

Terrorist Pasts & Criminal Futures: The Evolution of Paramilitary Violence in Northern Ireland

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Research Question

- It is more than 20 years since the Good Friday Agreement that paved the way for peace in Northern Ireland (of which President Bill Clinton assisted in).
- The paramilitary groups that formed during the conflict ('The Troubles') in Northern Ireland gained and maintained influence in local communities.
- This new wave of paramilitary criminality includes drug dealing, punishment beatings, money laundering and extortion, among other crimes.
- This research project seeks to explore the evolution of past terrorism into the modern organised criminality that we see operating across Northern Ireland today.

Northern Ireland's Troubled Past

- Brutal ethno-nationalist conflict that erupted in 1968.
- Intensifying since the partition of the island of Ireland in 1921, and has its roots even further back (12C-16C).
- Divisions between the Catholic nationalist community who believed that Northern Ireland should be unified with the Republic of Ireland, and the Protestant unionist community who believed that Northern Ireland should remain part of the UK.
- The violence was characterized by the armed campaigns of Irish Republican Army (IRA) and Ulster Loyalist paramilitary groups and British state security forces.
- The longest major campaign in the history of the British Army.

Theory: Terror & Crime Nexus

- Conflict and terrorism research have documented the overlap of terrorists within the criminal world (e.g. Jupp & Garrod, 2019).
- In contrast to traditional mafia networks, paramilitary groups tend to comprise of loose networks of individuals that operate transnationally.



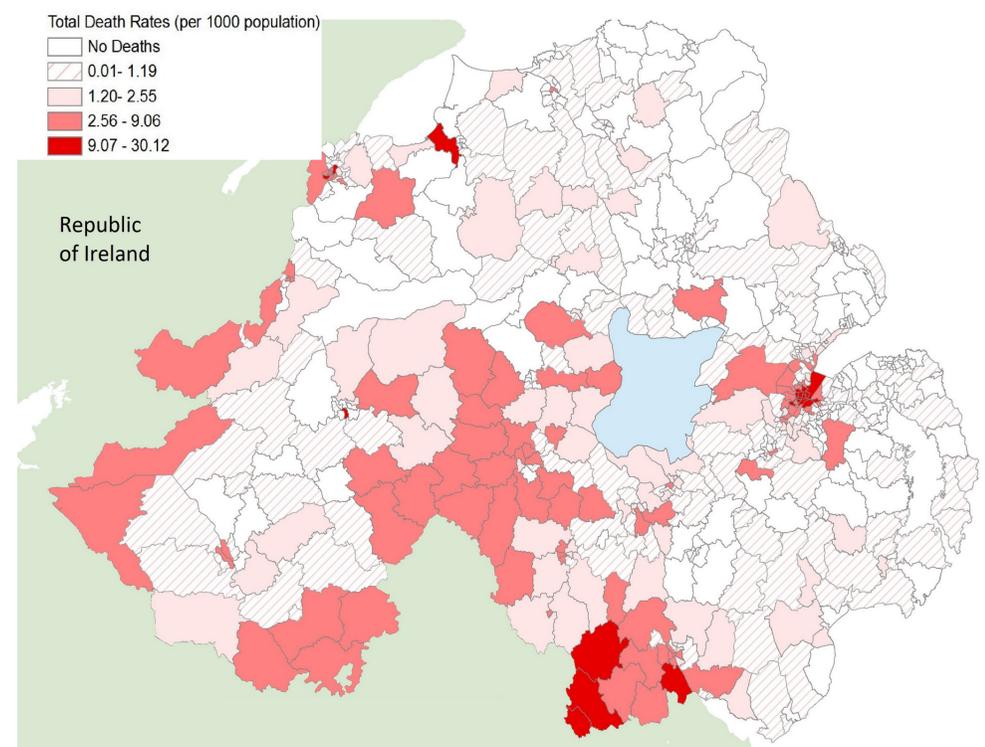
Related Literature

- Economic and social effects of the Northern Ireland conflict (Dorsett, 2013)
- Intergenerational transmission of conflict trauma (Singhal, 2019)
- Intergenerational transmission of crime (Junger et al., 2013)
- Long lasting effects of colonialism (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2017)

Main Spatial Data

Terrorism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • xy coords of terrorism incidents 1969-present, and deaths
Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual crime in Wards 2001-present • xy coords of crime 2011-present • paramilitary-specific data

Figure 1. Conflict Death Rate per 1,000 (1969-2001), in Northern Ireland Wards (582)



Identification

Spatial specification coming soon...

Other

- Robustness checks e.g. spatial data of the 16th Century British Plantations in Ireland
- Brexit & rising paramilitary violence
- Policy implications: lessons for other countries with experiences of conflict, and for Northern Ireland law enforcement.