DISSOLVING BOUNDARIES: a catalytic approach to ameliorate Belfast, Northern Ireland
This book is dedicated to my family, but first and foremost, my mother for her consistent encouragement. The professors that made me work hard for 5 long years. Robinson McIlwaine Architects in Belfast that gave me the opportunity to work and learn. Last but not least: to the guy that persuaded me to move to Belfast and has inspired me for the past two years.

Thank you.
This thesis is aimed to develop a large scale program, for a place whose essence is inherently filled with a schism of political and religious turmoil, and provide an opportunity for amelioration and conciliation. The schism of political and religious turmoil was researched, along with the history of Belfast, Northern Ireland in order to grasp the physical and emotional aspects throughout hundreds of years. This would then give a lead to a program that will aid in the current recovery process that the city is undergoing. The large scale program reflects that scale of the unused Crumlin Road Gaol, which is the site for what will be used to connect communities in the near future and in many years to come. This all adds up to the opportunity for amelioration of two communities that haven’t seen eye to eye for hundreds of years. Religious beliefs have fueled ignorant battles, but with the implementation of an integrated religious school, children, along with their families and other residents, will learn from one another. This creates the hope that an intelligent effort put forth to create stability and positive options will expound many other acts of peacemaking.
PROBLEM
The country of Northern Ireland has a condition similar to a person with a long term illness. There are times of stability and continuity, times of decline and even the abruptness of change. A person can rely on doctors for remedies and family and friends for support. A country, on the other hand, can depend on not only the communities, but the professionals, politicians and armed forces for assistance and encouragement. In the case of Belfast, Northern Ireland, there is extra attention paid to the history in order to boost it from its recent devastating events. Neither a person or a place can ever fully recover; there are always physical and/or emotional scars.

THE CITY
Belfast is known for its strong connections of maritime activities and this is due to its geographic location on the Irish island. In its current age, it is the capital of Northern Ireland which is a part of the United Kingdom, but it hasn’t always been this way. The island is separated into thirty-two counties; twenty-six within the Republic of Ireland, and the other six in Northern Ireland, or commonly referred to as Ulster. Country Antrim is the home to Belfast and is located in the northeast part of the island, with Belfast on the east side that connects itself with the North Channel by means of the Belfast Lough. The Lough is an intrusion of the Irish Sea that has provided a two-way channel of communication from the city and the outside world. The city is hugged by the surrounding mountains as it clutches onto the sea and throughout time, as the city grew to the north, east, and southeast, it encompassed the Lagen Valley, surrounding hills and the shores.1

BACKGROUND
Sometimes the history of a site is not germane to its present state, but the rich history of Northern Ireland and the Republic is hardly irrelevant. The true nature of Belfast is unforeseen, but the process of change is identified with the meaning of the city. There is a consciousness and a memory that grows throughout time.2 There were inhabitants on the island around 15,000 B.C. and the Celts were established there around 150 A.D to dominated the island for more than one thousand years.
Saint Patrick then organized Christianity in Ireland in the fifth century and the culture produced faith, language, learning and art. In the years of 795 - 963 Ireland was the victim to Viking raids that ransacked the land, until they became Christians in 1014. The Normans then invaded around 1171, took up Gaelic customs and language, and established a parliament in Dublin in 1297.

In the late fifteenth century, the English became concerned about Ireland when it sided with a rival. England decided to Anglicize Ireland and insisted that they break with the Church in Rome. The Protestant Anglican Church was established on the island, and the Catholic Gaels were irritated by the alien ruling. In 1601 there was a revolt against Elizabeth I, but the Irish lost. The Scots began invading to settle on land taken from the native Catholic Gaels and Normans and July 12th, marks the day every year that the Protestants in Northern Ireland celebrate “The Battle of the Boyne” that established the yet existing British government in Ulster since 1690. In present day, the ceremonies throughout the cities are illustrated by fifty foot bonfires that burn the Irish flag.

From 1695 through 1829 The Penal Laws oppressed the Catholics by debarring them from public life and office and made it illegal for them to be educated, own property and any military weapons or to hold Mass in public. William Pitt, British Prime Minister, forced a union between Ireland and Great Britain, dissolving the Dublin parliament and establishing a single one in Westminster. This Act of Union of 1800 made laws for Ireland from London until 1921. Another devastating period for the Irish came during the Great Famine from 1845 - 1850. People resorted to stealing, some emigrated, but many died from starvation. The government’s response was so poorly managed, and showed callous disregard for Irish suffering, which created resentment.

Due to the Home Run Rules trying to be passed years before, and because of public opinion in Britain and the U.S.A., a truce was signed in July of 1921 that lead to a treaty in December which gave sovereignty to twenty-six counties, excluding the six northeast: Down, Antrim, Armagh, Fermanagh, Tyrone and Londonderry. These six made up the
new country of Northern Ireland, a part of Great Britain, which made polarization inevitable. For the next few decades times were hard and sectarian strife rose again because the Unionist Party (Protestants) held the power in the Stormont parliament and the country had to deal with the Ireland Act of 1949. Westminster promised that Northern Ireland would not cease to be part of the United Kingdom without consent of its parliament. Not only that, but the two main industries that kept business going, shipbuilding and linen, were also hit with difficult times.³

Throughout the eighteenth century the brown linen industry emerged in this area and then the white linen manifested itself, marked by the White Linen Hall in 1785. It was once a rural activity, but Belfast attracted that trade because it served as a market center. At the end of the century, water power allowed for the manufacturing of cotton, which resulted in the rapid expansion of textile manufacturing in Belfast. Due to all of the new products, the shipbuilding and engineering industries were later linked to this rapid growth. In the second half of the eighteenth century the city was home to the world’s largest shipyard that built the Titanic. Harland and Wolff shipbuilding got a boost of business, along with the aircraft and engineering businesses during World War II.⁴

Migrants flocked to the city when they heard word of the booming industrialization. What was once a place composed of ninety-five percent Protestants, was now becoming occupied by the Catholics in the 1800’s. Not only in Belfast, but also Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester had a quick expansion of people which meant that discord between religion was also on the rise. Bill Maguire points out that the Catholics in Belfast, “were to prove in every way sharper, more persistent and more divisive than anywhere else.” He believed it was a movement of Catholic counter-colonization due to their intense feelings of territoriality.⁵ Once the shipbuilding trade was popular in Belfast around 1861, there were more people living there than in Dublin.

Inter-communal conflict was also a big cause for population shifts and segregation around the city. Around the years of 1880, 1920 and then 1969, communal disturbance was most prominent. During these periods
of conflict, families found it necessary to live in a community of their equivalent religion in order to evade hostility. With each outbreak there was more and more divided neighborhoods. Professor Tony Hepburn said that with growing segregation levels, it created a base for an increase in further disconnection in the future, in the pattern labeled the ‘segregation ratchet.’

COUNT DOWN TO CHAOS

With the Unionist government controlling all aspects of life, the minority Catholics had little hope that they would ever be more than second-class citizens in an area where their families had lived for centuries. On the other hand, the majority Protestants felt that their right to govern was undeniable. In both communities poor existed, much along Shankill Road, the Loyalist/Protestant area, and Falls Road, the Republican/Catholic area. Instead of realizing their common Christianity as a reconciling factor, they instead reminded themselves of the political and religious lines to reinforce their cultural and social divisions. This was physically denoted by the multitude of peace-walls built to segregate neighborhoods and schools so that the two communities worked, played, studied and shopped in their own areas. The British and Irish rarely passed each other on the streets, and this separation gave rise to wary ignorance, distrust, anger and bitterness.

Throughout the summer of 1969, civil rights protests increased along with
tension, confrontation and paramilitary parties for both the Republicans and Loyalists. The British government decided to establish a cabinet committee on Northern Ireland, which made Dublin anxious about the safety of the minority so they sent an intelligence officers to the north to monitor developments. Violence broke out in Belfast, mostly carried out by the loyalists, in the form of burning homes and cars. The events of August 1969 are the turning points to what is known as ‘The Troubles’ and are directly responsible for the deployment of the British troops onto the streets, as well as the eventual re-emergence of the IRA (Irish Republican Army).

Not long after, the Downing Street Declaration was published stating that: ‘every citizen of Northern Ireland is entitled to the same equality of treatment and freedom from discrimination as obtains in the rest of the UK irrespectively of political views or religion.’ From this, the RUC was disarmed along with the B Specials, so that the Ulster Defense Regiment (UDR) would come into being as a new part-time force under British Army control. The Loyalists were angry and violence broke out again in the Shakill Road neighborhood, which was one of the heartlands of Belfast Loyalism.

Due to the unrelenting pressure felt by the Nationalist communities the IRA re-emerged since it had collapsed in 1962, but split into two groups. The Official IRA continued to focus on establishing a socialist Ireland and prepared to use violence if required, when the Provisional IRA defended the Nationalist communities with an aim to destroy the Stormont government and remove British imperialism from the island of Ireland. From this, in the middle of 1970, the British Army responded by imposing a 34 hour curfew in the Nationalist Lower Falls area, along with house-to-house searches for weapons, which was a complete and utter disaster. This can then be credited with the increase of membership for the PIRA and it weakened its own built up relationship with the Nationalist community. Later that year, the Social Democratic and Labor Party was established who sought to re-unify Ireland, thus becoming the main Oppression Party in Stormont.
When internment was introduced in August, there were flaws in both the planning of the operation and the execution. Reactions were an orgy of violence and destruction with many fatalities, due to bombings and shootings, and thousands of people from both communities were left homeless. By January of 1972 the Catholics were feeling hostility and alienation from the state, and this had a predictable consequent in the swelling of the IRA and then the British Army.

When senior members of the Northern Ireland government travelled to London in March, they found themselves being relieved of their position, security and control of the country in attempt to establish a ‘community government.’ What became known as Direct Rule allowed Northern Ireland to be governed directly from London, so its fifty years of self-government had expired. For two days straight there was a gigantic wake of shutdowns and strikes, but the worst was yet to come. 1972 ended up being the worst year during ‘The Troubles’ with a never ending cycle of carnage. On July 21st, the PIRA detonated 20 bombs around the city in just over and hour and by the end of the year 496 people had died. The new year began with an ever increasing level of violence that continued due to Northern Ireland’s government forced ‘power sharing’ between the north and the Republic. There was then the Sunningdale Agreement that caused public protests, continued violence and a massive strike organized by the Ulster Worker’s Council in 1974. Industries shut down, there were regular blackouts, fuel supplies were controlled and there were hundreds of roadblocks. The government of Northern Ireland was on a knife edge, and so in May the Chief Executive of ‘power sharing’ resigned and the Assembly was suspended, so that Direct Rule was reintroduced, and remained for the next quarter of a century.

SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS
In the effort to solve the Northern Ireland problem, the British government experimented with several initiatives during the 1970’s and 80’s. In 1975 there was the Constitutional Convention which provided a forum for local politicians to suggest their own solutions, but it collapsed in November without ever coming to a solution. There was then a group of ordinary citizens that named themselves The Peace People that sought
to mass destruction to force an end to ‘The Troubles,’ but in a bitterly divided society, the movement eventually faded. Even in September the plea for an end to violence from Pope John Paul II seem to fall on deaf ears.

To deal with the ongoing paramilitary violence, the government used to criminalization, which meant that anyone convicted of terrorist offenses would be treated the same way as any other criminal. In April 1979 the PIRA had operations that killed 22 more people, and they detested criminalization because they felt that they were soldiers fighting for Ireland’s freedom rather than ordinary criminals. There was a new prison built, called the Maze, right outside of Belfast that was constructed in H-shaped blocks and became infamous all over the world. Once the Republicans were inmates, they refused to wear prison issued clothing, covered themselves with blankets and smeared their cells with excrement. In the late 1980’s the PIRA inmates turned to the popular tactic of a hunger strike, which gained huge publicity for the group but did nothing to change government policy. For a short time, the government actually granted concessions and allowed some on the inmates to wear their own clothes, reduce their length of stay, have more visitations, and more association with other prisoners. These acts were enough to bring closure to what had been a particularly inflexible and bloody period in the history of ‘The Troubles.’

In May of 1983 a think tank was provided called The New Ireland Forum, which the Unionist parties declined to attend, and not unexpectedly, rejected all three of the options within the Forum Report. November 15th, 1985 the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed, as an agreement to give the Republic a voice in running the north, but did not establish an assembly or an executive. A conclusion was reached that in order to settle, there were three elements to deal with: inter-community relations, north-south cooperation, and inter-governmental negotiations.

Even when things started to get better, violence came back during October 1993 when the PIRA attempted to bomb an Ulster Freedom Fighters meeting on Shankill Road, but
ended up killing the highest number of people in a single month. On the 13th of October the PIRA declared a ceasefire, but 22 hours into the cessation Loyalist paramilitaries murdered a Catholic civilian. Meanwhile, Dublin accepted the fact that a united Ireland had to be the result of majority consent within Northern Ireland rather than arbitrary imposition.

In February of 1995 the London and Dublin governments put together The Framework Documents taking the nascent peace process forward. It outlined new political institutions in the north, protection for the Nationalist minority, and was based around the principles of self-determination, consent, nonviolence and parity of esteem. The peace process was severely impacted because the government continued absence of face to face talks with the Republicans and the PIRA would not decommission their weapons, when that was the prerequisite for entry into negotiations.

The peace talks began in 1996 with British Prime Minister, Tony Blair and US President, Bill Clinton, to assure negotiations by April 10th 1997, Good Friday. There were three strands to The Good Friday Agreement that essentially suited both sides. Strand one dealt with internal political settlement and established a 108 member assembly. Strand two focused on relations within the island and established a council responsible for cross border cooperation in areas of language, agriculture, health, tourism and trade. The third strand centered on east-west relations to facilitate consultation and cooperation for drugs, agriculture, energy and regional issues. Restructuring the police force with a 50:50 recruitment policy was also absolutely necessary for the support of both communities.

Theorist, Aldo Rossi explains how historical accidents, or a change in the history of a city is evident in the deformation of its architecture. When Belfast was going through a time of violence and struggle the surrounding communities and buildings were also affected. Some of the lasting scars can be view not only with the still standing ‘peace-walls,’ but
also on historic buildings like the 164 year old Crumlin Road Gaol. This idea states that how a place evolves, for better or worse, is expressed through the physical contortion and deformation of architecture. So when Belfast was in its devastating period, the buildings obviously altered due to destruction and or security needs. Now that the city is rebuilding itself and has a positive outlook, the spaces that contain these scars can also evolve in the same manner. The Gaol’s fabric that once summoned a negative atmosphere can now be overlaid with a positive and inspiring infrastructure. The characteristics of this collective artifact changes with the time, the people, and the expressions.  

**CRUMLIN ROAD GAOL**

Crumlin Road Gaol was designed by the renowned Belfast architect Sir Charles Lanyon and built between 1843 and 1845. This grade A listed building is acknowledged as an outstanding example as Victorian Penal architecture and planning. The prison has four wings radiating in a fan shape from a central area known as the Circle. Modeled on Pentonville Prison in London, it was the first prison in Ireland to be designed for ‘The Separate System’ of confinement whereby prisoners were perpetually separated from each other and never allowed to meet or converse. The Gaol was built to house around five hundred prisoners in single cell accommodation and each of the cells measure approximately twelve feet long by seven feet wide by ten feet high and an underground tunnel links the gaol to the courthouse across the road.

Significant changes in the original design have taken place over the years. ‘A’ and ‘D’ wings were originally shorter than they are now with a detached Fever Hospital standing to the west of ‘A’ wing, and a detached Laundry and Washing House to the east of ‘D’ wing. The laundry building was relocated in 1858 to accommodate the extension of ‘D’ wing. Further extensions and alterations took place during the 1870s and the 1920s, and the first hospital block was not erected until 1898. During 1927, the Staff Cottages were designed and constructed. In 1953 the Governor’s House was converted into Staff Quarters. Although the location of the Chapel has not changed, the interior has been significantly altered, and the original boxes for each prisoner,
presumably achieved in the manner of Pentonville, no longer exist. A portion of the boundary wall to the rear at the west end was damaged by an air raid and rebuilt in 1942.

Over time, the boundary walls enclosing the gaol have been substantially altered. Materials vary from natural stone to bricks and the walls have been topped in the recent past with concrete. A section of the wall was rebuilt following a World War II air raid, but it is also apparent that other sections of the walls have been rebuilt, altered and added to over the years.\footnote{11}

The prison routine was monotonous and Victorian prison reformers believed that solitary confinement, religious instruction and hard labor were the best ways to combat the criminal spirit. Under ‘The Separate System’ of confinement, inmates even had to wear a special cap pulled down over their face, during exercise period to hide their features from each other. The inmates would sleep on hard wooden boards or in a hammock in their cell. Each prisoner would be expected to work alone in their cell up to ten hours a day doing typical occupations like mat-making and oakum-picking (separating strands of rope.) Stone breaking was carried out in purpose-built sheds at the rear of the prison. Small stones were always needed for maintaining the very rough local roads at the time so the stones would be broken up with large hammers until they were small enough to pass through an iron grille. Attendance at the daily chapel was compulsory. A wooden partition between each seat meant that the prisoners were unable to see or speak to each other during the service, although the wardens could view the convicts at all times. Prisoners had access to prison chaplains and Bibles for their spiritual needs. A schoolmaster was employed to teach prisoners, particularly the young offenders, to read, write, and do math. Often the post was filled by one of the prison wardens, who was paid a special allowance. Prison food was basic and monotonous and the prisoners with sentences of less than three weeks were fed on bread and gruel, and those with longer sentences were given potatoes and soup.\footnote{12}

In the Victorian era, children were mainly sent to prison for stealing
very small items of food, clothing or money. Sentences for children usually ranged from one week to one month and sometimes included a whipping. The suffragette prisoners were housed in ‘A’ wing when the first outbreak of violence occurred in 1912. During the time they were in the gaol they went on a hunger strike and so the practice of force feeding was eventually halted and replaced with a new legislation. This was the ‘Cat and Mouse Act’ that dictated: that once the health of a suffragette deteriorated she was to be released, only to be returned to custody again to complete her sentence when her condition improved.  

Over the lifetime of the Gaol, seventeen men were executed and their bodies buried within the prison walls. Fifteen of the bodies have remained there and the only record of their final resting place are the initials scratched into the wall above. The first few executions took place on open gallows erected in full view of crowds of spectators. By 1901 a new execution chamber had been constructed within the prison’s ‘C’ wing and was used for the first time for the hanging of William Woods on the 1st of November.

On March 31st, 1996 the Governor of Crumlin Road Gaol closed the doors for the last time on the historic prison, bringing to the end one of Northern Ireland’s most famous institutions. The Gaol is of exceptional and historical interest and is considered of international significance as being an early example, the first one in Ireland, of an innovative approach to prison planning and organization.  

ADAPTATION

The gaol is a prime site for a historic rehabilitation project because it was built for a purpose that no longer exists. It’s intrinsic nature is innately negative, but the site has the potential to be reconfigured and used for a positive, opportune future. Even though it is in the United Kingdom the U.S. would consider this building to be in the National Register due to: it being more than fifty years old and is associated with historic people and events; significant for its architecture, craftsmanship or design; or, as with an archeological site, of value for historical research. This site would undergo a process of returning the property to a state of utility, through
repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural and cultural values.

The city of Belfast and the gaol have been through a lot including ‘The Troubles’ that caused the space to adapt physically to accommodate for any era and its people. Similar to this was the amphitheater at Nimes that had a precise and unequivocal form and function. But due to dramatic events in history, it reversed its function the space became the fortress that housed the city.\textsuperscript{15} This proves that the prison has the capability to be transformed, physically and programatically, into a new use that corresponds with the blossoming image that Belfast is producing during its recovery stage.

There are many modes of recuperation taking place throughout the city and in years past some small scale committees have actually seen big improvements. The Belfast Trust for Integrated Education was started with several families that wanted their children to learn in a religiously combined atmosphere. This has burgeoned into the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education that favors starting up new integrated schools with no links to pre-existing operations because it provides the best chance for producing a school that fully respects all traditions. There are departments within the government that disagree with building new schools for this purpose and the existing schools don’t want to convert. This results in more than six thousand students being rejected a position in the integrated schools due to lack of available space. The housing situation is already religiously segregated, but the school systems, as they are now, separate the Catholic and Protestant children, and the education systems has exacerbated divisions and contributed to ignorance about the other community.\textsuperscript{16}

The Gaol, located near the historically violent Shankill neighborhood, has the space and opportunity to be a part of the new revolution for the design of schools in an area where the education process needs to start at a young age. When some people had hoped that the site would be used for housing and museum space, the school would include this and much more. An international K-12 art college would allow for students to
board if necessary and learn in an intelligent, liberal environment filled with many cultures, nationalities and religions. With all of the activities that come with a school, there are many possibilities for jobs that have no bias towards religion. The surrounding community would alter over time and become infested with people of many nationalities, similar to the other two university districts in the city. This site would permit the growing possibilities for knowledge and respect and would accelerate and deepen people’s understanding of theirs and others histories and futures.

CURE

When there is a city like Belfast with a very ill past, but promising future, people are continually striving for a solution. The problem is that one single act can’t tackle the ignorance of history. With the flux of this site, there will still be some physical and emotional remains that people will notice and take to heart. The programatic and architectural transfigurations will create something that is similar in the nature of an urban artifact that renders it very similar - and not only metaphorically - to a work of art.  

This religiously integrated K-12 college and boarding school would provide students from Northern Ireland and all over the world with a challenging and comprehensive university preparatory education with a focus on art. It would motivate the diverse students to strive for intellectual, creative, and physical excellence, to develop a deep appreciation for the arts and different cultures, and to employ the technological tools of our modern age. This school would seek to install in students a strong sense of personal and social responsibility, the ability to think critically, and the competence to communicate and contribute in an increasingly global community.

This attempt of amelioration is aimed at conducing the comprehension of the country’s history in its entirety, along with it’s relationship with the rest of the world. The gratitude of having a stable education would propel others in the same direction, not only in this community, but also the city of Belfast and the country of Northern Ireland.
Respect

Impartial

Opportunity

Broad

Knowledge

Recognize

Balance

Educate
Black Bottom
Detroit, MI USA

The Berlin Wall
Berlin, Germany

Competing Identity
Jerusalem, Israel
Detroit, Michigan is known not only for its musical soul and for being the motor city, but also for housing a large ratio of African Americans living within its city limits. There were certain neighborhoods that developed even before World War I that flourished with the African American race. By the 1950’s there was a distinction of class between the blacks and whites. The later community was able to secure more promising jobs, allowing them to make more money and then build homes outside of the city. The blacks were then left to live in the remnants of homes with little money to support themselves. Within the city of Detroit, there was the use of outright violence, racial segregation, restricted covenants on property, and racist codes of practice by realtors that kept blacks restricted to living in certain parts of the city. These areas, near the lower East side, became known as the Black Bottom neighborhoods, or Paradise Valley. With the degradation within these areas, the city decided to combat it in the 1960’s. What was known as ‘urban blight’ conducted the bulldozing of these neighborhoods. In that space was Chrysler Freeway I-75, and Lafayette Park which is a mixed income housing development designed by Mies van der Rohe. This example combined townhouses, apartments, and high-rises with commercial area. Many people of all economic statuses began to come back into the downtown area in order to be a part of this new housing trend, that is still popular today.
On August 13th, 1961 the Berlin Wall began construction in order to separate East Germany from West Germany. This was due to the fact that after World War II East Berlin had converted into a Soviet styled economy, when West Berlin’s economy hadn’t changed and was still booming. Many of the residents in the East decided to move to a safer location and migrated West. The government didn’t approve and the East, the German Democratic Republic, started to construct the physical wall to keep their people in. This fortification into the landscape represented that two German states and their increasingly differing political, cultural and social experiences. Due to the closure of the East-West sector boundary in Berlin, the vast majority of East Germans could no longer travel or emigrate to West Germany. Many families were split, while East Berliners employed in the West were cut off from their jobs; West Berlin became an isolated enclave in a hostile
land. It took twenty-five years and 136 deaths until the wall began deconstruction on November 9th, 1989. The fall of the Berlin Wall paved the way for German reunification and there is still a memorial made in brick that scars the city.
Jerusalem, Israel has a religious conflict similar to Belfast, Northern Ireland. Both are the most populated cities in their countries, and they encapsulate deep-rooted cleavages based on competing nationalisms and arguments over sovereignty or state legitimacy. The conflicts in Jerusalem would have to be tracked back 1,300 years, and in Northern Ireland it would be more than 450 years of conflict. This middle eastern city is closely associated with the ‘collective soul’ of Jewish identity and is caught in a competing claim from Palestinians, Arabs, to make it their capital. The old walled city is one of the oldest in the world and is a World Heritage site. It is divided into four quarters including the Armenian, Christian, Jewish and Muslim quarters. It is estimated that 70 percent of the people are Jewish and 30 percent are Arab, which means that their religion is either Muslim or Christian. Although the formally Arab East Jerusalem is now largely occupied by Jews, there is complete segregation of neighborhoods. In the course of history, Jerusalem has been destroyed twice, attacked more than fifty-two times, then captured and recaptured 44 times. This is a city within a much larger area of ongoing conflict and there are some remedies that the government has proposed. Hand in Hand
is the only religiously integrated school system that has allowed the separated communities to learn together and try to ignore the segregated environments. It is founded to build peace between Jews and Arabs in Israel through development of bilingual and multi-cultural schools. The schools are balanced and they learn to treasure their culture while leaning and understanding the difference of other around them.
Located in Toronto, Canada, the museum’s original building was designed by Toronto architects Frank Darling and John A. Pearson in 1914. The architectural style is Italianate Neo-Romanesque, popular throughout North America until the 1870s. The structure is heavily massed and punctuated by rounded and segmented arched windows with heavy surrounds. The third expansion of the building was designed by Daniel Libeskind and Bregman + Hamann Architects. The new aesthetic includes a deconstructionist crystalline-form clad in 25 percent glass and 75 percent aluminium. The overall aim of this crystal was to provide openness and accessibility and to obscure the public street area and more private area of the museum.
This is a work of art by Rafael Moneo, completed in 1986, in Merida, Spain. The primary goal was to build a museum that would offer people an opportunity to understand aspects of the town’s Roman heritage. Without falling into a strict imitation, Moneo adopted the Roman construction system of massive masonry-bearing walls filled with concrete. Other Roman building techniques, materials, and proportions were utilized as well, and prominence was given to construction as an expression of architecture itself. The materiality of the Roman brick wall becomes, finally, the most important feature in the architecture of the museum. Natural light, another fundamental concern in the museum’s design, enters through skylights above and windows set high in the facades.
The former six story building was completed in 1928 by the architect Joseph Urban. It is a cast stone facade that has been preserved in the new design as a Landmark site. Originally built as the base for a proposed skyscraper, the construction of the tower was postponed due to the Great Depression. The new tower that is 46 stories tall, was designed by architect Norman Foster and completed in 2006. The uncommon triangular framing pattern requires 20 percent less structural steel than conventional skyscrapers. Hearst Tower is the first “green” high rise office building completed in New York City, with a number of environmental considerations built into the plan. The building was constructed using 80 percent recycled steel. Overall, the building has been designed to use 26 percent less energy than the minimum requirements for the city of New York, and earned a gold designation from the United States Green Building Council’s LEED certification program.
Caixa Forum Madrid
The museum is housed in a converted 1899 power station, one of the city’s few remaining examples of historically significant industrial architecture, that was acquired by the Caixa Foundation in 2001. Designed by Herzog & de Meuron in 2008, the surprising sculptural aspect of the CaixaForum’s silhouette reflects the roofscape of the surrounding buildings. Conceived as an urban magnet, not only for art-lovers but also for the building itself, the architects lifted the building off the ground, in apparent defiance of the laws of gravity, to draw visitors inside. A 24 meter high vertical garden, designed in collaboration with the botanist Patrick Blanc, takes up one wall of the square.
Norman Foster led the reconstruction of this building when it opened again in 1999. The dome is the iconic large glass dome at the very top of the building. It has a 360 degree view of the surrounding Berlin, Germany cityscape. The main hall of the parliament below can also be seen and natural light from above radiates down to the parliament floor.
The museum is housed in the Louvre Palace in Paris, France which began as a fortress built in the 12th century under Philip II. Remnants of the fortress are still visible and the building has been extended many times to form the present Louvre Palace. In 1988, architect I. M. Pei proposed the glass pyramid for the central courtyard and it’s underground lobby. In 1993, the second phase of the inverted pyramid was completed.
Cranbrook College for Creative Studies

Interlochen Arts Academy

Robben Island

Lagan College

Queen’s University Belfast

University of Ulster
Cranbrook is one of the world’s leading centers of education, science and art. It is comprised of a graduate Academy of Art, contemporary Art Museum, House and Gardens, Institute of Science and Pre-K through 12 independent college preparatory school. It also welcomes thousands of visitors and students to its campus each year. It was founded by Detroit philanthropists George and Ellen Booth in 1904 and the campus features the work of world-renowned architects such as Eliel Saarinen, Albert Kahn, Steven Holl, Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, Rafael Moneo, Peter Rose and sculptors Carl Milles, Marshall Fredericks and others. Critics have called Cranbrook “the
most enchanted and enchanting setting in America” and in 1989, it was designated a National Historic Landmark.
In 1906, the year Pablo Picasso heralded the Cubism movement and automobiles made their first tentative trips through Detroit’s streets, a group of local civic leaders founded the Society of Arts and Crafts. The Society offered informal classes in basic design, drawing and woodcarving beginning in 1911, and opened a gallery to display and sell work by students and eminent modern artists. In 1926 the Society became one of the first Arts and Crafts organizations in America to offer an educational program in the arts. From its inception, the school sought outstanding faculty and brought in noted painters, sculptors and crafts people from around the world. In 1933 the Society made national news by recognizing the automobile as an art form. Industrial design and commercial art were soon added to the school’s curriculum. Recognizing the need to be part of Detroit’s Cultural Center, the school moved in 1958 to its current location. In 1962, when the Michigan Department
of Education authorized the granting of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Industrial Design, the school officially became a College. In July of 2001, CCS changed its name to the College for Creative Studies to better reflect what the College does – educate talented students to become artists, designers, and leaders in their fields.
Interlochen Center for the Arts engages and inspires people worldwide through excellence in educational, artistic and cultural programs, enhancing the quality of life through the universal language of the arts. Situated on a 1,200-acre campus, Interlochen Center for the Arts is the only community in the world that brings together a 2500-student summer arts camp program for ages 8-18, a 500-student fine arts boarding high school with college-prep academics, two 24-hour listener-supported public radio stations (classical music and news), year-round arts programs for adults, 600 arts presentations annually by students, faculty and world-renowned guest artists, and eight decades worth of alumni worldwide, including a galaxy of arts luminaries. Arts lovers, lifelong learners and the world’s most talented and motivated young people are drawn to Interlochen from all over the country and all over the world to celebrate and create excellence in creative writing, dance, motion picture arts, music, theatre, visual arts and academics.
Robben Island has been used primarily as a prison. Indigenous African leaders, Muslim leaders from the East Indies, Dutch and British settler soldiers and civilians, women, and anti-apartheid activists, including South Africa’s first democratic President, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. Robben Island has not only been used as a prison. It was a training and defence station in World War II and a hospital for leprosy patients, and the mentally and chronically ill. Since 1997 Robben Island has been a museum. The museum on the Island is a dynamic institution, which acts as a focal point of South African heritage. The Robben Island Museum runs educational programs for schools, youths and adults, facilitates tourism development, conducts ongoing research related to Robben Island and fulfils an archiving function.
Lagan College was founded in 1981 as a religious response to the challenge of community conflict and a religiously divided school system in Northern Ireland. Since 1974 the All Children together Movement (ACT) had been lobbying the Churches and the Government to take the initiative in educating Protestant and Catholic children together. Religious segregation of school children was almost complete. With the support of ACT there was a public meeting called in February 1981 and founded a new school in September. They called the new school Lagan College after the river which flows through Belfast. It opened in temporary premises at Ardnakelly Activity Centre beside the river Lagan in South Belfast. For the first three years, the College, which aimed to serve the whole community - rich and poor alike - received no Government funding. Parents of pupils contributed what they could afford towards the costs. Over £500,000 had to be raised, so an appeal for benefactions by private individuals and charitable trusts locally and around the world was launched to bring the College to the point where it could develop into an economically viable institution. Maintained status was granted in 1984.
Queen’s University Belfast has a record of academic achievement which stretches back more than 150 years. Founded by Queen Victoria, the Queen’s University in Ireland, was designed to be a non-denominational alternative to Trinity College Dublin which was controlled by the Anglican Church. Although it was the first University in the north of Ireland, Queen’s drew on a tradition of learning which goes back to 1810. Its collegiate department, which provided University-style education, closed with the establishment of Queen’s and four of its professors and many of its students transferred to the new college. Founded in 1845, Queen’s opened in 1849 when the first students entered the magnificent new college building designed and built by Charles Lanyon. Since then, the University estate has grown to more than 300 buildings - many of them listed for their architectural importance. The first batch of students numbered 90. Today there are some 24,000.
The Belfast campus on York Street is part of the city’s vibrant Cathedral Quarter. Recognized as the historic heart of Belfast, the Cathedral Quarter is the city’s up and coming cultural hotspot. The area is richly endowed with historical, political and artistic character. The campus is made up of two separate buildings which are connected via a suspended walkway above York Street. Following a major £30 million refurbishment and redevelopment programme students and visitors have access to excellent purpose-built design space, studios for recording and editing live and off-air television, sound recording, mixing and animation, teaching and exhibition areas as well as a new Learning Resource Centre (LRC). The campus is currently home to the School of Art and Design and the School of Architecture and Design although other disciplines are increasingly being taught here.
Geography

Historical Segregation

Communal Divisions

A Child’s World

Crumlin Road Gaol
Belfast is known for its strong connections of maritime activities and this is due to its geographic location on the Irish island. Country Antrim is the home to Belfast and is located in the northeast part of the island, with Belfast on the east side that connects itself with the North Channel by means of the Belfast Lough. The Lough is an intrusion of the Irish Sea that has provided a two-way channel of communication from the city and the outside world. The city is hugged by the surrounding mountains as it clutches onto the sea and throughout time, as the city grew to the north, east, and southeast, it encompassed the Lagen Valley, surrounding hills and the shores.
Historical Segregation
Crumlin Road Gaol lies north of the Shankill neighborhood, which is an area adjacent to the heart of some of the most acute tensions associated with the civil unrests. There is a substantial number of vacant premises, particularly close to the peace walls. In this area, 64 percent of households live on segregated streets that hold less than 10 percent of the other religious group. To the East there are mostly Catholic neighborhoods and to the South and West are the Protestant neighborhoods. Neither neighborhood has a school that permits both religions to be educated together. This separation also continues for other institutions, shops, and work places. There is also the visual evidence of this division of lifestyles that can be found in the form of murals on the sides of homes, businesses and privacy walls.
The Shankill area also contains some of the evidence of relief constructed by the government. Twenty-five foot walls started to inhabit the landscape in the early 1970’s up until the early 1990’s in order to control the antagonism and sectarian violence that spread throughout the city. The so-called ‘peace-walls’ are in fact a contradiction. Instead of being characterized by peace and harmony, they give a sense of the conflict, tension, damage to property and continuing instability. Since they have been erected, visitors from all over the world and optimistic residents have left their feeling on the massive barricade. This shows that there is hope and support for Belfast.
The children of Belfast have adapted to the rough environment not only during the times of ‘the troubles’ but throughout present day. During the 1970’s and 1980’s, they once used the machines of war as their playground equipment but as those means have disappeared, their attitudes have remained. There’s a sense they have an unjust perspective towards other communities due to ignorance and lack of education. The lower class families also had it the hardest to provide the opportunity for an equal education. In effect, the children have continued to grow with the instinct to defend ones identity and territory from the political and religious instabilities and turmoil.
Sworn to wear the sash his father wore and thinking about all the things you have to be can just get a fellow down, sometimes.
The Crumlin Road Gaol building complex stands on the north side of the Crumlin Road, within the built-up area of the city, and partly surrounded by currently listed buildings: a late Victorian hospital immediately to the east, a 1930’s Masonic Hall immediately to the west, a High Victorian school to the north, and an early Victorian Court-House to the south, facing the prison directly across the main road, with their main entrances axially aligned, and their front boundary railings identical in original design. The prison and Court-House are also connected physically by
an underground passage. To the north of the prison buildings, there is an extensive area of tarmac, bounded on the north, east and west sides by high basalt rubble walls. To the east, the overall prison grounds beyond the main prison boundary wall, are separated from adjoining property by a basalt retaining wall, returning at the south-east corner of the site.
The central building is a three-story building of oblong form and essentially rectangular plan with a polygonal bay to the rear from which extend four radial wings. Walls are of basalt rubble and the main entrance faces south. The Inspection Hall to the rear of central building, known as The Circle is three stories high. Entrance bays to link blocks are arranged laterally to each side, leading to A Wing and to D Wing. Entrance bays to angled link blocks of B Wing and C Wing are open full height and full width, with balconies running across in front. The meeting point of the four wings contains some fine examples of the cast iron arches and balustrade and delicate spiral stairs.
A and D Wings were originally shorter than now, with a detached Fever Hospital standing to the west of wing A and a detached Laundry and Washing House standing to the east of D Wing. These detached buildings later made way for extensions to the wings. A and D Wings originally two stories high (discounting the basement of D) and were later raised a storey. B and C Wings were three stories high from the start. The external walls are of masonry construction. From the evidence of walls in the roof voids, the internal walls corridor would appear to be formed from a mixture of masonry and brickwork.
Built in 1858, this building has fallen into a serious state of disrepair and not withstanding its architectural quality. The Laundry consists of masonry walls with slated trussed timber roofs and includes areas of single and two storey construction. The walls are of basalt rubble with brick dressings to windows, and brick eaves courses.
The original stone built hospital building dating from 1898 is an interesting piece of architecture, well built in natural stone. The later addition, constructed in concrete bricks, has little architectural character. However, as the extension is still in reasonable condition, it may be practical to retain it and add onto it.
Built in 1927, the current poor state of repairs, including a serious attack of dry rot in localized areas, will result in an expensive restoration exercise. It is however proposed to retain the staff cottages as part of the development proposals. The cottages are generally two storey houses of rustic brick. The cottages have hipped roof of steep-pitched pyramidal form and natural slates in regular courses. The front elevation faces south but main entrance is in side elevation, facing east.
Over time, the boundary walls enclosing the Gaol have been substantially altered. Materials vary from basalt rubble to natural stone to bricks and the walls have been topped in the recent past with concrete. A section of the wall was rebuilt following a World War II air raid, but it is also apparent that other sections of the walls have been rebuilt, altered and added to over the years.
Due to the two islands: Britain and Ireland, being in such close proximity, much of their history has intertwined. The Nationalists of Ireland and the Unionists of Britain undoubtedly have different aspirations that contribute to the conflicts that still arise in everyday life. The Catholic and Protestant labels are indicative of two groups that differ in terms of culture and traditions. So, the conflict have become known as a mixture of interrelated issues such as the social differentiation, areas of deprivation and differentials in employment opportunity that add an economic dimension. Many believe that if there were solutions to these problems then conflict along other fault lines can be ameliorated. Violence is consistent in Northern Ireland but there have been patterns of time with stronger or weaker tensions. During the tough times, there have been cross-community groups that attempt to maintain a middle ground by means of communication and contact of Protestants and Catholics. These groups that deal with peace and reconciliation may not have an absolute direct impact on the resolution of the conflicts, but with their help and others’ they have contributed in maintaining the narrow middle ground. The education system is similar to the communities:

Program Design
segregated. The Protestants attend ‘controlled’ schools when the Catholics attend ‘maintained’ schools and once the students reach the age 11 or grammar school then almost half of the schools are single sex. The school system is administered by a central Department of education and five local authorities. The government provides funds for the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) so that the 27 primary and 17 secondary schools can function. This represents the interventions for the process of education and the structure of education through the consideration of issues between the segregated schools and the support for new integrated ones. These developments represent a small but relevant project that is making a contribution towards a coherent mainstream curriculum, extracurricular activities, conflict resolution techniques, approaches to peace education and inter-group contact.
The site would be transformed into spaces for a religiously integrated art school. These images show the dichotomy of space according to program and some of the simple attributes that correspond to both a prison and a school. There is an obvious contradiction as to how these principles are utilized due to the site, program and the people.
Tectonic Sketches
The tectonics of the building on the site would alter with new materials and building methods. These sketches illustrate some of the ideas to manipulate the existing skeleton and skin of the structures.
Space Detail Summaries

Classroom:

Quantities Required

1. Space Capacity: 25 Students, 1-2 Teachers
2. Number of Spaces: 28
3. Net Square Feet/Space: 1,000 sf
4. Total Net Area: 28,000 sf

B. Purpose/Function:

A classroom would be situated in an area of multiple classrooms. This would make circulation and planning more comprehensive. These particular spaces are more private compared to the art studios and workshops.

C. Activities:

This space would allow for the students to learn from their instructors and peers.

D. Spacial Relationships:

This area would be located in an area convenient for students to access on a daily basis. There would be multiple floors of classrooms that would allow that different ages/grades of students to be on a certain level of the building at certain times of the day.

Qualitative Considerations:

These rooms would be connected to the existing heavy masonry, but would also have a large facade of glazing. This would allow for much light and heat to enter into the building in this normally cool climate. The rooms would have to protrude in some fashion from the existing structure to allow for enough space to accommodate the students.

Equipment/Furnishings:

25 desks for students, 1 desk for the teacher, 1 computer along with desk, 25 student chairs, 1 chair for the teacher, indoor play equip-
Behavioral Consideration:

Certain spaces would have to accommodate the needs of the younger grades and some for the older students. Interior design could also be a factor.

Structural Systems:

In order for the space to function properly the connection from new construction to old would have to be taken into consideration. There would have to be enough structural integrity of the existing structure in order to have any additions.

Mechanical/Electrical Systems:

As of now both systems would have to be upgraded/implemented into the new design.

Site/Exterior Environment Considerations:

When planning for this space the access for students should be considered. With the addition of new construction, the exterior facades would be greatly altered aesthetically.
Project Program Summary

This religiously integrated K-12 college and boarding school would provide students from Northern Ireland and all over the world with a challenging and comprehensive university preparatory education with a focus on art. It would motivate the diverse students to strive for intellectual, creative, and physical excellence, to develop a deep appreciation for the arts and different cultures, and to employ the technological tools of our modern age. This school would seek to install in students a strong sense of personal and social responsibility, the ability to think critically, and the competence to communicate and contribute in an increasingly global community.

Program Quantitative Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Square Feet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boarding Dorms</td>
<td>17,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space for Prayer</td>
<td>3,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrooms (6)</td>
<td>1,800 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage</td>
<td>3,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle’s Office</td>
<td>300 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Principle’s Office</td>
<td>300 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary/Reception spaces</td>
<td>1,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers Lounge</td>
<td>1,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Room</td>
<td>600 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax/Copy/Supply Room</td>
<td>300 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional (25)</td>
<td>36,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Room</td>
<td>1,500 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument Storage</td>
<td>600 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Studios</td>
<td>5,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply Room</td>
<td>600 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Locker/Space</td>
<td>300 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washroom/Restroom</td>
<td>300 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>3,000 sf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood Shop</td>
<td>1,000 sf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tool Storage</td>
<td>400 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception/Circulation Space</td>
<td>300 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Lounge</td>
<td>3,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Lab</td>
<td>2,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Media Room</td>
<td>2,000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditorium:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theater/Stage space</td>
<td>1,000 sf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Seating.................................................................................3,000 sf
Backstage area.....................................................................2,000 sf
Dressing Rooms(2).................................................................1,000 sf
Prop Room............................................................................1,000 sf
Projection Booth....................................................................300 sf
Cafeteria:
    Kitchen..................................................................................3,000 sf
    Assembly space.....................................................................3,000 sf
Sports Facility:
    Gymnasium............................................................................7,000 sf
    Locker Rooms........................................................................2,000 sf
    Coach Offices........................................................................1,000 sf
    Restrooms/Showers................................................................500 sf
Museum Gallery:
    Permanent Cells...................................................................26,542 sf
    Student.................................................................................3,000 sf
    Conference Rooms.................................................................4,000 sf

Total Interior ...........................................................................142,624 sf

Entry:
    Interior Vestibule.................................................................4,000 sf
    Parent Drop-off/Parking.........................................................4,000 sf
Outdoor Space:
    Basketball Court....................................................................4,700 sf
    Tennis Courts (2)....................................................................1,400 sf
    Playground...........................................................................3,000 sf
    Art Installation areas..............................................................5,000 sf
    Gardens..............................................................................10,000 sf

Total Exterior ...........................................................................32,100 sf

Mechanical Space.................................................................17,114 sf
(12% of total interior sf)

Circulation Space.................................................................21,393 sf
(15% of total interior sf)

Total Square Feet...............................................................213,231 sf
The wall that once blocked views and access into the site has been altered in a consistent manner, but allow access in multiple areas. Students would normally enter through the largest opening into the front courtyard that leads to the entry.
The northwest west double security wall now surrounds a pool of water that is a memorial to the past life of the site and the 17 prisoners that are buried along the wall. There is bridging that connects the parking lot to the north courtyard and the typical manipulation continues for the rest of the northern wall.
The eastern wall has been interrupted to house the studios that project through. They are all new construction that provide space for fine and performing arts. These rooms put the students on display to the people on the exterior and the rooms to the north provide views out onto the landscaped theater.
This outdoor stage is shaped into the ground. It is at grade at the stage portion and the back walkway, but slopes down into the ground towards the stage. All of this would be made from the rubble that was removed from the boundary walls for the new construction.
Moving through the school there’s a wing designated for the library and computer lab on the first and second level as well as digital editing rooms, a quite reading room, and student housing is on the third level.
One of the important areas of the school would be the performance area in the center. This auditorium was placed in the area that was once used as the hub for control and security. Now it is the main space for people to be watched because of the performances. The shape of the space allows for an easy flow of circulation in the entry vestibule and along the theatre corridor. This also allows a contrast with the rigidity of the existing structure and the new light weight construction.
Site Planning
This year has provided me with the opportunity to evaluate myself on a personal level and within my architectural studio. I was lucky to have professors that allowed me to drive my project in the direction I wanted in order to satisfy goals I set for my master’s thesis. I would enjoy to study more of Belfast, Northern Ireland in order to grasp information that could continue the work that has been done in the past 8 months. What has been accomplished is an architectural aspiration that could only hope to have a glimpse of an effect on the communities that inhabit Belfast.

... God Speed
1 Boal, Frederick. *Shaping a City: Belfast in the Late Twentieth Century*. Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, 1995. pg.9


4 Boal, Frederick. *Shaping a City: Belfast in the Late Twentieth Century*. Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, 1995. pg.11-15

5 Boal, Frederick. *Shaping a City: Belfast in the Late Twentieth Century*. Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, 1995. pg.13

6 Boal, Frederick. *Shaping a City: Belfast in the Late Twentieth Century*. Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, 1995. pg.27


Boal, Frederick. *Shaping a City: Belfast in the Late Twentieth Century*. Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, 1995. Provided a course through history over the past three decades, with many graphs, tables, maps and photographs.


Gives background information that would help to explain the cause for ‘the troubles’ and what other conflicts has been cause.


Provides a dichotomy of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland through the use of photographs.


This gives information regarding the commonalities of the two contrasting communities.