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Northern Ireland

ACCESS RESEARCH KNOWLEDGE

Beyond Gross Divisions: National and religious identity combinations in Northern Ireland.

Orla Muldoon (UL)

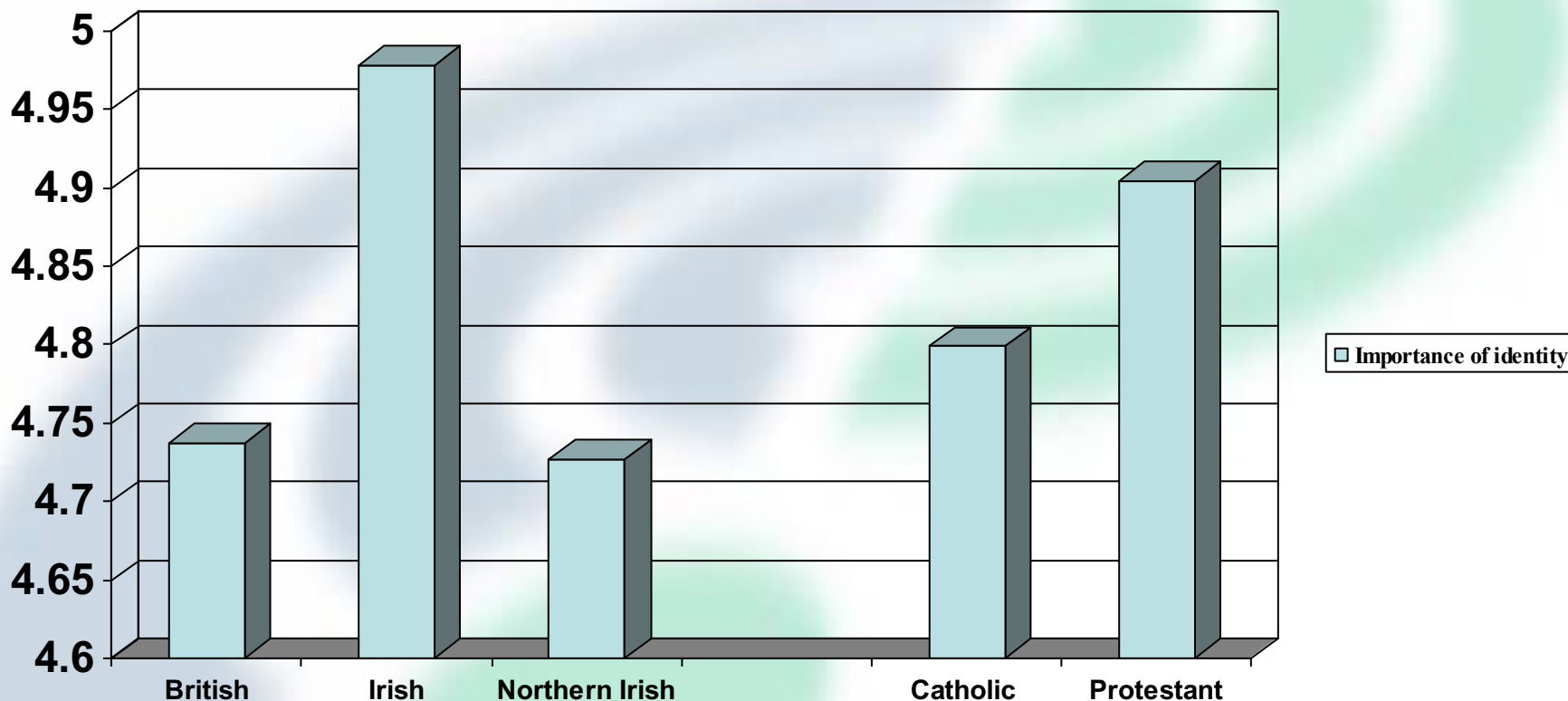
With Karen Trew, Paula Devine, Niamh McNamara, Lizanne Dowds and Katrina Lloyd (QUB)

ESRC Research Funded Programme

- Collective or social identities underpinning conflict
- The distinction between the individual and the social
 - Identities, emotions, attitudes, salience
- Religion as a social or cultural boundary predominates NI landscape but multiple identities important

- Religious, national, ethnic, historic, economic and cultural dimensions
- Multiple memberships:
 - National, religious, political
 - Changes over course of conflict-
 - Recession of Irish Protestant post 1969
 - Increased polarisation of national and religious identities
 - Ulster identity receded in 80's
 - Emergence of Northern Irish identity 1989

1. How do people think about their national and religious identities?
2. Previous research has looked at overlay of religious and national categorisation- but are there changes?
3. What is the nature of the relationship between identities?
4. Does the nature of these relationships have consequences?



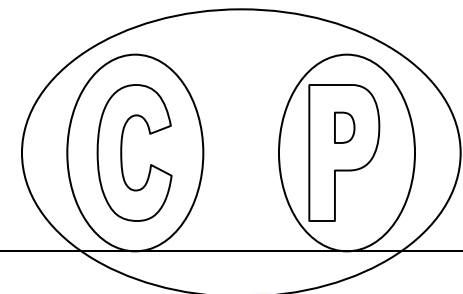
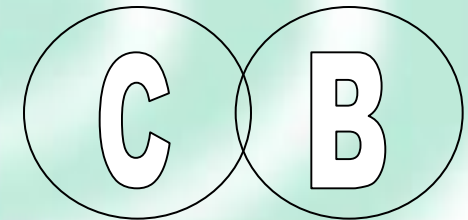
My nationality is an important part of my self image

In general my religion is an important reflection of who I am

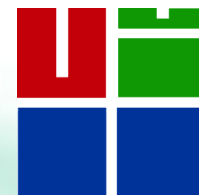
1. How do people think about their national and religious identities?
 - Rejection identification hypothesis
 - Majority/minority debate
 - Importance of dimension under consideration
 - Framing of public policy messages should be mindful of this- both groups are vulnerable but both groups are also strong.

➤ Social Identity research

1. Cross categorisation
2. Correlated identities
3. Inclusive identities



National and religious identity overlap

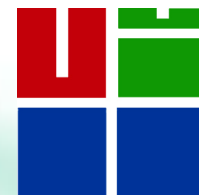


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Nationality	Catholic	Protestant	Other	Total
British	4%	33%	2%	39%
Irish	26%	2%	0.2%	29%
Northern Irish	10%	14%	1%	25%
Other	2%	4%	1%	7%
Total	41%	53%	4%	1050

- Correlated identification normative
- Crossed categorisation relatively unusual
- Inclusive identification
 - Northern Irish increased
 - Protestants and Catholics identify with group

New to NILT: Moreno Question



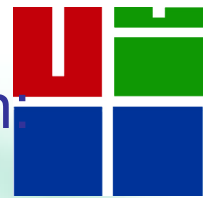
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Which if any best describes how you see yourself	British Protestant	Irish Catholic	British Catholic	Irish Protestant	Northern Irish Protestant	Northern Irish Catholic	Total
Irish not British	0	19.9%	2%	2%	1.5%	0%	20.9%
More Irish than British	.3%	8.7%	.5%	.6%	5.9%	1.1%	17.2%
Equally Irish and British	3.4%	1.5%	1.7%	1.4%	3.6%	5.5%	17.1%
More British than Irish	15.8%	.2%	1.7%	.3%	.2%	5.6%	23.9%
British not Irish	17.4%	0%	.5%	0%	0%	2.9%	20.9%
	37%	29.4%	4.7%	2.6%	11.4%	15.1%	100%

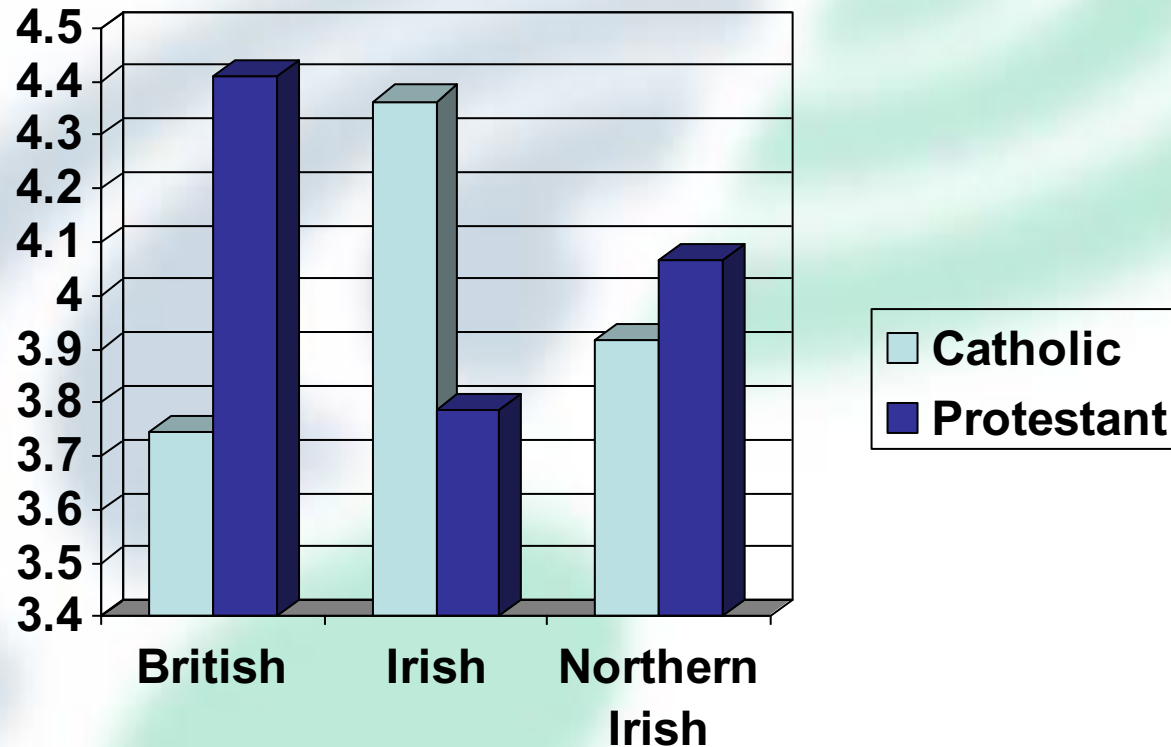
- Evidence that oppositional identity not as predominant in Northern Irish group i.e. more inclusive

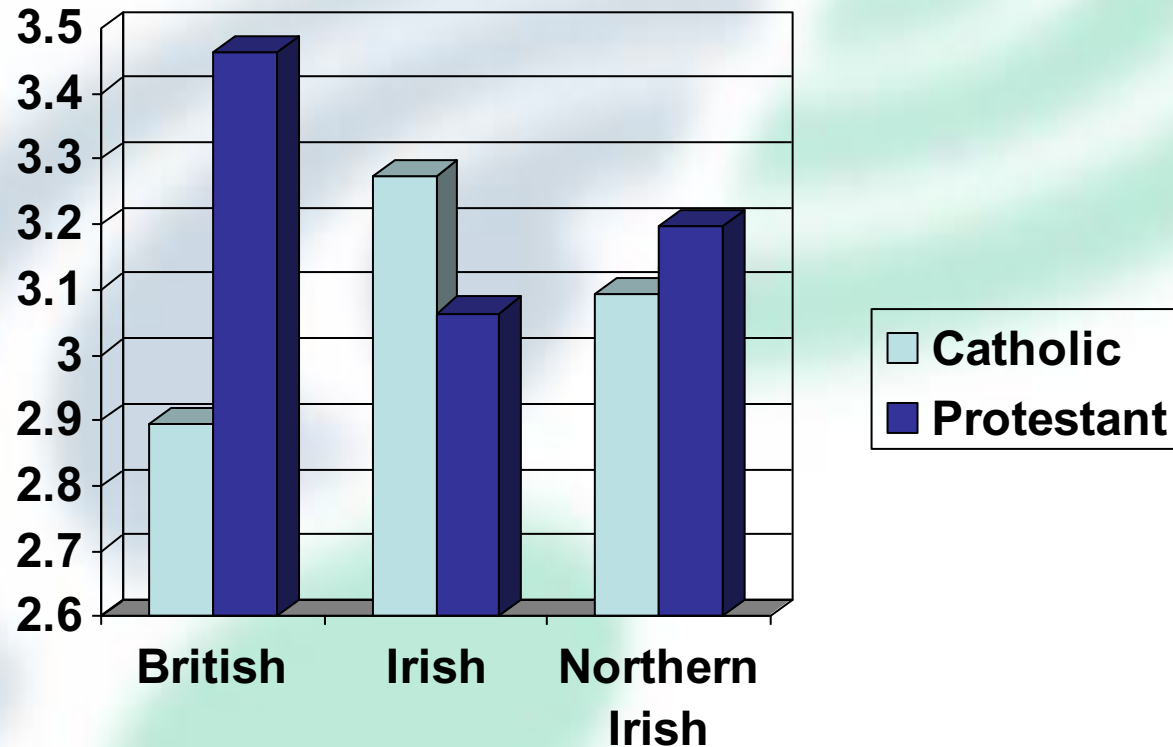
My nationality means a lot because I like Prodeastant (sic) friends because sometimes if you mix with Catholics they might not like who you are and what you support on the other side'. (Muldoon, McLaughlin and Trew, 2007)

- Evidence of much higher levels of oppositionality in traditional groups but cannot always be assumed.



- Flags
 - British Protestants and Irish Catholics responding with unease and annoyance to 'opposing' nationalities flag
 - Satisfied and hopeful when viewing own national flag
- Emblems
 - RUC and Hunger strike images divisive in Northern Irish group
 - No differences in response to less divisive images in NI group





- Mutually reinforcing nature of expected identity combinations
 - attitudes
 - identification
- Considerable proportion reject expected identity combinations
- Complexity of identity issues

- Importance of context to identity
 - Temporal orientation
 - Intergroup relations
- Northern Irishness as an identity?
 - A common identity
 - Social and political structures