

# **hemmed in and hacking it**

words and images  
from The Fountain  
and Gobnascale

( photographs)

**Templegrove Action  
Research Limited**

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The children don't have the same  
kind of freedom as I had.  
They couldn't go into other areas  
play football, and mix.  
They are hemmed in  
especially at night...  
There's times I can't send  
my older boy down the town.  
People know he lives here.  
He's come under attack.

woman interviewee  
The Fountain

The shooting in Annie's bar  
I was up in the Telstar  
the night it happened...  
But I wasn't actually in it.  
I just knew a couple of people to see.  
People were very afraid.  
Some people up stakes and moved out.  
They couldn't hack it.

male interviewee  
Gobnascale /  
Top of the Hill

photograph

# HEMMED IN AND HACKING IT

words and images  
from The Fountain  
and Gobnascale

edited transcripts  
from interviews  
by  
Ruth Moore and Marie Smyth

transcript first editing  
Ruth Moore

photographs  
Allen Kennedy and Ruth Moore

final editor  
and project director  
Marie Smyth

**TEMPLEGROVE ACTION RESEARCH LIMITED**  
**Derry Londonderry**

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Marie Smyth  
Project Director  
April 1996

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## Introduction

From 1993, a group of people began meeting to discuss various aspects of political life in Derry or Londonderry city. We worked together to develop a project which addressed the issues related to segregation, the movement of population within and out of the city, and the quality of life in enclave areas. In September, 1994, Templegrove Action Research Limited, a community based research company with directors drawn from both sides of the community, began a two year action-research project on aspects of segregation and sectarian division in the city. Funding had been obtained, and I had received a two year leave of absence from the University of Ulster to work full-time on the project. Just as the project began, the IRA, and shortly afterwards the Combined Loyalist Military Command, announced cease-fires. By early 1995, the two other members of the team, Ruth Moore, and Pauline Collins, had been recruited. In our research on segregation and enclave communities in the city we have come to refer to as Derry Londonderry. Our work has been based in two enclave communities: a Catholic community in the previously predominantly Protestant Waterside area of the city, - Gobnascale or Top of the Hill; and a Protestant enclave, The Fountain, in the predominantly Catholic Cityside area. One of our commitments was to make the work and our findings as accessible as possible to as wide a range of people as possible, from policy makers on the one hand, to people in the areas we were working in on the other.

Our work has fallen into several categories. Our work plans have been substantially altered by the cease-fires. We were anxious, as a research organisation working on issues of sectarian division to make a positive contribution to the new atmosphere of openness and hope in the city. Templegrove went about the usual business of conducting in-depth interviews and a field survey in Gobnascale and The Fountain, and in addition staged a series of more public events. We organised a series of public discussions in the city centre on aspects of sectarian division and organised and held a public hearing on the experience of minorities living in the city. Both these events are documented in separate publications: Public discussion on aspects of sectarian division in Derry Londonderry; and A Public Hearing: Minority Experiences in Derry Londonderry. A full list of publications is reproduced on page .

This work contained in this publication arises out of the interviews we conducted in the two areas. It is notoriously difficult to analyse and present qualitative data in a way which retains the impact on the interviewer, and respects the richness and complexity of the interview material. Yet the real experts on the issues we were interested in were undoubtedly those with the most experience of living with these issues. All too often their stories have been misinterpreted and misrepresented to serve some academic or media agenda. When I discovered the work of Richardson (1992), and the possibility of presenting interview transcripts as "poems", retaining their original complexity, but condensed in language, it seemed to offer possibilities to achieve this (see commentary on page ). Some of those we worked with were unhappy about the idea



of "poems", and their interviews are presented in a condensed prose format. Some of the images alongside the text have been suggested by the interviewees, and some are drawn from our archives of photographs of the two areas. We hope that the words of the people we met which are reproduced here will breach some of the effects of living in enclave areas - the lack of opportunity to talk - really talk-to people outside your area, and say what you think and feel.

Marie Smyth  
April 1996

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## The Fountain Interviews

photo

### First Fountain Man interviewed

The Fountain pre '68  
It would have taken in  
part of the north ward.  
It would have been bounded  
by Bishop Street Without  
as far as Bennett Street,  
right round The Diamond

taking in Magazine Street  
and up Butcher's Street.  
Down Ferryquay Street,  
through Ferryquay Gate  
and Carlisle Road,  
right down to Tilly's Brae  
and along Foyle Road  
and back up to Bennett Street  
and everything to the right of  
Bennett Street.

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The houses on Foyle Road,  
is now sheltered accommodation.

The shirt factory is closed.  
Tilly and Henderson's and

Hunter's factory is closed.

As is Hamilton's.

Welsh Markinson's is closed.  
It's now a wine store.

The Richmond centre is there  
where you had a lot of shops.  
Austin's was there  
and you had the Home and Colonial  
and the May Pole and Rosborough's.

They were grocer's shops.

You had an umbrella shop  
where Woolworth's is now.  
The Protestants had the Derry Wool Centre  
owned by Anderson's.  
They used to have a knitting factory.  
Lapsley had a shoe shop in Butcher Street  
and Canning had a butcher shop  
in Butcher Street.

You would notice a marked difference  
within the Fountain itself.  
We had 16 cul-de-sacs.  
You wouldn't have been able to move  
for children playing in the streets.  
That has all gone now -  
we're an aging community.  
The children have practically  
gone from the streets.  
Before you might have had 400 children

You'd be lucky now  
if you had one hundred.

It started to change in the mid 60's.  
Houses were being built around Culmore Road,  
Hampstead Park and Woodburn on the Waterside.  
Westbank Protestant people started to move out  
to private housing areas.  
The working class and self employed Protestants  
of the Dark Lane and the Fountain  
moved out to the houses being vacated,  
up around the Northland Road.

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You had a shift from the  
densely populated Fountain into these areas.  
Protestants who were stepping up,  
moving up-market.  
Working class Protestants, educated,  
coming in as professionals  
would not be going back to their roots.  
A natural shift, - that wasn't alarming.

In the early stages of the troubles  
the Fountain held well.  
There was a lot of rioting in '69, '70 and '71  
but it was a defensible area  
because of the narrow streets  
the protection of the city wall  
and the jail wall.  
The Fountain held where other enclaves  
were exposed and fell.  
Part of the South Ward  
from Bennett Street to the Gas Light Company  
had about 1400 Protestants in '68.  
They're now down to nine.

Republicans put barricades in Joyce Street,  
Dark Lane was changed then to Joyce Street.  
Some were trapped behind the barricades.  
The people of the Fountain went down with lorries  
and brought 13 families out  
into prefabs in the Northland Road area.  
They were later re-housed in the Waterside.  
Belmont would have been one of the first  
housing estates to go.  
The security forces were pulled out of Belmont  
gradually followed by the reduction in the Glen,  
the Northland Estates  
and the Protestants in the private houses  
in the Marlborough area.  
A lot of people from the Glen and the Northland  
moved into the Fountain

wanted to remain on the Westbank  
and reckoned it was reasonably safe.

We noticed a change in 1984,  
by the security forces.  
The 10th of March  
there was a demonstration in the Diamond  
about the name change.  
The DMSU's were brought in force that day.

They recklessly charged the people  
and batoned them into the ground.  
I saw a policeman trapping a boy

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and he hit him four times  
on the skull with a baton.  
He had to get two plates in his skull.

I made a complaint  
but they said there was no policeman  
with that number in this city.  
I knew I was wasting my time.

This came out of the blue.  
Up until then relationships  
between the Protestant in this city  
and the security forces  
were pretty good.  
Then a complete change.  
The young people of the Fountain  
were getting harassed by the police.  
This was a reason for families moving.  
I made another complaint in '86,  
which went as far as the Police Authority  
and didn't go any further.  
The young fellas were  
getting accused of breaking windows.  
The police egged them on,  
"Yous are no good,  
at least the Republicans fight us!"  
Calling "Orange bastards!"  
out of the back of Landrovers.  
The young boys had enough  
and rioted for three nights.  
The police were up with cameras.  
All taken to court and charged seventy pounds.

A very important factor  
would be the redevelopment of 1971 up to 1978.  
A lot of families were displaced  
to the Waterside.  
People got new houses, gardens and

and were disinclined to come back.  
Naturally enough you weren't going  
to come back to maisonettes, slab blocks.  
The old Fountain population  
was very disrupted, - halved.

The mid 80's was difficult  
because we had the Stevens Enquiry.  
Nine people had house raids and were taken  
in on trumped up charges.  
One boy was lifted for having a whistle  
and being part of a neighbourhood patrol.

We lost 30 families because of that.

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There's quite a lot has happened since '89.  
It's an uphill struggle now  
to attract people into the Fountain.  
It's Protestant people from the country  
that's moving back,  
from Strabane, from Letterkenny.

But the determination to regenerate  
the Fountain is there.

interviewed 1995

photograph

Pam Mitchell

I have my own identity. I am what I am.  
The Queen is my figurehead,  
a few hundred years ago  
I would have been classed as a royalist.  
In saying you are unionist  
you are holding your right to be a British subject.

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Since the age of fourteen,  
I've built up friendships  
and some of these are with Catholics.  
These friendships are very important  
and all through the troubles  
they have been secure.  
It is immaterial to me who I live beside.  
If the peace process holds  
everyone could live in peace.  
There is an awful lot of thrashing out to be done yet.  
Everybody is looking for  
the sun, the moon and the stars  
they want to hold it in their hand.  
They don't want to give anything in return.

Some people moved out because of the troubles;  
the wall is not a peace wall,  
it's a security wall.  
There's an element on both sides,  
given the slightest provocation  
something could flare up.  
You feel hemmed in by the wall,  
anybody that says they don't  
have become accustomed to it.

A lot had to move for the re-building.  
They were told they could move back  
when the houses were re-built.  
There wasn't enough built.  
These houses destroyed the character.  
It hasn't done anything to enrich anybody's life.  
They are just concrete boxes,  
too closed in.  
Young families didn't want upheaval again,  
didn't want to come back into the town again -  
the troubles were really bad

We are a glorified car-park.  
They pay road tax and insurance  
they think they can do whatever they like.  
People in here, paying rates and taxes  
have rights too.

The shirt factories were the life blood of the city,  
but even they have been depleted,  
moved out to industrial estates.  
There is a need for work in the city.  
The majority of people  
only work a couple of hours a day.  
Even in the big stores.  
If you are only a few hundred yards from your work  
the shoe leather would be a bit cheaper.

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We want young blood, to keep life flowing.  
On that score, it would be important  
for young families  
that really want to belong some place  
and to contribute something  
to move back.

Maybe ... there will be a chance.

**Pam Mitchell: interviewed 1995**

photo

Alistair Simpson

Prior to 1968 the people of the Fountain  
didn't feel isolated or under threat.

Since the troubles started  
we have lost three or four people.  
Murdered.

To see people you grew up with, worked with,  
getting their life snuffed out  
had a severe effect.

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photograph



The Londonderry Sentinel, Oct 1, 1969  
The wake of the William King killing

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First, William King was kicked to death in London Street.  
Some say it wasn't a political thing,  
but we saw it as the first Protestant being murdered.  
They used to come up Bishop Street and shout,  
"We might not have got King William  
but we got William King!"  
This made Fountain people determined.  
We were going to stick it out as long as we could.

Intimidation was rife,  
handwritten notices  
threw in letterboxes, especially B specials and U.D.R.  
Youths, - not from the Bogside  
because Bogside people told us it wasn't them -  
come up night and night  
throwing stones, petrol bombs  
into the Fountain.  
I got my house petrol bombed three times.  
My determination - I would not move.  
In the end I had to  
because the roof collapsed.

We had to get the army to put the barricades up in  
1969.  
That then segregated the Old Fountain Protestants  
against the Roman Catholics.  
Even today there is a barrier wall  
put up after Bobby Stott was shot  
at his own front door.

We presumed this happening  
was to drive the Protestant population  
out of the West Bank

But it had the opposite effect.  
"If you want us out,  
you'll have to go for the whole lot of us"  
People weren't just going to give up  
and walk away.

There was quite a lot of Protestants on the West Bank;  
down in the Belmont area  
up in Rosemount.  
Gradually they started to move out.  
The more they moved,  
the more the Fountain withdrew within itself.

"Are we going to give up our Protestant heritage?"  
Understand  
the city walls means a lot  
because of history.  
We felt if we get out,  
that was the history of the city gone.

The Derry Journal November 28 1975

We formed a Tenants association,  
the Wapping Community Association.  
That seemed to hold quite a number  
who at that time were determined to move out.

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I was accused many, many a time  
of trying to talk people out of moving.  
We would do anything we could  
to help them stay.

1962 to 1968 was relatively peaceful:  
people able to move in and out of the Fountain,  
irrespective of their religion or anything else.  
Four public bars in the Fountain  
all owned by Catholics.  
On the celebration nights  
the twelfth of July,  
twelfth of August and eighteenth of December,  
these bars were packed.  
Entertainment out in the streets  
music,- all types of music -  
it went on all night  
with the bonfires  
that we hope was no offence to anybody.  
Coming up to the twelfth holiday  
down in the Bogside  
they used to say to me,  
"here's the wee Orangeman coming now".  
But those people were able to come up,  
enjoy the entertainment  
and go away again.

In 1970, redevelopment started in the Fountain.  
people had to shift to the Waterside  
mostly to Lincoln Courts

with the promise  
they would get back  
if they wanted to.  
Once they got settled in  
we knew  
they weren't going to come back -  
not the way the Fountain was built.  
It took people away  
who had no notion of moving  
but had no option.  
The bars  
they went with the redevelopment.  
There is a building that was built for a bar  
which is now a nursery.  
Although the Fountain people liked their wee drink,  
they said no to the bar,  
because of the troubles, it's too dangerous.

Protestants who moved out -  
if they had been like us in the Fountain,  
- and I say with pride -  
if they had stood their ground

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it would have been a different situation.  
Alright, there was some in the security forces  
had to move  
and young families in the Fountain  
wanted their own homes  
and they seen the Waterside as a thriving area  
things would be better..  
Only a madman would have  
bought a house in the Fountain.  
Protestant politicians said,  
"Move over to the Waterside  
we can get you a good house".  
Because politicians were only interested in politics  
they weren't interested in the Fountain as such.  
They tell me  
" You stay were you are  
you're doing a good job".  
I turn and say  
" Aye and come on in along with me,"  
they wouldn't come in.

The re-development twenty five years ago  
was a sham.  
It should never have been allowed.  
Now they know we are not going to move.  
The thing to keep us quiet - give us something.  
We need good housing,  
its a losing battle if we haven't got that.  
But then you need the peace to last

I would like to see the Protestant population,  
coming back to the West Bank.  
Hopefully, if the peace develops  
that's if it develops  
people themselves will decide.  
It's like the wall in the Fountain,  
people saying to us  
"that wall has got to come down."  
That wall can only come down  
when the Fountain people say its coming down.  
When the time is right  
the people will turn and say,  
" We've lived behind walls long enough.  
Let's get rid of it".

People might say that it is a Protestant population  
trying to take hold again.  
It's not.

It's trying to make a normal city.  
We are doing our utmost  
to bring the standard of living up.

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We are hoping the government agencies will help us.  
It will put a different face on the Fountain  
and a different face on the whole city.

I think the majority on the West Bank  
would like to see that  
it would bring more harmony.  
The way I look at it  
political wise  
if you haven't the Fountain  
the city would be a divided city.  
Whether people agree with our politics or religion  
if we had moved out  
it would have been a loss.  
The powers that be  
couldn't say  
"its a mixed city".

Alistair Simpson interviewed 1995

photo

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Third Fountain man interviewed

I like living here  
born and bred here.  
Handy to the town.  
People are very close.  
At times, we may be badly divided  
but there is a sense of community.

The Catholic population has increased.  
There is nothing you can do about it.  
The Fountain,  
its virtually all Protestant.  
That's the way it is.

Two headed monsters.  
Quite a few look upon us like this.  
I went to the tech.  
They read my name  
and my address as the Fountain.  
Everyone turned to look.  
I stuck that for a year.

This area has been overlooked  
and neglected;  
the housing, the roads, the sewerage, the water.  
The mains pipes have been dug up

fifteen times.  
Never has it all been replaced.  
The Housing Executive  
play silly buggers.  
Means-testing the grants  
is ridiculous in this area.  
The houses are one hundred and forty years old.

We have lost the better off families.  
The people  
with a few quid behind them  
went.  
An aunt and uncle moved last month.  
My brother and his wife - a year ago.  
A brother in law, his wife and family  
eighteen months ago-  
a lot of neighbours  
all mostly to the Waterside.  
There are still some  
who want to move but can't.

It is common hearsay  
the council have an interest,  
in getting us out of here.

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The Fountain, it's a valuable site  
in the city centre.  
A lot of space badly utilised  
having a couple of hundred  
Protestants living in the area.  
But they have denied it,  
they will never say,  
"Yes, we want them out."  
Go to the marching -  
each year, a little piece cut off the route.

The area has caused problems,  
for the police.  
It took up resources.  
When really needed,  
there were not here.

If they want people to stay,  
they are going to have to  
do something drastic -  
redevelopment on a higher, bigger scale.  
better quality housing,  
similar to the top of William Street.  
Suitable housing for the elderly and disabled -  
more grants for older houses,  
more cosmetic work like street lighting

They need to re-locate people from the new estate  
into the empty houses in this area.  
It needs to be done gradually  
because once you move them out  
they don't come back.

Maybe they think  
we are a crowd of complainers  
always moaning.  
Moaning is no good.  
Need to demand things,  
take more action,  
like Civil Rights in 1969.

In the past months,  
they've taken a bit more interest.  
They got the school started.  
Personally, it was not what was most needed.  
There are those which feel  
the school might be the downfall.  
Let Catholic [children] go to it  
and Catholic families move in...  
It would be like a deck of cards falling.  
Push[ing] the Protestants out.

interviewed 1995

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Second Fountain woman interviewed

The neighbours  
they depended on you  
and you on your neighbours.  
You were in and out of each other's houses.

The house - it was a cosy wee house.  
We bought it just after we were married  
got the grant.  
It was just the way we wanted it.

It was bottles,  
stones and abuse being fired up the lane.  
Then windows were broken  
petrol bombs one night.

We used to sleep  
with a baton beside the bed.  
Going to bed at night you were just waiting..  
lived on your nerves.

The worst attack  
was on the 15th of August.  
We were in our beds



Ten to five in the morning.  
I could hear this big drum  
thudding  
sure enough  
5 boys had come up the lane  
with big burning logs  
beating this drum.

I could hear the beating  
getting closer and closer  
and closer.

My windows went in  
top and bottom.  
They pulled the curtains,  
tried to set the curtains alight.

[My husband] had gone to the front door.  
I had to pick the splinters of glass  
out of his head.

It seemed like they were there for ages.

We phoned the police.  
They did not come.  
We says  
"Right we'll go to the barracks".

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We went to the front desk,  
I said "look I've a child in its cot  
it is covered in glass".  
The answer I got  
IT WAS MADDENING  
"What do you want me to do about it?".

It was always us caught them  
and we came out the worst.  
One night  
my husband came out  
to defend his house.  
He was arrested -  
arrested for disorderly behaviour  
outside his own house.  
It was broadcast over Radio Foyle.  
It was terrible.  
I was expecting at the time.  
I was so cut up about it.

We were treated badly.  
The community police  
they popped in for a cup of tea  
but the ordinary patrols

in their eyes  
you were the guilty ones.  
At night, in a situation,  
you were innocent,  
people causing the bother  
were let go.  
We were treated like scum  
from police and all.

### The Bother

It was sheer vandalism  
another part of it was sectarian.  
It was ninety nine point five percent Protestants  
lived in it.

I did feel very threatened  
especially around July and August.  
The flags would have been up in the lane,  
as was done every year.  
Every year  
they got put up later and later and later  
just sort of last minute  
because we knew  
once they went up  
that was it.

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Don't get me wrong.  
I'm not saying there wasn't Fountain boys too  
that I chased manys a night,  
in my dressing gown.

At the end of the day  
if the boys are coming back  
for revenge  
they'll pick the first houses they come to  
and the Fountain boys will be up  
sleeping in their beds.  
It was a different matter  
when there were attacks on the Fountain  
from Hawkins Street of Bishops Gate.  
Then, the people up in the Fountain  
were up in arms,  
then they knew  
what it was like.

Something happened.  
People were going around saying  
"He deserved it".  
[My daughter] said to me

"Mummy what's everyone saying they did right"?  
I said  
"Wait till I tell you this love,  
nobody has the right to shoot anybody".

If the windows got broke,  
it wasn't Catholics,.  
It was just bad boys.

I wanted to move  
and I didn't want to move.  
I didn't want my wains growing up  
and making a difference.

The house below us had shutters on the window.  
I couldn't live like that.  
You might as well be in a prison.  
I wanted to get out of this situation right.  
It was no way to bring up children.  
But I loved my house.  
It was easy kept  
it wasn't a big mortgage.

We weighed things up  
we had had enough.  
At the end of the day  
we had no options  
but to consider the Waterside.

The Londonderry Sentinel December 1975

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One day I had the house up for sale.  
When people came to view  
I was praying that they would come  
earlier in the night  
in case anything flared up.  
I felt guilty in a way,  
selling my house to someone else.  
I kept saying to myself  
"well good luck".

All I wanted was to live there  
get to my bed at night  
and have a good sleep.  
If there had been peace then  
I would have stayed on.

I thought  
the day I move out  
I am going to feel bad.

I didn't

I was so glad to go.

interviewed 1995

#### Fourth Fountain man interviewed

The Fountain

I regard it as a small Protestant enclave.  
You felt safe and secure  
within the area  
especially with the walls and barricades.  
If you had been living  
as a Protestant  
in a predominantly Catholic area  
you might not have felt  
that same security.

The walls and barricades  
did limit you.  
I was frightened  
of going outside the area.  
I was forever getting kickings.  
You couldn't go to the cinema,  
go up the town.  
You were frightened of being chased,  
being given a beating.

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People tend to stick  
to their own area.  
It leads to a siege mentality -  
an "us and them" mentality.

You felt a camaraderie,  
as though under siege -  
you knew who your friends were  
and you felt close.  
That closeness might not have come  
had it been another situation.

The Fountain would be seen as  
the last bastion of Protestantism  
on the West Bank.  
It would be seen as a hard line area -  
Catholics frightened to move in,  
with certain adverse publicity  
about Catholics being put out of the area.

As an insider,  
I wouldn't look at the area like that.

The number of Protestant people  
that shifted from the city side  
intimidated out of their homes -  
the people who moved  
out of their own free will -  
there was two thousand of them.

We had to show this  
as a hard-line area  
in order to preserve the area -  
make Catholics frightened  
in order to ensure that  
the remaining Protestants  
could stay.  
There was many a case,  
where it was gradually two, three -  
until all the Protestants were forced out.

So we had to give this image  
that it's not safe  
for you to come in.

For a time,  
we had to set up vigilante patrols  
to protect the area.  
Police presence was inadequate.  
When patrols were set up,  
there seemed to be more police in the area.

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They weren't in to protect the area -  
more to harass people  
who had to take to the streets.  
They didn't seem to be around  
to catch the people smash windows  
and petrol-bomb houses.

I regard myself  
as part of the majority in Northern Ireland.  
In the city  
I see myself as a minority  
in Londonderry as a whole  
especially on the West Bank.

I've a feeling the Catholic majority  
look upon us  
as refusing  
to assimilate with the population as a whole.  
There's a fear

by assimilating  
our culture will be eroded,  
our heritage will be watered down.

There's nothing for young people around here.  
There's no play areas  
only the community centre,  
only open two or three times a week.

There's a football pitch  
but its not that great.

We have no unionist political representation.  
We have a Sinn Feiner  
representing the area.  
A lot of people  
would be reluctant  
to go looking for help  
or anything done in the area.  
I think a Sinn Fein councillor  
would be more than willing to help -  
more to prove.  
People may be frightened of going  
because of what other people would think.

The Fountain  
being treated like any other area  
won't happen as long as  
SDLP are in control.  
I don't think there is anything to gain  
from staying here.

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At the same time,  
it might be seen as an act of surrender.  
I think now with the cease-fire  
you will get more people leaving the area.  
With the troubles,  
leaving was seen as giving in.  
With the cease fire  
there is no reason to stay.

Interviewed 1995



The 1688 Seige  
A display of artifacts including locks and keys of the  
gate  
in St. Columb's Cathedral

32

Third Fountain woman interviewed

I lived over in Bond Street.  
Catholics lived there  
but everyone looked at it  
as a Protestant area.  
When we married in '78.  
We put the Fountain as first choice.  
Believe it or not  
back then we couldn't get a house  
in the Fountain.

We got word one night  
that they were moving  
twelve Catholic families

into the new houses getting built  
in the Fountain.  
They were looking to stop this  
looking for people to squat in the houses.  
We went over and squatted.  
My father came over  
all annoyed,  
"I reared you better than that".  
He thought it was awful.  
I was anxious for a home.  
My father took me right away,  
the next day, to the Housing Executive,  
to say what I had done  
and how desperate I was  
for a house.  
I had a house in Nelson Drive  
a week later.

So we settled for Nelson Drive,  
as second choice.  
But I couldn't get the wee boy into school.  
I was travelling by bus  
over to First Derry.  
So we moved into the Fountain then.

The Fountain would be  
the only Protestant area  
in the whole of the city side.  
The wall being there  
other people think  
we are hemmed in.  
But day to day,  
it would not bother me.  
You'd feel it more,  
at night, if it wasn't there.  
I don't think it's abnormal,  
or segregated.

33

There's gate ways in.  
People go into each other's estates  
and down to the shops.  
I know we are in a minority  
but it doesn't make me feel afraid.  
I'm just living my life.  
I'm as happy as anybody else.

It's more convenient for the shops.  
You haven't buses back and forth.  
The church is down the road.  
The school for the younger ones  
is down round the corner.  
My older ones bus over to Clondermott

They are old enough to do that on their own.

The children don't have  
the same kind of freedom as I had.  
They couldn't go in to other areas,  
play football, and mix.  
They are hemmed in,  
especially at night.  
It would be totally unheard of  
sending them to the chip shop  
on their own -  
anywhere out of the estate.

Its their town,  
we dwell in it.

There's times I can't send  
my older boy down the town.  
People know he lives here.  
He's come under attack.  
He knows the people that give him a hard time -  
he would shout at them too-  
it works both ways.

You're kind of labelled by other people.  
They ask you your address  
and your religion is  
automatically known.  
[If] you are kept waiting you think,  
"Is it because of where I come from"?  
It's labelled a paramilitary area  
Protestant and UDA.  
You get one's who think it's a deprived area.  
People that have lived here  
and who still visit here  
understand and see us  
as ordinary people living  
like anybody else - just as they did.

34

As for the police,  
I don't think they minded  
coming into the area.  
They'd have an easy enough time.  
People's friendly enough to them.  
They know the children.  
They know the parents.  
The community police are good enough.

There's been nights  
police not familiar with the community  
were going to lift people  
for standing at their own front door

Other nights there's been bother  
by the time they came,  
it was too late.  
They didn't know what happened.  
They didn't automatically believe you either.  
I find it unbelievable  
that descriptions have been given  
and they  
have not went after those causing the trouble.

photo

35

With the move of the Protestant population,  
it's important that we stay here  
to keep it Protestant.  
Once we start to move out,  
the whole city will be entirely a Catholic area.

All our heritage  
the twelfth, all the celebrations  
are all now just confined to this area.  
I don't think there would be a twelfth of July  
or August  
or burning of Lundv -

it would all be done away with  
if there were no Protestants living in the Fountain.  
There's a lot of people  
come and visit us -  
on those set days,  
you'd be glad you stayed.

Years ago, people did move.  
Housing wasn't really an issue then.  
It was the troubles.  
There's an estate -  
Lincoln Courts,  
the majority of the people living there  
came from the Fountain.  
People say  
it was the new Fountain.

A close friend of the family,  
lived in Belmont.  
It was nearly all Protestants -  
a lot of policemen.  
They moved right away.

Often, I wonder why?  
They weren't in the minority  
living there.

What was the fear?

When they first redeveloped the Fountain,  
they knocked down the terraced houses.  
They put up maisonettes,  
- a monstrosity.  
A lot of families moved then  
because families didn't want  
a house  
on top of a house  
especially with children.  
They were dangerous.

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Over the past few years,  
its got a bad name.  
It seems you can  
get a flat in the Fountain  
with no problem.  
The Executive is moving in drunks.  
It puts families off.  
You could count on one hand  
the young families.  
I've heard people say,  
the Executive's moving undesirables in

to force people out.

When it's an all Catholic area,  
it makes their job easier.  
They wouldn't have to  
fix so many broken windows.

The Housing Executive's attitude  
is that they have to get the rent  
and families just aren't applying -  
but a lot of people think differently.

I was too young then  
so I don't know  
what [Catholic] housing conditions  
were really like.  
From heresy and from listening to TV,  
Catholics says that they didn't get houses.  
They say that the Protestants got the houses  
because Protestants sat  
on the boards and committees,  
which decided who got houses.

Where I'm sitting  
the Catholics run the town.  
If that is fact,  
the tables are turned.

My mother, a Protestant,  
was born here  
and listening to [her] stories  
[it was] four and five in one bed  
in a room [where] you could touch the ceiling.  
If your money run out,  
someone next door or on the street  
would help you -  
they wouldn't see you stuck.  
But Protestants weren't sitting in palaces.  
They had it hard.  
There is poverty on both sides.

photo

The Executive are on about building houses  
in the Fountain.  
People in the Fountain can't apply.  
It's for people from the Waterside.  
They are not  
looking after people in the area -  
people have stuck it out here for years!  
People that haven't lived here  
are getting preference.  
I don't think it is fair.

Better housing would encourage people back  
and encourage people to stay.  
The town should be for Protestants as well  
and I'd like to see more moving over.  
But I can't see Protestants automatically  
moving into Catholic areas.

But when people learn  
to trust one another  
they mightn't think twice about it.

interviewed 1995

38

The fifth Fountain man interviewed

This interviewee preferred that an edited prose version of his interview, rather than the "poem" format be used.

A loyalist's reflections on the past and future.

I was lifted in 1989 after an uproar in the press regarding official documentation. The authorities wanted to prove that they were impartial by lifting as many Protestants as

Catholics; and in late 1991 held a show trial to appease the pan-nationalist front. I believe I was a victim of these policies of appeasement, as were many more at the same time. What I mean by that is that I was held on remand on trumped up charges.

Back then, I thought the only way to get rid of conflict was to hit back. The IRA had a free hand. I've had relatives killed, and for over 20 years our people were being butchered. The British government was not willing to deal with it and the UDA believed the only way was by retaliatory killings. They kill one of ours, we take two of theirs. When we started, the IRA were fighting a war on two fronts.

Before, the IRA could carry out attacks like Enniskillen, Le Mon, Darkley and could get away with it, and the Protestants weren't going to hit back. From the end of the 1980's when republican terrorists carried out atrocities like Teebann and the Shankill, our people did Ormeau and Greysteel. It was a strong message - an evil necessity, I suppose. When our people were being butchered, John Hume never went near Gerry Adams. But when his people were getting the same medicine, his people put pressure on him to go to Gerry Adams to bring an end to this war.

Sinn Fein have yet to show they are committed to peace. The British government have given something - opening border roads, taking soldiers of the streets, taking battalions from the province and re-introducing 50% remission. Fringe loyalists are using progressive language, state a willingness to compromise, will sign up to de-commissioning and have stated that they will not fire the first shot. Sinn Fein have called for parity of esteem but have been involved in street protests likely to provoke a loyalist response, and have no intentions of giving up arms. We are a separate people, we have separate roots. we are mostly cruthin and they are mostly celts. The Sinn Fein 'parity of esteem' must be backed



by actions. It must be shown that our culture will not be affected in an all Ireland state. We can only move forward by a commitment of all to disarm, with all party talks but not under the shadow of the gun.

Autumn 1995

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Peter Simpson

Peter, like the previous interviewee, preferred to be presented in prose format.

The thing about living here is that it is central. You are a five minute walk from everything, except the hospital and the cemetery. The population of the area is overwhelmingly Protestant all kinds of Protestant. They're a friendly bunch of people and as an Englishman

they are an easy people to live among. Because of the situation, the area has become a focal point. People identify with it, in a same way as people identify with the Bogside. Collectively, we identify with loyalism, and ours is a loyalist area, a loyalist culture - of which I am part, with which I identify. I am what I am, - too old a dog to learn new tricks.

There are a couple of Catholics, but there isn't sectarian bother, except at flash points which are the foot of Wapping Lane, and sometimes Horace Street and Artillery Street. Periodically, you'd get the odd flash, mainly young fellas drunk. Apart from that, we live a fairly quiet life. Bearing in mind that I am English, I, and the majority of us, have always been able to move freely. The known younger element, watch where they go but this doesn't apply to the majority of us, we go and we come. Our Catholic neighbours leave us alone and we don't bother them.

photo

The Housing Executive wanted a mixed estate, but we did not. I believe there would have been murder done, and they were wise to listen to what we were all saying. They didn't take a decision, that this was not to be a mixed estate. What happened was, that there was so many from our community looking for houses, it was a relatively simple matter to house them in there.

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Going back twenty five years, community relations were deteriorating. Many of us, were convinced there was going to be civil war. In which case, from a purely defensive point of view, it would be handy to know who your neighbours were, - to not have to look over your shoulder. There were some who just bailed out. But those who didn't felt, we are going to have a foothold in spite of what we saw as an intention - that we should all be transported

to the Waterside. We wanted to feel safe, and so the attitude we had to adopt was, it was better to live in a circle of wagons, on our own reservation.

But you know, twenty five years is a long time. There isn't the depth of hatred, of suspicion. But there is a desire on the part of the people here to keep a foothold, to keep the community in being, and I can sympathise with that. For historical reasons, it is important that such an area remains. It's been populated from early sixteen hundreds. Some years ago, an excavation found the town ditch, up at the top of the estate. I have not seen maps prior to 1850, but the area has been settled, mostly working class, - if you could call it that in those days: artisan class would be better.

In the early days, they had to move some families in order to make way for new houses. Originally these families were to come back to the new houses. For one reason or another, that didn't happen. There was the problem of people having to move, from other areas where

they didn't feel safe, such as the Glen. Some of these moved into the Fountain. One family in particular moved out of the Fountain, so that their son could visit. Because of the peculiarities of the job, the army put it out of bounds. I believe the same applied to the navy.

There's been a tradition, that the services were a useful occupation. When young people join up now-a-days, they consider carefully whether they ought to move. You can see why. A number of people I knew moved, for various reasons, not all to do with the troubles. UDR families moved for obvious reasons, - the city side wasn't the safest place for them. There would be people afraid for tangible reasons, getting stones through their window. Some moved to be where their families are. Some moved because they needed accommodation. You can understand young families wanting some place quieter. The Waterside is a desirable place, there's a lot of Catholics have moved from the cityside too.

I've come across two or three different attitudes. One is - these people are living in a ghetto,

they've a wall around it, to keep us out. They are quite right. The wall is to keep them out.

If they want in, they can come in the same way we go in. [The wall] was originally conceived as being necessary at the time, when street riots were an everyday occurrence. The object of the exercise was to erect some kind of buffer. The worst a rioting crowd could do, would be to throw something over it, rather than come in. Everytime there is a flashpoint incident it reinforces our belief, - the thing has to stay for the time being. One day, the damn thing will blow down and maybe that will be the time not to put it up again. But much depends on the prevailing attitude.

Other people say 'they've fought it out, leave them to it'. Yet another group feel a great regret

that there isn't more to-ing and fro-ing, as there used to be. People used to come into the Fountain to have a drink and watch the bonfires and we used to go to Long Tower.

The council often say, " How do you get Protestants to participate"? When people feel under threat, or besieged, if you like, they withdraw into themselves and become as self reliant as possible. That is true of any ghetto, if it is a ghetto. Lately, people have been taking more interest. The cease-fires have made a difference. The chances of walking into a shop

and being blown to bits are much slimmer. People feel easier going into pubs. People will participate more. Personally, I wouldn't go and watch Irish dancing. I wouldn't take part in a lot the council do, because it doesn't interest me, simply.

photo

I don't think Westminster gives a damn whether we live or die. I hear it said every day now, they are doing deals, telling bloody lies. That's okay as long as the cease-fire holds. Let them do all the deals they like. But once that cease fire fails, then it is a whole new ball game.

When you have two sets of people, with opposite beliefs, you are not going to get them to agree, to give up any of their beliefs -it's going to be a republic or nothing for one crowd or integration for the other. There are moves afoot to dislodge barriers in hearts and minds. The more of it is done, the less likely we are to go back to bombs and bullets. Time will tell.

We know the majority of people in this city happen to be of a different political view point to ourselves, and that is not difficult to live with. There are one or two advantages to being a minority: one - you can always complain. It is better to be a large minority as you can have your view points heard more readily. Small minorities wishes are over-ridden. Another advantage of being a minority is, you can ignore them. That is their biggest complaint. We have a collective contribution to make, as well as individually. A lot of us haven't been making it. That has its roots in the political situation, and that could all change. We could make improvements for ourselves, if everyone got together and ran this city the way it should be run. A few things constantly rankle people, - little things rather than big things - like the failure of the SDLP to represent us. You don't get rid of the nagging feeling overnight.

There is a goal in sight, and that is the improvement of the city. We should be up there pitching along with the rest. It happens to begin with individuals. The rest of the crowd hang back to see who gets their head lopped off

## The Gobnascale Interviews

### First Gobnascale Woman Interviewed

I wouldn't live anywhere else.  
The people are great  
and the view is beautiful.  
The family are all nearby -  
all on the Waterside.  
Around the Top of the hill,  
they can call on me.  
I'd do anything for anybody.  
but I wouldn't let nobody abuse me  
or my family.  
[The boys used to stand up here  
throwing petrol bombs]  
I went over across the way,  
I says to the boy,  
"Where do you come from?"  
He says, " Anderson Crescent,"  
I says  
"well get tae f... out of here!"  
My daughter  
she had a wee baby,  
she was upset.

I had worries  
when one boy  
was going with a girl  
over by Woodburn.  
The shortest way home  
was through Irish street.  
I stood watching  
afraid he would get a hiding.  
He would say,  
"I never done nothing -  
nobody will touch me."

I don't think there are  
any Protestants left in the area.  
There might be  
a few mixed marriages.

To be honest,  
there are two laws -  
one for Protestants  
one for Catholics.

Somebody called and told me  
"Your son's stopped down the road".  
I beat it down and says,  
"What are yous doing?".

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photo

They says "We are checking him out."  
I said  
"The fella's been away  
since seven this morning  
working with patients in the hospital  
and you have him standing here.  
Away and do your bloody duty right!"  
I gave off to them.  
No time for them  
because I think  
there are two laws.

Politicians are the cause of this bother

Nobody is prepared  
to give an inch.

interviewed 1995

45

Charlie Hillen

I come from the other side of the water  
the Derry side.  
I feel at home here now.  
This is a very  
picturesque part of Derry  
The scenery alone  
is breath taking.

Gobnascale estate is a very close community.  
The inhabitants are nearly  
all inter-related  
strong family ties.  
A lot of people in Gobnascale  
were originally from Top of the Hill-  
original Waterside people  
that have lived here for years.

In the seventies we had an unsettled situation -

people moving in and out.  
Because of the scarcity of houses  
people had to move over.  
Those coming over from the Derry side  
in the late sixties and early seventies  
stayed.

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Other people came over  
in the late seventies  
and tried to settle in  
but it didn't work.  
They felt very isolated  
and they moved back out again  
over to the Derry side.

The Derry people never mixed  
with Waterside people.  
Waterside people never mixed  
with the Derry people.  
Meanwhile, the people that came stayed  
families were growing up  
getting married,  
reluctant to leave Gobnascale.

At one time, it was a desolate estate  
over a hundred and twenty houses lay empty  
because of the fuel situation in Bard's Hill.  
The Housing Executive  
decided to put in electric fires.  
It didn't work.  
People got the first fuel bill  
for nearly £300.  
They just got up and left Bard's Hill-  
which was tucked away  
into the back of the estate -  
to disintegrate.  
It was empty for nearly 10 years  
until a private developer came in.

I am getting less conscious  
of Protestant estates around me  
as the cease-fire goes on.  
But back in the seventies  
Gobnascale felt very isolated,  
surrounded by New Buildings,  
Irish Street and Tullyally.

People living on the outskirts  
towards Irish street  
were on the look out  
all the time  
and had their windows boarded up



Mountain View and  
the far side of Anderson Crescent  
lay desolate for many years  
because Catholics had to leave  
and be rehoused inside the estate.

47

photo

Derry Journal Friday 4th February 1972  
Coverage of one of the Bloody Sunday funerals

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photo

Derry Journal 22 December 1972:  
Coverage of Annie's Bar killing

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The people in Mountain View  
were stuck in the middle.  
People had lived there for generations  
and were very reluctant to leave.

Some owned their own house.  
Whereas, the Housing Executive  
was under an obligation  
to get you out.

What we didn't realise  
Irish Street, our closest neighbour  
were the same as us -  
watching, looking over their shoulder.  
At that time,  
it was a built-in defensive mechanism  
to watch your neighbour.

At one time there was  
a siege mentality here  
because of what happened  
in Annie's Bar.  
If there was a border line  
between (here and) Irish Street  
Annie's bar would be just slightly this side.

Bloody Sunday happened (but it)  
was a different sort of situation.  
One was perpetrated  
by government forces  
and public opinion would keep  
that sort of thing at bay.  
The other was perpetrated  
by a loyalist organisation  
which was proven down through the years  
to have happened  
over and over again.

Annie's Bar was the local bar  
for generations.  
One night just after Christmas 1972,  
loyalist gun men came in

and murdered seven men.

The young people here  
were on what you would call  
a war footing  
because nobody  
was brought forward for it.  
The people were uptight.

Somebody had to pay.

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The army and the police coming in  
had to pay the price.

Redevelopment on the outskirts  
of Gobnascale  
meant  
the old original Annie's Bar  
is now gone  
demolished.

You had this waste land  
left open for battling.  
It's still there.  
We have big boulders in the middle now.

Annie's Bar  
started to take on  
a siege mentality again.  
When loyalist gunmen  
were going into bars - like Greysteel -  
The Rising Sun was a replica  
of what happened way back in 1972.  
People started  
to barricade themselves in  
floodlights  
and everybody was checked.

Since the cease-fire  
that has relaxed.

This part of the world  
is ninety nine point nine percent nationalist.  
There's no problem talking  
about Protestant and Catholic here.  
You are talking to your own side  
- the converted.  
You can say what you want  
as long as you don't say nothing  
against the status quo.

Our problem

was the SDLP-Sinn Fein split  
until a year and a half ago.  
You'd wake up on Easter Sunday morning  
and the place would be covered with  
green, white and yellow markings  
all over the place.  
As Easter started to go, the paint got very drab.  
At the finish up it  
was more a mock to the colours.  
The SDLP crowd would say,  
"All that painting - that's terrible!"

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It was just the older generation  
they were apprehensive.  
"If them boys weren't throwing stones  
the army wouldn't be coming in."

The republican vote  
would be higher in Gobnascale -  
but the SDLP councillor  
was always able to get in.

The Family Centre  
started off with a nun from  
Good Shepherd Laundry.  
She started filling in forms.  
She couldn't cope with so many people  
she went to the Housing Executive  
and rented a flat in Virginia Court.  
The Family Centre took off from there.  
The nuns have left -  
it is civilian-run now.  
At this moment  
it is the hub of Gobnascale.

Back in the eighties,  
the Family Centre  
contacted the Housing Executive  
and the DOE  
to try and get some input  
into the estate.  
Re-development in the middle of the city  
was going on  
millions of pounds were getting pumped in.  
We weren't looking for anything gigantic.  
Rose Court was the first thing  
we tried  
to pin the Housing Executive down on.  
It took us many years  
to get the Housing Executive  
to move on small things -  
the grass cutting

The powers-that-be were very reluctant  
to pump money in.  
All of a sudden things  
started to move.  
We were getting promises  
of starting dates  
for this and that.  
Then all of a sudden they said,  
"We have sold this to a private developer."  
That knocked us back  
because private developers is a different game.

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The result is Rose Court  
is one of the best corners of the estate.  
For a long time, Rose Court  
was an eyesore.  
The reason why Rose Court was  
left the way it was  
(is because) any rioting  
occurred there.  
The army came up in patrols  
from Chapel Road towards the estate,  
the young boys met them -

bang!

The young fellas would retreat  
into the back of the houses  
and throw petrol bombs  
over the top.

It was harassing for the people  
living in these flats.  
One by one they drifted out.  
That was the first part of the estate  
to collapse.  
Young people discovered that the army  
was using it as a look out post.  
The young people tore all out  
and left four walls.

With the troubles  
Gobnascale never got off the ground.  
That can be said  
for every nationalist estate in Derry  
caught up in the troubles.  
The forces of law and order-  
namely the army -  
made it rough for us at times.  
The government (see the area)  
as a Sinn Fein republican area

which helps keep them down.

At times we were saturated  
by the British Army -  
houses getting raided.

We were the enemy.

No respect was held by the police.  
They came in,  
roughed us up  
and wrecked houses.

53

You and I would have known  
by the looks of it  
that the fireplaces was  
never interfered with  
but they pulled them away  
to see if any ammunition was behind it.

It was badness.  
It was just to show who was boss.

Intimidation went on in Gobnascale  
fellas were shot dead  
out  
on what they thought  
was their duty.

But families stood their ground.  
Families, not republican minded,  
were (also) harassed by the army  
put up against the wall.  
But nobody ever said,  
"I must leave because of the army".

Where are you going to go?

The army is harassing your son  
but he could be shot dead  
in Shantallow or Creggan.

People originally from  
the Derry side wanted out.  
They moved out  
to Shantallow or Creggan.  
Gobnascale was only a stopping point  
until better things came along.  
They needed a house  
until they could move or swap.  
Their heart and soul wasn't in Gobnascale

Growing up in the Bogside,  
I knew there were Protestants.  
But talking to people  
who lived in the Waterside  
there was this atmosphere  
between the Catholic people  
and the Protestant population  
that stayed for two or three days  
before and after the twelfth.

Then it disappeared  
until next time around.

54

The nearest I got to a Protestant  
was standing at Rossville Street-Lecky Road  
looking up at Derry Walls,  
at the crowds of people looking over the walls -  
as if there was a feeding day at the zoo.

I never had this Protestant-Catholic feeling.

I just had to deal with one side of the house.  
until I started to go outside  
the world of work.

The only thing I discovered  
when you were talking to Protestants -  
they were a bit reserved.  
They would never come right out and say  
[that]something we did was absolutely wrong,  
whereas  
we would have said something like  
"That's an eejit that you's have talking for you!"  
They would never talkabout the troubles  
as freely as we would, like.

I think we, as Catholics  
have a lot to learn from Protestants  
and vice versa.

At eleven or twelve years  
if you have a teacher that tells you  
that it is a sin  
to go into a Protestant church -  
that makes a big impression.  
I would go now,  
knowing it is not a sin  
but no priest has ever come back and said,  
"Forget what we said in those days -  
it was wrong!"  
I still have this mentality



that to go to a Protestant wedding  
you had to get special permission.

People say about "the Protestant Waterside" -  
that might have been alright a few years back.  
To my mind, that has all changed.  
The Catholic population of the Waterside  
has grown fantastically since I was a kid.  
Moore Street, Robert Street, Strabane Old Road  
these were all Protestant.  
Now you would be pushed  
to find a Protestant in this part.  
I do not feel a minority in the Waterside -  
I feel more in the majority.

55

In Derry it will take years  
before we are in a minority again.  
I would feel in the minority  
in the whole of Northern Ireland.

We should have a great say in Northern Ireland

Living in Derry is (part of) my identity.  
I belong to Derry  
to Northern Ireland, to Ireland.  
I feel sorry for people of the other minority  
that can't recognise their identity.

When I listen to Protestants  
talking about their identity -  
they seem lost.  
They keep bouncing off this British thing.  
I can say to a certain extent  
I'm British because of where I am born  
Protestants have wanted to be  
more English  
or British  
than Irish.

Personally  
I don't know Protestants from the Waterside.  
I am sort of segregated, sort of alien.  
I know of Protestants who left Gobnascale  
for the same reasons that Catholics left Irish Street.  
The troubles  
were the instigator of the fear  
Protestants were feeling.  
Bloody Sunday, Annie's Bar and other things  
were happening.  
Protestants felt intimidated -  
felt somebody is going to take it out on them -

they were going to get hit for it.  
I would probably have done the same.

The Protestants seems to be going  
more and more out towards Eglinton  
out of the city boundaries.  
If we are segregating people -  
it's a sad thing -  
we are pushing them to the brink.

We had good teachers.  
The Corporation for years segregated us.  
They taught us, you know.  
When Protestants come back  
over the bridge again with confidence,  
it would give the bigots a kick.

56

Gobnascale is my stopping point.  
I'd like to see it getting off the ground -  
coming up to Creggan standards.

The young people  
don't have an established place -  
a drop-in centre.  
Parents are reluctant  
to let kids trip out to the  
Chapel Road youth club -  
a trouble spot.

We may be a small community  
but we are growing.

We have to look to the future.

interviewed 1995

## Second Gobnascale Woman

Derry would be more Catholic  
than Protestant.  
I would be concerned  
about my own area-  
my own family -  
rather than the issues.  
I don't think deep about it.

You hear cityside Protestants  
are moving to the Waterside,  
now its spreading to outlying areas -

Whose fault is it?

Who decides?

I was born in Irish Street -  
a really Protestant area -  
just opposite Gobnascale.

I came to live here  
at the start of the troubles  
when neighbours were getting geared up  
in their B special uniforms.  
There are a few Protestants here -  
they are very much a minority.

From the middle of Fountain Hill,  
everything to the right  
is Catholic.

57

My husband, who was reared  
in a totally Catholic area  
would see Gobnascale as an enclave.  
The more politically minded  
would see it like that...

Maybe its fear.

I remember someone saying,  
"If anything happens  
we've had it in Gobnascale  
because we are surrounded."

Born in a predominantly Protestant area  
I wouldn't be as afraid.  
I would be inclined to say  
that Irish Street have the same fears.

photo

The only reason I moved  
when the troubles were bad,  
is fear  
not for myself  
but for my children.

If we were somewhere else  
they wouldn't be seeing the masked man -  
the patrols getting stoned.

58

When they ask questions,  
what do you say?

Because the children are boys  
made it worse.  
You've a fear of them  
joining an organisation.  
Since the peace  
you have a fear of drugs.

I couldn't have afforded  
to move to the places  
my husband would have liked.  
He didn't like the places we could afford.

We wouldn't have moved to another estate -  
out of the frying pan into the fire.

My sister lives in Lisamore.  
She says you hardly see a being.  
At least up here  
no-one's out on a limb,  
no-one thinks they are better  
than anyone else.  
You have the friendliness  
closeness and support.  
My mother, father,  
my husband's family  
and extended family  
all live in this area.  
I hadn't any problem with baby-sitters  
and my children have their cousins.

No-one really moves.  
They move from a flat to a house.  
Nineteen years ago  
a lot of families moved to bigger houses.  
They don't move out of the area.

A lot of people look down on Gobnascale.  
But where would you get a view like this?  
It's convenient  
to the schools and chapels.  
People from the Derry side  
don't think it's convenient.

The downside is  
we don't have any youth facilities.  
There is a youth club in the school  
but who wants  
to go back into a school environment  
after school?

59

In some people's eyes  
Gobnascale has a bad reputation.  
People ask, 'Where do you come from?'"  
People say "Top of the Hill" not "Gobnascale."  
People from Hollymount say  
"We're from Hollymount, not Gobnascale."  
There was trouble in the council estate.  
There is a stigma,  
but umpteen people who have been involved  
haven't come from Gobnascale -  
and come from good families!  
It's not as bad as they think.

Government agencies  
think we don't need anything.  
Because they pay benefit  
they think they are doing enough.

interviewed 1995

Cyril Henderson

I would have no hesitation  
telling people to come here.

The majority are good people.

You are not stuck in the town -  
five minutes walk and  
you are in the country.  
It's reasonably quiet.  
There's not a lot of

police and army now.

The area is improving -  
they are doing up the old houses  
that were lying derelict.  
There's still some vandalism -  
coming down from chapel,  
the other night, two boys  
standing up on top of a car  
jumping up and down  
kicking in the windows.

You could say we are an enclave  
because the Waterside is  
mostly Protestant.  
Irish Street, across the way,  
is mainly a Protestant estate  
and the hinterland - Tullyally  
and around Newbuildings  
is sort of all Protestant.

60

If I walk around from say, Irish street  
when I hit Irish street proper  
to come in here  
I don't say  
"Thank God I'm here,  
I'm safe now!"

You would have been sort of frightened  
about the boys  
getting caught up in something -  
not so much the girls.

The whole basic thing  
boils down to  
The Man Above.  
I always say  
He was the first real communist.  
There is no sense in saying "I'm a Catholic!"  
then going out to shoot a policeman.

Only one daughter moved  
out of the area.  
She lived in Derryview.  
It happened to lots of people -  
when they came to the door  
with hoods on,  
the gun,  
wanting the car.  
I won't accept that  
that anybody would tell me what  
I had to do

The population  
doesn't really matter to me.  
I can make it my business  
to get along with anybody.

People should mix together.

There's youngsters growing up  
that think Protestants  
or Catholics have two heads  
because they are stuck  
in an area where they don't meet  
the other tradition.

In our day,  
unless you were of strong nationalist tradition,  
which we aren't,  
we had friends of all traditions  
and we moved around the city.

61

Now, in the middle of town,  
youngsters get beat up  
because they are a certain religion,  
as they stand waiting at the bus stop.  
Which is wrong.

I was reared in Spencer Road,  
brought up with Protestant neighbours.  
They were the best.  
No hassle.  
The man across the street  
used to go out  
on the 12th of July and 12th of August.  
He'd come over to my mother's  
to see if his sash was on straight.  
It didn't cause any problems.

It's not that you feel part of a minority -  
we are part of a minority  
in Northern Ireland as a whole.  
It was worse in my younger days  
than what it is now.  
Catholics weren't getting jobs  
weren't being housed properly.  
Thank God that is all changing now.

62

In fact, the Protestant people  
will tell you we are getting too much.

In the times of Civil Rights,  
the Protestant majority were conned  
by their higher echelons  
into thinking  
they were the bees knees.

The working class Protestant  
was no better off.

To me, nationalism  
is the scourge of the world.  
I think of myself as Irish.  
The Protestant people might think of themselves  
as British, as English.  
It's good to be proud to be Irish  
or proud to be English  
but not to force that on anybody else  
or to say I'm better than these guys.  
This leads to war eventually.

This man, on this morning,  
talking about the Gaelic GAA thing  
the ban, the law 21  
gave a different view.  
He's an Irish speaker  
and says that no way



should anybody be discriminated against  
whether they be a policeman or a soldier.  
The only thing  
that should ban a man  
is if he is a dirty player.

I would be afraid  
of some of the Catholic population saying,  
"We have the ball at our toe  
and we'll rub it into these guys now!"  
It's like when the peace broke out.  
There shouldn't be any triumphalism.  
They should accept  
that they have to live with one another.

The Protestant population in the town  
is going down.  
It's sad. It's sad to think  
that to some extent  
it was our side that caused that,  
in the form of the IRA  
or Sinn Fein  
or whatever.

63

On the other hand  
you have areas where Catholics  
have had to move out  
and Protestants have moved in.  
Which is wrong too.

Once the cease-fires came  
there shouldn't have been any dilly-dallying  
about any conditions.  
Eventually, everybody has to sit down -  
the IRA, the INLA, the UVF, UDA -  
they all have to be involved  
because they are part of the problem.  
Are they going to agree  
with Sinn Fein or UDP?  
They should be there too  
to solve the problem.

It has happened in Cyprus in South Africa...  
the way they are going about it  
it is going to take longer than it should.  
Hopefully, they will get some settlement  
even some Sinn Fein men are saying  
that it can't be a united Ireland -  
but some sort of an agreement.

What I would like to see  
is that they will be happy

to accept Protestant people here -  
or Catholic people in Irish Street.

interviewed 1995

Third Gobnascale woman

I grew up in the Top of the Hill.  
I moved here from a farmhouse.  
We had to walk three miles to school.  
I'm here  
as long as nobody pushes their point of view.  
The troubles have touched everybody  
but you can't let other people's view  
dictate your way of life.

It was a different place.  
We moved here. It was more rural.  
We lived in Strabane Old Road  
but we had children  
and the road was dangerous  
and the house was cold.

64

It was restless in 1983  
but the restlessness didn't affect  
my decision to move.

My husband  
came from the Derry side  
plays for Derry teams.

Maybe my mother and father  
wouldn't have been in the Top of the Hill  
if there had been a boy in the family.  
There's no way a Protestant fella  
could walk up through the estate.  
It was hard enough for us girls.  
But we were independent souls.

We didn't come across through Anderson Crescent  
because they called us names

and we called names back.

They could tell by our school uniforms.  
They called us Jaffas.

The old area wasn't like that -  
the men played rings round the back.  
It was strangers that caused hassle

Imports gave us a hard time.  
Boys would have had gotten  
into physical fights.

I don't know of any Protestant families  
who have sons.  
As soon as sons get any age  
they move.  
My father  
having only five daughters  
kept us here.  
He had his own tradition.  
Everyone knew what he was.  
They respected him.

There isn't many Protestants in the area.  
They did try to make Gobnascale  
a mixed area.

There was families that came in,  
but they left.

The Waterside was always  
deemed to be a Protestant area.

65

I understand why Gobnascale is  
the way it is.  
Gobnascale had such a bad press.  
You have to be in here  
to understand that it has changed.  
It used to be a no-hoper place.

It has pulled its socks up.

We want to be proud of our own area.

Everybody will say  
Gobnascale is a Catholic area  
it was neglected by all bodies.  
The women want what's best  
for their children.

photo

We have no economic development.  
This supermarket is the first.  
People want an education  
a job.  
My preference will be for family life -  
my children.  
If there is a cause I'll fight for it  
but it will be something personal to me.

66

I can walk everywhere.  
The bus service isn't brilliant -  
it doesn't come by Hollymount.  
You try carrying  
six bags of messages  
up that hill.  
You haven't the money for taxis.  
I would walk down Irish street.  
It was a short cut - handy.  
I never felt any sense of danger.

Maybe Belfast is different.

Staunch Catholic areas  
they don't know the other side.  
Throwing bottles and stones at your house -

we went out in the morning  
as if it hadn't happened.

It wasn't people from Top of the Hill.

There is Catholics living in Protestant areas  
and their houses were stoned -  
that doesn't give them the right

to stone our house  
because we are Protestants  
living in a Catholic area.

A time ago,  
people had to take a side.  
I don't see why.  
I'm glad I live the way I do.  
It doesn't matter  
if you are born into a different religion.  
I am a strong woman.  
This is home.

Me daddy had a real sense  
of belonging to Top of the Hill.  
It passed on to me.  
It was wild  
shifting from Strabane Old Road.  
Hollymount is far quieter.  
I couldn't settle to begin with.  
It's sad people can't relate to me  
because I was born a Protestant.

There is no real winner  
in the whole troubles.  
People are rotting in jail.

67

I'm sure boys who get sentences  
come out shaking their fists.

There has to be more to life.  
interviewed 1995

Third Gobnascale man

Other people call it Gobnascale  
or the Gob. But anybody asks me  
I say Top of the Hill.

When I first came over here  
most of the people  
were old time residents.  
Outside people thought of this  
as being a particularly rough area in Derry.  
Run down.  
The people were sort of rough  
capable of holding their own.  
Very clannish.  
Even if  
they didn't like the person getting turfed over

by some crowd  
they wouldn't let that happen.

I'm not from the Waterside.  
I just happened to arrive here.  
I moved to Spencer Road in 1967.  
I moved up here in September '71 -  
from Creggan originally.  
People used to think Creggan was bad.  
But Creggan people say,  
"How do you stick it over there?"  
"Do you not find the Waterside strange?"

The Top of the Hill was quiet -  
the usual new estates -  
a lock of builders rubble.  
It was threw up quick.  
The actual houses weren't that good.  
It was all back to front.  
The front door goes into the garden.  
The back door is actually the front door.

But I'll be wearing a wooden coat  
that's the only way I'll be going.

I'm longer now in the Top of the Hill  
than I lived in Creggan.

## 68

There were a few Protestant families in Creggan.  
I never seen any real sectarianism  
until I came to the Waterside.  
I seen boys chasing  
whether it be a Protestant or a Catholic..  
They were fighting amongst themselves  
because they were two different religions.

My wee flat was attacked a few times.  
That was from 1969 to about 1970 or '71.  
We got out of the place then.  
It was at the bottom of Moore Street  
Moore Street was  
at that time  
a predominantly Protestant Street.  
I got married in March and the street  
was all decorated with Union Jacks and bunting.

photo

I drunk with a few people that lived in Moore Street.  
I had never any bother that way, you know.  
It was mostly lodges coming from the Memorial Hall  
across the bridge.

69

They started after '69  
throwing stones at the place  
roaring and gowling and kicking the doors.  
That was my first trip down the sectarian road.  
I just went to the end of Bond Street  
and beat the crap out of the boys that was doing it.

I had no bother after that.

The shooting in Annie's Bar  
I was up in the Telstar the night it happened.  
The only thing that stuck me as funny is  
you could walk into Gobnascale after the shooting  
but you couldn't get out of it.  
The police, the cops wouldn't let you.  
But I wasn't actually in it,  
I just knew a couple of people to see.  
People were very afraid.  
Some people up stakes and moved out.  
They couldn't hack it.

About three years ago

the police arrived.  
I was at work as usual.  
The cops says to my wife  
to warn me that my name was on the hit list  
for the Loyalist death squads.  
So I had to upgrade my security.  
I could have went to the Housing Executive  
and moved to whatever area I wanted.  
There were a few people up here that did.  
But I wouldn't move.  
My attitude was if they are going to get me  
they were going to get me.  
They gave you a hundred and fifty pounds  
she got a phone in  
and that was it.

I have been trying for years to get things going.  
If everybody just moved -  
went back into a wee corner  
then things would get worse  
instead of better.  
You make a stand.  
You walk away from it  
and you can't influence people.  
I had a bit of hassle from the police  
I think they just gave out the details to the Loyalists  
and that was it.  
I firmly believe that, you know.

70

No matter what,  
if you were trying to make change,  
if you didn't tow a conventional line  
in the SDLP or in the church  
then you were suspect of being in the IRA.

"Are you working for the IRA or Sinn Fein?"  
"Are you controlling the area?"  
"Syphoning money?"

I never asked anybody their beliefs -  
all I wanted to know [was]  
if they were to help the community.

The wife started up a park in 1981  
with a wee ACE scheme.  
That collapsed.  
It was harassment from the word go  
from the police.  
Harassment -  
it happened to plenty of people up here



The harassment I got -  
the army would be more joking  
but the cops were inclined to get nasty.

They knew rightly who I was,  
they used to come up and say  
"You'll have to give us your name and address!"  
Many times, walking down the streets  
I wouldn't move out of the way,  
and he wouldn't move  
the two of us ended up  
having a whole shuffling match.  
There was passive hostilities  
from both sides -  
sometimes open hostility.  
They started on my sons as well.

My mother said  
"You will have to get moved out!"  
My father was the same -  
never liked the Waterside.  
"You will be safer over here."  
I pointed out  
if I move  
what is going to happen to the people left behind?  
The next time  
it is going to be your neighbours  
getting the threat.  
Then all of a sudden, there's nobody left.

71

The last two years  
before the cease-fire  
you would lie in bed at night  
and wonder  
you would listen.  
"Are the young fellas getting a taxi home?"

I always told them  
never to walk home  
straight up the Strabane Old Road.  
Always walk the side streets.

Years ago  
there was a drive-by shooting  
a house in Strabane Old Road -  
the house above mine.  
Boys got out of the car  
smashed the windows  
and jumped in the car again.  
I gave the police

a description of the car.  
They stopped the car in Irish street  
but nothing was done.

People seem to be pushing cross community contacts  
like going to Corrymeela.  
They have to start somewhere  
but it seems very structured -  
like getting led down the garden path.  
You have all these people  
being very nice and watching.  
You really need to meet people  
warts and all.

If you are not working,  
you don't have a life.  
if you are young now  
you have all those micky mouse jobs.  
It's dead-end stuff.  
Ace and a tenner on your dole -  
just a whole scam.  
The young fellas are cannon fodder.

There was a few problems with drugs -  
only about two years ago.  
It wasn't cocaine or heroin -  
it was with speed and LSD.  
There was quite a few  
and it was a big shock.  
I didn't think it would happen here  
but it did.

72

When it happened  
you'd be sort of dumbfounded -  
how do you handle it?  
Life is a balls-up now  
buggered before it really got started.

I never thought I was in a minority.  
I thought I was treated badly  
in my own country.  
I was treated badly education-wise.  
The Catholic church had a lot to answer for.  
the only things I have learnt  
I have learnt myself.

When we grew up  
the Unionist Corporation ran Derry.

I was born in 1945.  
Even now I can see

the wee man coming down  
the street in Creggan.  
He wouldn't survive 10 minutes now -  
but he was in the 'B' Specials.  
He used to walk down with his rifle.  
Nobody would have said boo.  
You always got the message  
that they were the people  
and you weren't.  
Your view didn't count.

Then, you were having  
manys an argument with priests.  
I was told I was nothing but a communist.  
I wasn't allowed to think like this  
and  
"Who give you the right to talk like this?"  
I always had the attitude  
that things weren't right  
on both sides.  
I always had resentment  
against my school and church over it.

Just after the Hunger Strike  
I thought the whole place  
was going to end up  
the way Bard's Hill did.

I don't think the Catholic church  
has really helped us.  
They stood back, were afraid to.  
They didn't get in with the people  
and try to help.

73

It was easy enough to sit in a chapel  
saying you broke this commandment  
or you shouldn't be doing this.  
They have ignored the area.  
A guy reckoned, the new chapel  
built down on the Trench Road  
was to keep Gobnascale people up there  
so all the middle class Catholics  
could go down to the old church.  
I don't think any of the priests  
were up to the job  
to lead the people.  
They talked down to them.  
They gave them nothing.

The colonial era is coming to an end.  
It is more complex than this  
but you can understand

Like if you were in control of a country  
for many years  
and you think it is slipping away  
well, there is a lot of psychological barriers  
and you are going to say  
"I am going to have to move."

I think the ordinary Protestant thinks  
he is going to be treated  
as bad as what we were.  
If we got control that we are going to screw you.  
There's no way.  
I'd have to chop my own leg off.

I have no time for the theory  
about Catholics and Protestants.  
When they came from England or Scotland,  
the English government said  
they aren't Black -  
the only difference is they are Catholics  
so we will play on that.

If the Protestant population left  
it would be like losing your brother.  
You might have fell out with him  
but you don't want to see him going.

Equal terms  
cut out the terms Protestant, Catholic.  
You invest in the future.  
You say what you want.  
I don't want to see  
by a quirk of fate  
us ending up like the Fountain.

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I wouldn't like to see people saying  
"We have to keep the Fountain Protestant!"  
or, "We have to keep Gobnascale Catholic!"  
I can understand it  
yes  
and I'd say  
certainly, if you want it  
but you are going to pay for it.

interviewed 1995

Fourth Gobnascale woman

At long last  
the majority in the city  
has been recognised for what it is -

a Catholic majority.  
Gerrymandering has come to an end.  
Protestants have moved to outlying areas.  
I think they are moving because  
they don't want to live in a Catholic city.

This "predominantly Protestant Waterside" gets me -  
Where do they get their numbers from?  
All my life, I have been part of a minority,  
as a Roman Catholic in a predominantly Catholic town,  
with less rights.

Now you say a majority  
has a responsibility to a minority?

Twenty years from now, will a Catholic majority  
be as hard as a Protestant minority?  
We never want to go back to the 60's.  
I think to myself  
if we had more female politicians from 1969  
willing to put themselves up front,  
maybe we wouldn't have been in the situation we were  
in  
for twenty five years.

This [area] right round to Irish Street  
where I was born and reared  
is Top of the Hill.  
From I've been no size,  
I said, "I am going across to Derry,"  
thinking in my head  
that Derry was two cities.

One time we considered  
buying a house in Abercorn Road.  
I was broken hearted at the thought

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of having to leave the Waterside.  
I'll tell you why we were buying [that] house.  
We had bought one in Violet Street.  
It was a great big house -  
I fell in love with it.  
We were to move on the Tuesday.  
On the Sunday we got word  
we weren't getting the house.  
All was signed and delivered  
but they backed out in the end.  
They didn't make any bones about it.  
We were Catholic and we didn't get it.

photo

76

Doing the deal  
we were dealing with the mother  
but the son  
who was unionist minded  
had objections.

He blatantly said  
he didn't want a Catholic in his house.  
I was hurt and vented my anger.  
He wasn't man enough to face me.

I went to see her and explained,  
they had shattered my illusions  
and being raised in a Protestant estate

I couldn't understand their objections.  
She said she'd taken advice from her son.  
I think it was her feelings as well  
if she was that easily swayed.

The day we went to view Abercorn Road  
we got word we had been offered a house  
in Bard's Hill.

I took it.

The worst mistake we ever made.  
Electric bills were astronomical.  
No hot water bar the immersion heater.  
With four young children  
I was using the immersion  
for every drop of hot water I had.  
My first quarter electric bill was  
two hundred and eighty two pounds.  
That was 1978.

[My husband] had a pretty good job  
but I have a son with asthma -  
the dry heat was killing him.  
There were no parking facilities  
near the house.

Access to the house -  
you had to go up or down stairs every time.  
The Housing Executive  
neglected to do any landscaping at all.  
We deserved more  
for the money we were paying.

If I could buy a house in Irish Street-  
if I could be sure I could live safely  
in a ninety nine percent Protestant area  
and feel as if I was part of the community  
not as a token Catholic  
I would buy it.

77

It's probably just nostalgia.

We left Irish street  
under strange circumstances.  
We had to get out overnight.

When none of your neighbours  
comes out to defend you  
or to ask you to stay  
you know where you stand.

It was the early months of 1970 -  
the height of the Troubles in Derry

My youngest sister  
had been stoned on the way to school.  
It got to the stage where she was afraid to go.

We woke up one morning  
to huge red, white and blue letters on the path  
"Get out Fenian bastards".  
That [was] the last straw.

We swapped with a Catholic family  
from Gobnascale,  
that left to move to Nelson Drive.  
Nelson Drive at that time was fifty fifty.

A Protestant family, naturally enough  
from Nelson Drive,  
moved into Irish Street.

Granny couldn't risk anything happening to us.  
It broke her heart leaving Irish Street.  
It was her first house.  
She had had nothing  
and Monseynor O'Doherty demanded  
she be re-housed  
from a Duke Street tenement.

Her heart and soul was in Irish street.  
We had Protestant and Catholic  
coming in and out of Irish Street.  
People had known Granny for years.  
In Gobnascale,  
you hadn't the same community feel.  
It was simply a house.  
She had no feeling for it.

In a way I was glad to go.  
I remember the night  
Stevenson's Bakery burnt,  
standing in Bann Drive

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you could see the smoke  
coming up from the Bog.  
There was about 12 people standing.

It was Stevenson's Bakery but

this particular woman  
thought it was houses.  
She said,  
"Good enough for them,  
they are burning the houses  
we gave them!"



We were Catholic bogwogs,  
burning houses they gave us!  
Such a stupid, ridiculous remark -  
and she believed that.

I didn't want to live with the tension.  
My granny thought she could have moved on her terms  
not having to go and get emergency housing.  
I feel a bit cowed down for moving.  
Maybe if we had dug our heels in...

Bar putting a huge barricade round the house  
having a security escort  
I don't think there would  
have been anything anyone  
could have done.

Protestant families were glad to see us go.  
They could say what they wanted,  
do what they wanted  
when we weren't there -  
a thorn in their side.

I think we would have moved in the end.

The Protestant families in our street  
would have given us lip service  
trying to find out what Granny thought.

The Catholic population in Irish Street  
was so small  
a token Catholic in every street.  
Rowe Gardens had more.

Within three weeks of us moving  
every other Catholic family  
in the street had to move.  
The situation was so bad,

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it would have taken the whole estate to get together  
to ask us to stay.

We moved to Gobnascale.

The devil you know is better  
than the devil you don't.

My husband was in a precarious situation.  
He worked as an Ordinance Surveyor  
for the government

He was a Catholic  
drawing maps for the army.

Somebody's prayers were with us.  
The day he was to start in Belfast  
he got word to start in Dupont.

How could we have lived in Belfast?  
A Catholic working for the army?  
What area would we have lived in?  
We would have been neither fish nor fowl.

I still felt afraid in Gobnascale.  
I knew nobody.  
A lot of people had moved over  
from the Derryside.  
I was a fish out of water.  
One particular situation -  
there were rumours that spread  
and got out of hand  
that gangs were coming in  
from Newbuildings and Tullyally  
to attack Gobnascale.

The people in Gobnascale were terrified.

A friend of mine  
a Protestant fella  
joined a vigilante group.  
There were no weapons involved  
simply street patrols.

The people organising it  
were the forerunners of Sinn Fein.

My husband refused to take part in it.

It got to the stage  
where a few snide remarks were made to him  
about not pulling his weight  
turning his back on his own.

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The people in Gobnascale  
did live under fear.

The attack on Annie's  
proved  
there was a threat  
to the Top of the Hill.



photo

Derry Journal Tuesday 26 and  
Friday 29 December 1972

82

This particular night  
a friend of mine  
came running into the house  
and said,  
"There's been a shooting in Annie's.

They are carrying out bodies,  
nobody know's who's who

or what's going on!"

I'll never forget it.

[My husband] and three friends  
did their training every Wednesday night  
and then went to Annie's bar for a pint.

I ran down in bare feet.

It was total mayhem.

I saw Barney Kelly  
coming out of the bar.  
He shouted across the street,  
"Tell me mammy I'm all right,  
I've just got a graze."

He died on the way to hospital.

[My husband] came around the corner.  
He said he had gone down to Annie's  
but something prevented him

and he went on down  
to Iona House.

After that  
people were living  
on their nerves.  
It was so unexpected -  
so unbelievable.

It was Annie's Bar because it was handy.  
It could happen again.

It shook the whole community  
to the core  
especially with Charlie Moore

a Protestant fella  
being killed.

Nobody has ever been brought to task for it.

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People reckon  
they hadn't tried hard enough.

Being reared in Irish street,  
I never had any fear of the police.  
Several of our neighbours were policemen  
most were 'R' men

In Gobnascale  
I see it from both sides -  
policemen being taunted  
and policemen taunting young fellas and girls.

Who do you turn to?

Do I turn to the men coming round the doors  
saying we are organising groups  
to do this and that  
when you don't trust them?

Or do you trust the people  
you ring nine nine nine for?

You are stuck.

All you can do is watch yourself  
and tell your family to be wise and vigilant  
but let them know their own minds.

I found it difficult to rear boys  
on the straight and narrow  
without smothering them.  
They are making heroes  
and [my sons] listen to their peers,  
to the TV.

One of my sons said about Bobby Sands, -  
"the bravest man in Ireland."

I think if I had reared them in Gobnascale -  
an area  
where there is stylized pictures of the Hunger strikers

whether you like it or not

in a street  
with slogans painted on your walls

whether you like it or not

they would have had a one-track view of the troubles.  
The boys would have come home  
and said

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"Up the Ra!" and asked,  
"Why's my daddy not in the Provos?"  
"Why does my daddy work for the government?"

We have never had any serious run-ins

with the police.  
But the army  
used to give my son a rough time.  
The patrols used to be thick and fast.  
On the bridge and every morning  
on his way to college  
he was told to take off  
his trainers and socks.

They searched his bag  
everything.  
He said,  
"They will get fed up before I get fed up!"  
They did stop doing it.  
It's difficult being an adolescent boy in a housing estate.  
They are expected  
to be tough  
to drink  
try drugs  
leave girls pregnant (like me)  
and face the police and army.

After Annie's  
the unarmed forces  
turned into armed forces.  
Who were they helping?  
People were used as shields.  
I had a gunman in my house,  
shooting down at an armed patrol.

We were laid flat on the bedroom floor.  
They didn't care when the army patrol shot back.

I wanted out then.  
I could afford to get out.

If my husband had been unemployed  
I would have made the best of it.

But I wanted to take my sons  
from Gobnascale and trouble.  
They wanted to stay and resented moving.

interviewed 1995

## 85 Methodologies and Techniques

These interviews were conducted at an early stage of the research, and the themes emerging from them were used to inform our design of a questionnaire which was then used

in a field survey in both areas. The findings of this survey are documented in a separate publication.

The technique used to arrive at the texts published here was developed from the work of Richardson, who interviewed, transcribed the interview and then condensed the text of the transcript, - using the interviewees own words and phrasing - into a "poem" or condensed text. As such, the "poem" is a time-ordered display of data. Of time-ordered displays, and specifically of the transcript as a poem, Miles and Huberman (1994) say:

The display is striking. It brings the reader very close to a condensed set of data, has a compelling flow, and forbids superficial attention by the analyst. You have to treat the data set-and the person it came from-seriously because a "poem" is something you engage with at a deep level. It is not just a figurative transposition, but an emotional statement as well.

As Richardson notes, such a display "breaches sociological norms" by ignoring defined variables, by emphasising the "lived experience," illuminating the "core" of the case involved, engaging the reader (and the researcher) emotionally, and shifting the concept of authorship.

The time taken was substantial...Two points: (a) the selection, organization, and presentation of data in a display are decisive analytic actions, and (as in this case) they need to be done in a thoughtful, lucid way; (b) displays owe as much to art and craft as they do to "science".

Richardson wrote very little separate "analytic text" in our terms, but there is nothing in the method to discourage that. p110.

This technique allowed us to present our "findings" in the two communities, using the words which people themselves had used to us in interviews. After transcription, the full transcript was shown to interviewees and agreed. After this, the transcript was condensed, and the "poem" was shown to the interviewee, alterations agreed and the "poem" finalised. Like Richardson, very little analytic text will be presented here. Some of the themes that emerged will be drawn together , and then the people we interviewed can speak - and have spoken here - for themselves

### Themes

Reading and rereading the text reproduced here, and the full transcripts of the interviews on which these texts are based, a number of themes emerge. The main themes which we identified were those of the experience of violence and threat, of danger and fear, of anxiety for children, especially boys, of anger at injustice, at misrepresentation, of the felt need to "manage" the identity that living in the area gives residents, of being surrounded, isolated and being different from one's own community outside the area. The significance of killings of people from the area to the residents in both areas is clear, and the tight-knit nature of the community, which can mean conflict within the community as well as cooperation. The importance of the bonds within the community for the community's survival, and the decision to stay or go, the importance of economic as well as safety factors in that decision, the social problems and lack of amenities in both areas are all issues which were explored further in the survey of both areas. Yet, it is in these interviews, not in the survey results, that the message comes across most forcefully and movingly.

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submission on Derry Area Plan 2011

a public hearing  
minority experiences  
in Derry Londonderry

public discussions  
on aspects of sectarian division  
in Derry Londonderry

Two policy papers  
Policing and Sectarian Division  
in Derry Londonderry  
Urban Regeneration and Sectarian Division

three conference papers  
on aspects of segregation  
+ sectarian division  
researching sectarianism,  
borders within borders,  
the capacity for citizenship



"Ten to five in the morning  
I could hear this big drum  
thudding  
sure enough  
five boys had come up the lane  
with big burning logs, beating this drum  
I could hear the beating  
getting closer and closer and closer."  
**Woman from the Fountain**

The house below us had shutters on the window.  
I couldn't live like that.  
You might as well be in prison.  
I wanted to get out of this situation right.  
It was no way to bring up children.  
But I loved my house  
it was easy kept  
it wasn't a big mortgage.  
**Woman from the Fountain**

I would be afraid  
of some of the Catholic population saying,  
"We have the ball at our toe  
and we'll rub it into these guys now!"  
It's like when the peace broke out.  
There shouldn't be any triumphalism.  
They should accept  
that they have to live with one another.  
**Man from Gobnascale**

The only reason I moved  
when the troubles were bad,  
is fear  
not for myself  
but for my children.  
If we were somewhere else  
they wouldn't be seeing the masked man -  
the patrols getting stoned.  
When they ask questions,  
what do you say?  
Because the children are boys  
made it worse.  
You've a fear of them  
joining an organisation.  
Since the peace  
you have a fear of drugs.  
**Woman from Gobnascale**

