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**Vani K Borooah & Colin Knox, *The Economics of Schooling in a Divided Society: The Case for Shared Education*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 208 pp. \$62 Hardcover.**

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**Abstract.** Our identity is defined by the stories we tell about the past and the stories that we suppress. Segregation in schooling by religion at an early age inculcates a narrative of identity that excludes the other. That is not helpful for either peace or prosperity. This book discusses one aspect of the peace process in a conflict society, Northern Ireland, which is attempting to break the circle of violence. The authors examine the potential benefits of integrated education.

**Keywords.** Majoritarian Democracy; School Quality; Ulster.

**JEL.** D72; I2; P16.

## 1. Introduction

This is a slim but useful volume examining potential efficacy of changes in the institutional structure of schooling in Northern Ireland, also known as Ulster, to repair the damage caused by a long history of violent pursuit of identity politics in a society divided along religious lines. This little region of less than two million people is smaller than most cities around the world. A reason why Ulster is of interest to a wider international audience is that it is an example of what is wrong with a majoritarian view of democracy. It is also an example of how a society blighted by internal conflicts can aspire for a peaceful future. These examples are of interest to economists because internal conflicts have negative impacts on economic prosperity. Institutional structures can ameliorate or exacerbate these difficulties.

The issues discussed here have resonance beyond the borders of Northern Ireland, a province of the United Kingdom. Developments in Ulster might be of special interest in India because Indian political leaders of very different economic ideology, from Shubhash Bose to Vallabhbhai Patel, had taken a special interest in the partition of Ireland in the last century. The experiment on peace which has started here is unique. Politicians who regarded each other as threat to their ontological security not very long ago have been brought together in a power sharing framework. Some of them have a dark past in this hitherto violence-ridden province. All societies blighted by internal conflicts would benefit from studying political and economic developments in Ulster.

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One of the interesting features of this book is to suggest comparison with other divided societies. For example, attention of readers is drawn to the impact on poverty and inequality of the Hindu caste system in India. Readers interested in the identity politics in Kashmir, Baluchistan and Jaffna, for example, might read possibilities for embracing prosperity over identity for their own societies from the example of Northern Ireland.

The peace process which started in earnest the 1990s is an example of what might be possible if imagination is not lacking, and there is willingness to compromise on sovereignty. We highlight below aspects of the recent history of Northern Ireland which might inspire out-of-the-box solutions to conflict societies wishing to repair the scars of division. It is in this context that the details of an experiment in non-sectarian desegregated schooling which is reported in the book under review gains importance beyond the British isles.

### 2. Recent History

We need to begin somewhere. The partition of Ireland is a good point in time to anchor the political economy of Northern Ireland, or Ulster as it is also known. It is a small geographical area which was carved out to remain a part of the United Kingdom when the south of the country separated from the UK as an independent country, Irish Free State, in 1922. Although liberal Protestants had espoused the dream of an Ireland that was non-sectarian, undivided and free of British rule, when the idea of independence was mooted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Free State, later to become the Republic of Ireland, was a largely Catholic country. The constitution of this new nation continued to claim Ulster as an integral part. Undoing the partition remained an aspiration for the new country. Ulster came to be viewed as strategically important for Britain and any talk of Irish unification was viewed with suspicion in London.

Ulster was majority Protestant and it was governed as a province of the United Kingdom under the sovereign jurisdiction of London. Ulster Protestants were in the main not reconciled to joining the Republic in the south. Whilst the parliament in London, the Westminster parliament, remained supreme, Northern Ireland enjoyed devolved day-to-day governance. A locally elected body, the Stormont parliament, was located in the capital Belfast. It had powers over education, health, policing, transport, and municipal affairs in the province. Notwithstanding the fact that Stormont was subservient to Westminster, the UK parliament, the Stormont leader was known as the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland.

Those that hanker for re-unification of the north and south of Ireland are called Republicans. Those that wish Ulster to remain part of the United Kingdom are called Unionists or Loyalists. Republican sympathies in favour of a unified Republic of Ireland continued to prevail in sections of the Catholic minority. The Protestant majority mostly subscribed to the Unionist (also called Loyalist) cause, loyal to the idea of remaining united with the United Kingdom. They also enjoyed a 2 to 1 demographic advantage in elections to Stormont. The political discourse was so impoverished that elections could not lead to governments articulating an encompassing interest bringing the communities together. The Stormont government thus elected ruled for the majority Protestants oppressing the minority Catholics. The government made no secret of their desire to discriminate against Catholics. The first Prime Minister, James Craig, later to be ennobled by the British as the 1st Viscount Craigavon, even boasted that Stormont was a parliament for Protestant people. The institutions that he presided over made Ulster an unwelcome place for Catholics. Successive prime ministers of Ulster presided over a majoritarian government, enjoying electoral support from the majority Protestant

community. What happened in Ulster was a perversion of the idea of the liberal principles of a democracy.

When the minority community started a civil rights movement in the late 1960s, marching to demand equal treatment by government, the police reacted with such brutality that it laid bare the dysfunctional institutions that London had bestowed upon the partitioned segment of Ireland which had been retained as part of the United Kingdom.

Working class Catholic areas became increasingly fearful of the partisan police force, Royal Ulster Constabulary, under the control of Stormont. As communal tensions rose during the civil rights movement, they came to rely on a nascent non-state armed republican movement. British troops were sent in August 1969 to protect the minority community from the majoritarian rulers in Stormont. Notwithstanding the transparent need for root and branch reform of the Ulster Constabulary to transform it from a partisan armed militia into a modern professional law enforcement agency, there was no bold initiative from London. Large tracts of working class Catholic areas came to depend on Republican armed groups which had stepped into the vacuum of providing security in these areas. These non-state actors became increasingly violent and authoritarian, and a new full-fledged terrorist movement established root in the Catholic neighbourhoods. The British army, having arrived as a protector of those living in these neighbourhoods, became entwined with the local (Protestant-run) police force to crush the Republican terrorists.

Starting on the right note in 1969, sending the army to provide a buffer between the paramilitary wings of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) in the province and the minority community, British policy lost focus on this particular objective. A symbiotic collusion between the army and the RUC from whom, paradoxically, the army had arrived in 1969 to protect the minority community developed. Repressive policies of detention without trial, and questionable methods of interrogation of political detainees and suspected terrorists, which would later be repeatedly censured by the European Court of Human Rights, made matters worse. Lacking any imaginative response to the need for reform of the dysfunctional institutions of governance bestowed on Ulster at the time of the partition, direct rule from London was imposed in 1972. The Protestant-dominated Stormont government elected by the majority for that majority with a record of misrule for half a century was dismissed. The powers of Stormont were vested in the Northern Ireland office headed by a Secretary of State who would be a member of the cabinet in London. Although the police force would now come under the control of the Minister of State, the culture of partisan policing was not addressed. The police force was not sanitised.

Repressive policies proved to be recruiting sergeants for republican terrorists. Not to be left behind, various Loyalist terrorist groups also emerged. An era of The Troubles, which began with the civil rights marches in the late 1960s, now morphed into a civil war. The Ulster economy fell behind the rapidly industrialising Republic in the south.

### 3. Ireland and the European Union

The Irish Republic remained a poor cousin of the United Kingdom even as it gained independence from Britain. Like most post-colonial countries in early stages of independence, Ireland followed a *swadeshi* (import substitution) economic policy remaining poor. Economic thinking began to change in the 1960s, culminating in accession to the European Union in 1973. Outward looking

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economic policy encouraged foreign investment and industrialisation. From being an exporter of people, Ireland was to experience an influx of the young.

In the Republic, there was great social upheaval accompanying economic progress. Changes in the structure of the economy were accompanied by changes in the demographic composition as businesses and workers from Europe and the US entered the economy.

Demographic change and urbanisation reduced the power of the clergy. Tabloid reports of sexual peccadillos of senior members of the clergy further weakened the hold of the Catholic Church. The Republic had embarked on a road to greater tolerance of diversity in religious faith. Blending of Caesar and Church, to borrow a phrase from Bertrand Russell, was coming to an end. Urbanisation in its wake brought integration with the more secular countries in Europe.

The politics of the country was focused on economic growth, and the political discourse was no longer imprisoned in concern about pre-independence wrongs, real and imagined, done to the Irish by the British. Unification of Ireland was no longer high on the agenda in public discourse. Economic prosperity was the main goal.

Increasing prosperity in the South, the Republic, began to be noticeable. Growth rates in the Republic would eventually reach heights comparable to the fastest growing economies in East Asia. Per capita income in the Republic, averaged over the 1970s, was 29 per cent below the figure for the United Kingdom of which Ulster was a province. In the 1990s, the difference had narrowed to 13 per cent. The average over the whole of the 1990s masks the fact the Irish Republic's per capita income by the late-1990s had exceeded that of the United Kingdom.

Trends in the economy that Ulster would dramatically fall behind the Republic were beginning to show in the 1980s. There were tell-tale signs of prosperous Protestant workers in shipbuilding and aircraft manufacturing being especially vulnerable began to emerge. There was loss of enthusiasm in mainland Britain under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to shore up these industries with taxpayer subsidy. The Catholic minority was excluded from these lucrative jobs due to labour market discrimination. Protestants who had enjoyed the fruits of discrimination against the Catholic community began to feel the economic pinch. New investment was needed.

The campaign of violence by Republican and Unionist terrorist groups did not inspire business confidence. Antics of some of the political leaders of the Protestant community did not endear the province to prospective investors. For example, one of these religious fundamentalists, elected from Ulster to sit in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, made a spectacle of himself by denouncing Pope John Paul II as the Antichrist in a theatrical gesture in the first papal appearance at Strasbourg. Capital and talent were flowing into the South whilst Ulster was shunned because of its reputation of civil disorder and religious bigotry.

The government in Dublin was willing to concede that some in the Protestant community in Ulster needed assurance that entering a dialogue for peace with the Republicans in Northern Ireland would not necessarily lead to unification of the north and the south into a single republic. Notwithstanding opposition in the Loyalist community, the British government came to accept that there was no British strategic interest in holding on to Ulster. Both London and Dublin needed to be parties to any negotiated settlement between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. A formal declaration to the effect that the British and Irish governments wish to foster reconciliation within Ulster without territorial design, known as the Anglo-Irish Agreement, was signed in 1985.

It was also a signal to the Irish Diaspora in the US that Dublin did not desire to force unification against the wishes of the people living in Ulster. Economic

prosperity was the main aim. Not having to live with the consequences of terrorism and steeped in a romantic vision of the independence struggle against the British at the formation of the Irish Free State, the Irish Diaspora in the US had been a conduit for money laundering and arms supply to Republican terrorists in Northern Ireland. There was now a clear signal from Dublin that interference to stoke terrorist flames in Northern Ireland was not viewed as helpful by the Republic of Ireland.

By the start of the 1990s, the civilian population in Northern Ireland, both Republicans and Unionists, might have become aware of the economic consequences of the violence perpetrated by terrorists acting in their name. Peace in Ulster could provide economic benefit even to the Republic in the south. The corroding influence on army morale of indefinite reliance on the armed forces in civilian governance was becoming a potential strategic inconvenience to Britain. All parties were getting restless for an end to violence. It was time to try to articulate a timeline for withdrawing the British Army from the province.

More than two decades after British troops were sent to Northern Ireland and after 21 years of direct rule from London, a glimmer of hope for peace emerged with the Downing Street Declaration of 1993 when the prime ministers of Ireland and Britain announced that they were prepared to challenge aloud political taboos in their respective countries to seek an end to the civil war in Ulster.

A new government in London under John Major was willing to concede that there was no strategical reason for the UK to retain Northern Ireland as an integral part of the country. The Irish *Taoiseach* (Prime Minister) Albert Reynolds also took the bold step of declaring in unambiguous words that undoing the partition without democratic consent of the population of Ulster was not on the agenda. To provide further assurance that the world was changing, the Downing Street Declaration articulated the vision of a secular liberal democracy in all parts of Ireland which would “respect the democratic dignity and the civil rights and religious liberties of both communities”.

The immediate focus was for terrorist groups to surrender arms. Without quibbling over sovereignty, the UK agreed to entrust to foreign observers acceptable to the combatants the verification process of the surrender of terrorist weapons. Republican terrorists would not submit to British inspection of the disarming process. The Loyalists did not trust Dublin. An independent observer group comprising a Canadian retired general, a serving military officer from Finland and two US diplomats, independent of London and Dublin, was acceptable to the terrorist groups in Northern Ireland to oversee the surrender of arms.

The goal was to hold elections after terrorism was credibly renounced by armed groups by surrendering arms to the foreign observers for destruction. Elections would be held under a power sharing formula which would ensure that a majoritarian government could not again come to power. To govern for all, the majority must take into account the wishes of the minority. It took another 14 years before a power sharing formula could be put to practice, and an elected government in Stormont could replace direct administration from London. The peace process is still, two decades after the Downing Street Declaration of 1993, a work in progress, but it remains a beacon of hope for divided societies mired in conflict.

#### 4. Economics and Politics

Whilst the observation that an event follows an earlier different event does not necessarily establish that the latter is caused by the former, it may nonetheless be reasonable to surmise that economic change in the British Isles has been a catalyst for the peace process in Ulster, extricating the province from a cycle of violence

inspired by the politics of identity and a warped view of democracy as majoritarian rule. The story of the recent history of the province gives hope that some of the seemingly intractable conflicts over identity that blight the world may have a peaceful, if hesitant, diplomatic solution if economic incentives can liberate political discourse imprisoned in the narrative of the past. For an Indian audience which may have seen Ireland through the prism of colonial politics in the past, there is need to understand changes in thinking that have taken place since the integration of the Irish economy with the rest of Europe. Every little bit of detail in that slow process of social transformation needs to be understood if lessons are to be learned. The results of educational experiments discussed in the book under review are outcomes of a study commissioned by this government in Northern Ireland.

### 5. Separate Education

The sectarian divide has traditionally been bolstered in Ulster by segregated education. Children in Northern Ireland, as in the rest of Britain, are largely educated in the state sector. No more than 8 per cent of school pupils attend private schools, called public schools in a strange twist to the English language. The book under review only considers government supported schools. The nomenclature is not easy for foreigners. Not only are private schools called public schools, there are two types of state sector post-primary schools only one of which is called a secondary school. The other type is called a grammar school. Entrance to the latter is determined by academic selection around the age of 11. Those that are called secondary schools are non-selective post-primary schools.

Changes in educational philosophy in post-war mainland Britain emphasising the teaching of ethics over religious doctrine were not replicated in the province. Secularism is new to Ulster. The state sector in the province used to be, and it is still largely the case, divided into two types: maintained and controlled. Neither is secular. Catholic children went to maintained schools and Protestant children went to controlled schools. Although apostasy was not an offence, and certainly not a criminal offence punishable by death as it might be in some countries, it would be a brave parent indeed who would declare to be agnostic in Ulster. There was no official apartheid and children could cross the communal divide. Very few did. Only around 6.29 per cent of Catholics and 0.8 per cent of Protestants at primary level crossed the divide (p.54). They grew up with different narratives of history, different perspectives on the place of religion in society, and different ethos of Christianity. It was not until university, those that went to university, that Protestant and Catholic students would sit together in class unless they went to an integrated school. Very few did go to such schools because there were only a small number of non-denominational schools at the post-primary level. Also these were not grammar schools which aspire to achieve better examination results needed for entry into university.

In recent years, in the wake of the peace process, there has been interest in the outcome of integrated education where Catholic and Protestant children are taught together. Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI) commissioned a study by the authors (Borooah & Knox) to evaluate the educational outcome of integrated education. Whilst this particular statistical analysis has narrow focus, the book ventures into a discussion of wider literature about potential contribution to social cohesion of educational reform aimed to provide shared education between communities.

### 6. Educational Outcomes

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There is a long discussion in the book of new initiatives, Shared Education Programmes, to bring children from different religious background in contact with each other at both primary and post-primary levels. These initiatives also aim to introduce teachers to different traditions to broaden their perspective on education. Shared classroom education in some rural schools has focussed on collaboration between schools of different denominations. The educational outcome is determined not simply by examination results but by various qualitative measures discussed in publications by one of the authors (Knox) that are cited here. These chapters are self-contained and enriched with citations. They are not repeated in this book review.

Below we look at the statistical exercise examining examination results in different schools at secondary level. The reason is that these narrow measures of school performance influence parental choice of schools. If integrated education is to succeed, parents have to choose non-denominational schools over alternatives.

There is a considerable body of the literature in education suggesting that integrated education is beneficial for community cohesion, and a policy concern in Ulster is about increasing the provision of non-sectarian schooling. Whilst public opinion is also moving in favour of integration, but this is not reflected in parental choice. There are unfilled places in these schools. Since parental choice is determined by performance of pupils, a statistical exercise in the study focuses on comparing the academic outcome of integrated education with denominational secondary schools.

Northern Ireland did not run with educational thinking gaining foothold in the mainland in the 1960s, ending academic selection at age 11 for entrance to post-primary schools. All main political parties in mainland Britain are opposed to selection at such an early age. It is different in Northern Ireland where society is more conservative. Grammar schools remain an important component of post-primary education there. Each of the two types of post-primary schools, grammar and secondary, is sub-divided into Catholic, and Protestant. There are a handful of non-denominational (integrated) schools, only two of which are selective. The study under review compares examination results obtained by pupils attending non-selective integrated schools with those going to non-selective denominational schools. The data are not rich enough to compare grammar school performance.

Educational outcome has an impact on income inequality, and poverty has a negative effect on academic achievement. This argument is elaborated upon with citations to literature in the book. To the extent that Catholics as the minority group have suffered discrimination, pupils attending Catholic schools are poorer on average than those in Protestant schools. That does not necessarily mean that these schools would automatically register lower academic achievement. There are also intra-group differences to which attention is drawn in the book. The statistical analysis teases out, *inter alia*, these differences.

In common with statistical literature of this genre, academic performance and pupil attribute are measured by a number of readily available indicators, and they are outlined in Chapter 4. Students sit 10 GCSE examinations in Year 12 in a wide range of subjects varying from English to Mathematics. They are around 16 years of age when they take these examinations. Those that seek university entrance have to stay in school for a further two years specialising in 3 areas. They take A-level examination in these subjects. Students are more likely to take A-level examinations and encouraged to do well if they attend grammar schools which are better equipped and more aspirational. To compare academic performance across the range of schools, GCSE results in examinations taken in Year 12 are the main measures used for statistical scrutiny. The index used here is the proportion of children who obtain at least 5 “good” GCSE results. A good result is any grade

between A and C. Those that achieve 5 or more A-C grades are divided by the number of pupils in Year 12 sitting GCSE examinations in a school to compute the index of performance for the school. I do not know if schools could manipulate this index of success by discouraging weaker kids from sitting the examination, but this is the index that is used by Borooah & Knox. In any event, this is also the index which is used in the literature.

It is the case in England, as also in Ulster, that performance of a school pupil depends on individual attributes, in addition to the type of school attended by the pupil. For example, grammar schools may have a greater expectation of academic achievement than secondary schools. Students' personal attributes are recorded by their household income and whether they have special needs to cater for problems such as attention deficiency, Asperger syndrome and the like. Children from households below a particular threshold level of per capita income do not have to pay for school meals, if they choose to eat school meals. Others have to pay if they participate in school meals. Thus the children are categorised in this exercise by those that are on free school meals (FSM) and those that are not. Those with special needs are classified as SEN. In comparing the performance between schools, the impacts of these two variables are filtered out in a regression exercise.

Although FSM and SEN are personal attributes in the regression equations, it should be noted that they also capture something about the school ethos. Some schools may have a kinder disposition towards the children of the poor than others. Some schools make a greater effort to engage SEN pupils. This aspect of a school's performance should show up in regression coefficients of FSM and SEN variables.

Using the statistical tool of Oaxaca decomposition, originally developed to measure gender and race discrimination in the labour market, the authors measure the type-of-school effect of different types of schools. The methodology of Oaxaca decomposition is explained in sufficient detail in the book for the reader to be able to undertake similar studies.

## **7. School Comparison**

The idea behind the Oaxaca technique is this. Assume that the performance of a pupil depends partly on attributes independent of the type of school, say protestant controlled or non-denominational integrated, she attends. Now measure the returns on these attributes by running a regression of average performance, for example the index of at least 5 good GCSE results, against these attributes using the combined database. Now predict the performance of each type of school using the coefficients (returns) estimated above for attributes applying to that type of school. Then the difference between the actual performance and the predicted performance is the contribution on performance of the type of school the pupil attends. Thus the method allows comparison of pupil performance between different types of schools.

The authors are aware of the need for caution in the application of the Oaxaca technique to tease out, say, the impact on pupil performance of being sent to sectarian versus integrated schools. For example, there are ambiguities in the choice of proxy variables for individual attributes. Researchers in education in England, and there is no reason to expect different in Ulster, report that parent's income have an impact on performance of pupils. A proxy of this 'attribute' chosen by the authors, in common with literature in this genre, is the proportion of children qualifying for free school meals (FSM children). A richer database might allow a richer range of parental income and occupation variables.

The Oaxaca technique does not tell us why the return on an attribute is what it is. Is it because children from poorer households are blighted by lack of

encouragement at home or is it because they are discriminated against in the school system, if only through lack of attention? The authors are aware of these limitations and need for sociological studies to illuminate the factors behind proxies. For example, they cite (p.3) studies conducted in India that under-achievement of lower caste, *Dalit*, pupils can partly be explained by “discrimination, exclusion, and humiliation” in a cultural environment of schools which are “unwelcoming”. Most teachers are poorly equipped to deal with the disadvantages bestowed on these children by the culture of the school.

One of the interesting findings reported in the book is that FSM children fare better in Catholic schools (maintained schools) than in Protestant schools (controlled schools). Insofar as the two different types of schools are influenced by the two different strands of Christianity, it is legitimate to investigate if the particular strain of the Protestant tradition as it has evolved in Ulster is less culturally inclusive than the Catholic tradition there. Even at primary level, a greater proportion of FSM pupils in the maintained sector primary schools are able to compete successfully for a place in grammar schools than the proportion in controlled primary schools. Protestant children from poor households may be less well served, on the heroic assumption of *ceteris paribus*, by Protestant schools than the children of the poor amongst the Catholics. Some scholars have gone further. The authors cite (p.82) work suggesting that all pupils would be better served by dispensing with segregation and putting students together in “learning communities” that are independent of sectarian control. This is indeed what the experiments in integrated education are trying to achieve. The research informing this book was initiated by a study commissioned from the authors by the Department of Education Northern Ireland to examine the performance of integrated schools.

On a purely mechanical measure of performance, for example, proportion of students achieving “good” marks (Figure 2.1 p.33), the achievement of the integrated sector is credible. This sector does considerably worse than grammar schools, whether Catholic or Protestant. That is not a fair comparison because the integrated schools are only beginning to emerge and they remain largely non-selective. The point is that integrated education, if it were to become the common form of schooling, would impose no academic disadvantage even on the crude measures of academic success which often influence parental choice for schooling. A good education system should allow choice of schooling not constrained by religion or other group membership of parents. The outcome of integrated schooling in the non-selective post-primary sector gives hope that the tentative steps towards integration in schooling are justified.

As to whether selective schools should also be made available in larger numbers to compete with denominational grammar schools, that is a different question. If educational philosophy remains conservative and selection at a young age based on test results at Age 11 continues in Ulster, there is certainly a case for improving access to non-sectarian grammar schools.

However, the electoral in Ulster may have to start engaging with modern thinking in education, certainly in England, that selecting a small fraction of school children based on examination results at a very early age to be taught in properly resourced schools and relegating the rest to poorly funded secondary schools with lower aspiration is a dis-service to children. It is a waste of talent in the economy. Predicting the entire lifetime achievement and then making these predictions self-fulfilling in the funding method of applied to schools is an outmoded view of education. Children are denied equality of opportunity when life chances are based on an arbitrary system of selection at a young age.

Now that equality of opportunity between Catholics and Protestants has become an integral part of political discourse in Ulster, one hopes that Northern Ireland would also engage with other modern European values of equality of opportunity for all children. Having said that, we note that whilst Ulster is moving towards the idea of shared education, when one day children would no longer be segregated by religion, England is travelling in the opposite direction undoing achievements of the past by allowing men with money to set up ‘faith’ schools where sceptical enquiry is not the norm.

### 8. Conclusion

We end where we began. Ulster was a textbook example of the perversion of the idea of democracy by resort to majoritarian rule. It is also an example of a conflict society mired in violence and terrorism being able to conquer this dark legacy to move towards an inclusive democracy.

The reason for ending segregation is not just an instrumental argument. There is much in this book that gives food for thought about reducing inequality of opportunity. The authors enrich their work by citing and evaluating a wide range of literature on the place of schooling in society. As noted earlier, there is a rich discussion of the qualitative methods of valuing educational outcome, and discussion in this book is not restricted to the “5 good GCSE” index, notwithstanding the importance of this index in parental choice of schools. Those that are interested in education, especially in societies blighted by the politics of identity, would find this book worth reading.



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