Watch your thoughts for they become words.
Watch your words for they become actions.
Watch your actions for they become ...
habits. Watch your habits, for they become
your character. And watch your character, for
it becomes your destiny! What we think, we
become.

The Iron Lady (2011)

Derry/Londonderry: A city of walls

Keith Henry, Emma Farnan, Greg Lloyd

Abstract

Many public urban areas are susceptible to intense inter-communal antagonism due to seemingly irreconcilable cultural, historical and ethnic differences, with conflicts about a place's identity, form and use becoming characteristics of the urban in the 21st Century (Eggertsson, 2013). This can complicate the nature of what constitutes as the 'public interest' within public places, with society in the contemporary city spatially responding to such challenges by becoming more privatised in nature (Miles, 2010:13). There is the potential retreat from the 'civic' stemming from ambiguity and a lack of consensus in what the term 'civic' represents. The paper focuses upon the spatial context of Derry/Londonderry in Northern Ireland and demonstrates that the politicisation of land has had a profound influence upon the perceived assertion of property rights over public places alongside the creation, management and use of public places. It concludes with some important findings for planners, policy makers, and others concerned with the future of public places.

Key Words: Public Places, Property Rights, Privatism

1.0   Introduction

Many urban areas are susceptible to intense inter-communal antagonism due to seemingly irreconcilable cultural, historical and ethnic differences, with conflicts about a place's identity, form and use becoming characteristics of the 21st Century (Eggertsson, 2013). This creates pressures for group rights and complicates the nature of what constitutes as the *'public interest'*, with society in the contemporary city responding by becoming more privatised in nature (Miles, 2010:13). There has been a retreat from *'civic'* stemming from ambiguity in what *'civic'* represents. This is demonstrated in post-conflict societies by city spaces often becoming territorially segregated as societal groups regress to the sanctuary of parochial publics and the perceived safety associated with homogeneity. The latent danger within diversity is eroded by *gemeinschaft* and group solidarity, with the group's identity/ownership asserted over land to exclude those who don't conform to it. By facilitating this, urban planning has been heralded by Jerram (2011:317) to be responsible for small mindedness and boredom inherent in planned, ordered cities, with Davis (1992) acknowledging the detrimental impact that this has

had upon the spontaneous, dynamic urban public places.

The scarcity of resources and the increase in pressures exerted upon public places by an increasingly heterogeneous population and their attempts to appropriate the common property rights to utilise land creates competition for it (Davy, 2012). These struggles can become particularly problematic within post-conflict urban areas that comprise of co-habiting polarised communities. Competing demands upon limited public places have led to urban planning and politics becoming increasingly complex and fragmented, delivering unpredictable political fields of action (Ploger, 2004:72), with common property rights replaced by seemingly privatised rights. This encroachment of private rights has encouraged the dystopian perception of publicness of contemporary public places. Foretold by Jacobs (1961) with *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, lamented over in Sennett's (1986) *The Fall of Public Man* and ridiculed within Sorkin's (1992) *Variations on a theme park: the new American city and the end of public space*, the publicness of public places is heralded as being lost[1].

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[1]   It should be noted however, that it is questionable if public places have historically been more public in nature as there has always

This paper challenges this dystopian perception and develops the thesis that in reality post-conflict cities find functionality within such fragmentations. Using the city of Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland, as an exemplar and the conceptual framework of new institutionalism (Williamson, 2000), the argument acknowledges the delicate balance of urban order and disorder. Discussion focuses on how communal property rights over public places has developed a more functional and efficient urban system. Burnham and Bennett ([1909] 1993:1) interpret planning as stemming from the want and need to create order from chaos. Subsequently, Derry/Londonderry acknowledges that the pursuit of a public place for all publics is unnecessarily problematic; instead the city functions through the providing an assortment of public places for all publics.

Derry/Londonderry isn't blinded by its turbulent past, instead it focuses upon its spatially shared present; demonstrated by the complimentary nature of its public places. Nationalist spaces, unionist spaces and shared spaces remain, and whilst physical borders and psychological boundaries persist, they have become more fluid due to the acknowledgement of property rights.

2.0   Urban Public Places

Public places are defined by a range of characteristics, including ownership (Kohn, 2004), the presence of people (Gehl and Gemzoe, 1996), the extent of unrestricted access (Carmona *et al.*, 2008) and characteristics which are held by Carr *et al.* (1992) to be democratic, responsive and meaningful. Ne-

been a diverse range of publics competing for access and entry to public places. Within the Greek Agora, slaves, women and children were not permitted, yet it is often held as the utopian public place.

vertheless, despite the flexibility of the term and the range of associated eclectic definitions, there is a degree of consensus (Christopherson, 1994; Kohn, 2004; Minton, 2009) that public places have lost a degree of their publicness, to the detriment of the *'public man'* (Sennett, 1986). By attempting to create planned, ordered cities, the democratic potential of public places, according to Davis (1992) has been eroded, having a detrimental impact upon the quality of urban places.

Urban places matter, superseding the countryside as the foci of power, vortex of social change and regional drivers of the economy. They account for the spatial concentration of approximately half of the world's population (Cohen, 2003), yet there remains a distinct lack of clarity in the dynamics of urban ecology with Davis (2002) claiming that there is greater knowledge and understanding of rainforest ecology than that of the urban. It is within the complex, intricate urban relationships that the study of public places will focus upon:

'Public space is almost by definition urban space, and in many current treatments of public space the urban remains the privileged scale of analysis and cities the privileged site' (Low and Smith, 2006:3).

Understanding *'urban'* as defined by Davis's (1965) conception of the social structures which enables a recognition of control and not through Wirth's (1938) definition of numbers, density and heterogeneity, there is an acknowledgement of the importance of control. Control requires power, with power existing only when there are encounters between people; power remaining latent until the point of interaction (Jerram, 2011). The element of control, which may be as a result of ownership or management, is a central factor within discussions of place, space and land use (Krueckenberg, 1995) with the relationship of how the intricate factors of ownership and management are structured having a profound impact upon how a place is accessed, utilised and by whom (Figure One).
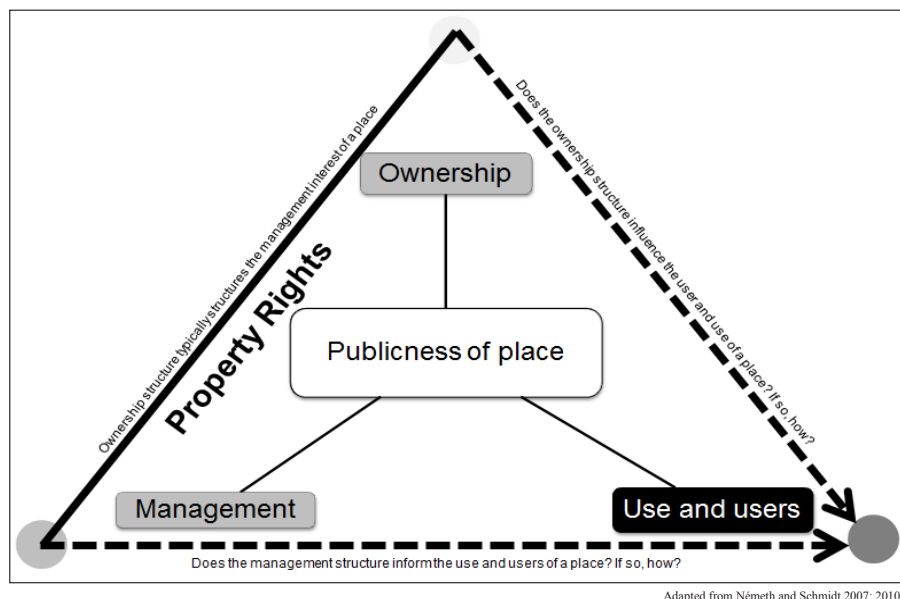
Adapted from Németh and Schmidt 2007; 2010

Adapted from Németh and Schmidt 2007; 2010

Fig. 1. Model of publicness of a place

The elements of control, ownership and management are incorporated within the social structural paradigm of property rights, with property rights providing a means of organising and asserting power (Mitchell, 2003:22). Property rights determine who is allowed to be where and when within urban places (Waldron, 1991:226). This is as the bundle of property rights delineate rights of which the respective claimant can utilise, such as the right to exclude.

The rights to exclude facilitated the fragmentation of the urban society and created an urban environment in which *'conflicts and tensions between groups are just part of life'* (Woitrin, 1979:20). Urban areas represent a paradoxical place between order and disorder, similarity and difference, instrumental use and expressive use and those with and without power and control. The impact of these social relationships will influence how a place is perceived, interpreted and utilised (or not) with the scarcity of public places (Low, 2006). It also involves the pressure that is exerted upon them by an ever increasing and heterogeneous urban population (McIntyre *et al.*, 2001) creating a situation in which conflicts about place's identity, form and use are becoming an inevitable characteristic of the 21st Century (Eggertsson, 2013).

This has facilitated the professional, academic and governance interest in urban public places with research growing rapidly during the 1990s and 2000s (Adams and Tiesdell, 2013), with it focused upon diverse components of the urban 'system'. Following the decline of industry in many important cities there was an effect on the aesthetics, form and function of urban areas. Many deteriorated urban centres began to pursue regeneration measures in an attempt to reinvent themselves (Raco, 2003:1869) with cities adopting different means of achieving this, for example through waterfront regeneration, retail-led regeneration and culture-led regeneration.

Nevertheless, with increasing acknowledgement and production of public places, a negative social phenomenon within urban public places began to be collectively recognised across the developed world. This was the *'serious decline in the quality of the public realm'* (Tibbalds, 1992:vii), one issue being the perceived erosion of publicness of the public places:

[Public places] *'are now subsumed under a broader narrative of loss that emphasises an overall decline of the public realm and public space'* (Banerjee, 2001:12).

With the loss of publicness of public places increasingly appreciated as a worldwide phenomenon, it indicated that there was, and remains, a general consensus of the fundamental need for research to help halt the escalating expression of discontent regarding our urban public places (Carmona *et al.*, 2008), abandoning the reluctant stance of academics who have largely shunned the urban environment (Grimm *et al.*, 2008) and to fulfil the aspirations of urban planning as acknowledged by Healey (2010) to involve the promotion of sustainability for the betterment of society, and not just for the few.

As core components of urban life, public places are the stage in which life is enacted out upon; *'The existence of some form of public life is a prerequisite for the development of public spaces'* (Carr et al., 1992:22). The interaction and engagement of so-

cial activities that occur within public places are fundamental to the social vitality of a society with public places interpreted as a place of civil functioning and order (Jacobs, 1961; Gehl and Gemzoe, 1996). Jacobs (1961), for example, acknowledged that everyday activities in urban places, such as streets, are essential to the vibrancy and vitality of an urban area and it is this interaction that establishes the foundation of trust between people. This also serves to demonstrate why *'The public spaces created by societies serve as a mirror of their public and private values'* (Carr *et al.*, 1992:22). Public places are a social product, a historical and cultural artefact of a specific place at a specific time, created as a reflection of the specific society's views, culture, beliefs, norms, values, history and ideals.

The acknowledgement that public places are a social product indicates that the contemporary urban problems may be influenced by changes within society. Kohn (2004), for example, identified the phenomenon of privatisation of urban space as a potential cause to the erosion of publicness of public places. Jacobs (1961) stated that there must be a clear demarcation between what constitutes as private and public places for public places to be successful. Urban areas, as defined by Madanipour (2003:1) are:

'broadly structured around a separation of public and private spaces. It appears to be a defining feature of these settlements: how a society divides its space into public and private spheres… [with the] public-private distinction having been a key organising principle, shaping the physical space of the cities and the social life of their citizens.'

Nevertheless, such demarcation is often difficult to achieve in reality due to the blurring of the boundaries between the public and private realm. The urban realm, as perceived by Gehl and Gemzoe (1996) and Jacobs (1961) is an area of spontaneous, creative playful public places that provide the stage for a mosaic of internationals to assert themselves upon (Christopherson, 1994). It is this seductive place of spontaneous encounters that urban designers attempt to deliver. The reality is, however, that the social public realm is a lot darker than the perceived dichotomy between order and disorder.

Issues may arise as society is often unwilling to embrace the latent messiness of spontaneity and have taken practical measures to create the illusion of spontaneity within urban experience in a subtle and highly ironic framework. The *'spontaneity'* that remains in public places may be a result of practical measures taken to create the illusion of spontaneity within the urban experience in a subtle and highly ironic framework, ironic in that what may appear as highly spontaneous is indeed highly controlled. Nevertheless, there may be a fine line between order and disorder due to the messy simmering of social tensions bubbling below the surface. How a place may be utilised by the ever dynamic, heterogeneous public has the potential to be very messy; not what planners, politicians and those involved with the creation and management of public places desire. They strive for the certainty of order and control. Subsequently, action has been taken to erode the uncertainty that surrounds the public and how people interact with each other. This has led to urban areas that may be perceived as being spontaneous, being highly manipulated in reality.

Control requires power, with power existing only when there are encounters between people (Jerram, 2011). Acknowledging this point contributed to the interpretation that public places have become a site of power and, subsequently, resistance and contest between those with power and those without, those who are deemed inclusive and those who are subordinately excluded, and those with property rights and those that don't (or at least perceive themselves as not having property rights). There has been the blurring of boundaries between public and private places so that most of the places shared with strangers exist within the grey area between the two with this having a detrimental impact upon a place's perceived publicness. This has led to the necessary questioning of whom is entitled to utilise public places. Is Lefebvre's (1991) perception that the *'right to the city by all'* merely a utopian ideology and not indicative of the real world? Is there the need for research to better understand the struggle between residents and local authorities as to who has the legitimate right to define, design, utilise and manage contemporary public places? These concerns have contributed to the escalating appreciation of the concept of property rights within public places.

This is expedited by concerns regarding the phenomenon of public places being utilised as arenas for art, performances and festivals. These expressive uses of places are easily identifiable and have attained a prominent position within contemporary public places due to the marketability of cities having a profound economic impact, particularly within tourism. Expressive uses, however, can delineate a sense of identity which a particular group(s) can identify with and embrace, which may simultaneously segregate another group from availing of the public place's instrumental use due to psychological boundaries arising from their inability or reluctance to affiliate with the expressed identity (Figure Two). This demonstrates the entailed complexity of achieving inclusive urban public place; a complexity that may not be deliverable due to the eclectic range of public perceptions.
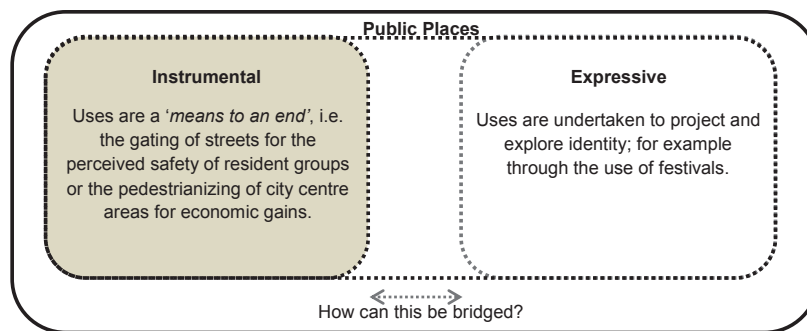
Author's original work

Fig. 2. Instrumental and Expressive Uses

The ability of expressive uses to emblazon an identity upon a spatial area may either include a specific group or exclude them. There is the informal assigning of property rights upon the place; where property rights are defined as socially constructed rights to a resource which shapes peoples' use of a resource and their behaviour to each other. They are socially structured constraints that shape human interactions, comprising of a bundle of rights (Ostrom and Schlager, 1996) which formally or informally assign the use of the multiple attributes of land (Barzel, 1989). The delineation of property rights can entitle the owner the right to avail of the use of the resource, obtain income from the renting of the resource, or sell the resource and transfer the resource to new ownership (Dequech, 2006; Davy, 2012). Segeren *et al.* (2007:12) argued that property rights can then legitimately be claimed to be rules that establish *'how a person may use an object and when that use might be affect or be affected by another person'*.

Within the understanding of property rights of public places there is acknowledgement of the element of social interaction. It is this social element that makes them public, not the commonly understood element of ownership alone i.e. the state providing public places and the market providing private place. This is as private places may be provided by public bodies, as can be seen by social housing and public places may be provided by private owners as can be seen with the provision of shopping centres. Public places, even if not equitably used by all within a given social use, typically include a variety of users, and with a variety of people comes a variety of values, competing ideals and the potential for urban conflicts. Through understanding social structures like Fraser's (1990) multiple publics, it can be argued that the idea of *'the public'* can no longer be acknowledged as a homogenous grouping; if indeed it ever really was as even the Greek Agora excluded women and slaves. Different social movements have, however, demonstrated that inequalities remain for many groups within society - women, ethnic and sexual minorities - with conflicts emerging as they challenge to be incorporated within the spatial specific public. Whilst there is the potential for interactions with other members of society which enables the potential for co-consumption of public places (Webster, 2007) by a spectrum of users across society,

it does not crucially guarantee equitable consumption.

Fundamentally, this inequity of use has the latent potential to expedite into conflicts and competition, which Pejovich (1997) defines as being the result of two or more individuals or groups attempting to capture the utility or value of a resource of which only one can have. This is particularly problematic in regards to the instrumental and expressive use of place (Figure Two) particularly within heterogeneous, polarised communities, as competition for place is a major source of tension (Madanipour, 2010:119). Public places, no longer interpreted as a singular space within a homogenous society, are exacerbating socio-spatial polarisation and can be heralded as a petri dish to observe and investigate the cacophony of conflicts that are played out upon the urban canvas in attempting to attain the control and capture the value of the public place. Contemporary governance decisions have, however, pursued the goal of *'sanitising'* these places into more ordered forms. These decisions have seemingly facilitated the movement away from values of shared places for active civilians by manipulating the institution of property rights to enforce self-preserving (Sennett, 1986) homogenous semi-public places.

Privately owned public spaces are frequently criticized for diminishing the publicness of public space by restricting social interaction, constraining individual liberties, and excluding undesirable populations (Nemeth and Schmidt, 2011:5). The privatisation of the *'public'* realm has led to arguments that there has been the dissimulation of the public place which is eroding the spontaneity and the serendipity of the place. Shatkin (2008:384) has stipulated that one prominent challenge of contemporary global urban planning is the *'unprecedented privatisation of urban and regional planning'*. Through urban planning practice facilitating security agendas and neo-liberal commercial initiatives, there has effectively been the rejection of the concept of public purpose or of public benefit in favour of the interest of the commercial elites. Under such circumstances, public places have become manipulated by powerful individuals, groups and institutions who attempt to gratify their parochial interest. This can create a situation of conflicting demands upon the land; an innate issue within many elements of contemporary urban planning.

Competition for land and the rights to utilise and capture its value have expedited into conflicts (Davy, 2012) which have become particularly problematic within urban areas that comprise co-habiting polarised communities. This has led to ensuing conflicts regarding the identity, form, ownership and use of public place. The failures of previous planning thinking were seen to be its advocacy of the simplistic separation of sanitising order. Ultimately these failed. This fuelled the need for theoretical discussion on how to cater for the plurality of the modern society and their potentially incompatible interests of public places. An example of where public places embroiled in conflict attempted to have order instilled within them through separation is in the socially turbulent context of Northern Ireland with the separation most visually encapsulated through residential segregation, which in certain cases has a very physical border through the somewhat ironically titled[2] *'peace walls'*. One way of conceptually

2 Ironic as this is often the locations of the most intense outbreak of temporal violence.

understanding the plurality of society and the outcome of the contestations that emerge within public places is through an appreciation of the insights attained from the concept of privatism.
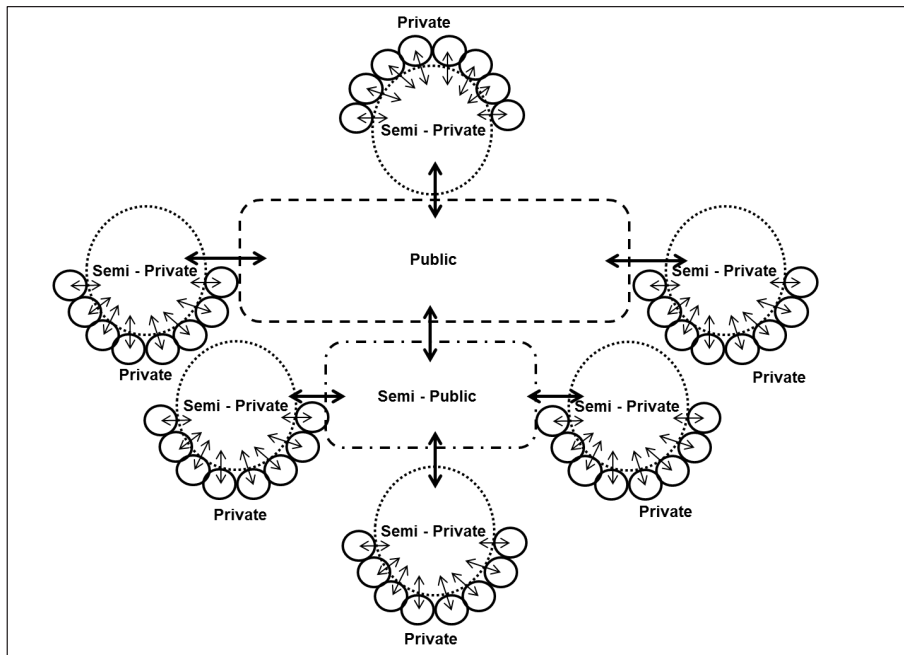
3.0 Privatism

In the sociological literature, privatism is frequently understood as 'home-centeredness' (Hirt, 2012). As a result of privatism personal networks have become increasingly privatized, consisting of a dense network of interactions centered on private dwellings like individuals' homes. This is in contrast to public places which are characterised by diverse, loosely coupled interactions. Such interactions are shaped by privatism being characterised by the sacrifice of *'bridging social capital'* for *'bonding social capital'* (Putnam, 2000). Bonding social capital is formed through the interaction of tightly-knit networks of similar others, often close friends and kin. Personal communities high in this form of social capital tend to provide generalized social support (Wellman and Wortley, 1990) but they can also be repressive and tend to be racially, culturally, behaviourally, and ideologically homogeneous (McPherson *et al.*, 2001). Bridging social capital exists through access to diverse, and relatively *'weak'* social ties that provide specialised social support and access to novel information and resources (Burt, 1992). Individuals who have more bridging social capital, which can only come from participation in diverse social milieus, are more trusting and demonstrate greater social tolerance. Subsequently, it is the home-centered focus of privatism that shapes perceived publicness (Figure Three).

Areas in which privatism has occurred and there has been bonding social capital between local residents can be perceived as private in relation to who and how they are utilised by those who are beyond the social bond. There has seemingly been the encroachment of private rights over the public places that are located within close proximity to their homes.

'When public spaces are successful...they will increase opportunities to participate in communal activity...As these experiences are repeated, public spaces become vessels to carry positive communal meanings' (Carr *et al.*, 1992:344).

If there is no communal activity the publicness of the public place is perceived as being eroded. As a result there may be the creation of a spectrum of increasing publicness of public places as you move towards the urban centre, as there are not only less residents in the urban centre, but the interactions that occur in the urban centre public places are characterised by bridging social bonds. Such privatism can facilitate an increased sense of security. Through the bonding of social capital there is expectancy in how other people will behave and conform. Segregation and social boundaries into zones of comfort has become *'a zeitgeist of urban restructuring and a master narrative in the emerging built environment of the 1990s'* (Davis, 1990; 223). As such, privatism has enabled parts of the public urban fabric to become fragmented into zones of private or quasi-private interests, restricting *'the right to the city'* (Lefebvre, 1991) into a narrow landscape of an accepted public. This enables the selected public to be in a position in which they can shape *'their'* part of the city (Harvey, 2008:38).

Adapted from Newman, O. (2001)

Fig. 3. Spectrum of public places due to privatism

This has been facilitated by the closing, redesign and management of public parks (Low, 2000), the developments of Business Improvement Districts (Zukin, 1995) and in the suburbs there has been the construction of gated residential communities (Low, 2003).

Within Northern Ireland order has been attempted to be instilled through separation, most visually encapsulated through residential segregation as a result of ethnical engineering, security intervention or political interference (Murtagh, 2010:163-167). With the concept of publicness of public place significantly impacted by the nature of public place, use and users of the place, it is inevitable that such segregated residential patterns would instigate the phenomenon of privatism. Given the psychological boundaries and/or borders that are associated with segregation, alongside the perception of the respective place being implicitly or explicitly owned by one community, privatism has seemingly occurred in many public places. With society in Northern Ireland focused upon the private realm, given that there was no agreed consensus of what the public or civic constituted, society became more intimate, closed, and homogeneous. Such segregated residential areas have enabled the perception that the phenomenon of privatism and the encroachment of private rights over public places has occurred in Northern Ireland, and specifically in the city of Derry/Londonderry.

4.0 Derry/Londonderry: A city of *'walls'*

Whilst Belfast is the political capital of Northern Ireland and the predominant focus of research of sectarian conflict and divided societies, Derry/Londonderry has been heralded as

a *'symbolic place in the history of the conflict'* (Cohen, 2007:952). Derry/Londonderry is a landscape of many narratives creating literal and symbolic walls, barricades, boundaries and borders which have only served to define the western political and social rhetoric of division that the city has endured as a consequence of the colloquially labelled *'Troubles'*[3]. Located on the north coast of Ireland (Figure Four), the city's title illustrates how deeply emotive the naming of a place can be, with Nationalists having a preference for Derry and Loyalists tending to adopt the title of Londonderry[4]. This reflects Tonge's (2002:4) assertion that many of the current political problems of Northern Ireland are colonial in nature, between the native Gael and the *'planter'*. Despite the acclaimed success of the plantation in the city (Scheitz, 2013), Derry/Londonderry illustrates the problems experienced by an urban centre in a marginal and border situation. In doing this, the city conveys the fundamental importance of its physical and its historical political situation and how it can be seen to be a dual city; two groups of people with two distinct views of history and perceptions of place.

The city holds a symbolic value for Protestants as history and identity converge in a spatial sense as a consequence of the Siege of Derry/Londonderry during the Williamite War between the Protestant William of Orange and the Catholic King James II. The city also has a special significance for Nationalists as the city symbolises the perceived second class status of Nationalists within Northern Ireland (Ruane and Todd,

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3 The Troubles as accepted by the Northern Ireland Office refers to the socially turbulent period of history in Northern Ireland from the outbreak of the violence in Derry/Londonderry in 1969 until the signing of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement in 1998.

4 It is due to the contentious nature of the city's title that the circumlocution of Derry/Londonderry has been utilised in the paper as it is widely accepted as a neutral term for the city.

Source: clker.com

**Fig. 4.** Locational Map of Derry/Londonderry

1996). Despite having a majority Nationalist population, Unionists retained control of the city council as the Stormont government was accused of gerrymandering wards (Bryan *et al.*, 2007). It is within this emotive context of Derry/Londonderry that it has been alleged (Dochartaigh, 2005) that the Troubles were ignited.

Derry/Londonderry clearly illustrates the spatially divided landscape of *'us'* and *'them'* with the eastern bank of the River Foyle being mostly Protestant and the western bank being almost exclusively Catholic (Doherty, 2007) with defaced road signs, flags, political murals and painted kerbstones being some of the means in which areas have been demarcated. Such informal assertions of property rights over public places can appear to support Madanipour's (2010:1) view that public places mirror the complexity of the urban society, with a fragmented public place reflecting the fragmented society that exists in Derry/Londonderry. In order to ascertain whether such politicised public places have property rights asserted over them to appear less public and more controlled than other public places, there was the need to adopt a more holistic model of publicness that conceptualises the various dimensions acting on this concept, thereby establishing a methodological benchmark and grounding future empirical

work on this subject; new institutionalism.

New institutionalism seeks to appreciate the intricate nature of relationships and action within a specific spatial location so to understand the eclectic range of factors that influence and shape the local level. New institutionalism is diverse in attempting to interpret the theory of behaviour under uncertainty (Dequech, 2006:109) by acknowledging the importance of political institutions, history and culture, present actions, thoughts and behaviours of agents to deliver a more holistic interpretation of the intricate relationships that are in constant flux within the urban environment. Subsequently, new institutionalism seeks to better determine a means of analysis of the intricate relationships that exist in the social, political and economic systems that are at play within the urban environment by acknowledging the intricate levels of Williamson's (2000) model of new institutionalism (Figure Five). With appreciation of the complex, dynamic network of social embeddedness, institutional and governance structures which profoundly influence the publicness of public places there is a move beyond the mere recognition of the institutions and structures that are provided by alternative perspectives to a narrative which seeks to explain their rationale, existence and form.
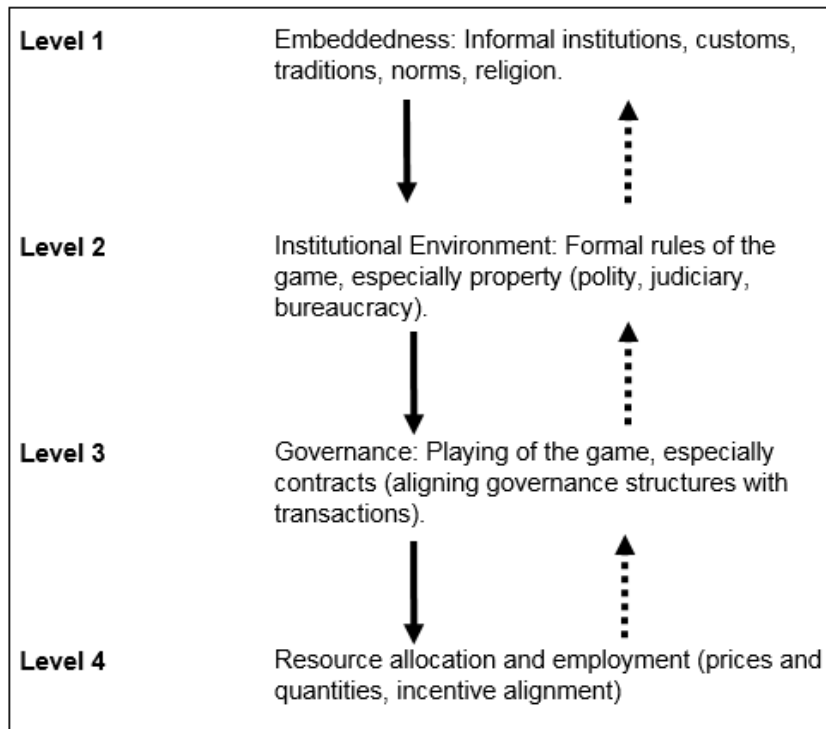
© *Williamson, 2000.*

Fig. 5. Williamson (2000) model of institutions

4.1 Social Embeddedness

Collective spatial gathering is evident in the present form of the city of Derry/Londonderry, due to the heavy influence of the city's history. The sense of belonging tends to be duopolistic with belonging to one place or one group, very often meaning exclusion from the other. The embedded distrust of the *'others'*, a socially turbulent past and the pro-longed conflict are visible within the urban form, urban structures and peoples' behaviour and interpretation of different public places in the city. Areas in which there are a significant number of Protestants will hold a degree of trepidation for people of a Catholic religious belief or Nationalist political belief, in much the same way that areas of a Nationalist majority will hold a degree of fear for Protestants/Loyalists. This inhibits the perceived publicness of the city's public places, with:

'Power and identity having had an impact upon the public place' (LD6).

There has been a persistent struggle over 800 years between the two communities with both communities attempting to assert their identity and establish their respective community's political ideology over place and people. The presence of such narratives shapes people, their relationships and how they relate to land. The assertion of narratives of identity and power have been met with resistance, often violently, by the *'other side'*; helping to create a situation in which Derry/Londonderry's:

'public places and city centre are contentious' (LD6).

Public places are characterised by the society in which they are in situ. Due to distrust of the *'other side'* there has been the spatialisation of identities and a desire to live within an individual's own community as there is a degree of safety attached to this. As such, the city and its public places have evolved over time as the political and social context has shifted:

'our places have been created through an evolutionary process...I suppose historically, the idea of 'their' place and 'our' place wasn't the perception, it was very much the reality' (LD7).

The withdrawal of the concept of civic places and the retreat into parochial public places in which the demographic of user was consistent gave people confidence. Segregation enabled a degree of certainty in how other people would act within a specific place as they had a degree of homogeneity; the *'public'* place felt safe. Public places in which there was the potential to engage and interact with the *'others'*, especially during the Troubles, held a degree of trepidation for many as such places often had latency for disorder. Distrust and suspicion of the *'others'* exacerbated residential segregation; having a profound impact upon the spatialisation of the population demographic in the city. There is a marked distinction between the population profile of the Nationalist Cityside and the Unionist Waterside on either side of the River Foyle physically demarcating *'our side'* from *'theirs'*:

'[People] *are introverted looking and don't want to share so become isolated and siloed so you get that ghetto-like mentality where places are welcoming if you 'kick with this foot' and if you wear this football top'* (LD8).

Whilst this can create feelings of discomfort for people who don't conform to the asserted identity and access and utilise the place, such feelings are so embedded in the people that they are almost expected and dismissed as being the norm:

'If you want to be offended, you will be offended…You know what you are going to expect, no matter where it is Londonderry, Belfast or wherever. So, I'm just saying it's a culture thing now' (LD12).

Sectarianism and segregation are both causes and effects of the Troubles. The events of the Troubles only served to reiterate the hundreds of years of division and distrust that had left people suspicious and afraid of what the *'other side'* represent. The presence of physical demarcation s influenced how people access and utilise the urban environment by enabling people to create psychological interpretations of the city of places they can and cannot go. There has been the creation of mental maps as a result of the:

'Perceptions of who owns what and who has the right to share in a particular culture and who has the right to share and understand it' (LD6).

Memories of events, stories of areas, and perceptions of the *'other community'* have left communities with a predisposed impression of what the *'other'* is like and have aggravated the mental maps of places that they can and cannot access and use. Consequently, people seem to feel threatened or intimidated upon accessing or utilising public place that has the *'others'* identity, particularly if there are symbols or emblems visible. This is as:

'The Troubles has left us with a legacy of issues in terms of where people can go and be safe in' (LD3).

Subsequently, socially embedded attitudes have an impact upon the perceived publicness of public places. Enduring sectarianism and segregation acts as a means of asserting property rights over an area for one religion or community background. With the relatively social stability that the city has endured in recent times, there has been acknowledgement that such perceptions are often misguided. There have been attempts to erode the negative perceptions attached to the two communities by cultivating dialogue and relationship building. This is hoped to modify the situation so that publicness is predominantly influenced by ease of access, as opposed to negative perceptions:

'The inhibiting factor should be proximity not perception' (LD3).

Nevertheless, given the inert characteristic of socially embedded attitudes, such perceptions are difficult to overcome:

'Sometimes perception is even worse than reality and if it takes hold there is a real challenge there to change it' (LD7).

Informal social relationships have created mental barriers to certain places for both communities. The breaking down of such mental barriers may be assisted with physical environmental changes; facilitating a change in seemingly entrenched social divisions:

'The physical enables the mental…Removal of the physical barriers and easier physical access - then they will start to breakdown the mental barriers' (LD10).

History and culture have a significant role to play in sha-

ping contemporary society and in affecting the context of the *'game'*. The contemporary urban environment and the people who utilise and engage with it cannot be examined without an historical and cultural appreciation of how they are formed. To do so would undermine and over-simplify the layers historical memory brings to society today. In understanding the historical and cultural context of the city and socially embedded attitudes, there is evidence that both communities have a tendency to focus on the past. Nationalists romanticise the idea of Ireland prior to the British invasion and colonisation, illustrated by murals which celebrate the idea of a united island, providing the incentive in how their behaviour and relationships are structured today. Unionists sentimentalise about the times that they had a hegemonic position within Northern Ireland and the strength of the union they had with Great Britain prior to power sharing. Nonetheless, it has been expressed that despite the influence of socially embedded attitudes of sectarianism and segregation, there is the aspiration for all to move on. This is despite in being individually or collectively problematic:

'The past is the past. I think that we have to remember who was killed but we have to move on for the generations who are coming in' (LD11).

The expression of such feelings has led to the genesis of a change of attitudes in the city with there a movement away from being fixated on the social problems of the Troubles of the past, to focusing on the situation as it is today, which is predominantly economic. Places that were characterised by divisions, for many, have had such embedded feelings challenged by all publics accessing and utilising them; their boundaries or borders have become more fluid. In illustrating the *'feedback'* loop of the Williamson (2000) model, the political, governance and local level changes which have attempted to bring peace to Northern Ireland has initiated alterations in how people interpret and perceive public places. There is a view that no longer should public places be viewed as territory to be claimed by one side over another, but:

'that public places should be shared by all…I don't think that anybody should have one grab over another' (LD12).

To enable such changes in public places to occur, socially embedded attitudes for many have evolved. Within Derry/Londonderry, there has been a marked transition away from polarised positions in which:

'You couldn't have got Billy and Seamus representing both sides of the community to sit down in the middle of the Seventies and think about shared space and whether they would like a park or to increase the permeability of the two communities' (LD8).

There has been the cultivating of a *'culture of continuing conversations'* which has been established over a prolonged period of time. This has helped to remove some of the embedded prejudices and suspicions of what the 'other side' are motivated by to establish a:

'mature relationship, which you know, has been built up on over a period of years. There has been the element of trust built up where people will have had a bit of give and take and where it has been reciprocated' (LD10).

Nevertheless, there is the argument that socially embedded

attitudes haven't been overcome; they have just been muted within the public realm. Certain public places have become more mixed in terms of the demographic of the users, with physical segregation beginning to be challenged. They, however, to a degree remain psychologically segregated from each other. Within the public realm there has been the assertion, not of a true civic realm in which people use, express and represent themselves as their true selves but there has been the emergence of a seemingly accepted narrative of neutrality which will enable the public place to function. People suppress details that could give their identity away. Given the lengthy period of violence, distrust between the communities, such embedded attitudes remain:

'I can understand and there's no doubt that there would be, I suppose 'hangovers' from the past' (LD7).

The inertia or path dependence of institutions within this level causes organisational and behavioural change to occur slowly, generating a lag between changes of the formal structures and that within the embedded level. Sectarian feelings remain prevalent in how individuals and communities engage with each other and public places. Whilst such embedded attitudes are changing, some are frustrated with the degree of inertia that is attached to socially embedded attitudes:

'I'm getting increasingly frustrated as we are a couple of generations away from actually getting this sorted and resolved' (LD6).

There is a very real sense that the worst of the Troubles is over and that the city is moving, all be it slowly, towards a more stable state of affairs. The socially embedded attitudes however, ensure that sharp political and religious divisions remain and the tensions of the troubles are not far from memory. Given the ancient and modern history of the contemporary city of Derry/Londonderry and the heavily polarised embedded attitudes that communities have, it is unlikely that the city will realise *'perfect peace'*. The imperfect knowledge of why incidents occurred and the fresh grievances of the troubles compound ancient differences. The distrust that the communities have for each other has therefore remained. For many, socially embedded attitudes continue to inhibit the publicness of public places in the city. This infiltrates the various levels of the Williamson (2000) model, influencing relationships within the public places at local level where the *'game'* is played, between the governance structures that enforce the *'rules of the game'* and between institutions where the 'rules of the game' are established which has accumulatively resulted in differing perceptions of property rights being asserted over public places.

Searle (2005) acknowledged that society functions through the institutional stipulation of the *'rules of the game'*. Subsequently, the problems of public places can be seen, in essence, as institutional problems (Young, 2002:20). Following the Williamson (2000) model, the socially embedded level highlights the characteristics which have facilitated the creation of public places in the past and illustrates how the inertial characteristics are slowly beginning to develop in conjunction with evolving transformations in the inter-related tiers of the model. Whilst the physical construction of the public realm through urban design and place making has dominated the literature, socially constructed narratives that acknowledge the role of institutions have begun to acquire greater impor-

tance. North (1990) defines institutions as the socially constructed constraints that shape human interactions; setting the *'rules of the game'*. In most developed societies, political institutions, identities and structures are strengthened by the exchanging of a particular set of values from generation to generation (Denver and Hands, 1990), informed by socially embedded attitudes, with these processes of embedded socialisation infiltrating the institutional level seemingly true of Derry/Londonderry.

4.2   Institutional Level

One of the main issues, influenced by the aforementioned socially embedded attitudes, is that politics has become intertwined with the social conflict in Northern Ireland:

'It's all about resolving the power over public places and we haven't got a political system in place that has any chance of overcoming it as they are all so embroiled in it as well' (LD6).

The hegemonic political power that Unionists had in the early years of Northern Ireland, prior to the Troubles, had implications for political institutions in the city of Derry/Londonderry. Even after this hegemonic position was eroded, however, there was a perception that political institutions still were not equitable in the city:

'Even after the Unionist controlled gerrymandered council was abolished…it still wasn't addressed' (LD7).

The Troubles in Northern Ireland didn't just bring incidents of deaths and injuries, it also created the situation for great social and political upheaval. As the political system has been intertwined with the social conflict, during the Troubles, the political system failed to deliver. Political parties were interested primarily in their own community and didn't trust political representation from the other community:

'They couldn't see each other far enough. They didn't want to listen or speak to the other' (LD8).

This began to adjust after the signing of the Belfast Agreement/Good Friday Agreement (GFA) in 1998 which initiated a devolved administration in Northern Ireland and provided a framework for developing a pluralistic society in Northern Ireland. This was based on mutual recognition of opposing traditions through the adoption of a consociation model. Although it remains contested and seems to operate within a constant turmoil of tensions, the GFA is still regarded by many as providing the framework within which future generations can express their differing cultural and political identities with equivalence and confidence. The consociation model can best be understood as seeking consensus and cooperation to manage such deep social and political divisions, without attempting to dismantle them with a degree of consensus and support for consociation from all parties. Within the consociation model, however, the traditional ethno-political grounds that the parties have long embedded themselves in continues. Sinn Fein still has the aspiration of a united Ireland whilst simultaneously sharing power with the DUP who have the goal of retaining the union with Britain. Such discrepancies have profound implications within the political realm, particularly as embedded attitudes of sectarianism and distrust can often compound their ability to

function together.

As such an underlying, if not undeclared, premise of the GFA is that sectarianism remains a permanent feature of society across Northern Ireland; socially embedded attitudes have been institutionalised within the political realm which can influence the governance and local levels. This is as the parties, whilst taking part in a power sharing Executive, remain divided along community and religious lines. As such, regarding contestations over identity and power over public places, it has been asserted that:

'The leaders are helping fuel it all' (LD13).

As the Northern Ireland Executive remains a relatively new institution there has been claims that it offers:

'No grown up leadership, we are still at kindergarten level' (LD6).

This has left many people claiming that the issues of power, culture and identity and the contestation of these in the public realm are instigated by political disputes. Such frustrations can be aggravated as politicians have the potential to aggravate issues for their own or party interest. Ruane and Todd (2004) acknowledged that such *'ethno political entrepreneurs'* can manipulate public opinion for their own ends particularly during the run-up to elections. This is readily acknowledged within the interviews:

'I am sorry to say that a lot of politicians play to the gallery and do play for the vote. There are a number of things that they wouldn't bring up if the election wasn't on. There are some things that are green and they try to make them greener…and the same is done on our side' (LD12).

The institutions that establish the *'rules of the game'* have been interpreted as manipulating socially embedded prejudices to attain votes. This is important to note, as political parties on their own have no mandate, deriving from being democratically elected by the people of Northern Ireland. As such, parties are very often accused of playing to the extremists on both sides which can motivate voters to come out and participate with democracy. This appears to have led to *'tit for tat'* political discussions in which one political party accuses their rival party from across the community divide as being the reason for no or slow progress:

'Unionists don't want to engage so at this particular time it seems that Unionists will only engage when they are absolutely forced to engage and even then it's in a minimalist way…they are still quite negative in trying to fight the past and the present' (LD4).

The consociation model has institutionalised politics in which there can be no situation in which there is a party for all. This institutional division has been reflected within the public realm with functional *'civic'* places with expressions when people can represent their true selves largely being restricted to when they are within *'their'* own area. Others have contended however, that the power sharing model has created a more representative political system that has largely eroded the feelings of social inequality. People are largely perceived to be equal and such advances in the social relationships in the political realm have created the potential for compromises within the public realm:

'I think that we are in a much better place than we were say ten or fifteen years ago and our politicians are much more open…so we can have these discussions and have the accommodations' (LD10).

This progressive approach has had a profound impact upon the people and city of Derry/Londonderry. The annual Apprentice Boys of Derry[5] parades have recently occurred in the city centre on the Nationalist Cityside with little or no violence. This is in stark contrast to the violence that surrounded the parades during the Troubles. There is now recognition of the importance of working together, even if tensions remain institutionally and socially embedded:

'In taking this collective approach we deliver' (LD7).

It should be acknowledged, however, that the socially embedded attitudes are inertial; they take a long time to be transformed. As these are embedded in people at the local level, governance and institutional structures in addition to the issue that political discourses are historical constructs and therefore vulnerable to shifting political and social forces, it has been expressed regarding peace that:

'I think that politics and the people hold it back' (LD8).

Despite this, the political institutions determining the *'rules of the game'* in Derry/Londonderry have been held as an exemplar for the rest of Northern Ireland, with the city:

'looked upon as a model of how things should be worked out and as to how relationships can be built over the years.' (LD13).

Contemporary practices of public realm provision (Kohn, 2004; Minton, 2009) demonstrate that through the delineation of property rights there is the potential to instil a sense of security and safety. Property rights increase the knowledge and understanding of each individual and group's behaviour and expectations of behaviour upon accessing and utilising the public realm. In Derry/Londonderry there has been the ability to increase the knowledge and understanding of individual and group behaviour as there has been the cultivating of a *'culture of conversations'* (LD8). With society functioning through the institutional stipulation of the *'rules of the game'* (Searle, 2005) the problems of public places can be seen, in essence, as institutional problems (Young, 2002:20). By getting the 'rules of the game' right, there is the ability to establish the optimum situation for the public realm.

4.3 Governance Level

The governance level is concerned with the enforcing of the *'rules of the game'*. Enforcement of the *'rules of the game'* in Derry/Londonderry during the early years of the state of Northern Ireland was heavily influenced by the institutional and socially embedded levels. Unionists enjoyed a political hegemony and socially embedded attitudes of distrust and suspicion contributed to the rules of the game, favouring Unionist agendas in the city. The creation and enforcement of inequitable rules of the game contributed to some asserting that:

'The public places were poorly managed' (LD7).

Governance structures enforced the rules of separation and

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5 A Protestant/Unionist marching institution that commemorates the closing of the city gates of Derry/Londonderry during the siege.

distrust of the other community by facilitating segregation. Subsequently, planning, as a governance structure, was influenced by these attitudes and used as a tool for separation. With sectarianism and segregation being instigated by socially embedded informal cues and institutionalised by formal rules, governance structures began to apply societal division:

'We have clearly identified our segregated positions within our polarised society with housing which leads to our schools following and becoming part and parcel of this segregation as well... there is an air of exclusion from a specific area for a lot of people' (LD13).

The physical division of the two prominent communities was an attempt to create order by minimising the latent potential for conflict and disorder that could be instigated by both sides. Governance structures, however, have been criticised by some of the means in which they attempted to instil 'order' in the city, most emotively demonstrated by the events of Bloody Sunday:

'If you use violence then you get violence... Police using violence - it was inevitable there would be a spark lit with this spreading across Northern Ireland' (LD7).

This demonstrates that the decisions taken in Derry/Londonderry have had implications across Northern Ireland as it is an emotive site for both communities and demonstrates the ability for governance level actions to influence agency at the local level. The signing of the GFA, however, instigated changes in socially embedded attitudes and institutional structures, having a profound impact upon how the 'rules of the game' have been enforced. There has been an acknowledgement of the enforcing of the rules of the game to be conducted in a manner that is:

'coming at it from a spirit of compromise, consensus and conciliation' (LD10).

As the political and social climate has changed, so have the rules of the game. As community relations have improved, there has been a reduced need to focus on enforcing security agendas, to focus on shared interests of economic development. This shift was thought to have been facilitated by:

'a lot of collaborative work that was set at driving the tourism context' (LD6).

In the past, governance structures would have been unable, and potentially unwilling, to acknowledge shared agendas due to the divisions at the higher levels of the schematic Williamson (2000) model. The culture of conversations that was initiated with advances in embedded attitudes and the institutional level has left the city in an enviable position in Northern Ireland as conflict has been minimised through the development of more respectful and transparent governance structures:

'they have been way ahead of the game in all of these...Two distinct cultures and traditions can co-exist and how do you do that? You do that by just respecting each other and getting on in a non-threating manner. I think this city took that approach, to respect all views and respect all cultures and all traditions and recognise that there are a number of cultures and traditions in this city and of course afford people the right to express their culture, express their identity but as long as it is done in a non-threatening manner and in consultation with the wider city' (LD7).

Whilst it may be heralded as being the optimum result for the entire population of Derry/Londonderry, the conversations and relationship building was not an easy task. There was the need to utilise a neutral mediator to overcome institutional division and embedded distrust:

'there was a couple of key business people that I think played an invaluable role in it in terms of being the honest brokers in terms of speaking to the parties; because sometimes you know that with two polar opposites it can be difficult to organise a conversation, whereas if someone who is maybe recognised by the two polar opposites as being an independent broker can give them a collective sense of purpose' (LD7).

As a result, community relations to a large extent have improved within the city. During the marching season when tensions would traditionally have been high, attitudes have somewhat changed:

'People seem to be taking steps to if not respect each other, to at least tolerate each other' (LD5).

Inevitably, governance structures have evolved with transformations in the socially embedded and institutional levels. As the context of the game and the rules of the game have evolved it is inevitable that this has had an impact upon how the rules have been enforced. As the higher schematic levels have become more representative of the population and shared physically, if not psychologically, then the governance level would respond. There has been a marked shift from the securitisation of public places to an attempt to make them more shared. Whilst some barriers and boundaries remain, the erosion of others has had a profound impact upon the publicness of the market level, the public places of the city.

4.4 Market level – the public place

It is at this micro-level in which the public place operates. As such, at this level the 'playing of the game' or the agency of the agents are studied, having been shaped by the governance structures adopted in response to the influence of the informal and formal institutions alongside the cultural and religious norms of the social embedded level. At this scale people live their lives and share their experiences. This not only shapes the social relationships within the urban environment but will in turn shape actions and use of the built environment and its public places. Within the city there is an appreciation that public places are an arena in which many publics and citizens interact:

'Public places are where you would encounter publics, being places through which they move, congregate and spend time either individually or collectively with public, I guess, being the opposite of private…I think I would also use the term 'citizens', all be it that citizens tend to be associated with a place…so the public is made up of citizens. The public then by inference has rights, but citizens also then have responsibilities' (LD2).

The acknowledgement of rights being affiliated with responsibilities is an important consideration. There has been an acceptance of the need to recognise people's right to assert their identity be it through parades or protests. This has been accompanied by an identification that with rights come res-

ponsibilities to respect and tolerate other views:

'I think it is very important for cities to have places which are free from being aligned to a political position of people…you can't have one particular viewpoint being espoused at one particular place as that in turn makes the area unwelcoming to other sections of the public.' (LD3).

Nevertheless, the initial accord made by the political leaderships has not been fully reflected at the community level, which remains in many parts divided. Further, an underlying, if not undeclared, premise of the GFA is that sectarianism is to remain a permanent feature of Northern Irish society. The GFA may be understood as a consensus about how cooperation can manage such deep social and political divisions, not dismantle them. The inability for the institutional level to change the rules of the game, instead merely altering them, has meant that perceptions towards some public places have remained unchanged:

'Nationalists from the Bogside are more than likely to feel uncomfortable in Waterside areas such as Irish Street, Clooney and Lincoln Court and the same for Protestants from the Waterside area who will feel uncomfortable around the Bogside, Creggan Estates and Rosemount areas which are recognised as being Roman Catholic, Nationalist or Republican areas' (LD13).

The market level presence of a demographically mixed and polarised population helps maintain the psychological and physical divisions with incidents of political violence and community tensions fortifying these trends and patterns of social division (Darby, 1997). The physical demarcation of segregated public places reiterates socially embedded attitudes:

'Religion and sectarianism is still an issue in the North. There is for some people, and caused by some people, an actual real physical danger of going into a specific area as the reality is that these sectarian feelings still do exist and will influence who will go into an area or place' (LD11).

Such perceptions are shaped by explicit and implicit assertions of identity which influences the dual meaning of not just what identity *'owns'* a place, but also informs which identity isn't welcome. Many of the interviewees saw a distinction between public places that were surrounded by residential properties and the public places within the city centre. Residential properties are privately owned, or privately utilised if properties are publically provided, with this private element seeming to encompass surrounding public places:

'There are areas that are not shared. There are areas that are clearly marked territory and that is evident with housing with the result being that there are parts of the city in which people feel like they are not welcome' (LD13).

The potential for such residential areas to be shared spaces has been inhibited by the presence of physical borders, in addition to psychological and embedded cues. Such physical borders, like peace walls, were intended to separate communities and facilitate public order. Yet, many contend such governance and institutional responses as they were thought to exacerbate local level tensions and distrust:

'Peace wall - if ever there was a word that just didn't sit right…we become isolated and siloed…you get this patchwork of you can go

there and can't go there in a city' (LD8).

Due to the spatialisation of the population and natural partition provided by the River Foyle, segregation of the city is clearly physically demarcated. In response to this residential segregation, it has been expressed that there is a need to question whether such segregation is a negative thing:

'The Bogside, Tullyally, the Fountain can never be neutral areas and you can't force them to be. An area is what it is and it isn't wrong. You can't say that the Bogside is wrong because it's virtually all; the majority of the people who live here are nationalist or Republican. You can't say that the Fountain is wrong as basically everyone that lives there are Unionist or Loyalist' (LD11).

Notably, the market level (Williamson, 2000) has the ability to influence the higher schematic levels by incrementally influencing change. Accordingly, when the community is ready to have increased publicness within the public places that are in or within close proximity to their residential areas, then they will instigate the change. Whilst this is evident in some parts of the city, it hasn't been the case in others. It should be recognised however, that the agency of the market level within an area does not just have the ability to incrementally influence the higher schematic levels of the Williamson (2000) model. Due to the deeply embedded religious and political connections that exist between communities across Northern Ireland, they also have the ability to influence all levels of the Williamson model in other areas:

'In Northern Ireland when other parts become involved in sectarianism and it is acted out, probably in the streets of Belfast, it does have an impact here…it's not just what is happening here with the public, it is what is happening elsewhere and the perceptions that derive from them events' (LD6).

The evolution of publicness within public places in the city of Derry/Londonderry was therefore influenced by events that occurred in other parts of Northern Ireland:

'Incidents like Bombay Street and it getting burnt out, the tension and sectarianism that were occurring in Belfast had an impact back in the city. This led to people in the city moving as they wanted to be in their own comfort zones rather than potential intimidation…The situation in Belfast exacerbated what happened in the city' (LD13).

This exacerbated the residential segregation within the city of Derry/Londonderry. Yet, events that occurred within economic public places of the city centre also influenced the publicness of public places beyond the city, with it stated that events in the city:

'led to the whole issue regarding parades and protests. Derry was the setting of the flame for the problems throughout the country' (LD13).

Contestation over the rights to parade and opposition to the parades was highly emotive, resulting in significant civil disorder and damage to property and businesses. The economic implications of such incidents motivated the Chamber of Commerce, amongst others, to cultivate conversations in an attempt to negotiate some form of compromise. The agency of local people at local levels, facilitated and abetted by institutional and governance structures instigated such changes within the city. There is the belief that for local change to occur, and for publicness to improve, then it must be driven

by local people:

'There is no white knight coming to save us. It's just not happening and we have sat for years and years waiting for someone to do that and that time has changed. The 'City of Culture' has shown us as a people what we can do and what we can deliver and given us the confidence to say you know what; we can do this for ourselves' (LD10).

Such action and positive outcomes, enabled by a more inclusive and open dialogue, has assisted people in taking deliberate steps to respect one another. It is hoped now that Derry/Londonderry can play a role in helping to find some forms of compromise within parading disputes across Northern Ireland as:

'The city has now become looked upon as a model of how things should be worked out and as to how relationships can be built over the years' (LD13).
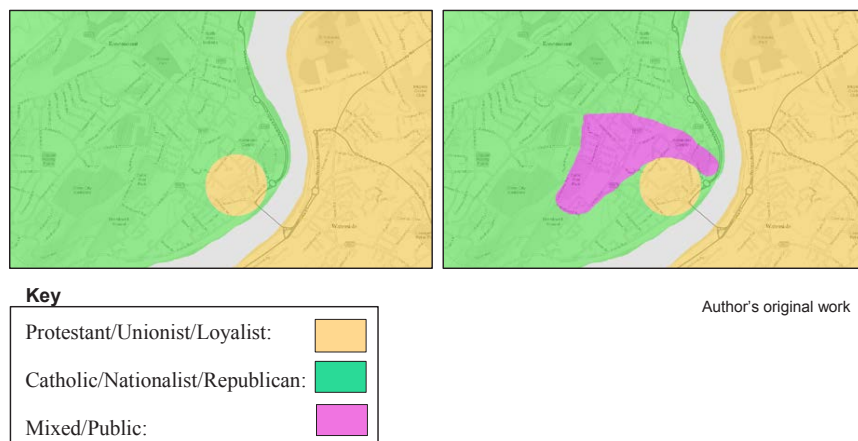
The agency of the local level, facilitated by governance and institutional level sponsors has enabled certain public places to become more civic in relation to its use and user. In contrast though, public places (particularly those within or in close proximity to residential areas) continue to have an assertion of identity and ownership delineated over them. This has created a mosaic of public places in the city with differing perceptions as to their respective level of publicness:

'There are perceptions of who owns what and who has the right to share in a particular culture and who has the right to share and understand it' (LD 7).

This is demonstrated by psychological maps of the perceived assertion of private property rights over public places (Figure Six).

Whilst there is the acknowledgement that there have been significant advances within the publicness of public places in the city many challenges remain with the delineation of ownership over an area, demarcated by flags and murals. To tackle such challenges requires leadership from each of the bottom three levels of the Williamson model of New Institutionalism if the socially embedded practice of sectarianism and segregation that characterise public places in the city are to be tackled.

Key

Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist:

Catholic/Nationalist/Republican:

Mixed/Public:

Author's original work

Fig. 6. Psychological maps of the publicness of public places in Derry/Londonderry

5.0   Conclusion

The research indicates that the distinction between public places and private space has become less clear, with the creation of 'private public spaces'. Such places blur the lines between public management and public use with elements of seemingly private management and private use. Body-Gendrot *et al.* (2008:1) state that the questionable distinction between public policy and private interest has redefined the contours of public places in urban areas. This is thought to have confined public social life to 'certain locations, certain hours and certain categories of 'acceptable' activities' (Gehl, 1989:8).

The places and spaces in the city of Derry/Londonderry are a socially constructed spatial mosaic of publicness. Shaped by socially embedded attitudes, institutional and governance structures and the agency of the 'market' level, public places have evolved with differing perceptions as to the publicness of specific public places. Some places act as an iconic place for remembering, contestation and resistance like the Bogside and walls. Other places resemble how the past can be changed to improve things for people there today, demonstrated by Ebrington with the military space becoming a celebrated utilised public place.

The city isn't blinded by its turbulent past but is reminded and focused on its spatially shared present; demonstrated by the complimentary nature of public places in the city. There are nationalist spaces, unionist spaces and shared spaces and whilst physical borders and psychological boundaries persist, they have become more fluid. There is no singular place for all the people, but there are public places for all the publics; demonstrated with the nationalist Bogside and Unionist Waterside and Fountain area and the largely civic place of the

Guildhall and the Walls. Whilst for a minority of people these public places remain affiliated with Unionism due to their colonial history, education and shared use have largely eroded this colonial history for many so that they aren't perceived as being solely for the use of one community.

Nevertheless, under the thin veil of peaceful sophistication which has taken time, money and great effort to deliver, the truth is that political polarisation and social unease persist within many public places in Derry/Londonderry. Through the rejuvenation of public places with public art, headline music festivals and light projects that embellish tourist brochures and enhance the marketability of the city, has there merely been what Neill (1995) refers to as the application of *'lipstick on a gorilla'*? The 'monster' behind the segregation of public places may not have been addressed, omitted by fear of opening wounds and aggravating socially embedded attitudes of distrust and hatred. Within the duopolistic society of Northern Ireland there has been the need in many situations to acknowledge and open up potential divisive feelings to enable the removing of the anchor certain issues has upon one or both communities. The dissipation of resources in public art schemes and festivals may temporarily paper over the cracks of social division; they do not solve the embedded problems that underpin the division. Subsequently, the publicness of public places in the city are as dynamic as the society in which they are in situ, both being temporally and spatially specific.

Echoing the quote at the very beginning of the paper George Orwell (1950:37) is quoted as having said *'Whoever controls the past controls the future. Whoever controls the present controls the past'*. This is demonstrated by the findings of the Derry/Londonderry case study where divisions can be considered historical artefacts that remain physically in places and psychologically in people today.

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