

# **Religion and Public Attitudes towards Amnesty in Northern Ireland: Is There a God Gap?**

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The granting of amnesties has now become a cornerstone of peacebuilding efforts in societies emerging from conflict. Yet, to date, the role of religion in determining attitudes towards such arrangements remains highly anecdotal. This is particularly the case when the views of victims are considered. Mindful of these omissions, this article investigates the relationship between a range of religious measures – religious practices, beliefs in and about God, and religious saliency – and attitudes towards an amnesty for those who admitted carrying out acts of violence during Northern Ireland's troubled past. Based on nationally representative survey data, the results suggest that Protestants are significantly more opposed to such an initiative than Catholics and this relationship holds regardless of whether individual victims or members of the general public are considered. For both religious communities, however, it is beliefs in and about God which emerges as the key, albeit divergent, determinant of views.

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