



## Beyond the Wire: Former Prisoners and Conflict Transformation in Northern Ireland

*Peter Shirlow, Kieran McEvoy*

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This book provides the first detailed examination of the role played by former loyalist and republican prisoners in grass roots conflict transformation work in the Northern Ireland peace process. It challenges the assumed passivity of former prisoners and ex-combatants. Instead, it suggests that such individuals and the groups which they formed have been key agents of conflict transformation. They have provided leadership in challenging cultures of violence, developed practical methods of resolving inter-communal conflict and found ways for communities to explore their troubled past. In analysing this, the authors challenge the sterile demonisation of former prisoners and the processes that maintain their exclusion from normal civic and social life.

The book is a constructive reminder of the need for full participation of both former combatants and victims in post-conflict transformation. It also lays out a new agenda for reconciliation which suggests that conflict transformation can and should begin 'from the extremes'.

The book will be of interest to students of criminology, peace and conflict studies, law and politics, geography and sociology as well as those with a particular interest in the Northern Ireland conflict.



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