LIMINAL BORDER SPACES
AN ARCHITECTURAL - POLITICAL ANTHROPOLOGY
AN INVESTIGATION IN BELFAST NORTHERN IRELAND

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ABSTRACT

What began as exploration of societal lines and their social, political, and economic influence grew to include an investigation of the concept of liminality and both its spatial and temporal characteristics. Using Belfast, Northern Ireland, U.K. to serve as context and liminality as a design ideology, in-depth ethnographic research and identification of liminal design principles produced two specific design proposals as the outcome of this thesis. These proposals address the peace wall conditions that currently divide areas of the city as a result of the Northern Ireland Conflict, in a way which aims to bridge the gap between communities and strive towards future unification. In addition to specific proposals for Belfast, production of an overarching process outline allows for transferability of the findings of this thesis to other specific geographies. The transferable aspect of this research explores the role of the architectural designer in addressing this typology of condition and their various associated conflicts.
Author’s Notes: An Introduction

This diagram is a visual representation of the organization of this thesis and thereby informs the reader of the thesis argument’s progression. It is structured in a way in which a series of ideas is followed by a series of case studies and examples which exhibit the idea. These together lead to the next idea. Once introduced, the concept of liminality and its spacial and temporal qualities propel the thesis forward. The next idea comes from an analysis of the liminal traits of the previous big idea, until a site is determined and design principles have been extracted. These traits are then applied to this site through a theorized design process, resulting in the final design intervention.
“But when one draws a boundary, it may be for various kinds of reasons. If I surround an area with a fence or a line or otherwise, the purpose may to be to prevent someone from getting in or out; but it may also be part of a game and the players be supposed, say, to jump over the boundary; or it may show where property of one man ends and that of another beings; and so on.

So if I draw a boundary line, that is not yet to say what I am drawing it for.”

LUDWIG WITTGENSTIEN
The field of architecture is not merely a tool for designing buildings, but a method for rethinking conventions of the physical environment. Designed spaces can activate change through their impact on those who experience them. Through a focused study on a unique typology of physical environments, the range of impact that design can have may expand. This thesis is a study of architectural – political anthropology. It examines social, cultural, and political conditions of existing societal lines and the unique circumstances which surround them. The goal is to determine if and how we can readdress these conditions to create an intermediate space to be utilized by the communities which exist along it. The thesis process will examine if and how an intentional space can allow for divided and sometimes conflicting cultures to interact in a meaningful way. It explores the following questions: Can this space foster cooperation and collaboration, and bring value to a condition which has previously separated and divided? How can architecture, as a mindset, a process, and a physical intervention, reach towards this outcome?

In authoring this thesis, I have started down this path of research for a number reasons. First, it is my passion as a designer in the field of architecture to focus on the human element as the driving force behind all design. It is my goal to impact the design profession in how it acknowledges the human element, not only in the minor, the everyday, and the mundane - but in a way that significantly impacts lives. I believe in the power of architecture and design to do good, beyond the level in which good design makes for better experiences. Secondly, the concept for this thesis stems from a project completed during my undergraduate studies at Lawrence Technological University, under the direction of Professor Phillip Plowright, and in partnership with classmate, Paige Spagnolo. In completing a proposal for the Evolo Skyscraper competition, we conducted a high level, theoretical examination around the idea of Borders. Our proposal was interested in the notion that even though borders are reduced to a line when mapped in the two dimension, that projected line takes up tangible space in reality. That space could vary from as little as a few inches
to several hundred feet, depending on the scale of the projection. We theorized what the implications were from this onto that piece of land and how it could be utilized differently from the land around it to serve a unique purpose. Within the scope of that project, we focused on the border space to act as a free state. This Free State would serve as a hub of unregulated data transfer and uncensored digital publication. Throughout this thesis process I was not interested in the transfer of data, but rather how these condition can be envisioned as an in-between space that could be utilized to bring people together and create added value for the bordering communities, rather than reinforcing a state of separation.

Ultimately this thesis utilizes existing conditions in the city of Belfast, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom as the study site for an in depth exploration of the thesis concepts. Belfast is a city with a long history of conflict which serves as only a piece of a much larger historical conflict on the island of Ireland. The situation and its history is later discussed too much greater lengths. However, it is currently important to understand that Belfast is a unique city ideal for this exploration because of its self-segregated society of Catholics and Protestants. This separation is made visible through the physical manifestation of the “peace walls” which enclose neighborhoods. By choosing to focus on Belfast as a specified context, a detailed analysis of specific conditions can be conducted. This allows the overarching themes of this thesis to be examined in a way that is more effective than if applied to a generalized context. However, the ideas both examined in and stemming from this thesis are not specific to Belfast. They can be translated and applied to similar conditions globally. However, the successful application of these ideas in other geographies means understanding the history and the forces at play there at an in-depth level.
The term "border" is generally used in to conceptually define spaces. However, its use in various contexts provides distinctly different meaning. When termed more broadly to avoid the specificity that come with the term, these conditions can be referred to as societal lines. In terms of spatial delineation, these condition often exist to meet the needs of privacy, security, distinguishing ownership or providing physical separation. They can be created naturally, as cities, communities, or cultures expand and grow over time, pushing up against each other. Likewise, can be imposed by man upon the land for the purpose of defining jurisdiction and ownership. In the case of the later, the lines drawn can sometimes ignore the realities of how and by whom the land is being utilized, creating tension between its occupants. Belfast’s intracity barriers were originally self-imposed, and later reinforced and maintained by government forces. These walled-off regions had already sat ethnically divided, and were largely welcomed by residents at the time of the conflict for their added security. They remain, years later, both for their promise of safety and for denoting informal claims of territory.

If challenged as a mechanism for separation, potential can be found in the unique circumstances that occur when cultures meet at borders. A border region may face challenges distinct to itself and its social structure. Fernando Romero is a Mexican architect and urban designer, and the founder of FR-EE. In his book, "Hyperborder", he describes a "third space" a zone afflicted with problems that are entirely distinct from those experienced in the rest of the two nations. This is done in context of the United States and Mexico Border. Belfast’s interface areas can easily qualify as "third spaces" by Romero’s definition, as they are inflicted by several issues that are not equally experienced by the rest of the city. The interface areas, as they’re commonly referred, suffer from increased violence and vandalism, low income, and a general reduction in economic market.

By acknowledging the unique social and political issues of these types of regions, and embracing the idea of border as "third space," investigation into the reinvention of these societal lines can occur. This investigation can explore how this condition can take on a new physical manifestation that serves to address the following questions:

How can these spaces bring conflicting people in neighboring regions together, to promote cooperation and collaboration? How can they add to the quality of life of those who may come in contact with it, both in the spirit of and aside from the social tensions that accompany it?

This notion of a "third space" already exists, in a variety of capacities, meant to achieve a multitude of goals. These can be categorized by places that are jointly controlled, such as international zones, free trade zones, and historic marches or marchlands. Or, they can be independently controlled, such as micro-nations or buffer states. Further explanation as to the meaning of each of these terms and details as to how they operate similarly and differently, can be found the on the adjacent page. Exploring why various types of "third spaces" were created provides insight into factors that should be considered in any new physical interventions of the same categorization explored in this thesis. Some of these spaces have been created to provide sanctuary, or a neutral area while others intended to facilitate trade or cooperation. These types of spaces can also separate disputants to mitigate conflict, or act as protective enclaves. By maintaining their designation as a distinct zone, third spaces may, in some cases, also have the benefit of being exempt from current laws, or the ability to create new law specific to that space.

**micro-nation** - an entity that claims to be an independent nation or state but is not officially recognized by world governments or major international organizations.

**marchland (march/mark)** - a medieval European term for any kind of borderland, as opposed to a "heartland." More specifically, a march was a border between realms, and/or a neutral buffer zone under joint control of two states, in which different laws might apply. In both of these senses, marches served a political purpose, such as providing warning of military incursions, regulating cross-border trade, or both.

**buffer state** - a country between two rival or potentially hostile greater powers whose existence can sometimes be thought to prevent conflict between them. A buffer state is sometimes a mutually agreed upon area lying between two civilizations, which is demilitarized in the sense of not hosting the military of either power (though it will usually have its own military forces). The invasion of a buffer state by one of the powers surrounding it will often result in war between the powers. A March is controlled by a greater power, whereas a true buffer state is deliberately left alone by rival powers situated either side of it.

**international zone** - a type of extraterritoriality governed by international law, or similar treaty between two or more nations. They can be found within international airports and can contain duty-free shopping. In areas of conflict there may be international zones called **green zones** that form protective enclaves to keep diplomats safe. Countries in conflict may also have international zones separating each other.

**transit zone** - type of free trade zone in which a port of entry in a coastal country (host country) serves as a distribution and storage center for a landlocked neighboring country or one which lacks adequate cargo handling facilities. Goods passing through a transit zone are normally not subject to any customs formalities, duties, or import restrictions of the host country.

**free trade zone** - a specific class of special economic zone. They are a geographic area where goods may be landed, handled, manufactured or reconfigured, and reexported without the intervention of the customs authorities. Only when the goods are moved to consumers within the country in which the zone is located do they become subject to the prevailing customs duties. Free-trade zones are organized around major seaports, international airports, and national frontiers—areas with many geographic advantages for trade. It is a region where a group of countries has agreed to reduce or eliminate trade barriers.
By integrating the idea of border regions and the notion of joint or independent control, a study can be conducted which defines three possible conditions of a border’s existence: a single line condition, a void area, or an area of overlap. Throughout the thesis process, these conditions were explored using three well known border conditions of different scales within the context of Detroit, Michigan. Livernois Avenue was explored as a neighborhood border, 8 Mile Boulevard as a city border, and the Detroit River as an international border. The visual representations of these studies can be found on the following pages.

From the results of this study, the following conclusions were deduced. By overlapping edges or creation of a void, a “third space” is created, separate from the two existing spaces. Through overlap, the border region becomes richer and more vibrant. The life or activity of each side is pulled closer together, so that it is touching or merging. However, when the sides were overlapped in the study, the content of one side overpowered the content of the other side. This is partially due to the nature of the exploration and the methods used, but it raises the following question when applied to a physical condition; in creating a shared border space, what can be done to make sure it remains neutral without one culture overpowering the other? When a void is created, a sterile environment occurs which lacks the characteristics of either side. It separates the life of each side even further, while creating an even wider border to be crossed. This exploration relates back to the idea of joint control versus independent control in the implementation of a “third space”. The conclusions from this study provide implications as to what these three types of conditions would mean when translated into a physical design intervention in Belfast.
In Detroit, the Detroit River serves as a border for the city and the state, and as an international boundary between the United States and Canada. Opposite to Detroit, across the river sits Windsor, Ontario. Because the border exists as an arbitrary line within a fluid, always moving, body of water, the width of the river itself takes precedence over the legal border, imposed by man. Because this river is utilized by the people for the recreation of both sides, it begins to reflect the idea of "third space". The width of the river itself becomes the new occupy-able, interstitial, third space. The exploration of medians as borders found later in this thesis reveals how main streets create a similar phenomenon on land.
A thesis exploration of societal line conditions deserves a detailed understanding of the various terms associated with the concepts, and the connotations they hold. By examining the use of these terms by the public, a nuanced understanding of the ideas themselves can be obtained.

This exploration began with an analysis into the terms "borders" and "boundaries". The initial definition was conceived at the prior comprehension of the author, and was developed through a study of use by various professionals during their analysis of the topic. These understandings were juxtaposed against remedial dictionary definitions, and through a surveyed understanding from a sampling of the author’s peers, consisting mostly of other architectural master’s thesis students. Finally, through a series of both digital and abstract expressions, an attempt was made towards representation. These visual explorations also served as further investigation.

Throughout this process geared towards gaining understanding, additional terms were introduced. The study was expanded to include the terms "edge" and "threshold" after they were encountered during the exploration of the previously mentioned terms. Finally, the idea of "liminal space" was added. Liminality was a newly discovered concept to the author of this thesis, but has immeasurable applicability in the context of the thesis.

Through the exploration of the definitive nature of these terms, the author’s initial understandings of "border" versus "boundary" were challenged and ultimately evaluated to be unaligned with the popular understanding of the terms. The author’s understanding of "border" shifted from a physical, hard lined separation of people or cultures, to a non-physical or naturally formed condition. This condition has the potential for width, and may be unprecise in its definition. On the other hand, the initial understand of "boundary" was a blurry, non-physical condition without need for social or cultural definition. What resulted was an understanding of "boundary" as a physical condition, meant to separate or control movement. The exploration of "edge" led to the definition of a singular condition, where something ends. In some instances, the "edge" condition may have the intention of keeping people in. "Threshold" was defined as a distinction of space that is intended to be crossed, such as with a doorway or gate.

Kevin Lynch, in "The Image of the City" discusses edges as one of the elements that make up a city. He describes edges as needing a continuity of form throughout their length to be recognizable. Edges gain strength if they are "laterally visible for some distance, mark a sharp gradient of area character, and clearly joins two bounded regions." Lynch references medieval city walls and water to land as very clear representations of this edge condition. However, when the two regions are not of contrasting nature, Lynch argues that defining this edge condition can be important in orienting the observers as to what is "inside" and what is "outside." [2]

The definitions at each stage of this study, as well as the methods of exploration can be seen in the pages that follow. The conclusive definitions listed represent how the terms will be understood moving forward in the context of this thesis.

border - a physical or hard line of separation, dividing people and/or cultures, such as international borders

boundary - a blurry, or not-physical line of division, with no social need for separation, often found at the local or state level

INITIAL AUTHOR DEFINITIONS

PROFESSIONAL USE DEFINITIONS

border - a condition of blurred edges, which is activated by life; a liminal condition of porosity and resistance, which denaturalizes difference and brings life to the edges
boundary - naturalizes differences through weak, undeveloped, unlively edges

DICTIONARY DEFINITIONS

border - edge of a surface that defines its outer boundary
boundary - line that marks the limits; dividing line, limit of activity
edge - the outside limit of an object, area, or surface; a place or part farthest away from the center of something
threshold - the outside limit of an object, area, or surface; a place or part farthest away from the center of something
liminal - of or relating to a transitional or initial stage of a process; occupying a position at, or on both sides of, a boundary or threshold.

CONCLUSIVE DEFINITIONS

border - non-physical or natural condition which may or may not have width, not hard or precisely defined
boundary - physical barrier between spaces, meant to separate or keep in or out
edge - singular condition; keeps something in or contained; where something ends
threshold - a distinction of space or a path that is meant to be crossed, such as a door or gate
liminal - (conclusively defined in the pages that follow; see: “The Liminal Condition”)
The discovery of the concept of “liminality” was, as mentioned, the most significant outcome of the previous investigation, adding important conceptual content to the thesis agenda. It expresses the essence of the goals of a third space intervention at a border condition. Richard Sennett, in his lecture, “The Architecture of Cooperation”, found online, introduces the idea of liminality. Sennett is the Centennial Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics and the University Professor of the Humanities at New York University. He also spent time as a fellow of the Joint Center for Urban Studies of Harvard and MIT. In his lecture, Sennett describes “liminality” as a live border condition, which provides both porosity and resistance. He also challenges the notion that cities, due to the nature of their development, prioritize placing their most valuable assets at the center. Sennett instead encourages pushing the life of a community to its edges, denaturalizing the differences with the communities around it. He also references informality of function in these types of spaces, citing markets with informal economies that have had a tendency of occurring in these types of conditions.

In the thesis author’s continued research on the concept of “liminality”, many of these ideas were reiterated and expanded upon. “Liminality” is also used to describe a period of time in which the socially accepted standards of social hierarchy are dissolved. Individuals are removed from the normal modes of social action. This, in a sense, allows for the scrutiny of customary values while the structures of society are temporarily suspended. “Liminality” as a concept is described as fluid and malleable, adjectives which can be translated to spatial interventions. The temporal element of liminality, as it applies to a physical manifestation, can imply how the physical form continues to change and develop over time. Additionally, it can elude to the programmatic function of the space, and how the activities that occur there continue to change as the needs of the communities utilizing the space change over time.

This implies importance to these traits and their role in the design intervention of border spaces.

“Liminality” as a state of being takes place in three stages: “Separation”, “Marginalization”, and “Aggregation”. “Separation” is defined as the action or state of moving or being moved apart from one’s constituents. “Marginalization” reflects the relegation or confinement to an outer limit or edge, or the pushing of people to the edge of society. “Marginalization” also has the negative connotation of affording individuals a level of lesser importance. However, marginalization can maintain its importance as a piece of the liminal process in the context of this thesis by disregarding this negative aspect of its interpretation. This thesis does not aim to afford any individual or group a lesser level of importance. The exception to this would be we interpret this aspect as meaning a lesser level of importance than previously maintained. In this sense, it would reference creating equality when juxtaposed against another individual. Lastly, “aggregation” refers to the reformation into an aggregate or a whole. In this context, the surrounding population and culture and the many individuals of which it is made up representing that aggregate. In Belfast, that aggregate is made up of two very distinct groups which operate largely separate from each other.

While “liminality” is naturally a representation of instability, it can also pave the way for access to esoteric knowledge or an understanding of both sides. It is important to discern from this explanation of the “liminal” condition that it has both spatial and temporal elements. In other words, it exists through both the physical elements and the element of time.
PHYSICAL LIMINALITY
EXPLORED THROUGH MEDIANS

The utilization of Livernois Avenue and 8 Mile Boulevard in the earlier study led to a deeper investigation into the function of street medians as borders. These streets, and the medians within them, may serve as borders between neighborhoods throughout Detroit. In some cases, it serves as the border of the city itself.

An in depth study of medians throughout the city and the metro region focused on scale and enclosure. The study was expanded to include additional medians spaces, both nationally and internationally. The author examined two additional U.S. medians, while also examining two in London, U.K. and two in Paris, France. The median spaces were intentionally design as functional realms, often for gathering or recreation. The functions of these spaces range from public parks to markets, and more.

An assessment of this study shows that while some medians do divide the function of the street (often with help from several lanes of quick moving traffic in each direction), they also can begin to act as that liminal third space. In those situations, they are intended for successfully allowing gathering and connecting to occur. Even in conditions when medians and traffic do act divisively, the main street condition itself begins to function as third space. Claimed by sometimes both neighborhoods and sometime neither neighborhood on which it borders, it gives width to what can recognized as a neighborhood or city boundary. Often lined with retail shops, dining, or cultural institutions, main streets bring people together for social interaction, creating connections, and bringing added value (beyond their primary function of circulation) to the people of both sides. The scale of the space created by the street walls also contribute to the success of the space. As an urban space planning rule of thumb, a 1:4 proportion of building height to open space with is when pedestrians begin to experience a feeling of enclosure, or the definition of a space. The ideal scale for a defined enclosure is between a 1:2 and 1:3 building height to open space width. This idea of enclosure and definition of urban space should be taken into consideration when creating successful border spaces, if in fact the comparison to an urban main street function is an accurate one.
DOWNTOWN - COMMERCIAL / OFFICE/MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL
8-16 + STORY BUILDINGS
4 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
1 BLOCK = .07 MILES, .3 MILES TOTAL
STRONG STREET WALL

NEIGHBORHOOD - SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
2 - 3 STORY BUILDINGS
2 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
1 BLOCK = .5 MILES, REPEATING
MEDIUM STREET WALL, W/ ADDITIONAL 40’ SET BACKS

OFFICES/ LIGHT COMMERCIAL
8 -16 + STORY BUILDINGS
4 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
1 BLOCK = .12 MILES, REPEATING
MEDIUM STREET WALL

COMMERCIAL
1 STORY BUILDINGS
5-6 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
1 BLOCK = 1.00 MILES, REPEATING
MEDIUM - WEAK STREET WALL

COMMERCIAL
1-2 STORY BUILDINGS
3-4 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
1 BLOCK = .5 MILES, REPEATING
MEDIUM - WEAK STREET WALL

COMMERCIAL
1-2 STORY BUILDINGS
5-6 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
1 BLOCK = .5 MILES, REPEATING
WEAK STREET WALL

DETROIT AREA MEDIANS

MEDIAN: 60’ WALL TO WALL: 190’

MEDIAN: 50’ WALL TO WALL: 120’

MEDIAN: 30’ WALL TO WALL: 180’

MEDIAN: 30’ WALL TO WALL: 180’

MEDIAN: 45’ WALL TO WALL: 200’

MEDIAN: 25’ WALL TO WALL: 125’

MEDIAN: 40’ WALL TO WALL: 200’
DOWNTOWN - COMMERCIAL/ OFFICE / MULTIFAMILY RES
8-16 STORY BUILDINGS
2-3 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
1 BLOCK = .08 MILES, .2 MILES TOTAL CROSS WALK BETWEEN
STRONG STREET WALL

MULTIFAMILY RES
3-5 STORY BUILDINGS
2-3 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
.05 MILES TOTAL
STRONG STREET WALL

MULTIFAMILY RES
4-3 STORY BUILDINGS
3 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
.14 MILES TOTAL
STRONG STREET WALL

MULTIFAMILY RES
3 STORY BUILDINGS
3 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
.35 MILES TOTAL
STRONG STREET WALL

MULTIFAMILY RES/ RETAIL
4-6 STORY BUILDINGS
2.5 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
.50 MILES TOTAL
STRONG STREET WALL

MULTIFAMILY RES/ RETAIL/ OFFICE
6-8 STORY BUILDINGS
3 LANES OF VEHICLES EACH WAY
.20 MILES TOTAL
STRONG STREET WALL
TEMPORAL LIMINALITY

BORDER CASE STUDIES

Building on the previous research, a series of case studies were conducted to examine borders in both the spatial and temporal context. This case study included historic city edges such as Barcelona, Spain and Vienna, Austria. It also included political and cultural divisions such as the Berlin Wall in Berlin, Germany and Detroit, Michigan’s Birwood Wall.

Vienna, Austria was established in a time in which walls were built around cities for the most basic functions of security. However, as time passed and Vienna continued to grow, it easily outgrew these original outer edges. As their function became void and they were engulfed by the growing city, the walls were removed. This occurred in Vienna, and in several other historically walled cities. In Barcelona, for instance, a sewage stream was diverted further out and around the city as it grew. These edges (wall or stream) were removed to allow the city to flow openly, but their memory and the history behind them was preserved through the designed interventions that replaced them. The Vienna Ringstrasse in Austria replaced the historic wall that surrounded the city, after the wall was removed in 1857. It is now an important vehicular roadway, and lined with some of the most prominent cultural assets of the city, including theaters, parks, museums and government buildings. Similarly, in Barcelona, Spain, as the city grew and the sewer stream was diverted, it was replaced with a street in 1440. It has since been developed into major pedestrian mall, utilized for various markets, and bordered by many restaurants, cafes, bars and cultural venues.

It is worthwhile to note how these spaces have been developed as major gathering spaces within the city. The markets present in Barcelona reflect an evolved version of the concept of informal economies which often develop at border condition. The assembly of cultural institutions are significant in that they represent the shared culture of the cities and bring together people to create connection and interactions. The presence of restaurants and cafes demonstrate a particular value of food as a medium for facilitating interactions as well. The buildings that line these streets are often architecturally designed to reflect the values of these communities because of the significance of their programming. Therefore the ‘face’ that they choose to present in the facades of these buildings represent an intentional and strategic statement as to how this city wishes to be perceived, as this is, in a sense the public face of the city. This idea of a projected face of perception translates well into the idea of border. How any community is perceived from outside of their border is especially significant as to how other feel about forming connections with them.

The Berlin Wall and Detroit’s Birwood Wall are more recent physical boundaries that were erected to separate people and/or their ideas. Once the Berlin Wall was removed, the interaction between the two sides remained limited to a certain extent. As of 2014, 46% of both West Berlin and East Berlin Germans felt each side had little interaction with each other. This condition is experienced on an even greater level in Belfast, where the interaction between communities is much less. This signifies the importance of community rebuilding efforts, both in Belfast and Berlin, in the aftermath of separation and conflict. The Birwood Wall in Detroit represents a different set of circumstances. Though it originally built as a tool for racial segregation, it lost its relevance once the city’s black population grew and the white population fled to the suburbs. The neighborhood on the white side of the wall natural became populated with African Americans over time. However, the wall remained as is – a forgotten relic of the past. It has more recently receive some attention as murals have been installed on a piece of the wall that falls adjacent to a local park. These murals that have been canvased across the wall promote messages of racial equality and justice. This use of art to remember the past can be seen in Belfast as well. Though political murals still cover several building facades, the more recently commissioned murals focus instead on messages of peace and reconciliation.

These case studies of historical borders shed light on numerous components of their redevelopment, or lack thereof, which can be applied to an intervention which is the nature of this thesis. Each of these historic borders are significant for the way in which they have transformed overtime, acknowledging the significance of their past function while taking on a new role in the present and future of the communities in which they exist. They respect the troubled past of these communities without “whitewashing” it, but have changed with time to reflect the future. This aspect makes them both temporally and physically liminal borders. The summaries of this case study research can be found on the following pages.

Furthermore, this case study research led to the identification of Belfast to serves as the framework for exploration throughout this thesis. It was chosen due to the recentness of the conflict, the fact that the border conditions still exist as they were, and the presence of government efforts to reintegrate the city and move forward from the violent past.
### 13th-18th Century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1359</td>
<td>Wall reinforced due to First Turkish Siege</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1559</td>
<td>Fortifications had become obsolete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600's</td>
<td>District 1 to 16 (outside the wall) were incorporated into the municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1807</td>
<td>Wall demolished entirely</td>
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</tbody>
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**Gathering Need:**
- Connect historic “inner city” to “suburbs”
- Gathering/entertainment within the city

**Gathering Place Programming:**
- Still important vehicular route
- Buildings among the most important sights in Vienna
- State opera, parliament, city hall, burgtheater, museum for applied arts, vienna stock exchange, votive church, museum of fine arts, natural history museum, large parks, monuments, place to meet people, shopping

### 14th-15th Century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1377</td>
<td>Construction on new city wall to enclose La Rambla and El Raval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1440</td>
<td>Stream diverted outside new walls of La Rambla became a street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1703</td>
<td>First trees along La Rambla planted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1766</td>
<td>Laid out as a pedestrian pathway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gathering Need:**
- Popular with tourists and locals
- Terminates into city center

**Gathering Place Programming:**
- Narrow service roads
- Major pedestrian mall
- Kiosks, traders, performers, cafes, bars, sights, meeting points, historic buildings, theaters, opera house, market, museum of contemporary art
1961 - 1989

- 1945: WWII ended
- 1948: Disagreement about Berlin Blockade
- 1949: Berlin Blockade Declared
- 1952: Berlin Wall construction began
- 1961: Berlin Wall construction completed; WALL CONSTRUCTION BEGINS
- 1989: Wall is opened; DEMOLITION BEGINS

 border type: double wall, secured
current status: removed (with the exception of some historical pieces)
original need for separation: political differences
current state of need: cultural differences still exist in the generation raised with the wall,
As of 2014, 46% of both West and East Berlin Germans felt each side had little interaction with each other

1940 - TODAY

- 1945: WALL CONSTRUCTED. Wall is completed.
- 1950 - 1960's: Migration out of the city by Detroit's white middle class, area became mostly black, wall lost its meaning...
- 1961: Berlin Wall construction completed
- 1989: Wall is opened; DEMOLITION BEGINS

 border type: single wall, open
current status: still standing
original need for separation: racial segregation
current state of need: lost all meaning, no differences between each side
Belfast is the capital city of Northern Ireland. Throughout the city, peace walls sprawl through neighborhood blocks and long major thoroughfares. The oldest of these installation have stood erect since 1969, installed as temporary structure that were meant to last only six months. However, forty-five years after the first of them were installed, they still divide the landscape of Belfast.

The peace walls were installed as a mechanism for separation and defense during a time of major violence in Northern Ireland. They stand in various forms throughout the city. Due to their intended temporary nature, many were initially constructed of fences or sheet metal. However, as their need became more long term, many were rebuilt or added to with iron, brick, and steel. They range in length from a few hundred yards to over three miles, and are up to twenty-five feet high. Where peace walls end, they often meet with other more common types of dividers, such as traditional fences or landscape walls. These often act as a continuation to provide the same functions achieved by the peace walls. The height or width given to these object is maintained to prevent violence in the form of rocks, bricks, or even petrol bombs thrown from the opposing side.

While the conflict effected everyone in the city, paramilitary groups were the key figures of opposition. These opposing sides are defined by their loyalties and hopes for Northern Ireland, as well as their religions. The Catholic Nationalists or Republicans, a group who historically suffered oppression, are defined by their aspirations for a United Ireland, and remain loyal to the Republic of Ireland. The Protestant Loyalists or Unionists hold loyalties to Great Britain, and aspire to remain under Britain’s control. This opposition gets its roots from a conflict that stems back over eight hundred years, since the first English involvement in Ireland.

A detailed knowledge of the early history and culture of Ireland is necessary in order to understand how deeply into the past the current conflict is rooted. While the history is summarized here, the timeline provided on the following pages includes a more detailed account of the events that have influenced the conflict. [4]

The English had their first hand in Ireland in 1170. Prior to this involvement, Ireland existed rather peacefully as a largely Catholic island. Following this involvement, English barons were given land, but also seized additional land. Eventually, many began to self-identify as Irish. In the 1500’s, more Irish land was given away to English settlers, and Catholic services were outlawed, beginning of a future of oppression for Irish Catholics. This sparked Irish Revolt against English rule. The revolt led to an out lash of violence, which only resulted in further oppression of Catholics.

In 1685-1690, King James II of England abolished the anti-Catholic laws. However, this was a short-lived relief as King James was overthrown by William of Orange, and ultimately defeated at the Battle of the Boyne. This again sends Irish Catholics into a state of extreme oppression, and by 1703, ninety percent of the Irish Isle was owned by Protestant English Nobles.

The 1801 Act of Union abolished Irish Parliament and formally united Ireland and Great Britain. This was followed by a great unrest in which the Irish revolted and protested, while English landlords mass evicted Irish tenant farmers. 1845 hit with a Potato Famine, which resulted in a greater hatred towards Great Britain as the British Government refused to help, causing more than 1.5 Million people to starve to death. 1886-1920 saw a series of Home Rule bills proposed, with the third Home Rule Bill passing in 1912. However, once the Protestants in Ulster made it clear they would not support home rule, it was adapted to exclude six protestant counties in Northern Ireland. In 1921, partition of North and South was legalized by the Irish Free State Treaty. This marked a success for the majority of Ireland, but led to escalated violence in the North, as the North remained fully under British rule. In 1922, the Irish Civil War broke out after British forces left Ireland, leaving their roles to volunteers, who stood on either side of the struggle. Violence escalated for over a year.

In 1948, the Irish Free State in the south was granted full independence through the Republic of Ireland Act. The previously mentioned six northern counties remained a part of the United Kingdom. This official division of Ireland led to a 30 year period of heightened violence which came to be known as The Troubles. It is then that the peace walls were erected.

The Troubles broke out with the Battle of Bogside in which violent riots led to petrol bombs and other acts of violence. Riots broke out in Belfast as well, and with the police force unable to manage the situation, British forces were brought in. Access to Catholic areas was denied to prevent bloodshed. This idea was carried forward with the installation of the "peace walls" throughout the city as a response to preventing violent interaction. Catholics were undergoing a fight for civil rights, in addition to the continued struggle over the nationality of Northern Ireland. The violence of this period was orchestrated between opposing paramilitary groups on each side, as well as the British forces on the side of the Protestants. Many of these groups were labeled as terrorist organization, and used violent, fear-inducing tactics to make advances for their cause. While much of the population was somehow involved either formally or informally with one of the many groups launching these attacks, the violence and hatred trickled down to those without any involvement in one of these groups as well. Virtually no one stood neutral on the situation, and as the violence grew and the casualties increased on both sides, the polarization between sides and support for each grew as well.

While this was a time of great violence in Northern Ireland, it was also a time of progress for the Irish Catholics. While 1972 led to a suspension of the Northern Ireland government as direct rule was imposed, the 1985 Anglo-Irish agreement gave Dublin some control over Northern Ireland’s affairs. However, the Unionists were outraged and the agreement never went into effect. The 1993 Downing Street Declaration decided that the people of Northern Ireland should be given the right to decide their own future. Representatives of the various groups were to meet to discuss, leading to ceasefires by several of the groups in order to gain a seat at the table during the 1996 Peace Talks. In 1998 the Good Friday Agreement was reached, maintaining a divided Ireland, decommissioning paramilitary groups, creating North/South Anglo-Irish councils, and maintaining that all should have basic human rights, civil rights, and equality. Political prisoners were released on the condition that a cease fire was maintained.

While this agreement formally marked the end to The Troubles, the trouble was not over. Despite the call to maintain cease-fire, violent crimes continued to occur shortly after the Good Friday Agreement. Due to the paramilitary group, the Irish Republican Army’s refusal to decommission, the devolved government was suspended several times, with a five year suspension beginning in 2002. This continued decommissioning created an even greater distrust on both sides. The IRA finally began moves towards decommissioning for fear of being placed on the United States Terrorist List. In 2005, the IRA finally ended their Armed Campaign, calling for all of its members to look towards peaceful means of progress. The 2006 St. Andrews agreement set out a new permanent government structure. In May 2007, the devolved government was reinstated and upheld successfully for eight years. The 2010 Hillsborough agreement transferred policing power to justice affairs from London to Belfast, settling another long disputed issue in the creation of the new government. In September 2015, the government was once again suspended due to the failure to reach an agreement on the issues of welfare reform, addressing paramilitary groups, and how to create mechanisms for dealing with the unresolved murders and injuries incurred during the Troubles. However in November 2015, the Fresh Start Agreement was reached, dealing with welfare reform and paramilitary groups, but failing to create mechanisms for dealing with the remaining aftermath of The Troubles. The devolved government was once again reinstated.

Aside from the implementation of a new devolved government, a number of social reconstruction efforts have begun to be implemented in Belfast. Ranging from local community organization to larger non-profits, some government base and other individually organized, these organization have begun to implement efforts aimed at uniting the opposing communities. The PEACE III program is an initiative of the European Union aimed “to support peace and reconciliation and to promote economic and social progress in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.” Healing through Remembering is a “an independent initiative made up of a diverse membership with different political perspectives working on a common goal of how to deal with the legacy of the past as it relates to the conflict in and about Northern Ireland.” These are included here to provide perspective on the wide range of initiative and approaches being made to move forward from the conflict in a way that promote the peace and unity of communities in Belfast and Northern Ireland.
In addition to the need for understanding of the two sides of this conflict, an understanding of the many parties involved is necessary. In an attempt to further understand all the players with stake in this situation, and organizational outline was constructed, identifying the various organizations representing both the Catholic and Protestant sides of the debate, both historically and more recently. Additionally, any neutral or cooperative parties involved in the situation have been identified as well. While the involved parties expand beyond those listed here, the following information provides a good baseline for understanding the various perspectives of the conflict.5

Irish Republican Army/IRA:
the chief Republican paramilitary group with links to Sinn Fein, and shares the desire for United Ireland holds a ceasefire.

Official IRA IRA/OIRA:
formed by members of the original IRA, which split in 1969 has carried out very few attacks since a 1972 ceasefire

Provisional IRA/PIRA/ Provos:
other IRA group after 1969 split biggest and most active Republican Paramilitary Group during the Troubles

Real IRA/RIRA:
1997 breakaway members are against the peace process

Continuity IRA/CIRA:
an IRA splinter group forming in 1996 after Provisional IRA ceasefire

Sinn Fein:
republican political party, with ties to IRA. The support the Good Friday Agreement and have 16% of seats in assembly

Irish National Liberation Army/INLA:
a Republican paramilitary group responsible for 125 killings has suffered from internal feuding called a ceasefire in 1998

Irish Republican Socialist Party/IRSP:
supports the INLA cease fire but opposes the Good Friday Agreement founded in 1974 and seeks an all-Ireland Socialist Republic

Northern Ireland Office:
British Government department responsible for Northern Ireland Affairs and maintaining and supporting the devolution settlement resulting from the Good Friday Agreement

British -Irish Intergovernmental Conference:
deals with non-devolved Northern Ireland matters upon suspension of Northern Ireland Assembly, devolved issues revert back to the Conference

Alliance Party:
non-sectarian party that attracts support from both Protestants and Catholics has six seats in the Northern Ireland Assembly

Neutral or Joint Organizations

North/South Ministerial Council:
established under the Good Friday Agreement to coordinate activity and exercise certain governmental powers across all of the island of Ireland, mutually interdependent with the Northern Ireland Assembly

Womens Coalition:
non-sectarian party that promotes issues of concern to Northern Irish women

Parades Commission:
committee formed in 1997 to mediate between Loyalist marching organizations and Catholic residents

Unionists/Loyalists/ Protestants
supporters of Northern Ireland’s political Union with Great Britain
ROLE OF THE ARCHITECT

While this master’s thesis develops at the hands of an architecture student situated across an ocean in Detroit, Michigan, many may pose the following question: What right or ability does this individual have to impose their recommendations on this situation that they can in no way fully understand and have not experienced firsthand?

The answer is multi-faceted. It is agreed on all sides that I as the author of this thesis, will always have a somewhat limited understanding of the conflict, regardless of the extensive research I have invested into it. I can, however, do the best within my abilities to gain a detailed understanding of the historic context, violence inflicted, and pain and distrust incurred. I have attempted to do so. I have developed empathy for the goals of both sides of this situation. I can do the same for the victims of both sides and their families. I have included this Author’s Note to express my own feelings about the various back-and-forth of the conflict, based upon my level of understanding. These feelings are, of course, influenced by my limited understanding, preconceived notions, and personal biases on the situation, but my biases would be much less extreme than anyone situated directly within the conflict. With that in mind, I believe I am able to maintain a more objective perspective on the issue, which would be necessary in order to create a meeting of the minds, while addressing the needs of concerns of both sides. My limitations on the situation still prevent me from standing alone as an individual qualified to strive towards this sort of intervention, and it is only with guidance from local individuals that a successful proposal can be reached.

ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Ethnographic research is the study of people and cultures, intended to study cultural perspective. The researcher strives to observe society from the vantage point of the subject. It can be said that ethnographic researchers exist in a liminal state. They are living separate from their own culture, yet not fully incorporated into the culture of study, as they are participating in and observing that culture. This liminal state is both emotional and uncomfortable, as the researcher uses self-reflexivity to interpret field observations and interviews. The researcher acts as a “human instrument” which engages with their observations through the recording and analysis processes, often choosing what to observe, and how to record and how to interpret these observations based on their own reference points and personal experiences.

A lengthy analysis and understanding of the situation and its causes is necessary in order to have any chance of achieving the aspirations of this thesis. In order to construct a situation fostering collaboration and positive interaction, I must first know what forces at play are currently preventative of this. What is achieved is a remedial level of knowledge on the conflict and by no means can represent a complete understanding of the many complex facets of an eight-hundred-year-old history of opposition.

As the conductor of this thesis, I followed up my initial study of the history of Ireland with a series of artistic representations of my perspective towards it. These artistic representations were used in an attempt to explore and expose my understandings and emotions towards the situation, as well as the emotions present in the people of Northern Ireland themselves. While the paintings are, in their nature, the reflection of an understanding flawed by its limitations and impacted by its biases, they strive to interpret a multitude of complex emotions. The paintings aim to reflect the dynamic feelings of fear, hatred, violence, and betrayal which play in the climate of the situation, as well as a glimmer of hope towards resolution. The can be found on the following pages.

In attempt to achieve the understanding to the farthest extents possible, to ensure validity of this thesis and its conclusion, I have embarked on an eight-day long trip in Ireland as part of the ethnographic research component of this thesis. This trip included time spent in both Dublin and Belfast, to provide for additional understanding of the social, economic, and political climate. In addition, this has provided means for a close-up examination of the existing conditions of the peace walls, and a real-time analysis of the proposed sites. Through interactions with the people of Belfast, I have obtained an even greater level of understanding and empathy for each opposing side of this conflict. As with any design project, a realistic sense of the existing conditions is valuable in creating a design intervention which responds to the specific sites.
ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS

I followed up my initial study of the history of Ireland with a three part series of artistic representations of my perspective towards it. These artistic representations were used in an attempt to explore and expose my understandings and emotions towards the situation, as well as the emotions present in the people of Northern Ireland themselves. While the paintings are, in their nature, the reflection of an understanding flawed by its limitations and impacted by its biases, they strive to interpret a multitude of complex emotions. The paintings aim to reflect the dynamic feelings of fear, hatred, violence, and betrayal which play in the climate of the situation, as well as a glimmer of hope towards resolution. They can be found on the following pages.
My trip to Ireland, which was conducted over the spring break of my thesis year, was logged through both journal entries and the collection of photographic record, both which have been included here. Additionally, my trip provided for a series of interactions with locals that contributed greatly to my perspective on the conflict, the current situation, and how to successfully move towards a united future with the design interventions I propose. These various methods of information collection can be found in the pages that follow.

The following pages contain journal entries that have logged the timeline of my trip. However, the level of information provide in them only begins to touch on the rather extensive insight I was able to gain from the experiences mentioned. A more detailed account of the most significant experiences and conversations are included in pages that follow.
We arrived in Dublin by plane at 5:15am local time, meaning it was across midnight at home. We took a taxi to our hotel, and even though we were half a day early for check-in, they gave us our room keys right away. Exhausted from the travel, we went up to our room for a quick rest and to get ready for the day. Close to eight o'clock, we made a stroll into the city center where we wandered a bit aimlessly. On the wall, I noticed a poster for a Sinn Fein politician, the IRA political wing. I noticed the city had a lot of trash on the streets, but it seemed like they did a pretty good job of cleaning it up pretty regularly as well. We first went into that quiet day. We saw the river of course, as we crossed into the South Side of town. While wandering, we came across a couple of markets. Instead the GPO during our walk for the 100-year anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence from the UK, which many cab drivers had told us about on the way from the airport. One of the first sights we came across in the city was Dublin Castle, which also had a beautiful garden space accompanying it. We had brunch reservations at 12:30 at the Vintage Cocktail Club (VCC) The bar-restaurant, located in the temple bar district, had an unassuming, all-gray front facade and no signage. You had to ring a bell to be let in. The food and drinks were delicious, but nothing too out of the ordinary from brunch at home. The bacon was more than I expected, and we learned that chips are thick French fries. After brunch, we wandered the city some more, and visited the beautiful Christ Church Cathedral. We didn’t pay for the full tour as to explore inside, but we wandered the grounds and took a peek inside. We also visited St. Patrick’s Cathedral, which also had a big park space accompanying it. Many people here seem to have dogs, and we enjoyed seeing them walking them and the dogs playing in the public spaces of the city. Instead of St. Patrick’s Cathedral, we did pay to enter, and spent
DAY 1

Quite a bit of time wandering inside the beautiful, ornate space. They had all sorts of historic artifacts and memorials along the edges of the space, including some very old's destroyed Union Jack flags, which I found fascinating. We spent some time wandering the Temple Bar District, though we didn't really do any drinking, as we were all kind of dragging from the travel time change. We hit a few shops including one with woolen knitted items where I purchased a scarf. We also visited this beautiful shop with many wools, but also with various food treats, and I purchased some that I had a truffle. We headed back to the hotel late afternoon for a nap, as we were all exhausted. Waking up after a few hours around 8:00, we just visited the hotel restaurant downstairs for dinner, and headed back upstairs promptly after to go back to sleep. Our first day in Ireland was fantastic, even with how exhausted we were. Of course, there had been some cultural differences that we were trying to figure out (now who knows how much to tip...).
The food was good—filling & At of meat & potatoes. After lunch at the Brazen Head, we headed out towards the West End of the city to the Kilmainham Gaol (pronounced “jail”). We wanted to do the tour, but the last tour for the day was already sold out. Luckily, right across the street was the Museum of Modern Art. It was interesting that most modern art museums I’ve been in have been in modern buildings. This was anything but... A long front door led up to a very traditional building & formal courtyard. The interior, however, was about what you would expect of a Modern Art museum. We spent about an hour in there before taking a bus back to the other side of the city (with help from locals to figure out fair costs).

We were hoping to get into the Trinity College Library, but being that it was Sunday, everything was closed. We spent a little bit of time just hanging around the campus. We wandered for a bit in a shopping district near by before making a couple of pub stops for dinner and drinks. We then wandered back the half hour walk back to our hotel for the night.

The first weekend in Ireland has already been full of sight-seeing & pub visiting. Everything we experience seems to somehow tie back into the complex history of Ireland that I’ve been learning about with my research. We’ve also been discovering a number of cultural nuances that are different from the States. The people have been kind.

We head to Belfast in the morning.

Monday, March 7th. Day 3.

First thing this morning we took a cab to the train station, where we got on our train to Belfast. I’ve never really traveled by train before, so it was an interesting experience in that way. It was about a 2 hour train ride up to Belfast.
DAY 3

...selves along the way. We arrived around 10am, but couldn’t check in to our Air BnB until noon. Luckily, we had left our suit case back at the Dublin Hotel and were only traveling with backpacks. We stopped into a deli for lunch, and ordered a wrap with "Rockets" which we discovered was bangers. We had gotten money out at the ATM at the train station, but as soon as we started mixing our change from Northern Ireland (pounds sterling) with our change from Ireland (euros), it got confusing. The exchange rate was of course different for each as well, so that took a little time to figure it out.

After picking up lunch, we continued our walk to the Air BnB, again, about a 30 minute walk from the city center. It was interesting to see the neighborhoods, as well as the city center itself. We got to the Air BnB early, so we wandered around the streets nearby until our host arrived at noon. He let us in and showed us around the house, which was a cute 2 bedroom. Everything was small, every minimal lifestyle it seemed. Used to hosting tourists he provided us with flyers & information on all the major tourist things, and even put us in contact with the neighbor as an alternative to the black taxi tours. We relaxed at the house for a few minutes after Stephany our first left, tired from the walk & the travel.

Shortly after, we headed back to the city center, as I had set up a 3:00 meeting with Sarah from Healing through Remembering. At 3, Sarah sat down with our group in their office for over an hour and discussed with us her knowledge of the wall & the conflict in the work their organization was doing to promote the city forward from it. Sarah was able to provide me with tons of information, a lot of which confirmed my own research on the issue. She told me about their initiatives, including an open call for memorial designs, an art exhibit, and really being the conduit to start conversations between the two communities. After meeting with Sarah, we went around...
DAY 3

The tour to a pub for a drink and food, and continued the discussion with my group of travel companions. As this was a ton of new information for them, and they were really able to start walking their heads around what my project is. After dinner, we stopped into another pub for a few more drinks. As someone who doesn't enjoy beer, I was happy to see the numerous cider selections available throughout Ireland. We spent the remainder of the evening walking around the city center. It felt very similar to Dublin, but not newer, which many programs are. It was also really interesting to make comparisons to Detroit. In many ways it felt like what downtown Detroit could have become in the next 5–10 years.

Tuesday, March 8th
SITE VISIT DAY!

First thing this morning we took a tour to the Crumlin Road Gaol and spent several hours walking around the area, including the Girdwood Community Hub, development, and the neighborhoods adjacent to the peace wall. There is also a very clean and well-maintained park there, and while much of it looks lovely, it is being used as a public park, there are also allot of trash and such along the peace wall. We found this interesting, as it is in sight to people's yards. The park was fenced off from the road, but since it has begun to be used as a dog park, several individuals took their dogs there while we were wandering around. After checking out the lower Old Park area south of the wall, we wandered up through the north neighborhoods of Clifton Park. We stopped there at a cafe for some breakfast, then headed back to the Crumlin Road Gaol for our tour. This tour was fascinating and disturbing, all at once. Many of the prisoners arrested during the Trouble spent at least a few nights there before sentencing in the courthouse across the street. At that point, many may have been distributed to other prisons. The tour was extremely valuable at giving a context to the community around it. The tour guide was also able to provide me with information...
On the development happening behind it at the Girdwood Site. Shared Housing is being implemented, though I remain skeptical about how successful it will be. After the tour, we walked South to my own site. The “wall” here along Cuprin way was much more “impressive” than the right turn for it. It amazed me how long it was and how tall it was. The Art, graffiti, and signatures that covered it really blew me away. Both the formal + informal expressions on the wall were really touching. We walked along the wall, and then wandered up through the neighborhood nethinging it, to check on some indecencies from Google Earth. It was interesting to see that between the Protestant & Catholic neighborhoods didn’t really feel too different, aside from a few union jack flags. As we made our way back down to the wall, you could see more trash and graffiti; one vacant site at the end of the wall looked like it had become a ground for dumping. To walk back down to the city center, I had to walk though a space at the end of the wall that could be closed. We spent a little bit of time along Falls Rd. Here, which had the main offices of Sinn Fein, as well as a number of small plays and a memorial garden.

Back down in the City Center, we met with Elwyn, who was the cousin of Lyra, for a drink and food. Lyra is the author of the Lennon Memoral Project. Elwyn, who was not for outside the city, told us about her experience during the troubles. She wasn’t too impacted by it, but also explained it as a “new normal” in Belfast. People had to be searched when entering the city center. It was lonely to talk to a local, and forgot their perspective on the history, the current situation, and my project. Elwyn hit the nail on the head: the next generation that will really be the next generation that goes to the city past all of it. After meeting with Elwyn, we hit another pub, and then headed up to check out the Victoria Square Shopping Center. A newer development, and a beautiful open air shopping center. Heading up further North, we checked out the Cathedral Quarter of the city, and grabbed a few drinks at a Titanic themed restaurant before heading in...
For the night.

Wednesday, March 9th.

This morning we got a tour of the city from Michael, one of his neighbors from across the street at the Air B&B. The tour gave us a great overview of the whole city. Michael took us to only the Catholic cemeteries. It was very dusty with the hundreds of people buried there. He showed us where the hunger strikers were buried as well as one of the past presidents of Sinn Fein. It was really peculiar that one area of the cemetery remained completely green with any headstones in sight.

Michael explained that people who had died of the plague had been buried there and the soil had been contaminated so they had to dig it up. He also explained that in the Belfast city cemetery down the street both Protestants and Catholics had been buried there, but separated by a wall built under protest. Even in death, these communities remain divided. He took us back up by Cupar way and into the monastery just south of the wall, where the starting of the peace process occurred.

He explained the troubles really started in the trouble of the neighborhood by car. What one made of that neighborhood by car was scary. Most of the roads were very narrow and few of the roads were made of stone. The tour with Michael was really interesting. Our tour with Michael included Stormont, the home of the government, and the home of the government, the house of the government. He also took us through the neighborhoods south of the city center, near Queen University.

Between the mix of wealth and students, there was a lack of violence that the more working-class areas of Belfast experienced. Michael also reiterated some of the information from Elwyn about it being the next generation to really pull the city through it. He also had his own stance about the security of the city center, which made it seem a bit more extreme. He and Elwyn both noted a unique sense of humor shared by the people of Belfast and Ireland in general.

We ended our tour with Michael at the Titanic Museum. We grabbed lunch at a...
DAY 5

It was a beautiful day in the city center. Our tour bus left at 9:30 am. Our guide, the bus driver, was fantastic. Something to say about every area we drove through. He too showed us how beautiful Ireland is! We even saw a beautiful waterfall, and we got to know the town well. The drive was beautiful, and we had beautiful weather. On our last stop, we visited the Bushmills whiskey distillery, which had a beautiful place and a great experience. We then stopped at the coast of Dunluce Castle, also a Game of Thrones filming location. Our next stop was the Giant's Causeway, an amazing rock formation along the coast. We had a couple of hours to spend there, and the scenery was beautiful. We ate in a little pub at the top of the cliffs, before getting back on the bus. Again, our guide continued to entertain and give us all sorts of knowledge about the county of Antrim. We made one stop on the way back to a little fishing village where I got honeycomb ice cream. Delicious! We arrived back in Belfast around 5:30 pm. We grabbed dinner at a restaurant called Flame and wandered Caring.
DAY 6

We caught our train back to Dublin. We ended up at a restaurant from the train station. When we got back to Dublin, it was late. We took our luggage back and went straight to bed.

Friday, March 11th.

Today, we were back in Dublin, and spent the morning sleeping in. We started our day with lunch, before heading over to the Trinity College Library. It too, was a little more touristy than I had hoped. We saw the Book of Kells and the Long Room. The Book of Kells left me unimpressed while the Long Room was beautiful, I was disappointed I couldn’t actually go into the books at all, but was corralled to the center portion of the library. After the library, we headed towards the George St. Arcade, an area of markets and shops. On the way we found this wonderful retail development around an atrium cafe space. The George St. Arcade was great, but alot smaller than expected. I bought a hat from a man, who when he asked where we were from had a very negative opinion about Detroit. So it was interesting to talk to him for a bit. After that, we headed over to St. Stevens Green, a wonderful park. It was really beautiful to see. When leaving the park we walked into St. Stevens Green Shopping Center, which had beautiful intricate detailing. We left there to go get dinner, back in the Temple Bar neighborhood. We found a local pub after that, with live music, and had a good time checking that out for a bit.

Saturday, March 12th.

Our last full day in Ireland. We all decided we wanted to take it easy on our last day. In the morning, we headed over to Christ Church Cathedral again to check out the crypts underneath. It was a little odd, as there was a cave under them as well. After that, we wandered...
Day 8

Day 8

Day 9

DAY 8

Eloise

In the evening, we had Italian food at
La Pavé. It was a bit disappointing when we found out there were no
logs. Dinner included more live music
with dancing as well. As we walked
around the city that evening, we could
tell they were preparing for St.
Patrick’s Day tourist crowd. After dinner,
we went back to the bar we had found
guai for another drink. After that, we
called it a night and headed back to the hotel
for our last night.

Sunday, March 13th.

Travel time back to the U.S. We

got a wake up call from the hotel;

because we were worried about our

phones + the time change for Daylight

Savings Time. We had a cab pick us

up at the hotel + take us to the airport.

We got through security pretty fast; but
didn’t have a gate # for our flight yet.

We grabbed some breakfast + waited, not

realizing we still had to go through
customs. That too went smoothly once we

spent in the park, so we were a bit disappointed
when we found out there were no
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up at the hotel + take us to the airport.

We got through security pretty fast; but
didn’t have a gate # for our flight yet.

We grabbed some breakfast + waited, not

realizing we still had to go through
customs. That too went smoothly once we

spent in the park, so we were a bit disappointed
when we found out there were no
logs. Dinner included more live music
with dancing as well. As we walked
around the city that evening, we could
tell they were preparing for St.
Patrick’s Day tourist crowd. After dinner,
we went back to the bar we had found
guai for another drink. After that, we
called it a night and headed back to the hotel
for our last night.

Sunday, March 13th.

Travel time back to the U.S. We

got a wake up call from the hotel;

because we were worried about our

phones + the time change for Daylight

Savings Time. We had a cab pick us

up at the hotel + take us to the airport.

We got through security pretty fast; but
didn’t have a gate # for our flight yet.

We grabbed some breakfast + waited, not

realizing we still had to go through
customs. That too went smoothly once we

spent in the park, so we were a bit disappointed
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logs. Dinner included more live music
with dancing as well. As we walked
around the city that evening, we could
tell they were preparing for St.
Patrick’s Day tourist crowd. After dinner,
we went back to the bar we had found
guai for another drink. After that, we
called it a night and headed back to the hotel
for our last night.

Sunday, March 13th.
figured out where to go. We got on our flight, and I watched several movies on the way back to the U.S. The airplane then offered lots of tea and coffee. When we landed in Chicago, we had to wait for our luggage, and then caught a cab back to Andrews apartment. Even then, we could notice the differences from Ireland. The cab drivers were much less friendly. We headed out pretty quickly, as we still had a long drive home - the dog to pick up tonight. We should make it back to Detroit around midnight.
STAKEHOLDER INTERACTIONS

My ethnographic research included several one-on-one interactions with various Belfast stakeholders. The goal of these conversations was to gain a greater understanding of the situation in multiple capacities. The aim was to gain a more accurate perception of what the current feelings were towards the peace walls and the other party, as well any detailed insights which could influence the proposed interventions. These conversations provide examples of first-hand experiences and impacts of the conflict, and critical insight into the cultures and their history.

STAKEHOLDER #1: Lycia Trouton | The Linen Memorial

Prior to my Ireland trip, I connected with Lycia Trouton, a Belfast-born Protestant who began her work on "The Linen Memorial" as her doctoral thesis at the University of Wollongong in Australia. Lycia also studied in metro-Detroit, receiving her Master of Fine Art at Cranbrook in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Lycia is currently located in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Lycia’s work on “The Linen Memorial” is explored later in this thesis as a case study for liminal memorials for the conflict. Lycia was significant in both providing insight into Belfast and Northern Ireland in general, as well as connecting me to her many resources there from her own project, especially in the post-conflict period from 2007 – present, starting with the first annual Day of Reflection, June 21st 2007. A detailed transcript of my conversation with Lycia is included in the appendix of this book for reference. Since Lycia was born in Belfast but raised in Canada, and considers herself, in her adulthood, an international artist-academic, she was able to provide an outlook which stems from her personal experience with both family history and academic/creative research for the planning of “The Linen Memorial”. The conversations with Lycia provided insight about how, as an outsider, I could approach the conversations with locals. Also, Lycia was able to provide insight about certain cultural aspects of Belfast and Northern Ireland.

From Lycia’s perspective from living in Detroit for three years (she had a live-in Hamtramck studio while she obtained her degree in Bloomfield Hills), she shared with me how she felt that Belfast had become a “pariah city” during The Troubles (specifically since Bloody Friday, 1972). She stated that when new acquaintances in Canada met her and her family-of-origin, that they could assume that her family was from somewhere else in the region, such as England or Scotland. At these times, sometimes she and her family felt protected by this assumption and so they would not correct such assumptions. It seems that her family-of-origin was nervous about the socio-political situation, especially in the 70s and 80s when she was growing up and, therefore, it was sometimes “easier” to “pass” as “not from Belfast” giving them less worry about entering difficult conversations about violence and civil rights, and/or being branded as from that “tribal Irish” war zone). Lycia added about how she feels that her time living and studying in metro-Detroit had a great deal of influence and impact in her gaining a deeply held interest in her home city and homeland; that her reflections on socio-political or social justice issues and urban planning influences were based on the Detroit region’s own (similar but very different) divisions and civil rights history. We also discussed areas of commonalities and shared cultural factors between the ethnic-religious groups and divisions in Northern Ireland. For her own project, she chose to identify with white (ecclesiastic) linen as “the neutral (and perhaps reconciliation or binding) creative element”, as the linen industry of Northern Ireland once created an alliance between communities because people of all walks of life worked in the mills or associated industries in Edwardian Belfast, right up to the 1950s. However, the once colonial flax farming and linen production-industry has largely diminished today. We discussed the possibility of music as a bonding element and, while certain types of music may create links between persons-of-different, other musical genres are still very divisive. For instance, Lycia, pointed out how folk music integrated Irish or Celtic instruments and sounds, post-the 1970s/80s. Celtic music was, then made internationally famous and popular though an infamous international production entitled Riverdance in 1994 and, finally, integrated into global culture, post-internet. However, the lambeg drumming of the Protestant Orange order during the annual July 12th parades is, very obviously, marked with continuing division and controversy (because it is associated with territorial issues – such as mid-seventeenth century protestant settlers). Lycia identified agriculture as another historically piece of shared Northern Ireland culture which is still prominent today – and memories of flax farming, linen bleaching in the fields and small-farm flax retting. This agricultural element and the tie to nature/the land are pieces that could be successfully integrated in to the creation of a peace wall redevelopment and design.

STAKEHOLDER #2: Sarah | Healing through Remembering

My first day in Belfast, I met with Sarah from Healing through Remembering only hours after arriving in Belfast. Sarah provided me with a detailed account of the work Healing through Remembering has done to deal with the legacy of the past in regards to the conflict in Northern Ireland. Much of their work revolves around bringing the various groups of stakeholders to the table in a condition that allows for the hard conversations to occur with some role of facilitation. However, those involved with the organization come as individuals, not as groups or as representatives of groups. They work coming out of Healing through Remembering has largely dealt with a number of publications which provide summaries and guidelines for the work they are conducting. One project conducted by healing through remembering consisted of a traveling exhibit which displayed artifacts of the conflict in a way that led to the rethinking of the role that everyday objects took on during this time.
Another initiative, which was of particular interest to me and my thesis research was an open call for ideas around what a Living Memorial Museum of the Conflict would look like. By reviewing the contents of these submissions, I am able to benefit from the community engagement conducted by Healing through Remembering as if it were my own. The ideas presented from this open call for ideas now act as a measuring stick against which I can compare my design proposals.

Speaking in a personal capacity based on observations made during her own research aside from the organization, Sarah was able to provide me some first-hand insight about the current conditions of the situation in Belfast, as well as answer some more direct questions I had. She expressed that she sees the next generation of Belfast’s residents to really serve as a deciding factor as to how the city will continue to progress post-conflict. In reference to her work coaching university students, she commented that their world seemed to be very detached from those dealing more directly with the legacy of the conflict. However, she is also concerned about the younger generation picking up on the amount of respect and prestige leaders of the conflict have received from their communities.

Sarah also spoke to the fact that while many do still have an opposition to the removal of the peace walls due to safety concerns, others are opposed to their removal more due to the function they have come to play in more mundane aspects of their everyday life. For example, Sarah relayed a story about a woman whose opposition to the removal of the peace walls has decreased due to the safety concerns associated with their removal. She explained that while the removal of the peace walls is still an issue, the woman’s world has become more detached from the conflict due to her new role as a coach at a university.

Project Sites

Prior to visiting Belfast, two potential project sites had been identified. While that process of identifying these two locations as appropriate for architectural interventions will be explained later on in this thesis, it is important to explain now as part of my trip log, the in-person observations made at each of these locations. Additionally, the existing conditions of each of these locations is shared in the following pages through a photographic record. While present at the sites, each were evaluated again for their appropriateness for a peace wall intervention.

STAKEHOLDER #3: Elwyn

During my visit to Belfast, I was able to meet with Lycia cousin Elwyn, who lives with her husband in Bangor, just outside of the city. Elwyn identifies with the Protestant community of Northern Ireland.

Although Elwyn was always slightly removed from the conflict during The Troubles, she shared with us her experience visiting the city center during that time period. She explained how security forces were in place around the entirety of the city center, and individuals would have to open their bag and purses for inspection upon entering. Elwyn also stated the significant of the next generation in moving forward from the conflict successfully. Throughout our conversation Elwyn explained that the people of Northern Ireland have an odd, somewhat self-deprecating, sense of humor when referring to their conflicted past and in general. She explained that while the people of Belfast are some of the nicest when it comes to welcoming outsiders, they’ve historically had trouble extending the same courtesy to their own neighbors.

STAKEHOLDER #4: Michael

Instead of opting for the Black Taxi Tours geared towards tourists in Belfast, we instead received a city tour from Michael, a retired Catholic social worker, and neighbor to the AirBnb that we called home for the duration of time in the city. Michael’s tour of the city was extremely informational. He began by taking us to a Catholic Cemetery within the city and showed us the location where the hunger strikers were buried, as well as some of the past leadership of Sinn Fein, the Catholic political party. Additionally, he explained how in the city cemetery down the street, both Protestant and Catholics were buried, but separated by a six foot wall built entirely underground. Michael took us up near the Cupar Way peace wall and to Clonard Monastery where the start of the peace process began. Interestingly, the incident that signaled the start of the Troubles in Belfast occurred only a few blocks away, against what is now the back of the peace wall in that neighborhood. A memorial garden now sits on that location. Taking us further west in the city than we had been able to go while walking, we were able to see the edges of these neighborhoods, where the division between Protestants and Catholics was made visible through the use of flags to informally mark the territories. Additionally, Michael took us up to the front of Stormont, the house of the Northern Ireland devolved Government. The neighborhood surrounding it is home to the wealthiest of Belfast Residents and saw very little violence during the conflict. This reflects the power of the politicians as well as the fact that the sectarianism if more prevalent in the lower, working classes.

In response to our questioning during the tour, Michael echoed Sarah and Elwyn in the belief that the next generation would be significant to move the city forward from the conflict. Michael also shared with us his stories of visiting the city center during The Troubles, and the security that was in place there. While he echoed Elwyn’s account of the experience, it seemed more extreme when told my Michael. When we asked Michael about the unity factors between the communities, he referenced the Celtic language as a source of shared interest. Additionally, we discussed at length that while sports teams often align with one side of the conflict, The entire island of Ireland is able to rally behind individual sports such as golf, boxing, or motorcycle racing, where those competing are representing the city or the island as a whole.

Throughout our conversation with Michael, we were able to see the physical evidence of the conflict, such as the peace walls and the bullet holes in the walls of the houses. We were able to see the impact of the conflict on the daily life of the people in Belfast, and how they have continued to live their lives in the midst of it all.
The first potential project site visited was the peace wall between the Cliftonville neighborhood to the north, and Lower Old Park to the south. Separating these two communities is a double peace wall condition, between which is a swath of land 40-50 ft. wide. To the south of these borders structures are large amounts of land vacancy that must be addressed in addition to the physical wall condition.

In visiting this potential site, we began the experienced outside of the Crumlin Road Gaol. We headed north up Cliftonpark Park Ave. Directly north of the Gaol lies the Girdwood Community Hub. This project is a community recreation center that is key point of a larger development currently under construction there. This site used to be a large military base, but the redevelopment project is significant in that it moves forward an agenda of integration between the two communities. Aside from the Community center, the project is slated to include outdoor sports fields, and indoor sports complex, integrated housing and mixed use retail. Across Cliftonpark Ave. from this development lies Cliftonville. A small park sits at a southern corner of the vacant land, the rest of which seems to get utilized as an open space extension of the park. Just north, but still south of the wall is another piece of vacant land, completely walled in, which appeared to be utilized by Lower Old Park community members as an informal dog park. While visiting the site, we saw many neighbors out walking their dogs and several utilized this piece of vacant property to let their pets run off-leash. The gate to this piece of land is turned inwards towards the community, facing the remains of what was once a neighborhood street that now sits completely vacant. When walking up this deserted street towards the wall, to the left was a pathway separating the still populated streets of the neighborhood from backing right up against the barrier. Along this pedestrian path and along the wall itself was an abundance of trash littering the ground, which seemed out of place due to the proximity to the dense neighborhood grain present.

After completing our examination on the south side of the wall, we proceeded north up Cliftonpark Avenue to the Catholic side of the wall and the Cliftonville neighborhood. This side of the barrier was much more densely developed than its neighboring community to the south, and the backyards of homes back up to much of the wall. We then ventured down Cliftonpark Road past the Royal Belfast Academy. Lycia had previously mentioned how the Royal Belfast Academy is widely known as an integrated school, and has been historically, regardless of being situated in a Catholic neighborhood. Heading East towards Antrim Road, we stopped for breakfast at a café as a way to spend more time in the area and explore the feel of the neighborhood. Following breakfast, we headed back down to the Crumlin Road Gaol for a tour of the facility.

The tour of this jail was perhaps one of the most interesting, yet disturbing, experiences of the trip. This jail was in operation for 150 years, from 1846-1996. It acted as the first stop for the majority of individuals arrested during the Troubles. They were held there usually until sentencing, which occurred in the courthouse across the Crumlin Road and connected to the Gaol through an underground tunnel. Once sentenced, they would usually by moved to a different location long term, such as the Maze Prison, famous for the Hunger Strikes the occurred in the H-block there. This facility held many members of the various paramilitary groups involved in the Troubles, including many of the most prominent politicians, often more than once. The different wings of the Jail sometimes operated segregated between the groups, and sometime not. Several political attacks and bombings occurred on the Gaol during the conflict as well, both from within its walls and from outside them.

During its time of operation, dozens of prisoners were successful in escaping from the Gaol. Most fascinatingly, the tour guide told the story about a man who was arrested as a part of the IRA, escaped during his time there, and was never found. However, he returned for the first time two years ago as a guest of the Gaol for one of the tours. Because he was arrested during a time when these political prisoners were committed without trial, he had never been convicted of any sort of crime. Even if he had been, any statute of limitations had long since passed. In 1996, the facility was deemed unfit for use, largely due to the fact that sanitation facilities had never been added to the cells. It closed down at this time.

I was able to speak to the tour guide about the development happening on the Girdwood Site north of the Gaol. He mentioned the shared housing that was planned as a part of the development. When asked about what his perspective was on this piece of the development, he expressed his concerns about its success, stating that it was quite likely that in reality, it would come to serve one community or the other. This concern was echoed in some news coverage I was able to find online about the development of the site. While there is a large need for additional housing in Belfast for both communities, the general opinion of the public was that adding any sort of housing element to this development would compromise its neutrality.

The following images highlight the conditions around this potential project site and the other critical neighborhood elements mentioned here, such as the Girdwood Community Hub and the Crumlin Road Gaol.
VACANT COURTHOUSE ON CRUMLIN ROAD, ATTACHED TO THE CRUMLIN ROAD GAOL BY UNDERGROUND TUNNEL. MANY PRISONERS DURING THE TROUBLES WERE TRIED HERE BEFORE BEING RELOCATED ELSEWHERE TO SERVE THEIR SENTENCE. GIVEN CHEAPLY TO A DEVELOPER WHO PROMISED REDEVELOPMENT AS A HOTEL. REMAINS VACANT.

The Girdwood Community Hub is a new community center opened January 2015 on the former Girdwood Military Base just north of the Crumlin Road Gaol. It is only the first piece in a larger development project.

Aside from the community center, the Girdwood development includes outdoor sports fields, an indoor sport complex, and mixed use development. Integrated housing is a controversial piece of the development scheme, with locals questioning its ability to work successfully.
SOUTH OF THE PEACEWALL IS A LARGE AREA OF VACANT LAND. THIS VACANT SPACE IS ANCHORED BY A SMALL NEIGHBORHOOD PARK. AN ADDITIONAL PIECE OF ENCLOSED LAND APPEARS TO BE USED INFORMALLY AS A NEIGHBORHOOD DOG PARK. THIS VACANT SPACE BECOMES PART OF THE PROJECT SITE.
A LARGE BRICK WALL RUNS PERPENDICULAR TO THE PEACE WALLS BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS. THIS WALL SEPARATES THE PARK SPACE, IMPROMPTU DOG PARK, AND VACANT LAND FROM THE VACANT REMAINS OF A NEIGHBORHOOD STREET AND THE REST OF THE STILL OCCUPIED NEIGHBORHOOD.

THIS PEDESTRIAN PATH BUFFERS THE NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS THAT DEAD END AT THE PEACE WALL FROM THE PHYSICAL BARRIER. THIS PATH LEADS FROM THESE CLUSTERS OF HOMES TO THE VACANT LAND AND PARK SPACE.
THE REMAINS OF A NEIGHBORHOOD STREET, RUNNING PERPENDICULAR TO THE PEACE WALL, SEPARATES THE PARK AND ADJACENT VACANT SPACE FROM THE REST OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD.
A large area of vacant land lies between the neighborhood park and Cliftonville Ave. This vacant land is used as an informal extension of the park, and it fenced off from Cliftonville Ave. Directly left of this photo lies the entrance to the Girdwood Community Hub Development.

Where the pedestrian path separates the neighborhood from the barrier, it dead ends at the far west end of the wall, where it turns. The rooftops seen in the right of this image face outwards to a major thoroughfare, capping the west end of the wall.
BETWEEN THE DOUBLE WALL CONDITION LIES AN AREA OF LAND APPROXIMATELY 50-60FT WIDE. THE PATH OF THE WALL MAKES A JOG ABOUT HALFWAY DOWN IT'S PATH, AS SEE IN THIS IMAGE FACING WEST AWAY FROM CLIFTONVILLE AVE. AND THE GIRDWOOD HUB DEVELOPMENT.
SITE VISIT #2- Cupar Way

The peace wall along Cupar Way is notable for its size, its length, and the amount of street art, graffiti, signatures, and sculptures which cover it from end to end. These elements create a beautiful and interesting composition that I believe serves as an informal memorial element, as well as a tourist attraction. The wall consists of three layers of structure vertically, with the bottom most layer holding the majority of these artistic elements. The upper two layers are more fence-like in their structures. At the Northeast end of the wall, a large vacant piece of land is mostly fenced in by metal sheets. It appears to be used as a dumping ground for trash and garbage. Because the Catholic community south of the wall is entirely barricaded in from Cupar Way, many of the Protestant homes north of the site and at its West end face the wall. Another fence lines part of the North edge of the street, but it appears to be much more porous with where it ends, and has a few gates creating access through it. The conditions on the North side of the street vary depending on where you are along the length of the wall. On the site visit, I walked the full length of the wall from East to West. The West end appears to be capped with a new housing development that was under construction.

After walking the length of the wall, we then traveled north on Lanark Way to Shankhill Road, and into the Protestant community North of the wall. We cut through this area diagonally, seeing that much of the housing was new construction, while a few blocks sat entirely vacant, appearing ready for new infill housing at any time. When we reached the East end of the wall again, we proceeded through a large gate that crossed the street there, which our tour guide and neighbor Michael, had explained can be controlled remotely by police forced to be closed at any time. We also explored some of the Catholic community South of the wall, and walked a short distance West down Falls Road to a Memorial Garden and passing SinnFein Headquarters.
THE SOUTH SIDE OF CUPAR WAY IS BORDERED WITH AN 8 METER HIGH PEACE WALL, ENTIRELY BLOCKING THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY TO THE SOUTH. THE METAL BARRIER ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THIS PART OF THE STREET BLOCKS OFF A LARGE VACANT PROPERTY AT THE NORTHEAST END OF THE SITE.
THE CUPAR WAY PEACE WALL IS MADE UP OF THREE SECTIONS OF CONSTRUCTION VERTICALLY. THE LOWEST SECTION IS A CONCRETE WALL. HERE THE CENTER SECTION IS A SHEET METAL WALL, AND THE TOP MOST SECTION IS MUCH MORE FENCE-LIKE IN ITS CONSTRUCTION.

THE BOTTOM-MOST SECTION OF THE WALL IS A COLLAGE OF GRAFFITI ART, MURALS, INSTALLATION SCULPTURES, AND SIGNATURES AND WORDS OF PEACE MOSTLY FROM TOURIST VISITORS. THIS COMPOSITION ACTS AS AN INFORMAL MEMORIAL TO OUTSIDERS, CONSTANTLY CHANGING WITH TIME.
AT THE MIDPOINT OF THE WALL ON THE NORTH SIDE, A STREET THAT ONCE CONNECTED TO CUPAR WAY DEAD ENDS. THIS AREA HAS A SMALL PARK AND ATHLETIC COURT, AS WELL AS A SMALL PIECE OF VACANT LAND FURTHER EAST WHICH HOLDS POTENTIAL FOR REDESIGN.

AT THE WEST END OF THE NORTH SIDE OF THE STREET, HOUSES FROM THE PROTESTANT COMMUNITY FACE OUTWARDS TOWARDS THE PEACE WALL AND CUPAR WAY.
LOOKING EAST FROM THE WEST END OF CUPAR WAY, THE PEACE WALL TO THE SOUTH AND THE BLUE FENCE TO THE NORTH DEFINE THE SPACE THAT IS CURRENTLY VIEWED AS SHARED SPACE BETWEEN THE TWO COMMUNITIES. THIS CONDITION, IN A SENSE, MIMICS THE DOUBLE WALL CONDITION FOUND AT THE NORTH SITE.
THE FENCE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF CUPAR WAY IS MUCH MORE POROUS THAN THE LARGE PEACE WALL TO THE SOUTH. HERE, A GATE CAN BE SEEN OPENING THE NEIGHBORHOOD UP TO THE ROADWAY.

THE WEST END OF CUPAR WAY ENDS IN A HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION.
The following map and associated analysis depict the network of walls that sprawl throughout the city’s neighborhoods. Visible from the color-coding of the populations of the neighborhoods on the maps, the walls do exist on the edges of these populations; and condition often referred to as interface areas. While none of the wall completely enclose entire neighborhoods, the walls have been strategically placed and the additional infrastructure design to mitigate and control any conflict that may occur in the area.

The area of mixed population that is visible at the south end of the city is around Queen’s University, which is home to a large student population. In addition to the student population that exists there, the neighborhoods nearby are much more affluent and integration occurs much easier. The areas of red on the map depict flashpoints, which are historically the areas that have seen the most violence in the city.

The areas numbered three and six on the map and in the analysis that follows have been chosen as the project proposal site. These two conditions were chosen due to their contrasting characteristics. The peace wall in area three is located in the middle of a neighborhood condition, providing room for a double wall condition and a large amount of vacant space to work with in the proposal. Contrastingly, the peace wall located in section six of the map along Cuper Way exists at a much tighter scale horizontally, and a much grander scale vertically. The presence of a road condition along the wall provides for a unique challenge different than that found at the first identified site. By exploring the ideas of this thesis at two different scales, it allows for a greater chance of discovery and a greater amount of transferability to other global conditions.
BELFAST - NORTHERN IRELAND

1. ALLIANCE AVE
   - A major flashpoint occurs at Alliance Ave., between Ardoyne and Shetland Dells.
   - Peace line has existed here since 1971.

2. TORRENS
   - The Torrens area is historically a heavily fortified loyalist enclave, surrounded by republicans.
   - In 1996 the Ulster Volunteer Force in Torrens also planned an attack on Ardoyne but were ultimately talked out of it.
   - In 2001, the majority of the loyalist population moved out of the area. The peace line has since been demolished and redeveloped.

3. LOWER OLD PARK
   - Loyalist Lower Old Park is divided from Republican Ardoyne at Rossville St. with Honor St. split with a peace wall.
   - This area sees occasional sectarian clashes.

4. DUCARIN GARDENS/ LIMESTONE RD. / ALEXANDRA PARK
   - Between Lower Shankill Rd and Lower Atrium Rd in Alexandra Park/inner since 1964 dividing loyalists from republicans.
   - A police checkpoint was established in 2011 allowing limited access from one side to the other.
   - Clashes between the New Lodge and Tiger Bay area have existed since 1970s.
   - Local defense associations became part of the local defense organizations (LDOs) in the 1970s.

5. SPRINGFIELD
   - This area is the site of the battle of Springfield, a series of gun battles in May 1972. This began the worst fighting in Northern Ireland since the beginning of the conflict.
   - Fighting lasted for two days and resulted in 7 deaths.
   - The area is heavily fortified.

6. BLACKSTAFF
   - Blackstaff contains Loyalist Shankill Rd and republican Falls and Springfield roads.
   - Roots in this area go back to 19th Century.
   - During the troubles, most direct access points were seized. Loyalist violence and sectarianism still occur where the communities come close.

7. SHORT STRAND
   - Site of the most dangerous interface area historically.
   - Short Strand is a Republican enclave forming a number of interface areas with neighboring Albertbridge Rd. and Newtownards Rd. in East Belfast.

1970 Battle of St. Matthew: deadliest expression of tension in the area.
- Violent clashes are recently as 2011.

“NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE” PEACE WALLS

FLASHPOINTS
THE ROLE OF MEMORIAL

The role that memorial plays in the commemoration of conflict and in striving towards social justice is worth examining both generally, and in how it has been applied thus far towards the resolution of the Northern Ireland Conflict. “The Urge to Remember: The Roles of Memorials in Social Reconstruction and Transitional Justice” published by United States Institute of Peace, provides a lengthy list of summary recommendations, several of which can be applied to this conflict. Many of the recommendations that speak more directly to the situation of this thesis are presented here:

“Memorialization occurs throughout the conflict life cycle: before the conflict begins, during conflict, and after conflict ends. Memorialization initiatives take different forms depending on who initiates them, the stage of the conflict at which they are initiated, and the kind of society that emerges after violence ends.”

“It is not easy for outsiders to determine their proper roles in such situations [that they are expected to protect places the form the basis for future memorial and museum sites or that may be valuable in legal trials] especially when dealing with ad hoc, spontaneous efforts to build memorials can fuel the desire for revenge and promote further violence. Adding to the complexity is the fact that the definition of “outsider” depends on the context. Survivors in local communities may view fellow nationals from other communities or identity groups as outsiders.”

“But outsiders can play important roles in getting former enemies to work together on initiatives that promote social reconstruction. Increasingly, outside experts on memorialization are called upon to consult on national memorial projects in societies emerging from conflict. But outsiders overstep their role if the seek to start or dominate memorial processes, for those processes must be initiated and controlled by local actors if they are to become truly meaningful to recovering societies.”

In addition to this research on memorialization, further inquiry was done into what type of memorialization or recognition exist in Belfast to commemorate this conflict, and what is desired for any future commemoration. A document entitled, “Memorials to the Casualties of Conflict in Northern Ireland 1969-1997” by Jane Leonard, lists and evaluates the existing forms of commemoration throughout Belfast in regards to the troubles. This report was commissioned by the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. Many of these pieces of commemoration are small placards or statues that are erect throughout the city to commemorate specific events. These almost always only recognize one side of the conflict, and sometimes use language which takes a stance in defining history in a specific way which would not be shared by the other side.

It is expressed in this document that there is a desired for future commemoration to focus on usable, functional spaces, rather than the series of plaques and statues which currently exist. This supports the goals of this thesis to create a space which adds value to the community at these border conditions. In its summary, this document also states that any commemorative piece should not take the stance that peace has been reached in Northern Ireland, but address that it is an ongoing process.

This interest in memorialization of the conflict has led to the examination of four commemoration case study projects which are examined in depth on the following pages. These projects were selected because of the author’s opinion that there are elements of each which can inform a successful design project within this thesis. The projects selected tend to lean towards a more artistic representation of commemoration, which perhaps says something about the qualities of art that speak more directly towards liminal commemoration.
The project, installed on Black Mountain at the edge of Belfast, was *temporal in nature and material*, lasting only 22 days after installation. The site location was chosen for its accessibility visually to all of Belfast, and because it transverses both communities within the City. The area has served as a firing range for the British Army at one point. While its history is not neutral, it is now one of the more neutral locations in the city, not marked with political flags, sectarianism or graffiti.

A goal of the project was for it to unfold through a natural process of dialogue. *Text* was used in the artpiece as a simple means of communication. The project was planned to develop in partnership with two youth groups within the city that serve both communities, therefore reflecting a neutral process of development. However, the artist ultimately decided against this, as he did not have the time to build up the necessary rapport with these groups. He opted instead for a cross community panel discussion and planting session.

The ultimate installation of the word HOME on the mountainside, one letter at a time, was meant to question what home means during a period of transition. HOME was followed by “IMAGINE A CITY OF =”, and then finally “SORRY.” The ever-changing presence of this piece kept those within the city engaged and interested in the art piece.

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**Artist: Hilary Gillian**  
**When: April 5th-8th, 1996**

Hilary Gillian installed Our Trail of the Troubles as a list of those killed during The Troubles written in chalk along the streets of Belfast. This installation was *temporal in nature due to the material used*, and bilateral due to the listing of names chronologically. The temporality of this installation was crucial to its widespread acceptance. The list started on Royal Avenue, the central shopping district of Belfast.

Hilary feels her role as an art student allowed for the project to be accepted without too much backlash, as art students are often “getting away with a lot of things.” She was neutral in her actions in that she was not sponsored by any organizations. The project’s location in the city center during Easter weekend lent itself to neutrality in time and location, as the city center was kept neutral throughout the Troubles, and Easter is celebrated by both sides of the conflict for the same reasons, and Good Friday is seen as a somber and mournful day.

In order to write the names on the sidewalk, Hilary had to position herself in a non-confrontational position, kneeling on the ground, with her head down. This can be seen in contrast to the drummers of marches or violent rioters, who represent the usual expression of remembering The Troubles.
The Agreement is a piece commissioned by Becontsfield Contemporary Art, London, and completed by artist Shane Cullen. It consists of the words of the British-Irish Peace Treaty of 1998, carved in 55 panels total. This piece is highly charged and met with diverse reactions, due to its heavy content and concrete form. The Agreement has been conceived as a democratic gesture to recover public ownership of a landmark public document.

The exhibition of the work was narrated by a series of heated discussions of local concerns around the content of the document that is the subject of the work. These issues range from conflict management and resolution to human rights, citizenship, and art and politics. The Good Friday agreement was constructed by politicians with the homogeneous language of democracy and was intended for mass consumption. It marks the official end of the Troubles, and the beginning of the peace process. The piece makes significant information accessible in a new way.

The Agreement set a collaborative precedent, being sponsored by organizations throughout The Republic of Ireland in Dublin, Northern Ireland, including organizations in Belfast and Derry, and in London, England.

The Linen Memorial, created by Lycia Trouton, exists as a series of 400 linen handkerchiefs embroidered with the names of those who died chronologically during The Troubles, from both sides of the conflict. The scholarlty, thoroughly-researched and publicly produced Names List was taken from the book “Lost Lives: The Stories of Men, Women and Children who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles” by Brian Feeney et al. The book lists the names chronologically and without analyzing or criticizing their affiliations, but providing only factual journalistic evidence of the moment of death. The ordering of the names, hand-sewn next to one-another on one 12 x 12 inch “hanky” for a “joint public mourning, forgiveness and reconciliation” (which it seems is a part of Lycia’s creative intent) can still be considered controversial. Observers—mourners or survivors may feel that their loved ones names are listed along side that of criminals or terrorists. Yet, this system of chronological ordering also results in the handling of each death putting the emphasis on the “banality and horror of each individual death.”

Trouton’s choice of her use of linen was used to highlight the significance of linen-making as a long-time colonial industry in Northern Ireland, and yet that this industry and its symbol the linen bleaching green (as a place of rest) and the linen mill as a living place where both sides (generally) managed to live and work in cooperation, despite the conflict. Trouton also references women’s work and craft and women’s traditional role in “keening” (a vocal lament) for the dead and preparing or shrouding the body for funerary preparations in Northern and Southern Irish domestic culture. Trouton’s memorial, therefore, references a peace worker and the first female textile trade union leader (1950s), Saidie Patterson (b. Falls Road, 1906 – 1985) and work Patterson did for peace in the mid-1970s – especially organising “millies” (women mill workers) on both sides in her neighbourhood, a notoriously divisive area of Belfast during The Troubles.
In summarization of the commemorative projects examined here, and the ideas behind memorialization found in the previous research, this thesis project will move forward towards a design that does not attempt to serve as a formal acknowledgement of every individual life lost during the conflict, or even of the specific event that occurred. The proposals will instead aim to embrace the idea of a functional, quality space that acknowledges the past while looking towards the future and the reconciliation process occurring. As mentioned in the United States Institute of Peace document, the process of designing this space has and will continue to serve as the most important piece of the project, more so than the physical manifestation itself. The idea that process remains crucial even after the development of the space will be embraced, in that the programmatic elements and the ever changing conditions of the design will be prioritized. The prioritization of functionality and neutrality of use acts as a liminal design characteristic on the temporal end of the liminal scale. The unfixed or ever-changing conditions being prioritized as a design principle speak much more to the physical or spatial characteristics of liminality. The process proposed will reflect the need for local actors to lead the development of this space.

Several of the design ideas explored in the case studies can be summed up in more specific terminology. The first of these ideas is anti-/counter-memorial/memorials. The idea of the anti-memorial is a “philosophy in art which denies the presence of any imposing, authoritative social force in public spaces.” This concept aligns itself with the temporal qualities of liminality, as we began it look at the liminal quality of materials. Whereas carved stone or metals would serve as the monumental side of this concept, materials that are more susceptible to change and transformation over time speak to both the themes of liminality and anti-memorial. Liminality of materiality falls at the extremely spatial end of the liminal spectrum.

Additionally the concept of Parity of Esteem has presented itself in this examination of case studies. Parity of esteem can be used to establish a theory to overcome inter-communal conflict. Promoters of the theory argue that parity of esteem offers a language for negotiation of a post-conflict equilibrium. This negotiation begins with the communities recognizing the stalemate of their position. Rather than continue trying to out-do each other, the communities should attempt to negotiate a peaceful coexistence in a shared physical space despite their cultural differences. This idea is present in memorialization as it pertains to equal consideration and treatment given to both communities. It is necessary in order to preserve the space as a shared condition. This idea is a temporal factor of liminal design.

The more obvious liminal design qualities include neutrality of location and the porosity and resistance explored earlier with the introduction to the liminal concept. The selection of liminal peace wall spaces at the project sites directly speak to preserving a neutral locations with shared ownership between the communities. When talking about physical location, we are speaking to the spatial characteristics of liminal design.

These liminal design principles outlined and discussed here will form the basis for interpretation when being applied to the project sites in the design proposals that follow.
The project proposal for the northern site builds on the ongoing development of the Girdwood site, which calls for mixed use retail along Cliftonville Ave north of the site’s entrance, and shared housing south of the entrance. The thesis proposal includes building on this development through additional retail across Cliftonville Ave, creating a node and critical mass. Because of the amount of vacancy, the site expands from the footprint of the walls to include the area around it. The proposal can be seen as a new sort of productive landscape; describing both the food being produce and the function this space is now serving in the community. An apple orchard as an element of this landscape as well as other edible plants provide a small amount of food for the communities. This can be utilized by the neighbors to support their own households, or sold at the marketplace included at the center of the site as a sort of informal economy. A series of organic hills and pathways respect the historic path of the wall, creating a link from the neighborhood to the shared community development. The hills as well as the orchard reacts to the agricultural way of life reference by Lycia Trouton. The hills provide for the porosity and resistance of liminality, and provide for equality of access creating parity of esteem and neutrality in location. There is no direct path created from one neighborhood to the other, but people must first travel along and experience the space before existing. Many of the hills are cut with reflective surfaces and reflection pools, reflecting both of the neighborhoods into the space, adding to the liminal element. They also provide for a more personal reflective experience. The water is symbolic as a unifying element of societies. The use of plants, hills, and water creates a memorial space which changes over time, reflecting the changing relationships. A small lodging element is added for tourists, adding to the economic element, which is important, since the border communities are notoriously lower income. The desire to bring tourism to this part of the city was expressed during the site visit conducted as ethnographic research for this thesis. Also included is a dog park, after this need was witnessed firsthand while on site.
SITE 2

ANALYSIS AND PROPOSAL

Many of these same characteristics are carried over into the second site, aiming to create a common language that could be carried through to other future peace wall redevelopments. At this site, the wall runs along a roadway and occurs at a different scale than the previous. It is already used being used as an informal, changing memorial in a sense, as words of peace, inspirational messages, and graffiti art covers its surface. This is preserved and embrace in the proposal by maintaining the majority of the wall as is. However, by creating openings in the wall several streets are able to connect back to the main street, Cupar Way. Vacant property at the each end of the wall, and on each side, allow for equal public recreation spaces. These spaces are connected by an elevated park pathway, similar to the New York highline, running along and supported by the existing wall. A node occurs halfway down, where more open space allows for another public realm. The wall has been opened here for porosity, but resistance is provided by grapevines growing from above, and trees planted below, creating connections between the two levels, and creating a curtain wall below. This too is a productive landscape. The water element is also included here, as pools run along the north side of the street, and on the south side of the center public space. These have fountains which shoot water straight up, creating a water wall of sort, serving the same symbolism and reflectiveness as the water element at the north site.
While Belfast was chosen as the context to move forward the ideas and theories associated with this thesis, it is only but one of the many locations globally that could be considered for this type of design intervention. By looking at the larger picture, and recognizing the importance of approach, a process has been conceptualized and outlined here to provide for transferability of the thesis outcomes. The liminal design principles identified through this thesis exploration can be applied to various sites worldwide of similar typology. Ideally, if executed correctly, this process and these characteristics will make for design interventions which successfully meet the goals of this thesis project.

The proposed process incorporates an understanding of all of the important elements contributing to these types of situations, while outlining some guidelines to be maintained both throughout the process and in the final design intervention. These steps, those seemingly common in their labels, strive to address the very complex dynamics of a conflict ridden situation.

### BELFAST ANALYSIS

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<tr>
<th>REPUBLICANS V.S. UNIONISTS</th>
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**BENEFITS BOTH COMMUNITIES EQUALLY**

**IMPROVES THE URBAN CONDITION**

**PUBLIC SPACES ALLLOWING FOR CONSTANT INTERACTION**

**DESIGNING TOWARDS CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

**THE PROCESS**

**WHO?**

**WHERE?**

**WHY?**

**WHAT?**

**WHEN?**

**ACTION ITEM:** DETERMINE OR CREATE A NEUTRAL LOCATION SECURE LOCATION IN A MANNER TO REMAIN NEUTRAL

**ACTION ITEM:** EXPLORE AND DETERMINE COMMON GOALS, RELATING TO RELATIONSHIP AND OTHERWISE

**ACTION ITEM:** DESIGN! ADDRESSING SAFETY AND NEUTRALITY

**ACTION ITEM:** SET UP NEUTRAL PROGRAMMING AND MANAGEMENT

**HOW?**

**HOW DOES THE PROCESS FORM A FOUNDATIONAL RELATIONSHIP FOR SHARED SPACE/COOPERATION?**

**ACTION ITEM:** DIVERSE AND EQUAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS**

**CONSTANT INTENTIONAL CONTACT BETWEEN COMMUNITIES**
The process begins by addressing the need for understanding the various parties involved in the conflict and striving to identify both their commonalities as well as their disputed differences. In terms of the design process, this also means securing the engagement of these individuals for the duration of the project, both to gain a deeper understanding of them, and to obtain their cooperation, which is much needed for the process to be successful moving forward.

The next step strives to examine the factor of location. In moving the process forwards in terms of design, this step mandates that a neutral location is identified and secured in a manner which maintains its neutrality. Or, if a neutral location does not currently exist, a site with potentiality for neutrality should be identified and steps should be made throughout the process to strive towards its neutrality.

Moving forward, the incentive for collaboration must be addressed. This requires an exploration and determination of common goals both relating to relationship building (if they exist) and otherwise. Ideally, the desire would exist on some level to forge a cooperation. However, cooperation could be facilitated based on selfish needs of the opposing sides as well.

Next, the process requires major steps forward in terms of design in that programming must be determined in an attempt to strive towards at least some of the previously mentioned goals. In terms of design, this also means designing the final intervention through a long and complicated process of its own, while prioritizing the elements of safety and neutrality.

The fifth step of the process intertwines the element of time. As we know from the previous discussion of liminality, the element of time is significant. In terms of this process, it means addressing the need for change as the conditions, needs, and relationships change. It also means maintaining neutrality in the function of the space through its programming and management.

The final element of this process refers to the process itself. Through diverse and equal community engagement at all levels of the process, and constant intentional contact between the communities, one of the goals of the process itself is to create a foundational relationship for cooperation that can be continued on through the utilization of a shared space.
Author’s Notes:

A Summary

This architectural thesis has allowed me to explore ideas around conflict resolution, reconciliation, and liminality. In using Belfast as a context, I personally gained opportunity for travel and to explore multiple new cultures. I believe this thesis has been successful in challenging the typology of border conditions in a way that improves their value and impact on quality of life issues. However, it is the transferability of the ideas explored here that I am most excited about as an outcome to my thesis year.

In particular, I am excited about what the ideas explored here could mean with applied back home, in and around Detroit. Early stages of the thesis research explored Detroit border conditions, and helped to inform the direction of the conversation. However, circling back to my city of residence, I would like to challenge the most prominent Detroit borders with my newly found concepts about the liminal condition and their benefits to their neighbors. Specifically, I feel that the 8 mile divide between Detroit and Ferndale, as well as the western border of the city with Grosse Pointe, could benefit from a study that applies the liminal design principles outlined in this research. The Detroit River, while already categorized as a liminal space, could also surely benefit from an application of these principles. For a city that has a history of strong segregation and lack of regional cooperation, to envision a Detroit whose boundaries are no longer defined by the hard edges of separated races, but whose people’s movements become more conducive to regional movement, is to envision a condition which changes the conversation around the city and brings promise its future. The fact that this thesis explored and placed value on the processes associated with the project, as well as the specifics of the chosen context means that envisioning the success of these ideas elsewhere is not more easily achievable.


Samantha Szeszulski: He does Civil Engineering. And my best friend and her fiancé are also going. He’s (her fiancé) is in graphic design and she does mechanical system design for buildings. So they’re both going too.

LT: Great. So are you going straight to Belfast and then Dublin? And that’s for Ireland?

SS: So I think we’ll actually fly into Dublin and I believe we’ll get in on Saturday morning, so we’re going to spend the weekend there and then head to Belfast first thing Monday morning and spend most of the week there.

LT: Ok.

SS: Then we’ll head back to Dublin at the end of the week and spend another weekend there before we fly back out.

LT: Yeah. So, I’m just thinking logistics wise did you hear back from any of the bodies you mentioned?

SS: I didn’t. No. I haven’t heard back from any of them yet. I appreciate all the contacts you’ve been giving me though. That’s great.

LT: Yes.

SS: It just doesn’t help if they’re not responsive. So, Dr. Karen Nickell, who wrote the recommendation, I just had a confirmation from her that she has an appointment and may be out of commission for a while. Yeah… My recommendation is to just do things while you’re young! Someone said to me, when I was 32 and off to Australia from Vancouver, Canada for my doctorate, ‘Go to Australia while you’re young’… It seemed so far away and was like a huge uprooting for me at the time, as a home-owner in Vancouver. Ah well.

LT: Yeah. It seems like you’ve lived and worked globally.

SS: Yes. Enjoy it while you’re young. Okay, anyways, I started sending you those links. You see, Prof. Dr. Kirsten Mey ran a research unit at UL called “Interface”. Try to visit the architecture department at the University of Ulster, Belfast. I know you have questions for me.

LT: Yeah. You’ve been giving me tonnes of information, and that’s all fantastic. What was originally hoping for was for you to talk about the piece you did with The Linen Memorial and why you made the decisions you did in creating it. I actually found your thesis online, so I’ve been reading through that. But I was wondering why you made the decisions you did specifically with why you ordered the name chronologically and how you felt it was received. Any ties you have to Belfast and your personal and professional linked to the decision making story as it has to do with the conflict? A first-year student is it going to be a model? Or is it a model for a case study?

SS: It’s a model for my thesis so it will be design drawings and maybe a physical model if that makes sense. Early on I was thinking if there was something like a case study?

LT: Yes, I’m going through your thesis slowly.

SS: No problem. How do you design something that is significant to both sides of this conflict without ending up being meaningless to either? And how do you represent both equally without imposing your personal viewpoint on it? The goal for my project is to design this space that brings the neighboring sides together and I’ll be designing this for a previous peace wall site. So the idea is that these design pieces would be something that brings people together and is usable by both but also serves on that basic level as a memorial so it’s not ignoring the history. It’s still reflecting the history.

LT: It’s a model for my thesis so it will be design drawings and maybe a physical model if that makes sense. Early on I was thinking if there was something small scale I could to do kind of test it while I was there then maybe that would make sense. But it hasn’t really gone that way. So the thought is that these design pieces would be something that brings people together and is usable by both but also serves on that basic level as a memorial so it’s not ignoring the history. It’s still reflecting the history.

LT: Yes. That’s been meaning to read through it. I know what heart and soul goes into these MA theses, so I will get to it. And you’ve been very proactive in getting in touch and I think that’s going to be a model for your thesis. It’s going to be a model for a case study?

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LT: Yeah, I’ve been asked so many times in different ways, but I think it’s good to go over it.

SS: Let me preface it by saying some of the things I’ve been thinking about, while I think that’s given me insights into things I’ve been thinking about, while it’s been going along with this research, I think there are research grants there. I viewed a whole exhibition on international peace and conflict issues there in August 2011. Maybe we can finish your MA, we could collaborate on something together, or you might do your own PhD that builds on the subject you have started on already.

The Community Relations Council, they’ve entitled the matching that organization, as someone there might help. Just interview someone there if you can, as well as ‘Healing through Remembering’. The Director’s name is Kate Turner; please get in touch with her. That organization is entitled The CRC, in Belfast, gave me a grant. You may want to try reaching that organization, as someone there are research grants there. I viewed a whole exhibition on international peace and conflict issues there in August 2011. Maybe we can finish your MA, we could collaborate on something together, or you might do your own PhD that builds on the subject you have started on already.

SS: Yes, I’ve reached out to a lot of people but you have been the most responsive so far. But some of the places I may be able to stop in there while I’m there if I don’t reach anyone already.

LT: Yes or call ahead.

SS: Back to your other questions. First of all, I designed my artwork in late 1999, so obviously the times have changed. And that’s the main difference with your approach to your design and my own approach back then. I mean in 1999, it could still be considered within the conflict period, although the peace process was fully underway. I showed in a Seattle, USA-based exhibition called Horsehead International at The Waterworks Park off Antrim Road (my maternal grandmother’s neighborhood). My approach to my work and The Linen Memorial was from my 1991 training from Cranbrook – not ignoring the history. It’s still reflecting the history.

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LT: That’s great. I’ve been meaning to read through it. I know what heart and soul goes into these MA theses, so I will get to it. And you’ve been very proactive in getting in touch and I think that’s going to be a model for your thesis. It’s going to be a model for a case study?
LT: We'll talk about that later. The book lost Lives was published in late 1999. Did you know that I followed their scholarly Names List, which had been previously published in the mid-1990s in the newspapers? My colleague, artist Hillary Gilligan, from Sligo (another Canadian–Irishwoman), did a process- based artwork called ‘Lost Lives’ as a part of her MFA in installation art at UBC at that time – in the plaza near the art school – that was very brave of her.

SS: Yes, I saw that in your thesis.

LT: Okay. So, obviously, I had to have a scholarly names list to start with. And I researched Maya Lin's 1985 Vietnam Memorial wall which has just been built in Washington D.C. And I was in Pittsburgh University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, so I went to the Vietnam Memorial. I became a part of it in Newry, a border town, in my tour last year in 2014-15. Morgan heads up “The Disappeared” an important organization – and she role or refer a member of the congregation.  Ann Morgan, who was a speaker for me at Stormont (also a lace maker) is very involved in a church community the memorial, they are still not resolved, I refer them to The Samaritans, a bereavement counseling service or, sometimes a church leader will provide that process – art point of view. Like the Washington mall photo documentation of The Names Quilt, and the pictures that of the Lincoln monument in is still so fresh.

SS: Yeah, it is.

LT: So, in Northern Ireland, for many generations, even before my parents left, one would have to be very careful what you'd say due to the suspicions of trying to “live together”. And my mother’s father was involved in a political career immediately after World War II. He worked in a family business that had been nationalized by the British Government. My maternal grandfather’s family is the Ulster Unionists may have to try a different segment of society or something. So, while not from the ‘elite’ of society, my grandfather; Daniel Morgan, had been involved in politics. His father got arrested out of Derry in 1914. His father was there at the Place D'armes in France, and he was involved in the war. And actually, he was an ALP, which is a very, very, very, very old group. During the First World War, they were involved in the war. Daniel Morgan, my grandfather, he was involved in the war. So, he had a very important role in that. So, the situation was the same. And my father, who I named Alastair and Heather Kilgore, senior Board members of the Corrymeela Community of Ballycastle made me comfortable when I showed the artwork for the first time in 2007 at the Day of Reflection there. They had been volunteers who counseled survivors --- some of whom were “bussed” out of the area.

LT: That would be near my “Survivors of Trauma” people near Cliftonville Road in North Belfast. I went to that building with one of the grass-roots Peace

SS: I haven't. That might be the one I'm speaking about. I've emailed a gentleman at the Cliftonville Community Reconciliation Forum so to speak to him while’s

LT: There is a community center right around there. Is that one of the community organizations you've been reaching out to?

SS: Okay, so you do know that one. How much do you know about that development that is happening there? I haven't been able to find a ton of information on it, I believe it was near a freeway on the Pennenam Campus. So, back to the concept of the “parish”! Did you like that book reference that I gave you, edited by Belfast academics for the community? We talked about it, but I have to say more about it.

LT: I think I kind of have, but I also want to leave it open for them to tell me more about what they're doing and what their efforts are there, and what they've say due to the tensions— how taboo it still is. Should I be careful of what I'm saying and who I'm saying it to and that sort of thing? I was interested in, so I gave him a quick rundown, and asked him about this site as well. He sent me a bunch of links that were very helpful.

LT: That would be the one that I'm looking at include the one along Cupar Way, that is in the Blackburn Neighborhood just south of Shankhill Road. It's one of the oldest ones, and visitors come and write it. The other one is in Lower Old Park.

LT: Yeah, I should be more familiar with those.

SS: Okay, so you do know that one. How much do you know about that development that is happening there? I haven't been able to find a ton of information on it, I believe it was near a freeway on the Pennenam Campus. So, back to the concept of the “parish”! Did you like that book reference that I gave you, edited by Belfast academics for the community? We talked about it, but I have to say more about it.

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LT: If you go to the Ulster Folk Museum (www.nmni.com) while you're there, the Textile curator, Valerie Wilson might be able to talk to you about their 2014 exhibition on Celtic Folk / BGY (late 1800s to present day) - fascinating! I think what happened with the Irish music is similar to recreation in terms of "sports." Irish music then became "world music". About performance, for me personally – another story here: What's totally ironic is that there is a music talent in our family for drumming (my sister was in our school orchestra in percussion for years and my niece is currently at Goldsmiths London for jazz percussion). And yet, I never related this memory to my Protestant cultural heritage and the divisive drumming because it was so repressed (by my mother) in our family.

LT: You're also dealing with trauma so just take care of yourself.

SS: I have another general question that's more general that maybe you know something about. Part of what I'm trying to design into part of this is that you might be usable functional spaces and not just a monument or a memorial so I guess some of the programmatic elements of these, I've been curious if certain cultural aspects that unite both sides of it, like food or music or this or that or the other thing that act as bridging factors? I know the linen with their thesis, we talked about the linen factors were historically that element that brought people together to cooperate and forced them to work together. So, I'm just kind of wondering what those things are that bridge the gap now.

LT: While you're on the airplane, you would download videos on Irish music and Irish music and reconciliation. I was writing an earlier article last year and just to perhaps like on the plane that do to get you into the spirit of the field research you will encounter over there/ that mood. You're right, the drumming is very divisive still.

SS: So, I mean the idea that whatever these design spaces will be, they be usable functional spaces. And since the Girdwood hub site has all this vacant land around it, it's not really just handling the border, it's really kind of all this open land around it and I'm just trying to figure out what those extra elements could be. You know is there music culture and it some sort of performance space or is it food cultures and it some kind of market or whatever else it may be.

LT: You might be nice to go around with someone who can speak to the taxi driver in a Belfast accent. I will get a relative to take you around. There's an art tour, take it with a grain of salt.

SS: I have another general question that's more general that maybe you know something about. Part of what I'm trying to design into part of this is that you might be usable functional spaces and not just a monument or a memorial so I guess some of the programmatic elements of these, I've been curious if certain cultural aspects that unite both sides of it, like food or music or this or that or the other thing that act as bridging factors? I know the linen with their thesis, we talked about the linen factors were historically that element that brought people together to cooperate and forced them to work together. So, I'm just kind of wondering what those things are that bridge the gap now.

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LT: If you go to the Ulster Folk Museum (www.nmni.com) while you're there, the Textile curator, Valerie Wilson might be able to talk to you about their 2014 exhibition on Celtic Folk / BGY (late 1800s to present day) - fascinating! I think what happened with the Irish music is similar to recreation in terms of "sports." Irish music then became "world music". About performance, for me personally – another story here: What's totally ironic is that there is a music talent in our family for drumming (my sister was in our school orchestra in percussion for years and my niece is currently at Goldsmiths London for jazz percussion). And yet, I never related this memory to my Protestant cultural heritage and the divisive drumming because it was so repressed (by my mother) in our family.

LT: So, I have a playful side to me and it's all about female fingernail craft painting artists from Hispanic-town. And I'm trying to make an issue that nail art is like miniature Fine Art painting. There are different ethnic groups who have taken this on. So in this as a playful new thing, and I'm kind of theorizing it.

SS: All answered your all questions?

LT: I think so. I hope to spend this week reaching back out to some people there and get myself organized for this trip. LT: Well, it will all fall into place when you go. All the best.

SS: Thanks, I'm really excited. I text from me, send me a photo or something.

LT: Thank you again.

LT: Have a great time on your trip.

SS: Yes.


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