most effective politician ever to walk the corridors of Stormont' (251). Faulkner, though less effusive, nevertheless acknowledges that he 'always got on very well with him [Devlin] and respected his down to earth common-sense' (270). Between them, these two autobiographies tackle political failure head-on and unflinchingly confront the complex trajectories of long political careers, marked by changing ideological principles and personal soul-searching. *Straight Left* in particular is a substantial account of what may be considered a relatively insubstantial political career, especially if judged by the conventional criteria of parliamentary or ministerial memoir.

Evidently, the interpretative frameworks applied to Northern Irish parliamentary memoirs differ from those applied to paramilitary autobiographies. Dismissive of the perceived political compromises of those such as Devlin and Faulkner, these individuals have stories of steadfastness and sacrifice to tell. They are keen, of course, to justify their uncompromising stances, but their political lives are intimately connected to their movements' use of violence. An early instance of this genre is Seán MacStiofáin's *Revolutionary in Ireland* (1975), a work which certainly includes some *political* reflection on issues such as the split in the Republican movement in 1969-70 and the talks between IRA leaders and British cabinet ministers in July 1972, but which is also deeply concerned with the *military* strategy and tactics of the IRA's campaign against the state and its security forces. Electoral and parliamentary politics, conversely, are treated with barely concealed disdain, though that is hardly surprising for a self-styled nationalist revolutionary.

It is particularly instructive to compare MacStiofáin's autobiography with that of Gerry Adams, given their prominent leadership roles in the Provisional Republican movement, and the lengthy gap between their respective publications. Adams, of course, continues to deny ever having played a prominent role in the IRA, or indeed having been a member at all, although his credibility on this issue has been undermined by a succession of biographers and commentators.[34] In fact it is harder than ever to take seriously Adams's claims, given Martin McGuinness' recent admission that he *was* a significant IRA commander in Derry at the time of Bloody Sunday, an admission that perhaps heralds a

change of heart at the apex of the organization. Nevertheless, as O'Toole has observed, *Before the Dawn* 'almost entirely glossed over' Adams's IRA career, a view endorsed by Foster, who claims that he is 'unnecessarily coy' about the IRA and likens his memoir to 'a biography of Field Marshal Montgomery that leaves out the British Army'.[35] The political subtext was clear to all, however. The context of the developing peace process, and the perceived requirement to maintain Adams's position as the Provisionals' unchallenged leader, capable of delivering an IRA ceasefire and committing the movement to his new strategy, meant that 'these incredible assertions were allowed to pass with no more than mild expressions of skepticism'.[36] If Adams was to be accepted locally and internationally as a genuine agent of peace *and* compromise, then it suited the purposes of governments in London, Dublin and Washington, as well as republicans and even pro-Agreement unionists, to collude in this necessary fiction.

However, as O'Toole notes, 'the danger has always been that the tacit agreement to ignore the IRA past of the Sinn Féin leader would encourage a larger and more profound act of denial. If Adams did not have to account for his involvement with the IRA, then perhaps the IRA itself could remain unaccountable.'[37] Hence his view that the crisis in the peace process in 2002-03, which coincided with further allegations about Adams's IRA past, published in Ed Moloney's *A Secret History of the IRA* (2003), have combined to bring to an end a period when such ambiguity was 'a useful instrument of the peace process'.[38] Six years after the signing of the Belfast Agreement, and with the institutions set up by it suspended again, largely as a result of unionist fears about continuing IRA activity, this issue of accountability for past actions remains central to Northern Ireland's political future. Certainly, this question is not confined to the duality inherent in Adams's personal political history, and his efforts to maintain 'creative ambiguity' about his relationship with the 'armed struggle', but this element of the debate can be seen as a microcosm of broader difficulties.

If Adams' autobiographical writing is guarded and opaque, this is explicable in terms of his perception of the *political* imperatives of the republican movement at this particular juncture, though this does not of itself render such an approach justifiable to a wider readership. Foster acknowledges that 'since the Adams story is a small part of the story of modern Ireland, so the fact that it supplies – yet again – a narrative of evasions is only appropriate'.[39] Speaking of Adams's lack of clarity regarding his past, he suggests that 'it would probably be unrealistic to expect more', [40] yet readers are left demanding greater transparency and less apparent duplicity. O'Toole reinforces this point, noting that 'political autobiographies should be written when the hurly-burly's done. They should tell a story whose ending is known, reflect on something that has actually been achieved.'[41] Instead, the end of Adams's story remains unpredictable, because as he himself recognises in the foreword to *Before the Dawn*:

> I am also conscious that the elements of conflict remain today and retain their potency. For this reason I must write nothing which would place in jeopardy the liberties or the lives of others, so I am necessarily constrained. It is probably an invariable rule that the participants in any conflict cannot tell the entire story until some time after that conflict is fully resolved. (2)

These words were written in February 1996 when, with the end of the IRA's ceasefire at Canary Wharf, it was the Provisionals' actions rather than Adams's text that was taking lives, and not merely jeopardising them. It remains doubtful today whether, six years after the signing of the Belfast Agreement, Adams would take the view that the conflict has yet been 'fully resolved'. Indeed it is arguable that when Adams talks of the conflict requiring complete resolution before he could tell 'the entire story', the only circumstance that would satisfy his criterion is the creation of a united Ireland.

Despite the absence of this criterion, it was reported in the autumn of 2001 that Adams was in the process of preparing a second volume of autobiography, and that the literary agent, Andrew Wylie, had sold the rights for £400,000.[42] However, *Hope and History: Making Peace in Ireland*, edited by Adams's old friend, MacDonogh, comes no closer to offering what O'Toole called a 'real and fully truthful autobiography'.[43] Rather, it presents the author's version of the process leading up to the successful negotiation of the Belfast Agreement in April 1998, and while there is a perfunctory final chapter outlining some of the problems it has encountered in subsequent years, Adams has conceded (again) that the narrative remains unfinished: 'there is a natural third book […] but apart from noting that in my head, I have no plans, notions, ambitions to even think about writing it at the moment'.[44] Moreover, he insists that since the 'story' of the peace process is 'still unfolding, still sensitive, still fragile […] it is not my business to offer an objective account of events or to see through someone else's eyes. Nor is it my responsibility to document these events. My intention is to tell a story. It is my story. My truth. My reality.'[45] The rationale for publication at this particular time, therefore, seems to be that 'a happy ending' – the signing of the Agreement – is 'more important than a tell-all story' (2).

Adams also conflates his 'personal journey' with the communal story. The peace process in his eyes is a morality tale, where selfless nationalists – notably John Hume and Catholic clerics such as Fr Alec Reid – and republicans consistently urge the British government and the unionist parties to address 'the underlying causes of conflict', as if these are self-evident, uncomplicated and uncontested. He places enormous emphasis upon his dialogue with Hume, the quest for pan-nationalist unity, and the need to press the Dublin and Washington administrations to adopt the 'Irish peace initiative', with no apparent recognition that, without a balancing input from the Westminster government, no serious negotiation with *any section* of unionism would be feasible. Indeed, the unionists as an autonomous force hardly figure at all in Adams's narrative. Interestingly, his later overtures to unionism are revealed as merely a rhetorical device:

> the mess within unionism is inherently part of any process of change. Unionism *at its best* is quite a conservative, reactionary philosophy […]. I've been reading recently Faulkner's memoirs, different bits and pieces of writings by unionist leaders […] and you'd almost think that some of the senior British officials, some of the NIO people, are using a script written in the 1920s or 1970s.[46]

From this perspective, the 1993 Downing Street declaration is seen as no more than 'a significant development' (171), though an alternative reading would suggest that without

it there would have been no potential for progress towards genuine, all-party, inclusive talks. Republicans had to be provided with an alternative to 'armed struggle' before peace was possible, says Adams, but the unanswered question remains: what happens if the republican movement becomes engaged solely in the democratic process, but the outcome is not Irish unity, at least not any time soon? The teleology inherent in Adams's narrative means that he cannot entertain such an outcome; a 'proper' democracy, in his view, is defined as leading inexorably to a sovereign, united Republic. Even in 2004, there is no adequate answer to this question. Adams's approach to political autobiography, therefore, is to echo, through personal testimony, the officially-endorsed and internally-validated version of 'party' history, and to use this testimony in the service of contemporary ideological goals. In this way, autobiographical reflection is harnessed to the yoke of political expediency.

MacStiofáin shares this ideological rigidity about the goals of the republican movement, but in other ways his approach could hardly be more different. It is indicative of the nature and scope of the Provisionals' evolution since the early 1970s that his autobiography is imbued with the traditional 'physical force' belief that military action can and will remove the British presence in Ireland, and that political engagement, in the form of an electoral strategy, would represent a dilution of this pure aspiration.[47] He makes plain his commitment to revolutionary republicanism – even though he talks of his IRA involvement in the past tense – and expressly denies any sectarian dimension to this creed, an allegation levelled at him by an erstwhile member of the Provisionals, Maria McGuire, in her book *To Take Arms: A Year in the Provisional IRA* (1973). Unlike Adams, however, MacStiofáin is prepared to openly acknowledge his role as a military leader; indeed, given his contempt for political theorising and belief that military activity was practical, it is not so surprising that he is keen to play up his own involvement in military strategy and planning. Writing about the mid-1960s, he is casually dismissive of the role of Sinn Féin at that time in the republican movement's overall aims and objectives: 'During the couple of years I attended the meetings of the Árd Comhairle [Executive committee] and of the Coiste Seasta, the Sinn Féin standing committee, I found them boring and a total waste of time' (104). Having outlined the split within republicanism and the creation of the Provisionals, therefore, MacStiofáin devotes most narrative space to chronicling the prosecution of the 'armed struggle', the guerrilla tactics of the IRA and counter-insurgency techniques of the British Army and police. In this sense, the focus of his reflections is rather narrow, certainly in comparison with Adams, a fact which raises another pertinent question with regard to autobiographies of the 'Troubles': the parochial character of many protagonists' memoirs.

The different 'worlds' of the 'Troubles'

As a 'Troubles' autobiographer, Gerry Adams is unusual in the intellectual scope and strategic overview he brings to his account, although paradoxically *Before the Dawn* ends abruptly in the aftermath of the 1981 hunger strikes by republican prisoners and, as has already been noted, the published version of his life up to that point leaves huge gaps as the process of 'retrospective remodelling' proceeds.[48] What is clear, however, is that his 'most passionate commitment is to the narrow world of West Belfast, a self-justifying

and tightly-knit community later replicated in the republican wing of internment prison'.[49] Adams' story is couched in localised terms, partly due to his desire during the mid-1990s to confirm the republican heartlands in their belief that the 'revolutionary struggle' had not been defeated, despite the IRA ceasefire, and that all of the sacrifices had been worthwhile. It also makes his self-appointed task of subsuming his personal story into the heroic collective 'resistance' of the republican community much easier. Indeed, as Foster has argued, Adams 'is determined to see things purely in the perspective framed by his mother's back window', although this localism appears to be a conscious political decision, masking a much broader strategic, and cunning, intent.[50] In contrast to this disingenuously parochial image, he 'enjoys' massive worldwide exposure: in marketing terms, 'as an Irish product, Gerry Adams has name recognition rivalling Guinness or Waterford Glass'.[51] He purports, moreover, to be a 'very shy person', explaining: 'I find other people are much more relaxed in dealing with public events. I mean, I wouldn't be running about to banquets or balls or fancy suppers. It's nothing to those who lost their lives […] or lost loved ones, but I think the loss of anonymity is a big thing'.[52] Adams's target audience is therefore invited to see him as a grounded politician who understands them and their community; in short, as a man of the people.

It is not surprising that other autobiographies by second-ranking former republican activists provide detailed, though contested, accounts of life 'on the ground'. These include Shane O'Doherty's *The Volunteer* (1993), Eamon Collins's *Killing Rage* (1998), Martin McGartland's *Fifty Dead Men Walking* (1997) and *Dead Man Running* (1998), and Raymond Gilmour's *Dead Ground* (1999). These memoirs tend to concentrate upon shedding light on the immediate social world of the republican activist, usually confined to a particular locality, and often with little attempt to locate this experience within broader contexts. Those that are written by individuals who renounced their commitment to the republican cause (Gilmour in Derry, McGartland in West Belfast) and worked as informers, are probably even more constrained in their scope, given the doubly clandestine nature of their activities. Of this sub-genre, perhaps the best-known is Sean O'Callaghan's *The Informer* (1998), which unusually manages to combine a dense account of his life as an IRA leader, member of the Sinn Féin National Executive, and informer for the Garda Síochána, with reflections on the ideological character of the Provisional movement, of which he is now one of the most vocal critics.

A key criterion when judging the historical utility of these autobiographies is the authors' willingness or capacity to place their individual experiences within a broader *political* framework. However much controversy they have generated – and several of these authors have been violently attacked (McGartland) or even killed (Collins) as a result of the publicity attendant on publishing their life stories – and however disputed their accounts of life within the republican movement, they do differ significantly in their attitude to this wider context. Ultimately, some of these memoirs are of limited interest to the contemporary political historian in that they are primarily concerned with the minutiae of paramilitary activities, engagements with the 'enemy' and so forth. This may well be the result of a deliberate authorial decision to highlight these aspects, often with an eye on sales and the sensationalist appetites of populist audiences, or it may be that these 'foot-soldiers' have a relative lack of concern, knowledge or even understanding of

the broader framework within which their particular dramas were played out. These works are useful nonethless in pointing up the diverse experiences of the 'different "worlds"' that exist in Northern Ireland in relation to the 'Troubles'.[53] For instance, Eamon Collins explores the republican movement's character and operations around Newry and South Armagh, a largely rural environment which is markedly different from life on Belfast's Ballymurphy estate, as evoked by Adams or McGartland (though their accounts of the republican 'family' in its heartland diverge strongly later on), and different again from the experience of the 'Troubles' in Derry described by Gilmour and O'Doherty.

Similar social circumstances could certainly produce highly divergent political trajectories; this is most obvious in the sectarian patchwork of Belfast. The socio-economic deprivation endured in working-class districts of the city is vividly recalled in the testimonies of Gusty Spence, Paddy Devlin, Gerry Adams and Michael Stone. The most astonishing example of the same circumstances leading to very different political beliefs comes from Spence who, together with his brother, Ned/Eddie, was raised in the hard conditions of the Hammer district of the Lower Shankill during the 1930s. Ned broke with Orangeism, became a socialist and trade unionist, then a member of the Communist Party, and in the late 1960s joined the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association. Meanwhile, Gusty served in the British Army in Cyprus and on his return to Belfast joined the re-born UVF and was convicted of the 1966 murder of a Catholic barman, Peter Ward. Spence, with support from Garland, continues to deny responsibility for the murder, but he nonetheless served almost 19 years in jail for the crime, before his release in December 1984. For several years the two brothers were estranged, though they were to move closer after Gusty's renunciation of loyalist violence in the late 1970s and his conversion to socialism in 1981. Following Ned's son's arrest in connection with the activities of the socialist Official IRA, Spence wrote privately to his brother:

> As you know I have very much changed – not because of what prison has done to me, but because of what I have done for myself. If I had to serve a lifetime in dungeons like these, I wanted to know for what reason, and I searched for the truth […]. I feel deeply embarrassed when I think of my former 'truths' which when investigated did not stand up to scrutiny or fact.[54]

The localism of Spence's experience was extreme, and it is clear that his remarkable approach to his long years in prison and the autodidactic education he gained there helped him to transcend his enclosed world and draw broader lessons for his own ideological beliefs, the future of the UVF and loyalist politics generally. While by no means all paramilitary prisoners use their incarceration to such effect, it is significant that the mere fact of spending long periods in jail does not of itself determine that individuals must be inward-looking, self-obsessed or narrowly preoccupied with their immediate physical world.

It is difficult nevertheless to ignore the prison experiences recounted in these autobiographies, given that this facet of the protagonists' lives is so far removed from most readers' realities. Michael Stone, who was convicted for the Milltown cemetery

attack on republican mourners in March 1988, served 12 years of a 30-year sentence, before being released in July 2000 under the terms of the Belfast Agreement. There are a number of tensions, if not downright contradictions, in Stone's account of his motivation for publishing *None Shall Divide Us*. In the foreword he offers an apology to the families of those he killed, but immediately nullifies this by stating: 'I regret that I had to kill […]. I committed crimes as an Ulsterman and a British citizen and that was regrettable but unavoidable' (xiv).[55] The sincerity of his expression of regret is further undermined by his decision to include the celebratory 'Ballad of Michael Stone', which refers to those killed at Milltown as 'rebel scum'. His autobiographical tone is that of a veteran, someone who has matured enough to appreciate the motivation of his enemies, and while this may be sincere, it is nonetheless far from convincing. Though still not yet fifty, Stone expresses 'shock' at the direction his life has taken, claiming: 'looking back, I can hardly believe that I did those things and lived the life I led. It is like peering into the life of a stranger' (xv). But what is most instructive about Stone's reflection on his prison experiences is how little he appears to have connected with the political developments that were taking place during the 1990s. While constantly referring to republican violence as 'indiscriminate', he often leaves out the bloodiness of the UDA's increasingly brutal sectarian killing campaign, in favour of recalling failed 'spectaculars', operations that either never took place or were aborted, such as those directed at Irish Prime Minister, Charles Haughey, British Labour politician, Ken Livingstone, and RUC Chief Constable, Sir John Hermon. He also pays tribute to heroic figures within loyalism (Tommy Herron, John McMichael, John Gregg) whom he claims were close friends of his, but who are no longer around to confirm this, while denouncing men such as Tucker Lyttle, Jim Craig and Johnny Adair as 'career loyalists'.

For others, the experience of imprisonment presented an opportunity to think deeply about their political commitments and interrogate the strategic direction of their organizations, sometimes for the first time. Seán MacStiofáin was arrested in an IRA arms raid in Essex in 1953, aged 25, and sentenced to eight years in English jails. Taking his cue from the attitude displayed by republican prisoners interned in the Curragh camp during World War II, he used his time to test the 'idea of prison as the university of the revolution' (57). Thus, he learned Irish, immersed himself in the history of Irish nationalism, and made contact with Cypriot prisoners from the anti-colonial EOKA movement, with whom he swapped tactical and strategic information about guerrilla warfare. Through such activities MacStiofáin discovered a paradoxical freedom in incarceration: 'As soon as the cell door banged, I felt almost at home and yet, at the same time, less confined' (67).

Gerry Adams, on the other hand, recalls his initial experience of prison in *Before the Dawn* as 'a mixture of Brendan Behan's *Borstal Boy* and boarding school, in which we engaged in constant pranks, mayhem and craziness' (196). This levity soon gave way to sober and serious political activity, however. Despite his denials of IRA membership, Adams was released from Long Kesh in July 1972 to take part in the republican delegation that had secret talks with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, William Whitelaw, in London. There are several conflicting accounts of these talks, a clear instance of autobiographers presenting competing versions of a single incident, with little

or no corroborating material available.[56] Adams's later period of imprisonment during the mid-1970s saw him develop a much more strategic approach to the republican struggle, in conjunction with Bobby Sands and others. During this time he 'concentrated on reading, on my writing, and learning Irish', and developed a culture of 'collective political discussion and education' among his fellow inmates (246). He also found himself 'taking on a position of authority' (243), which allowed him a leading voice in the discussions that outlined the strategic shift that would lead to Sinn Féin's electoral intervention in 1982 and his own election to Westminster in 1983.

Paddy Devlin and Gusty Spence also present their prison experiences as turning points in their personal and political development. Devlin was interned between 1942 and 1945 for IRA activities, during which time he re-appraised his political thinking. He describes these years in *Straight Left* as 'the most formative of my life' (35), partly as a result of disappointment with his former republican colleagues, many of whom were themselves bitterly disillusioned by their incarceration, and the lack of grassroots support for their cause. Devlin also came into contact with self-taught men who made him consider the type of political principles he really wished to advance: 'Although I was highly streetwise when I was first locked up, I was hopelessly idealistic, naïve and immature. Prison broadened and matured me in all sorts of ways' (48). He left jail to pursue a career as a labourist politician, and like Gusty Spence, who was eight years his junior, his prison experience caused him to renounce violence as a means to political ends. Spence himself eventually resigned from the UVF in 1978, although he argues that he had already 'realised that physical force was not the way forward' as early as 1974.[57] In the intervening years, he was noted for his strict discipline in the UVF compounds under his command, which often brought him into conflict with younger, headstrong members of the organization, and his regular disagreements with the UVF leadership outside the prison.

The life narratives of Devlin and Spence were published when both men were in the twilight of their years, as they approached their seventieth birthdays. Devlin, writing before the peace process had produced a real breakthrough, cannot hide his wistful, valedictory air, and Spence speaks in a similarly regretful tone. Brian Faulkner was also writing from the perspective of the failure of his cherished power-sharing political initiative, and he cannot disguise a certain amount of bitterness with regard to those within unionism who rejected this experiment as a way forward. For those who publish memoirs earlier in their lives, like Adams and Stone, there may be less probability of mature reflection, and a greater sense of the conjunctural, of the subjects positioning themselves to gain maximum advantage for their particular concerns at a certain moment. This certainly applies to the youngest autobiographer considered here, Bernadette Devlin, whose *The Price of My Soul* is one of the very few memoirs by Northern Irish women politicians, a fact which exemplifies the male domination of both conventional, parliamentary and paramilitary political life in the region.[58]

Devlin published her 'story of the protest movement which wrote Northern Ireland across the world's headlines' before it was clear that these events would herald the long-term growth of the 'Troubles'.[59] Although she expressly rejects the label 'autobiography' for

the book, there are strong autobiographical elements in what was billed by the publishers as the 'story of the real flesh-and-blood Bernadette'. Writing in her early twenties, Devlin strikes a markedly different tone from that of the older male politicians and paramilitaries whose memoirs we have reviewed in this chapter. For example, she voices a loud impatience with the prevailing political system, not simply the archaic Stormont regime, but also the hidebound conservatism of the British and Irish establishments, and endorses the dynamism of the international student movement which was then challenging all forms of political orthodoxy. But while the immediacy of this work makes it a compelling read, it also imbues it with some of the characteristics of the political diary, as summarised by Gamble:

> it is contemporary with the events it describes, and it gives little thought to the consistency of one entry with another. The narrative that emerges […] tends to be fragmented and incomplete, but the quality of the material as evidence tends to be higher, because the diarist is recording how things appeared at the moment of writing. […] They convey how a particular politician thought and felt about events at the time, and the assumptions on which political calculations were made. It is precisely because they cannot be retrospective that makes their testimony so valuable.[60]

Certainly, *The Price of My Soul* fits this description, and provides a fascinating insight into the political mood of the civil rights era and the role played by the younger generation of newly-politicised activists. Devlin says of her own ideological journey during this heady period that 'the wheel was coming full circle; but with variations. I had moved from traditional, mad, emotional Republicanism to socialism in the context of Ulster; now I was joining my new-found socialism to my old belief in a united Ireland' (119). To read *The Price of My Soul* alongside the autobiographies of Brain Faulkner, Paddy Devlin and Gerry Adams is not only to grapple with the complexity of forces that led to the eruption of the 'Troubles' in 1968-9, but also to appreciate the significance of when, how and with what purpose these protagonists choose to publish their personal interpretations of these seminal events.

Conclusion

Contemporary political autobiography and memoir in Northern Ireland may, on occasion, contribute to wider processes of societal reconciliation in an emerging post-conflict environment. Or, if this is too grand an aspiration, it might at least prove an aid to enhanced mutual understanding of what motivated political actors over the course of the 'Troubles'. There is nonetheless a problem concerning the appropriateness of this mode of self-expression. There can be no doubt that many individuals feel the need to articulate their stories and experiences of inter-communal conflict, and to be widely recognised as having been hurt or harmed by such experiences. However, the question arises as to what is the best forum or medium for such stories. The recent past seems to point to the problems associated with 'officialising' testimony of the conflict; as Angela Hegarty has pointed out, the myriad legal processes, both current and planned, such as judicial enquiries, tribunals or an overarching 'truth commission', may only deliver

accountability and 'truth' about the 'Troubles' in a limited form. Hegarty claims that '[p]olitical considerations, deals, the legal threshold for proof, the sheer scale of abuses, all create a situation where not every crime is prosecuted, not every harm addressed', and proceeds to argue that 'the process and the language of law transmutes individual experiences into a categorically neat something else. Law does not permit a single witness to tell their own coherent narrative; it chops their stories into digestible parts.'[61]

It is in this context that autobiographical publications may have a significant role to play in contemporary political discourse in Northern Ireland by providing an opportunity for individual stories to be told in their entirety, thereby retaining their integrity. As we have seen, political autobiography or memoir by prominent or (in)famous protagonists in the conflict can also provide a symbolic, collective and communal aspect to this process of truth-telling. However, the lacunae or gaps that often characterise these autobiographical narratives make this process complex and uncertain, and render the results partial and contradictory. This is particularly the case when 'truth' about the recent past in Northern Ireland remains a matter of bitter dispute, and where there is still no public consensus about the essential causes of conflict. This meta-conflict is no nearer resolution, despite the imperfect peace. Indeed, it is rarely addressed.

Notes

"The newspapers and periodicals referred to in the following notes were accessed via the worldwide web, and are available at these sites: An Phoblacht/Republican News; http://republican-news.org/archive/1998/March26/26mary.html; Irish Times; http://www.ireland.com/; Belfast Telegraph; http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/; Sunday Life; http://www.sundaylife.co.uk/; The Spectator; www.spectator.co.uk; Daily Telegraph; http://www.telegraph.co.uk/portal/main.jhtml?view=HOME&grid=P13&menuId=-1&menuItemId=-1&_requestid=108430; The News Letter; http://www.newsletter.co.uk/; Sunday Business Post; http://www.thepost.ie/web/The%20Newspaper/Sundays%20Paper/index.asp; Irish Independent; http://www.unison.ie/irish_independent/. These sites were all accessible in April 2004, although the archives of some sources are available only by subscription. In addition, readers will find reviews and commentary on many of the works studied in this chapter at the following sites: the Newshound http://www.nuzhound.com/book.php and the Conflict Archive on the Internet http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/index.html."

[1] L. Gilmore, *The Limits of Autobiography: Trauma and Testimony* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001), p. 1. Original emphasis.
[2] G. Egerton, 'The Anatomy of Political Memoir: Findings and Conclusions', in *Political Memoir: Essays on the Politics of Memory*, ed. G. Egerton (London: Frank Cass, 1994), p. 342.
[3] Ibid., p. 346.

[4] R. F. Foster, *The Irish Story: Telling Tales and Making it Up in Ireland* (London: Penguin, 2002), pp. xi, xiv-v.
[5] Ibid., p. xvii.
[6] There is a voluminous literature devoted to these topics; see, inter alia: E. Longley, 'Northern Ireland: commemoration, elegy, forgetting', in *History and Memory in Modern Ireland*, ed. I. McBride (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); B. Rolston, 'Assembling the jigsaw: truth, justice and transition in the North of Ireland', *Race and Class*, 44:1 (2002), pp. 87-105; K. Bloomfield, *We Will Remember Them* (Belfast: Northern Ireland Office, 1998); M. Nelis, 'Truth Commission needed in England', *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 26 March 1998, **p.?**; B. Hamber and R. Wilson eds, *Recognition and reckoning: the way ahead on victims' issues* (Democratic Dialogue Report 15, 2003); B. Hamber, D. Kulle and R. Wilson eds, *Future Politics for the Past* (Democratic Dialogue Report 13, 2001). With regard to the site of Long Kesh/the Maze, a consultation panel has been set up to evaluate proposals for its future use, with the possibility of a museum under consideration; see, Suzanne Breen, 'Ex-IRA prisoners call for museum at Maze', *Irish Times*, 5 June 2003, **p.**
[7] F. Meredith, 'Rounded, Intelligent, Articulate, Human and Murderous', *Fortnight*, 412 (March 2003), p. 9. The interview coincided with the publication of English's *Armed Struggle: A History of the IRA* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).
[8] Ibid., p. 9.
[9] A. Gamble, 'Political memoirs', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 4:1 (April 2002), p. 142.
[10] Foster, *The Irish Story*, p. 3.
[11] Egerton, 'The Anatomy of Political Memoir', p. 344.
[12] Gamble, 'Political memoirs', p. 142**.** Original emphasis.
[13] Egerton, 'The Anatomy of Political Memoir', p. 347.
[14] Ibid., p. 348.
[15] Ibid., p. 347.
[16] Ibid., p. 344.
[17] M. Smyth and M-T. Fay eds., *Personal Accounts from Northern Ireland's Troubles: Public Conflict, Private Loss* (London: Pluto, 2000).
[18] Ardoyne Commemoration Project, *Ardoyne: The Untold Truth* (Belfast: Beyond the Pale, 2002). See also the series of Island pamphlets (Island publications, Newtownabbey) that include oral testimony from within the Protestant community.
[19] Joanne O'Brien, *A Matter of Minutes: The Enduring Legacy of Bloody Sunday* (Dublin: Wolfhound, 2002).
[20] Adams, *Cage Eleven* (Dingle: Brandon, 1990), p. 14.
[21] See G. Adams, *Selected Writings* (Dingle: Brandon, 1994), pp. x-xii.
[22] G. Adams, *Before the Dawn: An Autobiography* (London: Heinemann, 1996), p. 168. All subsequent references are to this edition.
[23] F. O'Toole, 'The Premature Life of Gerry Adams', *Irish Times*, 28 September 1996, **p.??**
[24] Adams acknowledges 'the persistence, advice and input' of MacDonogh, but it is clear that he himself is directly responsible for the words. See *Before the Dawn*, p. 2.

[25] K. McManus, 'Introduction' to M. Stone, *None Shall Divide Us* (London: John Blake, 2003), p. xi. All subsequent references are to this edition.
[26] M. O'Doherty, 'Wee Mikey looking for a Pat on the head', *Belfast Telegraph*, 11 June 2003, **p.??**
[27] S. Breen, 'Mad Dog for hire?', *Sunday Life*, 3 August 2003, **pp. ??**
[28] J. McCambridge, 'Adair outrage: Now Loyalist godfather signed up as an after-dinner speaker', *Belfast Telegraph*, 8 September 2003, **pp. ??**
[29] S. Breen, 'Adair: "Stone is an egotistical, paranoid schizophrenic"', *Sunday Life*, 8 June 2003, **p.??**; A. Murray, 'Stone to keep "kill and tell" cash', *Sunday Life*, 8 June 2003, **p.??**; M. FitzGerald, 'Crime pays: Stone set to rake in $30,000 for talks in America', *Belfast Telegraph*, 29 August 2003, **p.?. [page numbers required here]**
[30] R. Garland, *Gusty Spence* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 2001), p. ix.
[31] Ibid., p. 311.
[32] B. Faulkner, *Memoirs of a Statesman* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1978), p. 278. All subsequent references are to this edition.
[33] P. Devlin, *Straight Left: An Autobiography* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1993), p. 289. All subsequent references are to this edition.
[34] David Sharrock and Mark Devenport's unauthorised biography of Adams cites a number of occasions in his writings where he has 'judiciously edited out' his status as an IRA man. See D. Sharrock and M. Devenport, *Man of War, Man of Peace? The Unauthorised Biography of Gerry Adams* (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 116.
[35] F. O'Toole, 'The Taming of a Terrorist', *New York Review*, 27 February 2003, p. 14; R. Foster, *The Irish Story*, pp. 177-8. Former IRA member Anthony McIntyre chose a metaphor from closer to home when he compared Adams's omission of his IRA career as akin to George Best telling his life-story but failing to mention that he had played for Manchester United. Cited in R. Dudley Edwards, 'Gerry the Liar', *Spectator*, 27 July 2002, **p.?**
[36] O'Toole, 'The Taming of a Terrorist', p. 14.
[37] Ibid., p. 14.
[38] Ibid., p. 15. See E. Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA* (London: Allen Lane, 2002).
[39] Foster, *The Irish Story*, p. 181.
[40] Ibid., p. 178.
[41] O'Toole, 'The Premature Life of Gerry Adams', **p.?**
[42] D. Sharrock, 'Adams signs £400,000 deal for new book', *Daily Telegraph*, 10 October 2001, **p.??**
[43] O'Toole, 'The Premature Life of Gerry Adams', **p.??**. Suzanne Breen argues that in his 'studied attempt to exhibit emotion and sincerity' Adams's veers between 'statesmanlike' and 'folksy' throughout ('The Many Tales of Gerry Adams', *News Letter*, 2 October 2003, **p. ??)**
[44] G. Adams cited in C. Thornton, 'Vintage Adams: His life in books', *Belfast Telegraph*, 29 September 2003, **p. ?**
[45] G. Adams, *Hope and History: Making Peace in Ireland* (Dingle: Brandon, 2003), p. 2. All subsequent references are to this edition.
[46] G. Adams cited in P. Leahy, 'Trimble knows the old days are over', *Sunday Business Post*, 28 September 2003, **p.??**. Emphasis added.

[47] S. MacStiofáin, *Revolutionary in Ireland* (Edinburgh: Gordon Cremonesi, 1975), pp. 81, 92. All subsequent references are to this edition.
[48] Foster, *The Irish Story*, p. 174.
[49] Ibid., p. 176.
[50] Ibid., p. 177.
[51] **Author?,** *Irish Independent*, 30 September 2003, **p. ??**
[52] G. Adams cited in C. Thornton, 'Vintage Adams: His life in books', *Belfast Telegraph*, 29 September 2003, **p. ??**
[53] M. Smyth and M-T. Fay, *Personal Accounts from Northern Ireland's Troubles*, p. 133.
[54] Garland, *Gusty Spence*, pp. 244-5.
[55] Stone appears to have undergone a change of heart during his time in jail. Asked about remorse in a 1991 interview in the UDA magazine, *Ulster*, his response was unequivocal: 'As for remorse with regards to the deaths of the three people killed at that terrorist funeral in Milltown cemetery, remorse to an active loyalist volunteer is a luxury which one regrettably has to forego. In a word, no.' Cited in D. McKittrick, S. Kelters, B. Feeney and C. Thornton, *Lost Lives: The Stories of the men, women and children who died as a result of the Northern Ireland Troubles* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1999), **p. 1, 119.**
[56] See Adams, *Before the Dawn*, pp. 199-206; MacStiofáin, *Revolutionary in Ireland*, pp. 278-86; D. Sharrock and M. Devenport, *Man of War, Man of Peace?*, pp. 100-05; M. Garnett and I. Aitken, *Splendid! Splendid! The Authorised Biography of Willie Whitelaw* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2002), pp.127-48.
[57] **Garland, *Gusty Spence*, p. 178.**
[58] The extent of this dominance may be judged from the fact that no woman won a Westminster seat in Northern Ireland between Devlin's re-election in 1970 and the 3 women who enjoyed electoral success in the 2001 general election (Sylvia Hermon [UUP, North Down]; Michelle Gildernew [SF, Fermanagh-South Tyrone]; Iris Robinson [DUP, Strangford]).
[59] B. Devlin, *The Price of My Soul* (London: André Deutsch, 1969), p. 9. All subsequent references are to this edition.
[60] Gamble, 'Political memoirs', pp. 142-3.
[61] A. Hegarty, 'Truth, Justice and Reconciliation? The Problem with Truth Processes', *Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, 2:1 (September 2002), pp. 100-01.