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# The Twelfth of July

# Outline of Presentation

1. Background and context
2. Participants
3. Visual displays
4. Place and space
5. Tradition and change
6. Opposition

# What is the Twelfth?

- Commemoration of the Battle of the Boyne
  - William III and 1690
  - Popular celebration for Protestants
- Twelfth as ritual
  - Display of unity
    - Exclude the 'other'
  - Founding myth for Protestants in Ireland
  - Display of strength and control

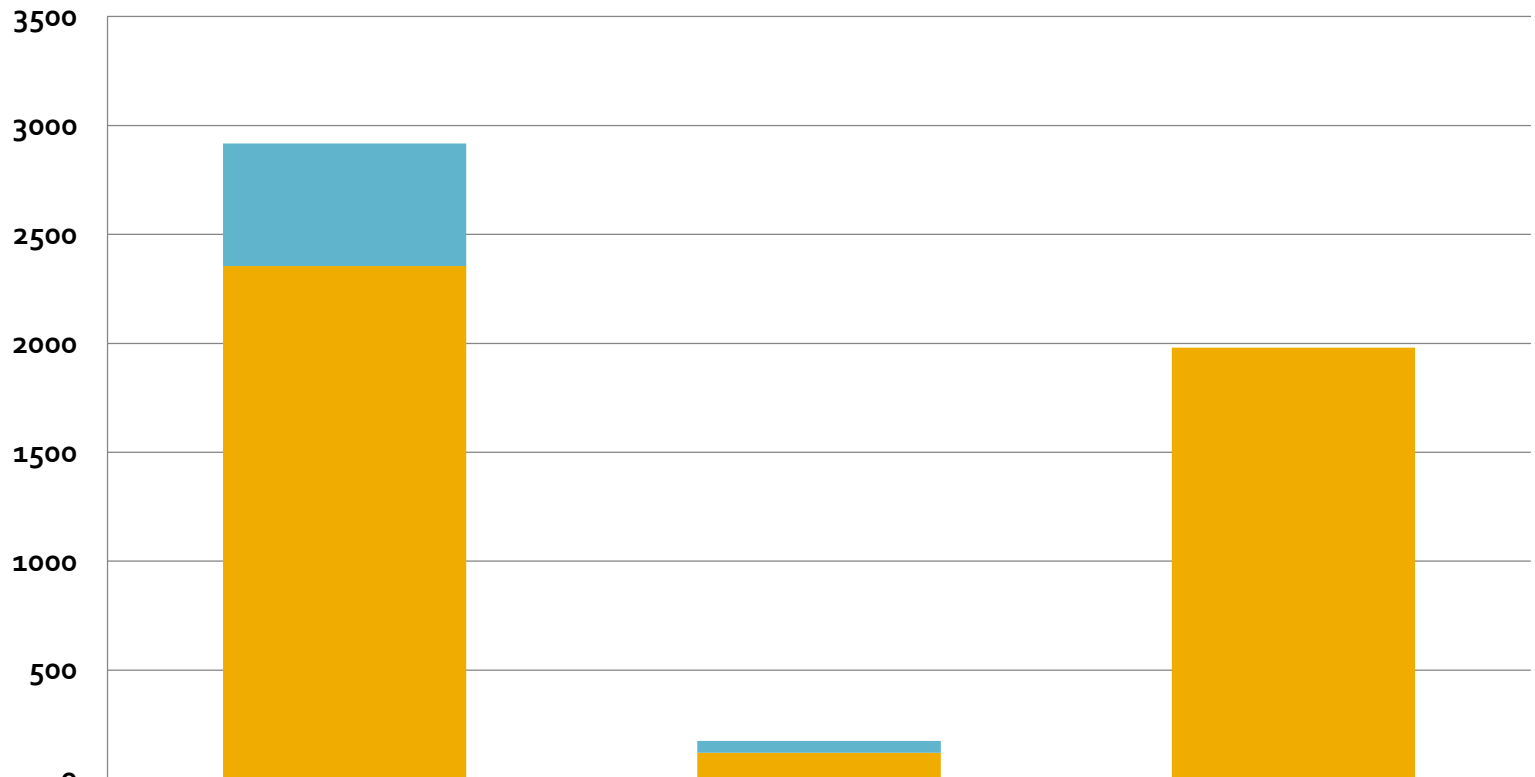
# The Orange Institution

- Order founded in 1795
  - To promote the interests of Protestantism
  - Claimed 100,000 members in the past
  - Parades, church services, networks & patronage
- Fraternal organisation
  - Masons, Black, Apprentice Boys, Hibernians, INF
- Hierarchical but decentralised
  - Local autonomy
- Spread through Irish diaspora
  - And through missionary work

# The Marching Season

- Annual cycle of parades from Easter to end of August
  - Orange Order: June & July
  - Black Institution: July & August
  - Apprentice Boys: Easter, August and December
  - Bands: Easter – September
  - AOH & INF: March & August
  - Republicans: Range of commemorations

# Parades in 2014-15



■ Sensitive  
■ Non-Sensitive

Unionist

Nationalist

Other

563

55

0

2355

121

1980

# Twelfth Parades

- Eighteen main parades
  - Most venues rotate
- 500+ parades in total
- Orange Order parade
  - Bands are invited
- Lasts from early morning till evening

# Ritual of Unity

- Protestant and mainly male
  - Multi generational
  - Limited female participation
  - No Catholics
- Diverse sections of Protestant community
  - Different interests and perspectives
  - Mainly working class
  - Urban and rural differences
  - Religious and paramilitary



# Display of Identity

- Banners outline aspects of Protestant identity
  - Boyne, Somme and other historical events
  - Faith and Religion
  - Monarchs and Britain
  - Local Identity
- Form of parade as military march
  - To (battle) field and back
  - Displays of strength

# Battle of the Boyne



# Battle of the Somme





# Others Historical Events



# Faith





# Biblical Stories



# Royalty & Britishness





# Local Identity





# Militarism and Paramilitarism



# Bands



# Place and Space

- Parades take over the city / Northern Ireland
  - Belfast closes down
- Walking 'traditional routes'
- Exercising 'right to walk the Queens Highway'
  - Claims to space
  - Ethnic and political dominance

# Tradition and Change

- Always the same, always different
  - Vital element of loyal identity
- Twelfth responds and reacts to changes
  - Visual repertoire expands
  - Routes change
  - Style of bands change
  - Paramilitary presence

# Opposition

- Always been opposition to Orange parades
  - Triumphant and sectarian
- Recent cycle of protests since 1995
  - Marches near or through Catholic areas
  - Mainly in urban areas
- Limited dialogue or compromise
  - Less tense now than in recent years