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NORTHERN IRISH FUNDAMENTALIST
AND EVANGELICAL PROTESTANTS
AFTER THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT

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Some of the most severe opposition to the Good Friday agreement has come from the unionist community, particularly those classified as fundamentalist Protestants. This paper seeks to correct the overemphasis on fundamentalism, exploring the relationship between fundamentalist and evangelical Protestants in Northern Ireland. Through a case study of 20 members of the Queen’s University Belfast Christian Union, the author explores issues such as theological belief, political belief, and modes of political and perceived personal trajectory. The paper concludes with an exploration of the prospects for fundamentalists, and the role of evangelicals in fostering social change amongst the Protestant communities in Northern Ireland.
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INTRODUCTION

Some of the most severe opposition to the 1998 Good Friday agreement has come from the unionist community, particularly from those who may be classified as fundamentalist Protestants. Many fundamentalist Protestants were vocal in their opposition to the agreement during the referendum campaign, and they have supported anti-agreement candidates. On the other hand, members of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), long identified with fundamentalist Protestantism, have demonstrated a willingness to participate in the Assembly and have shifted from a stance of staunch opposition to the Good Friday agreement to a policy of renegotiation, in the context of devolution within the United Kingdom. It is necessary to ask, then, whether there have been significant enough changes among fundamentalist Protestants and their political representatives for them to become active and positive contributors in the type of political order that the agreement seeks to create.

The fundamentalist caricature is one of uncompromising holy warriors who view the world, including its politics, as the arena for a cosmic conflict in which the one true God is on their side. But as convenient and simple as this description of fundamentalist belief may appear to outside observers, closer inspection reveals that religious fundamentalists are a much more diverse and complex group. Researchers have only begun to document and describe fundamentalist expressions of religious faith, including the Christian, Muslim and Jewish varieties (Bruce, 1992; Kepel, 1994; Gellner, 1992; Beyer, 1994). They also have set fundamentalism in the wider context of a reaction against modernisation, secularisation and rampant capitalism (Misztal and Shupe, 1992; Albrow, 1996; Pieterse, 1995; Barber, 1996; Castells, 1997). An in-depth comparison of the similarities and differences among religious fundamentalists world-wide is beyond the scope of this work, but it is important to emphasise that Northern Irish Protestant fundamentalism must be considered in this wider context.¹

Furthermore, the theology and politics of fundamentalists have been over-emphasised to the point of nearly obscuring the different—and theologically and politically significant—ideas and activities of evangelicals. Evangelicalism is often

¹ Northern Irish fundamentalism cannot be dismissed as a simple reaction to globalisation. Its roots reach back for centuries, making fundamentalism in Northern Ireland even more complex and entrenched than may be the case in other parts of the world.
viewed as a subset of fundamentalism, which leads to an over-simplification of evangelical belief, particularly regarding the connection between faith and politics.

This paper will correct the overemphasis on fundamentalism that has dominated prior analyses. It will describe the beliefs of fundamentalists and evangelicals, and in particular will challenge the stereotypical assumption that evangelicals hold unified beliefs. It will argue that because of evangelicals’ emphasis on the importance of the Bible and the theological beliefs they already share with fundamentalists, the potential for evangelicals to spark change among fundamentalists is greater than that of secular leaders or representatives from Catholic or mainline Protestant denominations. Understanding interactions within the fundamentalist and evangelical communities could point to underlying attitudinal changes that may have profound political effects. The paper concludes by analysing some possible directions of future religious and political change.

FUNDAMENTALISTS AND EVANGELICALS

First, it is vital to recognise that fundamentalists and evangelicals share key beliefs, including a commitment to adhere to the “fundamentals” of the Protestant faith: conversion, salvation by faith alone, and a belief that life must be lived in light of the teachings of the Bible. Fundamentalists and evangelicals are significant, numerically, in Northern Ireland. Boal, Keane and Livingstone (1997) have calculated that 50% of churchgoing Protestants are “conservative”, whereby they believe in the inerrancy of the Bible and the necessity of conversion. He further estimated that 25% of the Protestant population as a whole are conservative; Bruce (1996) put the figure at 30%. Another estimate puts the evangelical Protestant population at 33% (ECONI, 1995: 5).

But, as Thomson (1998: 254) writes, there are two misconceptions about fundamentalism and evangelicalism: “that evangelicalism and fundamentalism are discrete movements” and “that evangelicalism and fundamentalism are one and the same”. Jordan (2001) builds on the distinction between fundamentalists and evangelicals by breaking the evangelical community into six groups. Those who have been categorised above as fundamentalists he calls “oppositional or defensive evangelicals.” They believe that they alone remain faithful, see most issues as black and white, and believe they must be vigilant against infiltration by the unpure. Those who have been categorised above simply as evangelicals Jordan calls “inclusivist” evangelicals. They favour engagement with the world, believe evangelicalism must be constantly redefined, and see evangelicalism as “a tributary of the much broader river that is Christianity”. Inclusivists tend to be social and political activists. Table 1 summarises Jordan’s categories of evangelicals (22: 41).

Jordan may be right that the 25-30% of Protestants that others classify as conservative, fundamentalist or evangelical fall into one or other of these categories. For the purpose of this thesis, however, the focus will be on the theology and politics of the oppositional and inclusivist evangelicals—chiefly because those are the two groups most interested in politics.
Table 1. Categories of evangelicals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pietistic</th>
<th>Oppositional</th>
<th>Inclusivist</th>
<th>Confessional</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>Charismatic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favour private relationship with God. Non-political.</td>
<td>Vigilance against infiltration by the unpure. Northern Ireland is a special land set apart by God, like Israel.</td>
<td>Engage with the world, social and political activism. Dialogue. Christians are citizens in a plural society; Northern Ireland is not “special.”</td>
<td>Preserve the content of faith in historical creeds rather than developing evangelical thought through dialogue. May be apolitical.</td>
<td>Evangelical in experience, mindset. Little expressed theological content. May be apolitical.</td>
<td>Emphasise work of the holy spirit, emphasis feeling. Tend to be ecumenical. May be apolitical.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Jordan, 2001: 22-41

But it is important to remember the other types of evangelicals that Jordan identifies, especially since they have the potential to be attracted to either the oppositional or inclusivist camps if and when they are mobilised politically or exercise their right to vote. Hereafter, however, for simplicity’s sake, oppositionalists will be referred to as fundamentalists and inclusivists will be referred to as evangelicals.

Fundamentalists have been identified in terms of theological beliefs that include the belief that Northern Ireland is a special land set apart by God, anti-Catholicism, the identification of the European Union (EU) as an antichrist figure, and anti-ecumenism. Earlier in Irish history the majority of Protestants shared this view. While they may seem an insignificant minority now, it is important not to underestimate the diffuse influence of the fundamentalist Protestants, especially through Ian Paisley’s Free Presbyterian Church (FPC) and political party, the DUP. Indeed, the DUP attracts many voters who are not Free Presbyterians, as evidenced by its 20 seats in the Assembly. As Bruce (1994: 21) has concluded: “Paisley’s religious and political movements … have exerted an influence way beyond the reach of their membership”. Mitchell’s work (2001) also catalogues the diffuse influence of fundamentalist theology in the Protestant community. Lessons learned in Protestant Sunday Schools may stick with people long after they stop attending church and influence their beliefs about life and politics. As a non-churchgoer from Belfast told Mitchell: “Everything Ian Paisley says is the truth” (2001: 254).

Significantly, some fundamentalist leaders strongly promote political activism. For instance, Paisley’s European Institute for Protestant Studies (EIPS) and DUP are organisations that encourage fundamentalists to become involved in politics. EIPS headquarters is located in the same building where Paisley holds services for Martyrs’ Memorial FPC in Belfast. The stated aims of EIPS are to “expound the Bible and expose the Papacy and to promote, defend and maintain Bible Protestantism in Europe and further afield” (EIPS, 2002). The methods EIPS uses to promote those aims are providing correspondence courses and supplying information for “all
who are engaged in the struggle against the Papacy in both the religious and the secular worlds” (EIPS, 2002). The EIPS also publishes a bi-monthly journal, *The Battle Standard*, in conjunction with the British Council of Protestant Churches. The DUP, of course, is a political party, so it is both obvious and expected that it would have political goals, one of which is promoting the Protestant religion. One example of Paisley using the DUP as a vehicle to promote the Protestant religion is when he defended the Orange Order’s July 1998 sit-in at Drumcree (a protest over the independent Parades Commission not allowing them to march through a Catholic neighbourhood) by claiming that the Orangemen’s civil and religious liberties were being violated (Paisley, 1998).

This political involvement of fundamentalists is often underscored by the conviction that they are God’s chosen people. Northern Ireland is conceived of almost as a theocracy, like the nation of Israel in the Old Testament. God punishes or rewards the nation according to the moral behaviour of its citizens, as He sees fit. Indeed, this point of view claims that “Ulster is the last faithful defender of Protestant truth” (Thomson, 1995b: 25).

Fundamentalists also believe that many of the economic and political developments of the last 30 years are a direct threat to their freedom and their religion. Regionalisation, as promoted by the EU and necessitated by the integration of economies north and south, is of particular concern. Fundamentalists believe economic cooperation with the Republic is the first step on the road to political cooperation and eventual unity with the Republic. Fundamentalists also believe that participation in the EU squelches national sovereignty. They do not believe that the EU’s regional committees will be able to safeguard the individual cultures of EU nations. Furthermore, fundamentalists do not see the EU as just an economic arrangement necessitated by market forces. They believe it is a calculated conspiracy to overthrow Bible Protestantism, and Catholicism is the catalyst for the conspiracy. Accordingly, the Roman Catholic Church is the “Great Whore” described in Revelation chapter 17.

Fundamentalists mistrust ecumenism because it represents the move of other Protestant denominations into the fold of Catholicism and supports the theory that mainline Protestants are joining forces with the Catholic/EU antichrist. The ecumenists are considered just as dangerous as the Catholics because they too are watering down and stamping out the truth of Bible Christianity. Perhaps the worst offenders, in fundamentalist eyes, are the evangelicals that have begun to join the ecumenical movement.

In sum, fundamentalists continue to oppose political compromise because they fear it will pervert their identity and their religious beliefs and destroy true Christianity. They support this belief by their understanding of Northern Ireland’s special position as God’s chosen land, Catholic theology, and the influences of the EU and ecumenism. Fundamentalist theology is the basis for their political interpretations.

Evangelicals do not share the views described above. For example, the literature and educational programmes of the political action group Evangelical Contribution
on Northern Ireland (ECONI) apply Biblical concepts when analysing the political situation in Northern Ireland—but with a very different emphasis than that of fundamentalists. The themes that ultimately emerge are Christians as aliens, Christian identity and citizenship, and forgiveness in politics. ECONI take an entirely different view of Catholicism and ecumenism from fundamentalists. Cooke (1996) and Brewer (1998) also offer arguments that challenge fundamentalist theology and political ideas.

Central to ECONI’s political and theological argument about Northern Ireland are its de-emphasis on the possession of land and its emphasis on Christians as aliens, or foreigners, who are not bound by geography. While fundamentalists often point to the possession of Northern Ireland as a sign of God’s blessing upon them and His judgement upon Catholics, ECONI rebuffs that view. Of Christians, ECONI writes, “Their homeland is not to be in this world, where they remain aliens and strangers, but in the world to come. They belong to the Kingdom of God, a reality both now and in the future life” (ECONI, 1995: 10).

The ECONI emphasis on Christians as citizens differs from fundamentalists’ emphasis on citizenship. Paisley may have appealed to civil liberties in his statement about the sit-in at Drumcree, but ECONI asserts that “the Christian ethic is not a demand for legal rights but a concern that the human dignity of each individual be protected and served” (ECONI, 1995: 13). Evangelicals also do not think it necessary for the state to preserve their religion. In stark contrast to fundamentalists, they believe their religion will still be able to compete in an open market of differing religious beliefs.

ECONI also chooses to focus on the Biblical message of forgiveness, which is perceived as a key element in peace building. There has been scholarly work completed in recent years on the idea of forgiveness in politics, including Shriver (1995), Jones (1995), Hauerwas (1999) and Muller-Fahrenholz (1996). ECONI identify steps to forgiveness, which include admitting shared responsibility, serving others in the community, and identifying with (not forgetting) the victims of the violence.

In addition, evangelicals rebuff fundamentalists’ fears of Catholicism and ecumenism. Thomson (1995a) also wrote the booklet Beyond fear, suspicion and hostility, which directly challenges traditional Protestant assumptions that Irish nationalism and the Republic of Ireland are covert agents of Roman Catholicism. Evangelicals also have shown a remarkable affinity for working together across denominations because “they tend to identify themselves primarily as evangelicals rather than as members of particular denominations” (Thomson, 1998: 253). While this willingness might not necessarily be classified as “ecumenical”, it is certainly markedly different from some of the fundamentalist denominations that refuse to dialogue with almost anyone who is not a member of their group.

However, the characteristics of fundamentalists and evangelicals described here, with the exception of the data gathered from Jordan’s interviewees, are derived from elite sources: the written literature or spoken word of leaders of the fundamen-
talist and evangelical communities. It does not address how non-elite fundamentalists and evangelicals understand themselves in contemporary Northern Ireland and whether or how their self-understandings have changed. This analysis will move beyond the stereotypical lists of fundamentalist and evangelical beliefs reviewed here, demonstrating instead that fundamentalists and evangelicals hold a synthesis of various theological and political beliefs. It will deny a direct causal link between theological belief and political practice. Rather, it will argue that the influence of theological beliefs on their political practices is more unpredictable and varied than might have been previously assumed. Finally, it will describe the differences within evangelical belief, demonstrating how those differences may instigate changes among fundamentalists.

CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION

In 2000-01 I investigated fundamentalist and evangelical thought by conducting a case study of the Queen’s University Belfast Christian Union (CU). Studying the CU had several advantages. First, because of the nature of the organisation it was hoped that the CU might provide a forum where fundamentalists and evangelicals would interact. CUs are present on nearly every university campus in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland and fall under the jurisdiction of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES). CUs offer students from a wide range of Protestant denominations the opportunity for worship, fellowship and Bible study (Catholics are not precluded from joining a CU, but in practice few do). CUs do not have any “political” goals, and they are one of the few organisations in which members of fundamentalist denominations that normally advocate strict separation from others may socialise with Christians from other denominations. The CU is also quite large, as far as student organisations go. According to a Queen’s CU office-holder, about 500 different students pass through the doors for CU meetings during the course of the school year. Finally, as younger members of the fundamentalist and evangelical communities, students may be less entrenched in their positions and more receptive to dialogue over differences in political and theological belief.

It was decided to identify 20 students from the CU who would be willing to participate in an interview regarding their beliefs about Christianity and politics. Accordingly, a questionnaire was distributed at a weekly meeting of the CU on 30 November 2000. It was hoped that the responses could be analysed to create a balance between fundamentalists and evangelicals. But the questions that would be the best indicators of these identities (denominational affiliation and party affiliation) were made optional so as to avoid offence.
Composition of the Queen’s CU

It is useful to describe the composition of the CU on 30 November 2000. Of the 204 in attendance, 196 or 96% hailed from Northern Ireland (1.5% England, 1.5% Ireland, 0.5% Nigeria, 0.5% USA). The group was more female (62.75%) than male (37.25%), and quite uninterested in politics—118 or 57.8% indicated they were not interested in politics, while 82 or 40.2% indicated that they were. This is not surprising, given Jordan’s findings about the apolitical outlook of many evangelicals who are not “oppositional” or “inclusivist”. When this variable was controlled for by sex, however, it was revealed that 60.5% of the males were interested in politics, while only 28.1% of the females were interested in politics.

An overwhelming 63.2% claimed they were not affiliated with a particular political party. Of the parties named, 18.1% were affiliated with the UUP, 5.9% DUP, 3.9% Alliance, and 7.8% all other parties. As far as denominations, the Presbyterians were the largest with 62 or 30.4%. Twenty-four or 11.8% declined to identify their denomination, 11.8% were Baptist, 9.8% Church of Ireland, and 9.8% identified themselves as “Protestant”. Interestingly, only one respondent was identified as a Free Presbyterian. This may underline the emphasis the Free Presbyterian Church places on maintaining a strict separation from other denominations. It is also possible that some Free Presbyterians chose to identify themselves as Protestant, declined to provide their denomination or simply called themselves a Presbyterian, as a Southern Baptist in the USA might call himself a Baptist (although there is no evidence that Free Presbyterians regularly do this). But this is speculative; the only alternative would have been to make the question about denomination multiple choice rather than open-ended.

Thirty-four students indicated a willingness to participate. The 20 who were selected were interviewed in February and March 2001 in Belfast. The interviews were confidential and semi-structured, with questions designed to uncover what the students believe, how their beliefs were formed, how their beliefs affect their politics, whether those beliefs have changed over a period of time, and whether they interact with or discuss theological or political issues with fundamentalists (if they are “evangelical”) or evangelicals (if they are “fundamentalist”).

Interview data

Of the interviewees, 12 were male and eight were female. Males were over-represented due to their greater interest in politics and their greater willingness to be interviewed. Seventeen of the 20 indicated that they were interested in or followed politics. As far as political allegiances, nine favoured no party, six were UUP, three DUP, one Alliance and one Women’s Coalition/Women’s Labour. Denominationally, there were five Presbyterians, three non-denominational, three Protestant, two Baptist, two Church of Ireland, two did not indicate a denomination, one Congregational, one Free Presbyterian and one Nazarene.

For a list of questions, see appendix 2.
On the whole, the 20 were overwhelmingly evangelical. All expressed tolerance for other religious beliefs and opinions, and none spoke with unqualified favour of Paisley or the Orange Order. Thus only two interviewees fit somewhat comfortably into the fundamentalist mould. It should be noted, however, that the very existence of Paisley makes it easier for someone to present himself as at least more moderate than the DUP leader. It is also possible that when interviewed, people are able to present themselves as more reasonable or moderate than they may be in the heat of the moment; reactionary fears and emotions may not surface in an interview room as they do in a pub conversation, while watching a parade, or while in the voting booth.

The two fundamentalists did not hold all of the beliefs articulated above as expressions of typical fundamentalist theology or politics. Nor did the 18 evangelicals hold all of the beliefs typical of evangelicals. This is to be expected, because people are people, not lists of stereotypical beliefs. Furthermore, people may hold contradictory beliefs or be torn between two or more competing beliefs, not sure of what is true or false. Thus the data confirm that the ideal types of fundamentalist and evangelical do not adequately grasp the diverse positions within the movements.

At any rate, it was clear that the CU was not as much a site for fundamentalist and evangelical interaction as had been originally hoped. The CU, it seems, is largely a preserve for evangelicals, generally apolitical or moderate in their theological and political beliefs. While it might be argued that the CU members who were interviewed merely succeeded in concealing their fundamentalism, or that the fundamentalists present on the evening the questionnaires were distributed simply declined to be interviewed, this is not likely the case. For instance, Paul, an evangelical, expressed the belief that “there’s no real reason” to discuss politics at CU “because we all believe the same”. Grace, who attends a Free Presbyterian Church, said she was surprised and pleased to discover that the Free Presbyterians she met at the CU were much more evangelical, tolerant and moderate than she had expected them to be. But perhaps the most telling evidence of the CU’s evangelical ethos are the observations of Douglas, whose beliefs place him in the fundamentalist camp. Douglas identified himself as a minority within the CU, and said that most Christian students who hold his beliefs would attend the Free Presbyterian Tyndale student fellowship. He said he thought other members of the CU would not approve of him.

But even with only two fundamentalist interviewees, the data still yielded significant information. There were students who were very conscious of the struggle to overcome loyalist backgrounds. On the whole, however, the students hail from quite moderate backgrounds. Six students described their parents as moderate/liberal and said that their grandparents or other relatives were more extreme, five described their parents as moderate/liberal, and two described their parents as mod-

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5 All names have been changed to ensure confidentiality.
erate/liberal and said that one parent was an elected official—bringing the total of interviewees with moderate/liberal parents to 13. Four students described their parents as DUP/loyalist, two said that their parents were not Christian and had one parent who was in the security forces, and the background of one interviewee was not clear.

All 20 said their religious convictions influenced their beliefs about politics. Twelve said it was important for Christians to actively participate in politics. Eight of the 18 evangelicals said that Christians should be disengaged from politics, although this didn’t necessarily mean that Christians should not vote. Thirteen voted (or would have voted, had they been of voting age) for the Good Friday agreement, and those evangelicals who voted against it based their vote on concerns about decommissioning, prisoner releases and the police force—not fears of Catholicism or the extermination of Protestantism. Fourteen would accept or not mind living in a united Ireland, and 12 thought that Northern Ireland’s involvement in the EU has been positive and should be continued. But perhaps most telling was the marked lack of interaction between fundamentalists and evangelicals. Only five evangelicals said they discussed politics with fundamentalists. Douglas and Diane, the fundamentalists, said they purposely or implicitly avoid political discussion with people who do not agree with their views. Ten of the evangelicals also purposely or implicitly avoid discussion with fundamentalists, and three evangelicals said that they had no fundamentalist friends at all. On the other hand, the evangelicals were eager social activists, with 14 involved in community or volunteer work. Douglas and Diane were also involved in volunteer work. Appendix 3 summarises the backgrounds, beliefs and activities of the 20 interviewees.

**Thematic analysis of data**

The following will summarise the responses of the interviewees in light of four theoretical dimensions: theological belief, political belief, mode of politics and perceived personal trajectory (or they way they see themselves changing). These dimensions incorporate the themes of theology, politics and change outlined above. Individuals could conceivably hold an infinite number of combinations of theological belief, political belief, preference for mode of politics and perceptions of their personal trajectory. But despite these multiple possibilities for individualised combinations of belief, four descriptive categories emerged from the interview data: fundamentalism, strategic peace activism, moderating fundamentalism, and active overcoming. The four theoretical dimensions informed the four descriptive categories. One dimension may be emphasised within each category, while at the same time there may be considerable overlap of the dimensions within the categories.

A brief description of the dimensions is in order. It is helpful to conceive of each dimension as a spectrum along which individuals might be placed according to their particular beliefs, and along which they might move, in either direction, at a given time. The theological dimension, for instance, includes the beliefs that fundamentalists and evangelicals share and that give them their common ground, such as the authority of Scripture, the saving power of Christ’s crucifixion, and the necessity of conversion. Beyond that there is a diverse collection of beliefs, including the fun-
damentalist and evangelical distinctives outlined above. Those beliefs might be ar-
rayed along a spectrum; see dimension (a) in figure 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theocracy</th>
<th>Anti-Catholic</th>
<th>Anti-Ecumenism</th>
<th>Forgiveness in politics</th>
<th>Cautious ecumenical dialogue</th>
<th>Engage with the world</th>
<th>Christian citizenship/ Separation of church and state</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(a) Theological belief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anti-Good Friday agreement</th>
<th>Anti-United Ireland</th>
<th>Anti-EU</th>
<th>United Ireland OK</th>
<th>EU OK</th>
<th>Good Friday agreement OK</th>
<th>Pro EU</th>
<th>Pro Good Friday agreement</th>
<th>Pro United Ireland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(b) Political belief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apolitical (low)</th>
<th>Grassroot/ Volunteer Work</th>
<th>Following politics in the news</th>
<th>Voting</th>
<th>Belonging to a Party</th>
<th>Working for a Party</th>
<th>Running for Office</th>
<th>Holding Office (High)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(c) Mode of politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Conservative</th>
<th>Reflecting Conservative</th>
<th>Passive/Static Conservative</th>
<th>Passive/Static Moderate</th>
<th>Reflecting Moderate</th>
<th>Active Moderate</th>
<th>Passive/Static liberal</th>
<th>Reflecting Liberal</th>
<th>Active Liberal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
The perceived personal trajectory dimension focuses on what people think of themselves and how they believe they have changed or are changing. The spectrum ranges from perceptions of the self as conservative, moderate or liberal and includes how a person sees himself changing within a conservative, moderate or liberal context. For instance, one who is passive or static is not changing his beliefs; one who is reflecting is subjecting his beliefs to critical self-analysis, and one who is active has examined his beliefs and is taking conscious steps to change them. This dimension is necessarily relative and subjective, because someone who considers himself moderate might be considered liberal by an outside observer; or someone who considers himself moderate might be considered fundamentalist or conservative by an outside observer. This dimension is important, however, because it demonstrates that the beliefs of fundamentalists and evangelicals are changing and indicates that there is potential for further change. The data also reveals the reasons why the subjects believed their beliefs have changed. Within the CU, all who discussed their personal changes perceived themselves as moderating their theological and/or political beliefs. There is always the possibility, however, that an individual could become more conservative in their beliefs; see dimension (d) in figure 1.

The following descriptive categories, then, include these theoretical dimensions in varying and overlapping degrees. One or two dimensions may be emphasised within each category. Theological and political belief, for instance, are predominant in fundamentalism, mode of politics is predominant in strategic activism, and perceived personal trajectory is predominant in moderating fundamentalism and active overcoming.

Fundamentalism

The fundamentalist theme incorporates the already enumerated fundamentalist theological and political beliefs. Fundamentalists express typical fears about the danger of Catholicism from either a united Ireland and/or the EU, and are generally pessimistic about the future. Their viewpoints have undergone little or no change since the Good Friday agreement and they feel their fears have been vindicated by the manner in which the agreement has been implemented so far.

Douglas is a 22-year-old Presbyterian and DUP supporter from Antrim. He grew up in what he describes as a “mixed” estate in Lisburn, but it is also an estate that has a loyalist ethos marked by painted kerbs and bonfires on the 11th night of July. His childhood friends would now belong to Orange bands and call themselves “hard loyalist men”. He says his political beliefs are strongly unionist and conservative, beliefs that he would share with his parents. He voted against the Good Friday agreement and opposes both a united Ireland and increased participation in the EU.

Douglas’s opposition to the Good Friday agreement is based on what he calls the “lies” of David Trimble, who he believes misled unionists about what would happen once the agreement went into effect. Furthermore, “it was said before any vote was taken, what will happen is prisoners will be let out and you’ll never see a single bullet decommissioned... and that’s what’s happened”.

-11-
As far as a united Ireland, Douglas is frustrated by nationalists’ attempts to achieve something that never existed, for Ireland has only ever been united “under British rule”. He also said he does not believe it is “God’s will” for there to be a united Ireland. Furthermore, his father was raised in the Republic of Ireland and was discriminated against because he was not Catholic, something Douglas believes would happen in a united Ireland.

When questioned about the EU, Douglas expressed concern that it could be the antichrist empire prophesied in the book of Revelation, although “it’s a dangerous thing to sort of try and imagine or interpret what the Bible is saying.” He also disagrees with what he sees as a stripping away of British national identity and adding another layer of bureaucratic and unaccountable government to Europe. Because the EU could be “the sort of empire the Beast is going to rule”, he doesn’t want to be a part of that and thus might support an independent Ulster if the UK were to become too entangled in Europe. Most of his ideas about the EU have come from reading books or watching videos on the topic, including a tape by American televangelist Jimmy Swaggart.

Douglas does interact with those of a more evangelical bent within the CU, but as his comments in the previous section indicate, he feels he is looked down upon by CU members and would be hesitant to discuss theological or political ideas with them. Rather, he would interact in this way with students in the Tyndale fellowship.

Finally, Douglas is pessimistic about the future. He feels justified that his suspicions about the Good Friday agreement turned out to be right, and that more people are “coming over to my side”. He is on the council of the Queen’s Student Union, which he describes as very nationalist and discriminatory against unionists (“they literally near enough hate us”), and says that the “Catholic Employment Agency” (his name for the Fair Employment Agency) discriminates against Protestants. He would be willing to fight for Ulster but he believes middle class unionists have become apathetic, and that unionist culture is gradually being eradicated.

In sum, fundamentalist echo traditional concerns as well as a new theologically-based concern of the Good Friday agreement era: the *morality* of prisoner releases and terrorists in government. To release prisoners and to allow “terrorists” to participate in government is a breach of justice and a violation of God’s law. This reflects a theology that not only considers it man’s responsibility to execute justice, but a covenant-style theology that implies that such reckless disregard for God’s law can only incur His judgement on the nation.

**Strategic peace activism**

The interviewees represented in this thematic category have reflected long and hard about how they can best contribute to the peace process. The representative of this category, Elizabeth, believes it is necessary to work at the grassroots level, and although she wouldn’t completely shun “high” politics, she does not believe it is an effective way to change society. Although not every interviewee articulated this strategy in the explicit terms of Elizabeth, the high incidence of volunteer and cross-
community work amongst the interviewees indicate that it is a “strategy” that is being employed by many. Granted, it is a strategy that is employed for different ends by different individuals. Those within this category see it as a way that they, as Christians, can do their part for the peace process. Others may not connect their social activism with the peace process at all. They may engage in the work for reasons of compassion or personal fulfilment—the same sort of reasons people in peaceful societies choose to be social activists.

It is also important to note that the high level of social activism among the Queen’s students runs counter to the widely-held assumption that more Catholic clergy and lay people than Protestant are involved at the grassroots level. As a Protestant woman told Mitchell (2001: 251): “but their politicians in the schools and in the churches are all behind this community development, but we have nothing. We have absolutely nothing”. It is impossible to assume from this research that the Protestant community in general is becoming more activist—all this can demonstrate is that CU members at Queen’s do a lot of community work. While political scientists would call what they do participating in civil society, the students themselves may not think of their activity this way. Nevertheless, this kind of activism may be an effective means for instigating change and bolstering the peace process.

Elizabeth is a 21-year-old Baptist and Women’s Coalition/Women’s Labour supporter from Antrim. She describes her parents as apolitical, but pluralist. She voted for the Good Friday agreement, would not be opposed to a united Ireland, and said the EU has been good for Northern Ireland, especially economically. At the same time, she is unhappy with the way the Good Friday agreement has been implemented: “I personally feel like I voted yes and they took what they wanted and gave nothing”.

For the moment, Elizabeth has chosen to combat some of the problems in Northern Ireland by working at the grassroots level. She said this was influenced by the year she spent studying abroad at a university in the USA, where the ethos was “feminist-feminist-feminist ... and very much into grassroots contributions”. She would not be enthusiastic about discussing politics with more than a few close friends, so she generally avoids what she deems “sensitive” topics. Rather, Elizabeth volunteers for organisations that cater for Catholic and Protestant youths, and she observes her Christian friends doing the same things.

In sum, Elizabeth’s political outlook has been informed by her Christian beliefs and she goes about expressing her Christianity through her politics by choosing to engage in “low” grassroots politics rather than “high” politics. This reflects the evangelical emphasis on the social gospel, and the exhortations of groups like ECONI. It echoes the theological belief that preaching the gospel means more than just proclaiming it from the pulpit or under a great white tent. The gospel message also calls on Christians to serve in the world, visiting “orphans and widows”, as the Biblical text puts it. This is in direct contrast to most fundamentalists, who either shun or de-emphasise this belief and opt instead for separation.
Moderating fundamentalism

The interviewee represented in this thematic category has links to the FPC, but has rejected some aspects of its theology or practices. Grace attests that her beliefs have been changed, and indicates that it is possible for similar transformations to occur in others. Even though she would have voted against the Good Friday agreement, her vote was not based on theologically motivated political judgements. She is less fearful of change than fundamentalists, and seems better able to argue within the boundaries set by the Good Friday agreement for policy changes regarding decommissioning, prisoner releases and the reform of the police service.

Grace is a 19-year-old UUP supporter from Antrim. She was raised in the FPC, and says that her parents usually vote DUP, although they are not particularly “staunch” and would be open to discuss other viewpoints. She says studying Irish history for her A-level history exams caused her to make her “own decisions” about faith and politics. Her misgivings about the manner in which the FPC/DUP mix faith and politics prevented her from becoming involved in the youth fellowship when she was in secondary school.

Grace would have voted against the Good Friday agreement because she disagrees with prisoner releases and disapproves of Sinn Féin entering so easily into government. She could accept a united Ireland but would not be particularly enthusiastic about further involvement in the EU.

Grace’s comments about a united Ireland are significant because she explicitly challenges the fundamentalist assumption of linking the survival of Protestant Christianity with the maintenance of a territorial border:

I think a lot of Christians believe that it should be part of the United Kingdom whereas I don’t really see that as that big an issue. For me citizenship is in God’s kingdom, not in a country down here, so to me it wouldn’t make any difference to me.

As far as interacting with other fundamentalists and evangelicals, Grace has been encouraged by the open discussions she has had since coming to Queen’s. She was particularly surprised by the moderate beliefs of other Free Presbyterians:

[At Queen’s] I sort of made friends, found out they were Free Presbyterians, started going with them and that sort of contact was made before I even had time to make a stereotype ... Surprisingly a lot of them have similar sort of ideas to me.

Given Grace’s fundamentalist background, what is particularly important is that her objections to the Good Friday agreement are not couched in theological terms. She may object to the lack of decommissioning, prisoner releases and the reform of the police service, but it is not because she views Northern Ireland as a special land or believes that government should be based on a theocratic covenant. Because these objections are not backed with holy warrior-type convictions, they hold more promise of being viable in a process of debate within a plural society.

Finally, Grace’s descriptions of how she moved from fundamentalist to more moderate points of view illustrate the possibility of changing theological and political
ideas. Grace mentions studying history as a key to her transformation. When she was exposed and open to new points of view, she sought to understand them and perceived herself as changing her beliefs.

**Active overcoming**

The interviewee representing this theme was very conscious of the effort and struggle involved in changing and developing his evangelical point of view. Although Roger described his parents as moderate, his grandparents are very loyalist. Roger demonstrates the difficulty of change, and raises the very important idea that changing theological or political beliefs is an on-going process, not something that seems to occur once and for all. Like Grace, he also seems willing to work within the boundaries set by the Good Friday agreement.

Roger is a 21-year-old from Down who is not affiliated with a party and did not indicate his denomination. He describes Northern Irish culture as “oppressive” and is conscious that some of his beliefs are regarded as “betrayal” by people from his background (including his grandmother, a “Paisleyite”). Although he is not a member of the nationalist SDLP, he described the reaction of his friends when he admitted that he had voted for that party: “In sixth form we were going around the table saying who we voted for. Most people voted Unionist or Alliance and when I said SDLP people were a bit shocked”.

Roger voted for the Good Friday agreement and does not object to either a united Ireland or EU involvement, though he regards the prisoner releases as unjust and he is not pleased with that aspect of the agreement.

His own impressions of the Republic are positive, and he says if he had to choose between a British culture and an Irish culture, he would choose Irish. But even so, Roger battles against what he perceives as an inherent, internal bigotry. He came to some of these realisations when he spent a year studying abroad at a university in the USA:

> Spending time away from the country I realise how my views scare me... some of the emotions that come out of me when I see stuff on TV... I just don’t want my child to have that inbuilt prejudice against people that no matter how hard I can work against it, it will still be with me for the rest of my life... When I was about 14 there was a Catholic guy in school and I remember vividly calling him a Fenian bastard and I’ll never forget that and that was my first realisation that I was totally bigoted and to work against that.

Roger has discussed his beliefs with those of opposing views and has worked with children in a working class estate in his home town. He describes the children as “receptive” and has been particularly impressed with their responses to cross-community activities. Even so, his optimism is very guarded, and he becomes frustrated with the excruciatingly slow pace of the peace process, “I just do think do I want to spend the rest of my life in this environment where it is so frustrating? ... I would think about it and talk to some of my friends and then you just come away thinking there is no solution to this”.

-15-
Like Grace, Roger perceives himself as moderating. His self perceptions differ from those of Grace because of the emphasis he places on the difficulty of change, and his frank admission that it may be a discouraging process at times. He also shows an acute awareness of the disapproval he receives from other members of his community. His comments support the notion that change is not instantaneous or magical, but is gradual and may take a significant amount of time. Even so, he has been willing to work with children within his community. Like Elizabeth, his actions reflect the evangelical emphasis on the social gospel of interaction with the world.

**Summary**

The CU case study yielded a fruitful description of the post-Good Friday agreement theological and political beliefs of fundamentalists and evangelicals and the interaction between the groups. The fundamentalists retained traditional misgivings about Catholicism and the EU and a new misgiving about the morality of the Good Friday agreement. This influenced their political beliefs and their reluctance to embrace the post-Good Friday agreement political order. Evangelicals, on the other hand, were more willing and often eager to take part in the political order. This is not surprising, for it supports the prior work of Jordan, Brewer and others. The testimonies of the interviewees also provided evidence of the priority of social activism, the possibility of change, the process of change (interaction with others and education), and the difficulty and slow pace of change. Jordan’s assertion that fundamentalists and evangelicals are reluctant to interact and discuss was reinforced. The study was limited by a lack of fundamentalist interviewees and by the fact that a group of university students is not representative of the population as a whole.

**FUNDAMENTALISTS, EVANGELICALS AND THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE**

Fundamentalism continues to play a prominent role in the theology and politics of post-Good Friday agreement Northern Ireland. For his part, Paisley has continued to denounce the efforts of Catholics, mainline Protestants and evangelicals to compromise. He opposed the Good Friday agreement by leading a referendum campaign to reject it. His party then contested the elections to the new Assembly, campaigning partially on the platform that if elected, the DUP could attempt to destroy the agreement from within. His ally, the UK Unionist Party, took a similar stance. The gradual acceptance of the agreement is not something such fundamentalists look forward to. They retain their traditional hope of a Protestant dominated Northern Ireland and fear that the province will be infiltrated and damaged by Catholicism. Fundamentalist Protestants therefore believe they must use the political system to guarantee that their religion is predominant in Northern Ireland. They continue to believe that Northern Ireland is a land especially blessed and set aside by God for Protestants who hold to their particular faith.

Despite the persistence of traditional fundamentalist beliefs and sustained opposition to the Good Friday agreement by fundamentalists and their allies, fundamentalists are nevertheless changing. The process of change of the beliefs and behaviour of fundamentalists in post-Good Friday agreement Northern Ireland is very tenuous.
and it is difficult to forecast what the dominant direction of the change may be. Currently, the change may be moving in three possible directions:

1. Fundamentalists may be retreating to a position of marginalisation, hopelessness and victimhood. They will either never be heard from again, or will re-emerge at a time of future crisis.

2. Fundamentalists may be strengthening, retrenching and gaining allies. This would be supported by some interpretations of the DUP success in the 7 June 2001 elections.

3. Fundamentalists may be moderating to appeal to the middle ground, especially in their political rhetoric. This would be supported by the DUP’s pre-election document. Also, people may now be supporting the DUP for non-fundamentalist reasons.

The following outlines evidence of change in these directions.

**Marginalisation**

Some analyses indicate that fundamentalists are waning and their religion may be reduced to irrelevance or exterminated. Some Protestant separatists express what Mitchell calls a “siege mentality”, presenting themselves as “marginal, as victims, as helpless to affect the forces of change”. Furthermore, the one-time stereotype of defiant fundamentalists crying “No Surrender!” is being replaced by “hopelessness”. As she observes:

> Insecurity is deepening after the Good Friday Agreement, but defiance is not being actively promoted by the born-again Protestants of middle Ulster. Instead, they add the Good Friday Agreement to the list of globalisation, secularisation, etc. – phenomena which are sent to test their faith, which must be dealt with a resigned determination, but which will inevitably proceed as described in Revelation (Mitchell, 2001: 271).

For Mitchell, then, the portion of the Protestant community that holds these views seems to be gradually marginalising itself by refusing to assimilate, opting for separatism or privatisation, and being resigned to a gloomy fate. Survey data also indicate that the Protestant community in general, not just fundamentalists, perceive themselves as increasingly marginalised by politics. Researchers Joanne Hughes and Caitlin Donnelly of the University of Ulster have concluded that “the overall political and social context in Northern Ireland is perceived to be much less sensitive to their rights and cultural traditions than to those of the Catholic Community” and that 52% of Protestants believe that “it is Catholics who now receive better treatment” (*News Letter*, 16 Jun 2001: 9).

It is difficult, however, to conjure up a comparative historical precedent whereby a fundamentalist religion has been exterminated. Fundamentalism seems to wax and wane, reviving in times of crisis. Fundamentalists might lose a political or religious battle and be pushed to the sidelines for a time, only to re-emerge seemingly
stronger than ever. This pattern has been evident in the USA, and is not without precedent in Northern Ireland. In the USA, for example, during the extensive cultural changes of the 1870s-1920s fundamentalists were prominent in public debate. They seemed to lose the battle to theological liberals and evolutionists, however, and modernisation and secularisation theories asserted that fundamentalism in the USA would wither away. But that did not occur, as fundamentalists began to gain prominence again following World War II. The divisive political issues of the 1970s also proved fertile ground for fundamentalists to voice their alternative points of view. Fundamentalism may have waned in the late 1980s in light of the Jimmy Swaggert and Jim Bakker sex scandals, but the continued work of political pressure groups like the Christian Coalition and the difficulty that the Republican party encounters in keeping its religious right wing under control seems to indicate that the demise of conservative politics informed by religious fundamentalism will not come any time soon.

Likewise, the popularity and prominence of fundamentalism in Northern Ireland also has risen and fallen with the changing times. As in the USA, similar battles between conservatives and liberals occurred during the 1920s. The 1916 Rising in Dublin and World War I also worked against moderating fundamentalism at that time. In addition, fundamentalists revived during the Northern Ireland civil rights marches of the late 1960s, when Paisley’s popularity reached previously unprecedented heights and contributed to the downfall of the reformist unionist leader Terence O’Neill. The reaction to the 1974 Sunningdale agreement, in which a loyalist workers’ strike crippled the province and precipitated the suspension of that agreement and the instigation of direct rule, was also a time of resurgent fundamentalist ideas. Perhaps too much, then, should not be made of the possibility of the extermination of Northern Irish fundamentalism. It could, however, be temporarily marginalised if a normalisation of politics and society occurs. In that scenario, it might be hoped that future revivals of fundamentalism would be in response to less virulent crises and that fundamentalism would be tamer and less likely to contribute to violence. This is what fundamentalism has largely been like in the USA during the last century. And while US fundamentalists may be annoying to their fellow citizens, they have not contributed to any real American equivalents of the Troubles.

**Strengthening**

Other analyses conclude that fundamentalists and their allies are gaining in strength, confidence and numbers. For instance, Jordan argues that:

> those who are politically engaged line up either for or against the peace process and whatever movement there is between those two camps it is more likely to go from the pro to the anti camp ... even among moderate evangelicals there are signs of growing unease, even discontent, with the direction of change (Jordan, 2001: 140).

New fears that this just might be happening arose after the 7 June 2001 Westminster and local elections, where the DUP gained at the expense of the UUP and Sinn Féin gained at the expense of the SDLP. Tensions continued to mount in the
weeks following the elections as some of the worst riots since the beginning of the present Troubles took place between loyalists and nationalists in north Belfast.

**Moderating**

Finally, it could be argued that the DUP’s election success reflects not a swing toward militancy on the part of the electorate, but a swing toward moderation on the part of the DUP (and perhaps, by extension, some of the fundamentalists who support the party). This was manifested in the DUP’s pre-election rhetoric, which included the rather revolutionary premise that the party was willing to negotiate rather than destroy the agreement. The *Irish Times’s* Northern editor, Gerry Moriarty, also observed a marked softening of the DUP’s “language and mood” during the campaign. Moriarty noted that Deputy Leader Peter Robinson talked of “recasting” the agreement and argued that Paisley’s language was significant:

> The language here is worth examining. “Any relationship whatsoever with the Republic of Ireland would be fully accountable to the Assembly”, said Dr. Paisley quoting principle five, when on another day one would expect him to declare, “the DUP will smash the North-Southery of the Belfast Agreement”. Principle six refers to restoring the “morale and effectiveness of the police force” when it could have been a demand for the “RUC” to be fully restored to its former status (*Irish Times*, 30 May 2001: 8).

According to Moriarty, the DUP has probably adjusted its policy to suit the mainstream unionist community, which supports devolution and the agreement. Chris Thornton voiced a similar opinion, claiming that the moderation of both the DUP and Sinn Féin is a sign of “a move towards post-Agreement politics” (*Belfast Telegraph*, 08 June 2001: 6). Therefore, despite the apparent gains of the fringe parties, “in the long run, if the DUP and Sinn Féin have shifted, the centre may have already won”. This would support the assertion that the DUP is now gaining more supporters for non-fundamentalist reasons. It may, then, signal the cautious beginning of fundamentalists and their allies accepting the Good Friday agreement and its institutions. They may become willing to play by the rules of the new pluralist political game.

**Summary**

Whether or not change moves definitively in one of those three directions has political consequences. Simple marginalisation or victimhood would have the short-term effect of sidelining fundamentalists. While this might appear a preferable quick-fix solution for the majority and a chance to exterminate the influence of fundamentalists once and for all, this scenario is neither likely nor desirable. Historical precedent shows that fundamentalist influence on politics often lies dormant for several generations, until new crises give it the chance to reassert itself. It is much more desirable for fundamentalists to articulate their ideas in the mainstream than for those ideas to continue to exist on the fringes, percolating bitterness and anger that could prove threatening at a later date.

A strengthening of the fundamentalist position, concurrent with a strengthening of the Sinn Féin position, could work to create a cycle of conflict and stagnation in
Northern Irish politics. If it is demonstrated that the IRA has aided Colombian terrorists or is not honouring its cease-fire, fundamentalists could continue to gain allies. It could become more difficult for the UUP to convince the unionist electorate that the Good Friday agreement is viable and will bring peace and benefits to society. In a worst case scenario, the Assembly could be suspended, the agreement and its institutions could collapse, and Northern Ireland could spiral into the all too familiar pattern of sectarian violence.

A moderating of the fundamentalist position, however, could have positive and diffuse effects upon the entire unionist community. Moderation would indicate that fundamentalists are more willing to assimilate, accepting devolution, the Assembly and the institutions (even the North-South institutions) established by the Good Friday agreement. This sort of change in position could make the structures set up under the Good Friday agreement stronger and more democratic. Fundamentalists could be one of the minority voices that democracies need, the people who provide an ample check on the government and ensure that safeguards for their minority rights remain. Taking this step, however, will require fundamentalists to separate religion and politics and let their religion become an option among a plurality of religious beliefs. This is the most desirable option and the one which evangelicals may have such a significant role in promoting.

THE ROLE OF EVANGELICALS IN SOCIAL CHANGE

This paper posits that evangelicals, many of whom are former fundamentalists who themselves moderated, could instigate changes in the theological and political beliefs of fundamentalists. The two main avenues whereby evangelicals could instigate change among fundamentalists are via dialogue and social activism.

Both of these methods have positive and negative aspects. Dialogue could be fruitful because it promotes understanding between fundamentalists and evangelicals and exposes both groups to new ideas that could potentially change their way of thinking. Given the data from the Queen’s CU, the data collected by Jordan, and the published testimonies of some members of ECONI, moderating change has been occurring already within fundamentalist circles. Former fundamentalists testify that the power of Scripture, education, experience and dialogue with Catholics worked to change their beliefs and their political identity. On the other hand, there is little evidence that a regular, on-going process of dialogue among fundamentalists and evangelicals is taking place. Jordan, for instance, notes a growing distance between fundamentalists and evangelicals. He observes a tendency of pro-agreement evangelicals to refer to anti-agreement fundamentalists as “they”.

There is also the possibility that if more dialogue were to occur, it would anger fundamentalists and cause them to become more staunch and militant in their views. There was, indeed, a sense among many of the Queen’s interviewees that talking to fundamentalists didn’t do any good at all, and some fundamentalists agree. Roche (2000), the deputy leader of the Northern Ireland Unionist Party and a part-time tutor of philosophy of religion and Christian ethics at Irish Baptist College, ex-
plicitly condemns the views of ECONI as incoherent and immoral (Roche, 2000: 66-67).

So given the possibility of such deep disagreement remaining between fundamen-
talists and evangelicals, it is important that interaction between the groups is deli-
cate and fundamentalists are not treated with disdain. Certainly, any dialogue within
the fundamentalist and evangelical communities would have to be careful and sen-
sitive, and this may be why (as Cooke has observed) some Protestant leaders have
been reluctant to engage directly with Paisley or even mention him by name.

It may be difficult for evangelicals to overcome this fear and to treat fundamentalists
respectfully. There is no set formula or step-by-step programme that holds the
magic words for an evangelical to use to precipitate a change in fundamentalist be-

The strategy of social activism also has advantages and disadvantages. First, it can
be less confrontational than direct dialogue and debate. As fundamentalists and

In considering the advantages and disadvantages of dialogue and social activism,
however, it is interesting to note that the changes in political or theological belief
described by evangelicals did not come from just one source, such as a single dis-

Ganiel / Northern Irish fundamentalists and evangelicals
pression that evangelical theological and political thought is infallible, and that evangelicals will never make mistakes. They will, but the positive change that may be generated within the fundamentalist community could outweigh the errors that will occur.

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Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Age ________
Sex ________

Family’s country of residence _________________
If Ireland or Northern Ireland, county of residence _____________
Number of years attending Queen’s CU ________
Are you interested in or do you follow politics? __________
Do you vote? __________
Are you affiliated with a particular political party? __________

Would you be willing to be interviewed confidentially about your beliefs about the relationship between Christianity and politics in Northern Ireland? ________
If so, please provide your name and telephone number. __________________________

For statistical purposes, please indicate your denominational affiliation __________
For statistical purposes, please indicate your party __________
Appendix 2. Interview questions

How long have you been a Christian? Could you explain how and why you are one?

How long have you been interested in politics? Could you explain how and why you became interested?

Did you vote on the referendum for the Good Friday agreement?

How did you vote (or how would you have voted)? Why?

Would you vote the same way today? Why or why not?

What do you like about the Good Friday agreement? What do you dislike about the Good Friday agreement?

Are you interested in the politics of the European Union?

What do you like about the European Union and its role in the politics of the United Kingdom, Ireland and Northern Ireland? What do you dislike about the role of the EU?

Do you discuss politics with your family?

Do you discuss politics with members of your “home” church?

Does the clergyman of your “home” church talk about politics from the pulpit? What does he say? Do you agree or disagree with him?

Did you discuss the relationship between Christianity and politics at your secondary school? What did you discuss? Did you agree with what you were taught?

Do you discuss politics at CU meetings? With individual members of the CU?

Do you think that the way you practice politics should be related to the way you practice your Christianity? Why or why not?

Have your beliefs about the relationship between Christianity and politics changed over the last 3-5 years, or remained constant? If they have changed, how and why do you think they have changed?

Have you heard of the following organizations: The Orange Order, Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland, the European Institute for Protestant Studies, Corrymeela Community, Centre for Contemporary Christianity. For each group, describe what you think their political or theological beliefs are, and if you agree or disagree with them.

Please describe what the phrase “For God and Ulster” means to you.

What political activities or organizations are you engaged in? What do you think are the most important political duties for a Christian to perform?

What are your hopes/fears for the future of Northern Ireland?
### Appendix 3. Characteristics of interviewees

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<th>Good Friday Agreement vote</th>
<th>United Ireland</th>
<th>EU</th>
<th>Character of Interaction</th>
<th>Social/Volunteer work</th>
<th>Attitude to future</th>
<th>Party</th>
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Appendix 3 (contd.)

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<th>Good Friday Agreement vote</th>
<th>United Ireland</th>
<th>EU</th>
<th>Character of Interaction</th>
<th>Social/Volunteer work</th>
<th>Attitude toward future</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Fundamentalist or Evangelical</th>
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Notes:

Background:
1. Moderate/liberal parent in politics
2. Moderate/Liberal
3. Parents first-generation moderate/liberal
4. Parents DUP/loyalist
5. Parents not Christian/in security forces

Character of Interaction:
1. Political discussion purposely or implicitly avoided
2. No fundamentalist friends
3. Interact and discuss

Attitude toward future:
Opt: optimistic
Pess: pessimistic