

I.B. TAURIS

IRELAND and the MAGDALENE LAUNDRIES

A Campaign for Justice



Claire McGettrick, Katherine O'Donnell,
Maeve O'Rourke, James M. Smith & Mari Steed

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A devastating and vital account of life behind
the high walls of Ireland's institutions

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IRELAND AND THE MAGDALENE LAUNDRIES: A CAMPAIGN FOR JUSTICE

Claire McGettrick, Katherine O'Donnell, Maeve O'Rourke, James M. Smith and Mari Steed

A book written in response to Magdalene survivors' appeal that the public know and learn from the abuses they experienced so that what happened to them can never be forgotten.

This book offers an overview of the Justice for Magdalenes campaign and the ongoing efforts to advance public knowledge and research into the Magdalene Laundries.

It highlights how the Irish State continues to evade its responsibilities to survivors and its failure to acknowledge the abuses in these institutions.

Drawing from a range of primary sources, the book reveals the fundamental flaws in the Irish State's investigation of the laundries.

It categorically disproves the McAleese Report's claim that all 155 women exhumed from High Park Magdalene Laundry are now accounted for.

All source materials are available in an archive on the JFMR website:

<http://jfmrresearch.com>

In the name of the girls and women held in the Magdalene Laundries, all authors' royalties are being donated to the charity [Empowering People in Care \(EPIC\)](#).

BOOK REVIEWS

...one of the greatest acts of truth-telling in the recent history of Ireland. ... In helping the survivors to reclaim their dignity, this indispensable book also helps the rest of us to reclaim the true meaning of shared citizenship and common humanity.

FINTAN O'TOOLE

Irish Times Journalist & Orwell Prize winner

This brave book is an archive of an unfinished movement, a survey of the continuing harms of so-called 'historical abuse', and a set of demands for law reform and political change. ... it is an important challenge to official histories...

MÁIRÉAD ENRIGHT

University of Birmingham

It is impossible to describe the toxic fog of shame, distortion and indifference these writers worked through so the truth of the Magdalene Laundries could be seen in a proper light. No one wanted to know. They are my heroes.

ANNE ENRIGHT

Author & winner of the 2007 Booker Prize

Published 9th September 2021 | Paperback: 9780755617494 | eBook: 9780755617500 | 304 pages

Authors are available for book signings, discussions and other events.

Please write to bookqueries@jfmrresearch.com with requests.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Photo credit: Bryan Meade



Photo credit: Fiona Sugrue Ward

CLAIRE MCGETTRICK is an Irish Research Council postgraduate scholar at University College Dublin, Ireland. She is cofounder of [Justice for Magdalenes Research](#) and [Adoption Rights Alliance](#). She jointly coordinates the multi-award-winning [CLANN](#) project with Dr Maeve O'Rourke, as well as the [Magdalene Names Project](#), which has recorded the details of over 1,900 women who lived and died in Ireland's Magdalen laundries.

KATHERINE O'DONNELL is Associate Professor at University College Dublin, Ireland, and has published widely on the history of sexuality and gender and the intellectual history of eighteenth-century Ireland. She has been principal investigator on a number of funded research projects, including gathering [an archival and oral history of the Magdalen institutions](#) funded by the Irish Research Council. As a member of [Justice for Magdalenes Research](#) she has shared in activist honours, including the Irish Labour Party's Thirst for Justice Award.

MAEVE O'ROURKE is Lecturer in human rights law at the Irish Centre for Human Rights, NUI Galway. She is also a barrister (England and Wales) and attorney-at-law (New York). Since 2009 she has provided pro bono legal assistance to [Justice for Magdalenes Research](#) and is currently co-director of the [CLANN](#) project, an evidence-gathering and advocacy collaboration between [Justice for Magdalenes Research](#), [Adoption Rights Alliance](#) and Hogan Lovells International, LLP.

JAMES M. SMITH is an associate professor at Boston College, United States. His book [Ireland's Magdalen Laundries and the Nation's Architecture of Containment](#) (2007) was awarded the Donald Murphy Prize for Distinguished First Book by the American Conference for Irish Studies. He is a member of the advocacy group [Justice for Magdalenes Research](#).

MARI STEED was one of more than 2,000 children exported from Ireland to the United States and was born in the Bessborough Mother and Baby Home in Cork, where she also endured being part of the vaccine trials. Mari's mother spent time in a Magdalen laundry. She serves as US coordinator with the [Adoption Rights Alliance](#). In 2003 Mari cofounded [Justice for Magdalenes](#) (now JFM Research), an advocacy organisation that successfully campaigned for a state apology and restorative justice for survivors of Ireland's Magdalen laundries. She currently serves on the group's executive committee.

RECENT MEDIA APPEARANCES

18 September 2021, *The Journal*

Featuring James M. Smith. https://www.thejournal.ie/new-book-on-magdalene-laundries-in-ireland-5548763-Sep2021/?utm_source=shortlink

17 September 2021, WLRFM, *Deise Today* with Damien Tiernan.

Featuring Claire McGettrick.

9 September 2021, RTÉ Radio One, *Claire Byrne Live*

Featuring Maeve O'Rourke and Katherine O'Donnell.

<https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/clips/22003151/>

9 September 2021, Northern Sound FM, *The Joe Finnegan Show*

Featuring Claire McGettrick.

8 June 2021, RTÉ *Prime Time*

Featuring Maeve O'Rourke. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=176202977687153>

4 June 2021, RTÉ Six One News

Featuring Claire McGettrick. <https://www.rte.ie/news/player/2021/0604/21963285-commission-invited-to-appear-before-childrens-committee/>

18 May 2021, *Hot Press*

Featuring Maeve O'Rourke and Claire McGettrick. <https://www.hotpress.com/culture/clann-project-the-injustices-are-compounded-by-the-states-ongoing-inaction-22852846>

12 May 2021, Northern Sound FM, *The Joe Finnegan Show*

Featuring Claire McGettrick. <https://www.northernsound.ie/news/local-adoption-rights-campaigner-warns-issues-remain-despite-legislation-approved-yesterday-174285>

25 January 2021, *Irish Times*

Opinion-editorial by Maeve O'Rourke and Claire McGettrick.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/mother-and-baby-homes-inquiry-s-lack-of-transparency-was-damaging-1.4466658>

21 January 2021, *Irish Examiner* Podcast with Mick Clifford

Featuring Katherine O'Donnell.

<https://soundcloud.com/mickcliffordpodcast/katherine-odonnell-mother-and-baby-homes-report>

18 January 2021, *Irish Examiner*

Opinion-Editorial by Katherine O'Donnell.

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/opinion/commentanalysis/arid-40209191.html>

13 January 2021, RTE Radio 1, *Morning Ireland*

Featuring Maeve O'Rourke. <https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/clips/21892746/>

PUBLICITY PHOTOGRAPHS

Photos can be accessed via this downloadable zip file:

http://jfmresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Ireland-and-the-Magdalene-Laundries_Publicity-Photos.zip

(Photo credit: Bryan Meade)



BOOK ARCHIVE

In line with our goal to challenge knowledge suppression, we are making available our source materials via this archive. Private correspondence and other materials that are not accessible to the public are available on our website here: <http://jfmresearch.com/bookarchive/> (individual chapters are listed below).

Sincere thanks to Conall Ó Fátharta who donated the materials he obtained via Freedom of Information, and to Sheila Ahern who gave us access to the archive of the late Mary Raftery.

Introduction

<http://jfmresearch.com/bookarchive/introduction/>

Chapter 1: Ireland's Magdalene Laundries and the Lives Lived There

(Not applicable)

Chapter 2: Survivors Begin to Be Heard

<http://jfmresearch.com/bookarchive/chapter2/>

Chapter 3: Anatomy of a Campaign: The Strategies

<http://jfmresearch.com/bookarchive/chapter3/>

Chapter 4: Anatomy of a Campaign: Developing a Human Rights and Justice Agenda

<http://jfmresearch.com/bookarchive/chapter4/>

Chapter 5: Publication of the IDC Report: The Campaign Within the Campaign

<http://jfmresearch.com/bookarchive/chapter5/>

Chapter 6: Never Tell, Never Acknowledge (...everyone knew, but no one said)

<http://jfmresearch.com/bookarchive/chapter6/>

Chapter 7: Ex Gratia 'Redress'

<http://jfmresearch.com/bookarchive/chapter7/>

Chapter 8: Bringing up the Dead: Burials and Land Deals at High Park

<http://jfmresearch.com/bookarchive/chapter8/>

Chapter 9: Conclusion: Who Do We Want to Be?

<http://jfmresearch.com/bookarchive/conclusion/>

Other source materials

<http://jfmresearch.com/bookarchive/other-source-materials/>