

Different Age, Different Attitude to Community Relations: Is this the case in Northern Ireland?

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Format

- Why this topic?
 - Why is it important?
- How can we examine it?
 - What do we need?
- What do the results tell us?
- Conclusion



Malcolm Sutton

An Index of Deaths from the Conflict in Ireland

Total of 8 records returned

Bell, William	05 December 1972 (30) Protestant Status: Civilian (Civ), Killed by: British Army (BA) Shot while repairing roof of house, corner of Benwick Road and Glenbryn Park, Ardoyne, Belfast.
Hillis, Roy	05 December 1972 (28) nfnI Status: British Army (BA), Killed by: Official Irish Republican Army (OIRA) Killed by booby trap bomb attached to rocket launcher, abandoned near Kitchen Hill British Army (BA) base, Lurgan, County Armagh.
Bogle, William	05 December 1972 (27) Protestant Status: Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR), Killed by: Irish Republican Army (IRA) Off duty. Shot outside post office, Main Street, Killeter, near Castlederg, County Tyrone.
Craven, Joseph	05 December 1983 (26) Catholic Status: Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), Killed by: Protestant Action Force (PAF) Shot from passing motor cycle shortly after leaving Department of Health and Social Services office, Church Road, Newtownabbey, County Antrim.
Todd, John	05 December 1993 (31) Catholic Status: Civilian (Civ), Killed by: Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) Shot while sitting in stationary car outside taxi depot, Ligoniel Road, Ligoniel, Belfast.
Duffy, Brian	05 December 1993 (15) Catholic Status: Civilian (Civ), Killed by: Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) Shot while sitting in stationary car outside taxi depot, Ligoniel Road, Ligoniel, Belfast.
Devlin, Gerry	05 December 1997 (36) Catholic Status: Civilian (Civ), Killed by: Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF) Shot, outside St. Enda's Gaelic Athletic Association Club, Hightown Road, Glengormley, near Belfast, County Antrim.
Kell, Trevor	05 December 2000 (35) Protestant Status: Civilian (Civ), Killed by: non-specific Republican group (REP) Taxi driver. Shot shortly after being lured by bogus call to a house, Hesketh Road, off Crumlin Road, Belfast.



Community Relations

"In order for community relations to have any substantive meaning, it must be constructively linked with policies for equity and diversity. Likewise, if equity and diversity are to contribute to stability rather than heightened competition, they need to be brought together with an acknowledgement of interdependence between groups in Northern Ireland."

A Worthwhile Venture, Practically Investing in Equity, Diversity and Interdependence in Northern Ireland. K. Eyben, D. Morrow & D. Wilson, (University of Ulster, 1997).



What evidence do we have?

- Quantitative research
 - Cross sectional studies
 - Time series
 - Cohort studies
- Qualitative studies





Datasets www.ark.ac.uk

- Northern Ireland Social Attitudes (NISA)
 - 1989-1996, circa 900 respondents pa
- Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT)
 - 1998 to date, circa 1,200 respondents currently
- Community Relations and Political Attitudes (Pooled)
 - 1989-2006, circa 23,000 people
- Young Life and Times (YLT) – 16 year olds
 - 2003 to date, circa 3,300 young people to date

Figure 1: % believing that relations between Protestants and Catholics are better now than 5 years ago, by age category 1989-2006

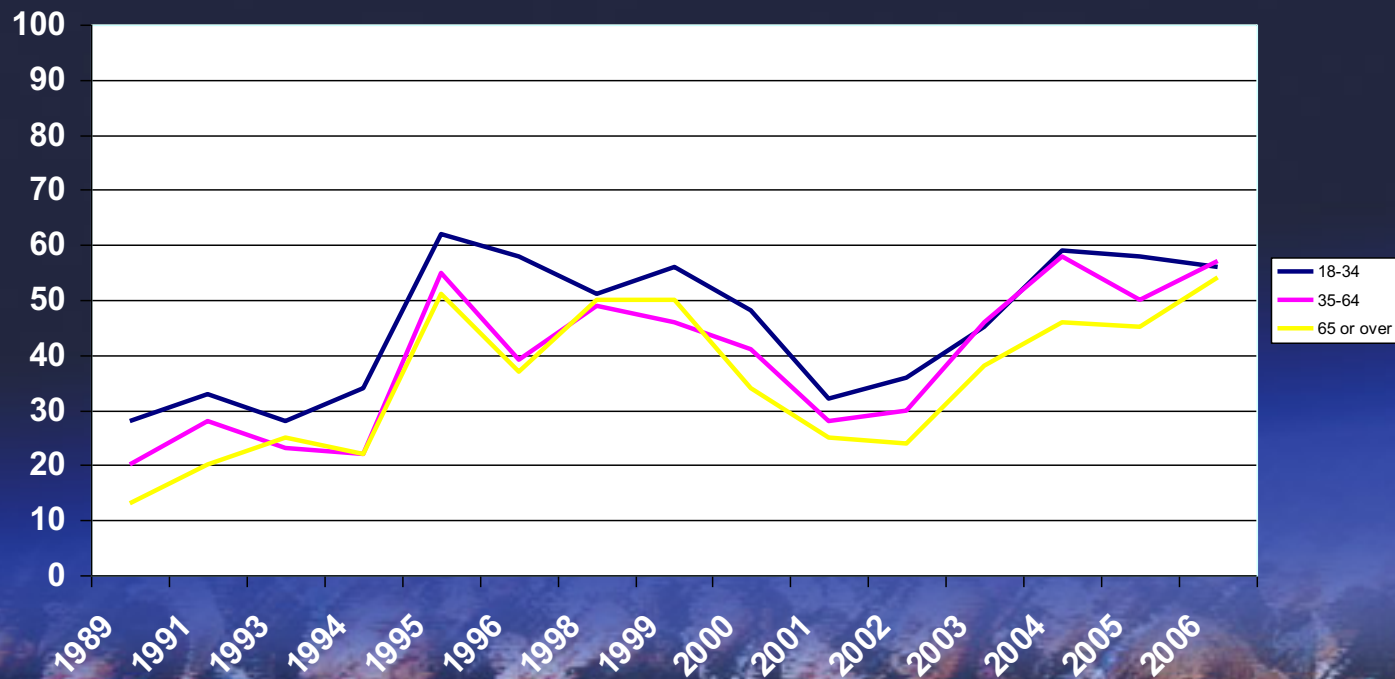


Figure 2: % believing that relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in 5 years time by age category, 1989-2006

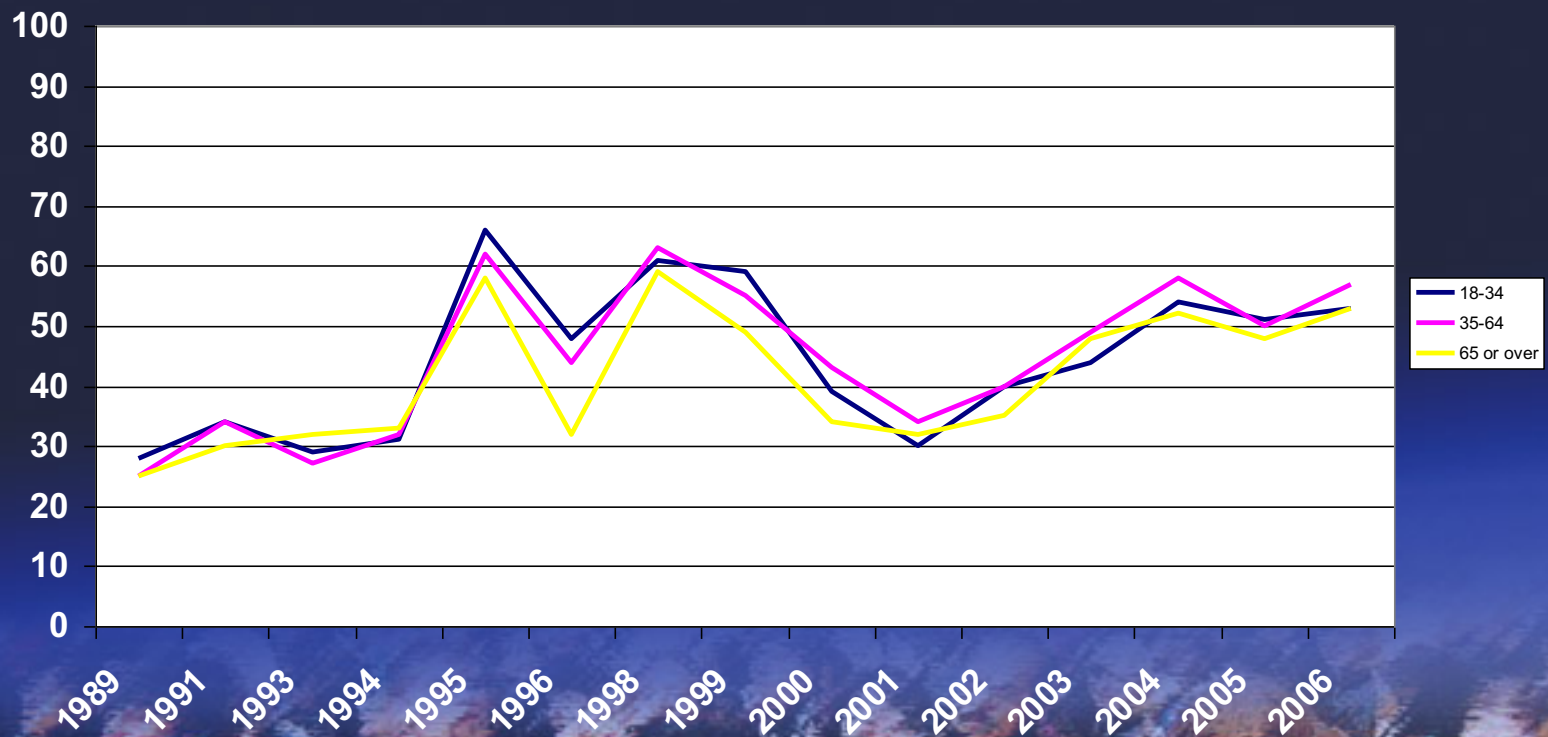


Figure 3: % saying religion will always make a difference in Northern Ireland

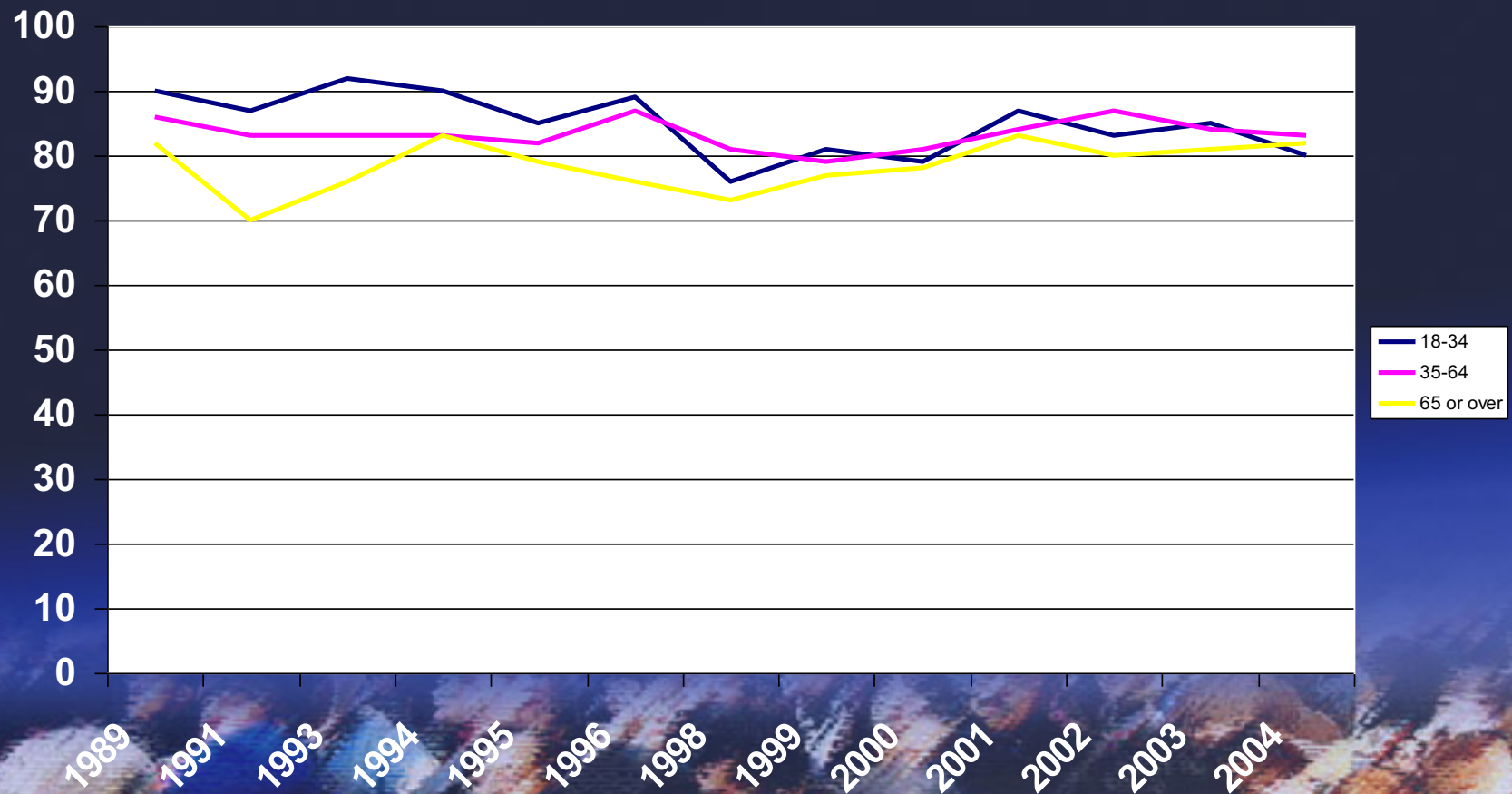


Figure 4: % who would prefer to live in a mixed-religion neighbourhood, by age category 1989-2006

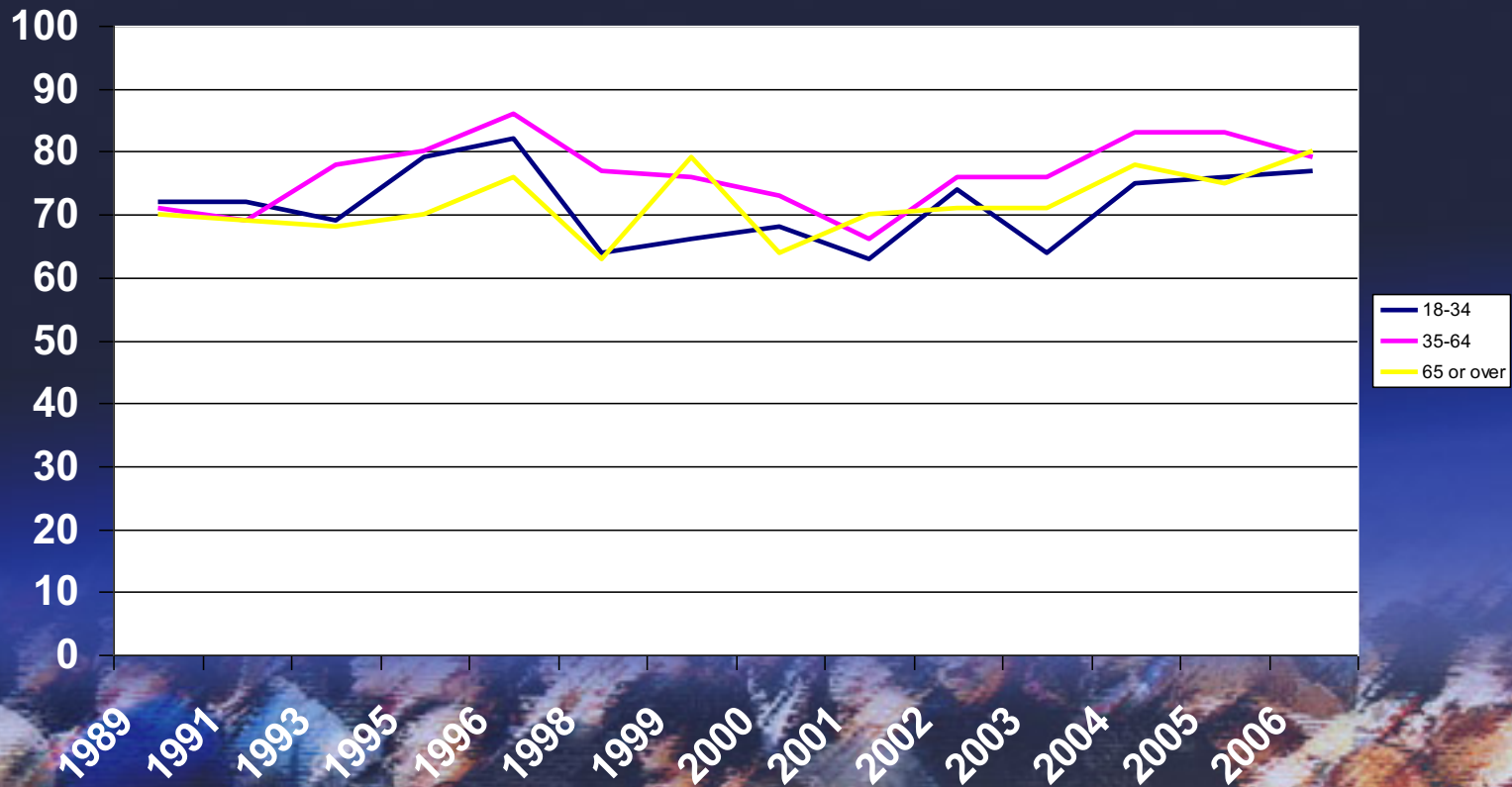


Figure 5: % who would prefer a mixed-religion workplace, by age category 1989-2006

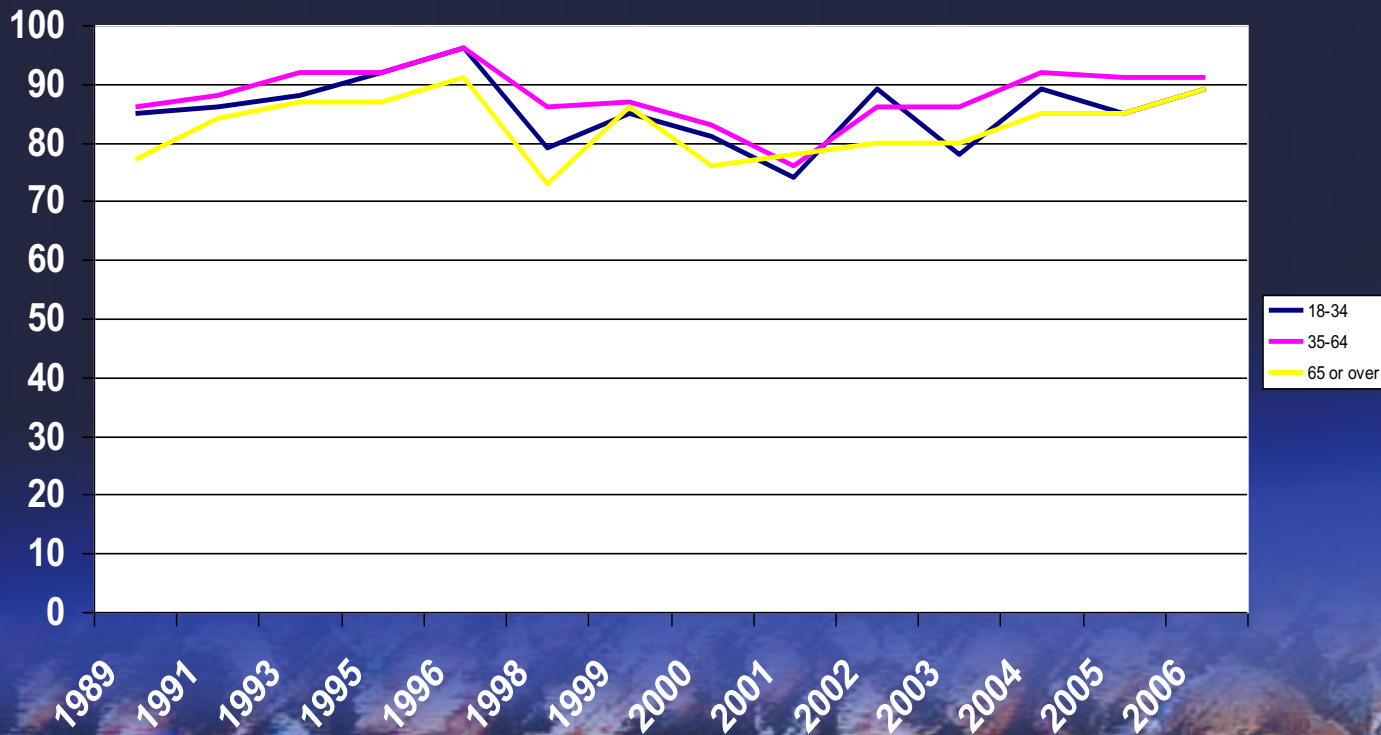
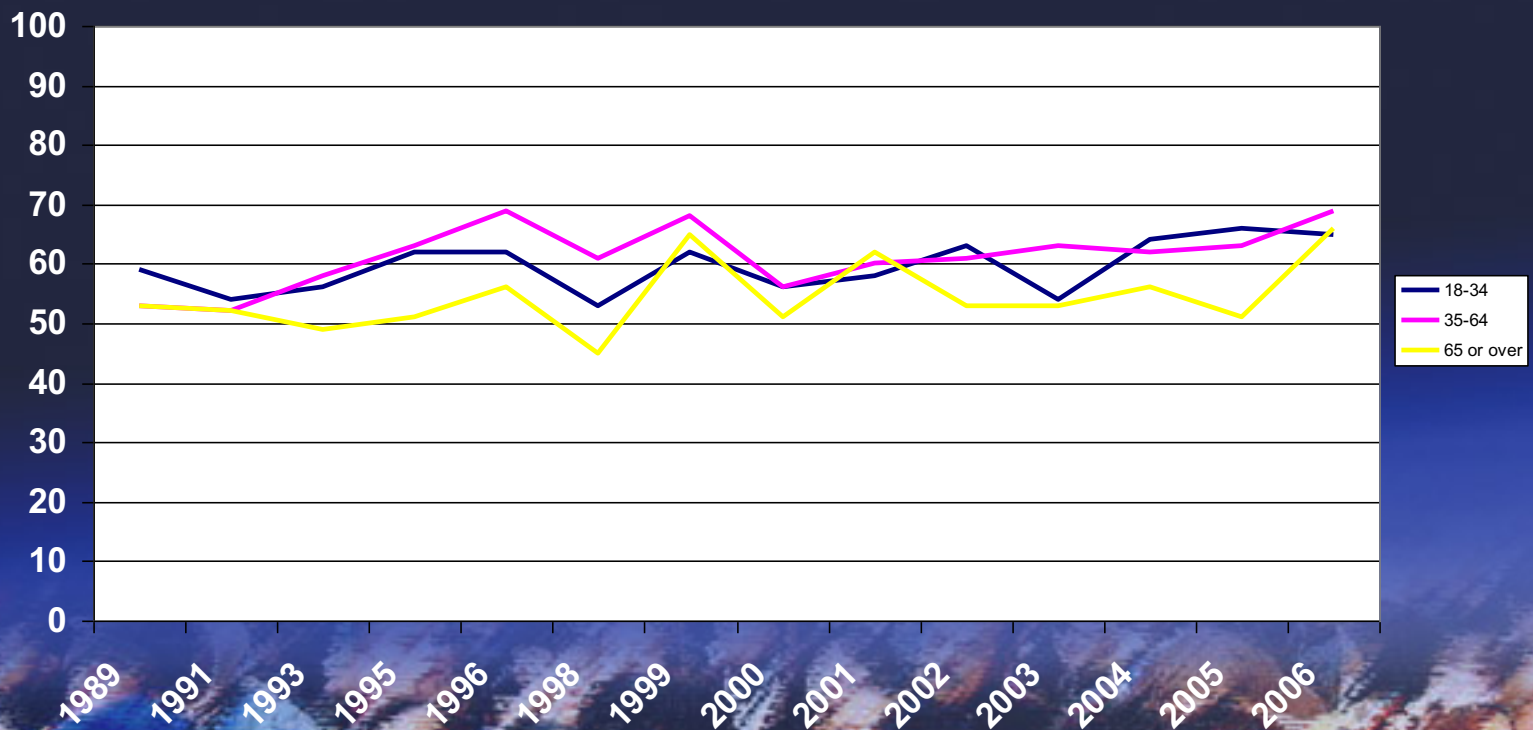


Figure 6: % who would prefer to send their children to a mixed-religion school, by age category 1989-2006



So far then...

- Some change over the years for all age groups
- Younger age group more optimistic about state of CR now than 5 years ago
- Little difference between age groups looking to future 5 years
- Younger age group most likely to think religion will always make a difference in NI
- Middle aged group would most prefer mixed-religion neighbourhoods, workplaces and schools

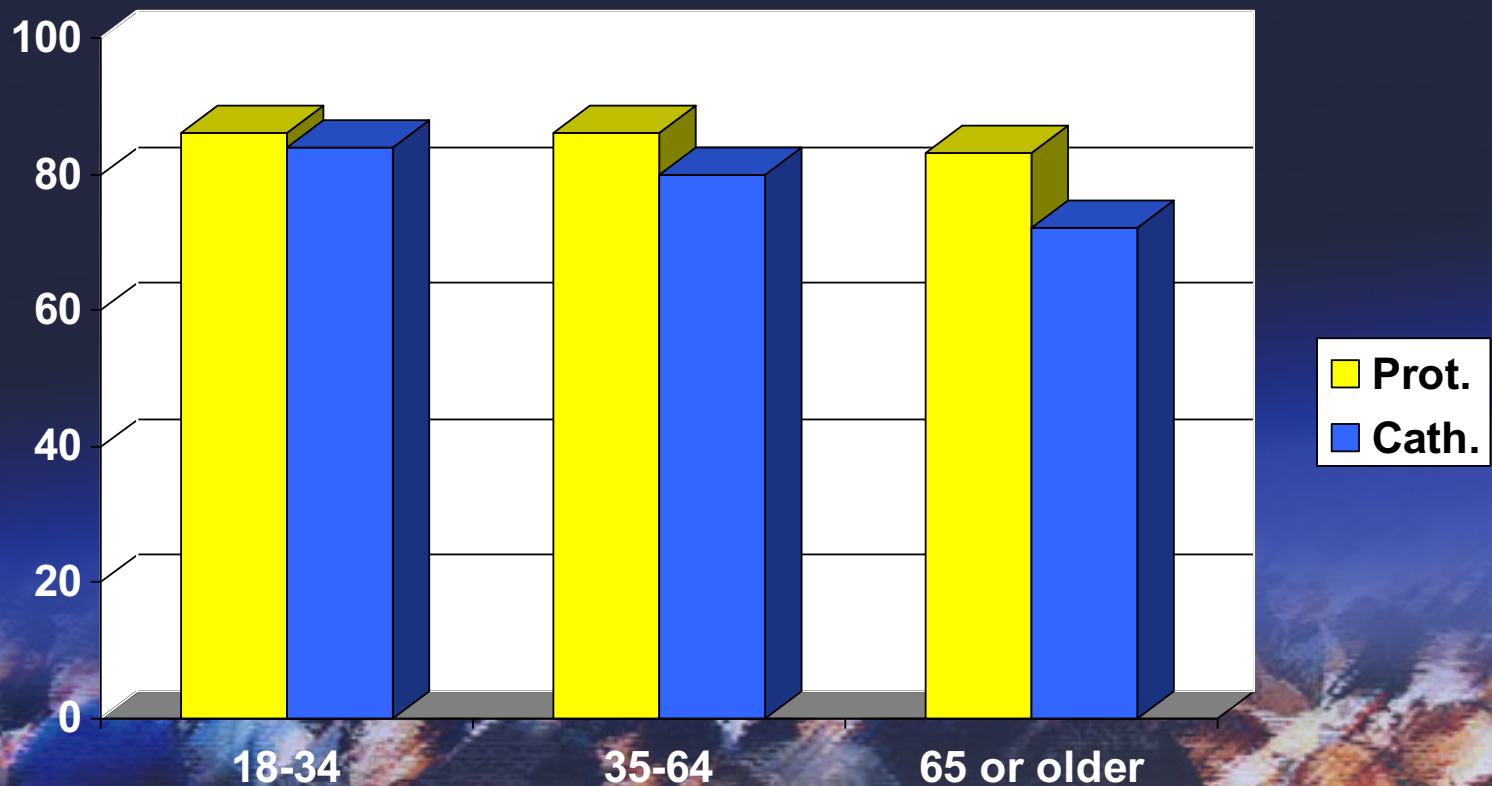


But what is this telling us?

- Could take these indicators and look at them in more detail eg by religious breakdown or by social class or educational level....
- Previous research has demonstrated Catholic-Protestant differences and the effect of increased mixing and integrated schooling



% believing that religion will always make a difference by age category and religion



Cohort Studies

*A **cohort** is a group of people who share a common characteristic or experience within a defined time period (Wikipedia)*

- **1948 cohort** ie people who were 20 years old when 'Troubles' broke out.
- **1968 cohort** ie people who were born at outbreak of 'Troubles'.



Qualitative Quotes

‘Well, the age group we’re all at, we grew up through the Troubles, and we all know somebody or have lost somebody very close to us... Everyone maybe in North Belfast would have, should it be a neighbour or an aunt, an uncle, a son, cousin. You know, everybody’s affected, like. Everyone has their own story to tell...’

Young Man in North Belfast COTT 1998





Key indicators by cohorts

Community relations indicator	1948 Cohort %	1968 Cohort %	YLT 2006 16 year olds %
Believing that relations between Prot. and Cath. are better now than 5 years ago			
Believing that relations between Prot. and Cath. will be better in 5 years time			
Religion will always make a difference in Northern Ireland			
Prefer to live in mixed-religion neighbourhood			
Prefer to work in a mixed-religion workplace			
Prefer to send their children to a mixed-religion school			

Cohort analysis

- Again age differences noted but again in different directions.
- For the younger group these are particularly interesting
- What more do we know about the younger people?



YLT Quotes 2006

- 'I would like Catholics and Protestants to be at peace and stop all the fighting'
- 'I would like there to be peace in Northern Ireland, I don't understand it, I found it hard to understand in history class.'



More quotes

- 'I feel that many people especially my age are very sectarian and very racist.'
- 'I do not think that things will improve at all more than likely just get a lot worse.'



More quotes

- 'If parents didn't pollute their children's minds with sectarianism, Catholic-Protestant relations would improve...'
- 'Community Relations are generally poor, most of the older community (30+) behave negatively towards people from different backgrounds. I hope my generation behave more naturally and openly to different people and cultures'



More quotes

- 'I feel they should keep trying to bring the communities together, but feel it is not working at this time.'
- 'There is not enough cross community relations and activities to make young people more aware of the different race and religions in our society...'



What do we need?

- Need for robust quantitative data
- Need for rich qualitative data – life stories
- Need for this information to be widely available and easily accessible
- Need for dissemination
- Policy Research links



Conclusion

- Yes, there have been changes over the years
- Yes, there are age differences
- However there is little evidence to suggest the young are that different from the older generations
- We need to be concerned about the lack of commitment to developing new policies and procedures regarding Community Relations



- 'There is a definite need to improve relations as well as promoting good relations.'

THANK YOU



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