

# "Like a Dog": Remaking the Irish Law of Institutional Abuse

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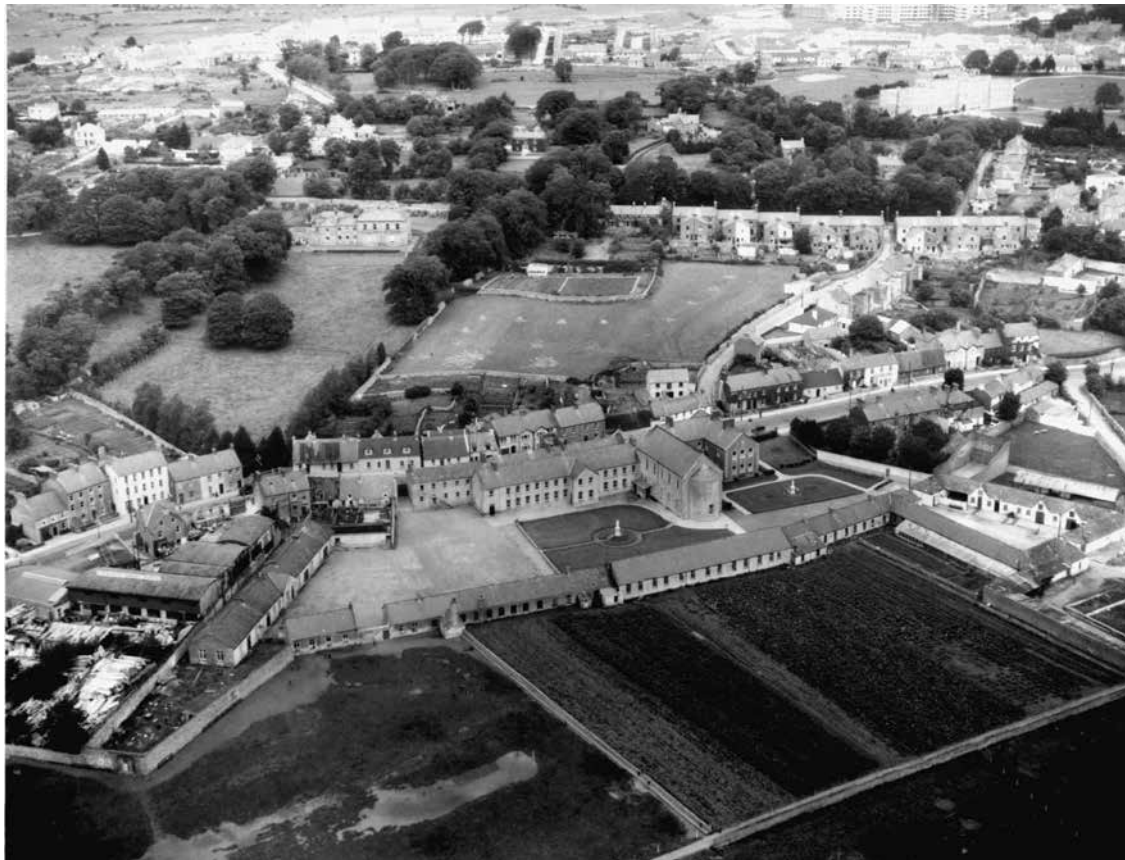
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' LIKE A DOG '  
REMAKING THE  
IRISH LAW OF  
INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE

MÁIRÉAD ENRIGHT



St Joseph's Industrial School, Salthill, Galway.  
Photo: Morgan Collection, National Photographic Archive.

## 'Like a Dog': Remaking the Irish Law of Institutional Abuse

Dogs roam across Ireland's archive of industrial abuse. In the *Ryan Report*,<sup>2</sup> they appear forty-three times;<sup>3</sup> squealing, snapping, tracking, starving, threatening. Almost half the dogs are in the fragments of survivors' testimony that punctuate the formal report. Those who were children in industrial schools remembered their younger selves as dog-like. The *Ryan* testimonies are not unusual. Dogs appear in memories of mother and baby homes, Magdalene laundries and industrial schools.<sup>4</sup> Survivors say that in the institutions they '[t]reated us like you wouldn't treat a dog'.<sup>5</sup> Children led "a dog's life."<sup>6</sup> Children adopted from institutions were, one politician tells us, "[s]old like puppies".<sup>7</sup>

In Colin Dayan's book, *The Law is a White Dog*,<sup>8</sup> she says that dogs can tell us something about how non-persons are created and survive under law.<sup>9</sup> Dogs are not 'persons' in law and enjoy none of the independent legal protection that this personhood entails. A dog's survival and dignity, the grievability of its life,<sup>10</sup> depend ultimately on a deep, long-term attachment to a human person.<sup>11</sup> As such, dogs are always legally vulnerable. Violence and death lurk and wait. Dayan uses comparisons between dogs and people to explore experiences of enslavement, torture and imprisonment in the United States. With her work in mind, it is natural that dogs should also appear in Irish testimonies of institutional abuse.

Some women and children were sent to institutions following encounters with the criminal justice system. But others were locked away because they or their parents had transgressed social norms; around sexuality, reproduction and family.<sup>12</sup> Galway was home to many outposts of this system, including the Bon Secours Mother and Baby Home in Tuam, the Mercy Order's Galway Magdalene Asylum, and the industrial schools in Galway City, Clifden, Salthill, Ballinasloe, Gort, Loughrea, Oughterard and Letterfrack.<sup>13</sup> Many are better understood as national, not local institutions. In 1972, the *Irish Times* reported that most of the boys in Letterfrack were working class children from Dublin, Cork or Limerick.<sup>14</sup> The age of criminal responsibility was 7, and boys convicted of a crime aged before they reached 12 were sent to Letterfrack.<sup>15</sup> They experienced this sentence as a kind of banishment. Their parents often could not afford to travel long distances to visit them.<sup>16</sup> Some children escaped and, where they were caught, police brought them back.<sup>17</sup> Bench warrants could be issued for their return.<sup>18</sup>

## PATIENT'S ESCAPE FROM MAGDALEN ASYLUM.

On Thursday morning a young woman inmate of the Magdalen Asylum, Galway, whose name was stated to be unknown, escaped from the institution.

She is described as being aged about 25 years, wearing a black skirt, and had a slight stoppage in her speech.



Images left (top-bottom):  
Patient's Escape From Magdalen Asylum, Connacht Tribune, 25th August, 1928.  
Courtesy Adoption Rights Alliance.

St Joseph's Industrial School, Clifden, Co. Galway.  
Photograph taken in 2001, supplied by the Sisters of Mercy  
to the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse.

Forster Street, Galway (during the STP car rally) 1973.  
Magdalene Laundry central in the background. Courtesy Galway Bay FM.

Image below:  
Site of the unmarked mass grave in Bon Secours Mother and Baby Home in Tuam,  
Co. Galway, 2019. Local amateur historian Catherine Corless' research,  
published in 2013, uncovered the names of the babies and children who died  
in the Home. Almost all had been buried in an unmarked and unregistered  
site, which Corless identified as a sewerage system. The Home is now being  
investigated by the Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation.  
Photo: August Blanqui, 2019.



To be sent West, and placed under the jurisdiction of a religious institution was a definite and complex shift in legal status. In the nationalist imagination, the West was an unspoilt territory, free of urban decadence, where an authentic Irish spirit prospered.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, it was a place that had seemed beyond first British and then Dublin rule; violent, marked by subversive popular attitudes to law. It required reappropriation by the new state, even in the face of a resistant populace.<sup>20</sup> Thus, the West was at once a place beyond law, or a place from which law had absconded in the face of traditional norms, and an ideal place, a site of disciplinary formation.<sup>21</sup> As Saris writes, institutions mediated these conflicting positions;<sup>22</sup> they were outposts of legal Dublin, domesticated and integrated into an undisciplined and unknowable rural landscape.

### **Becoming-Dog:<sup>23</sup> Degradation and Shapeshifting**

In recalling themselves as dogs, survivors gesture to an intense and violent experience of de-personalisation under Irish law, and give it vivid emotional and material content. Dog self-talk reflects an attempt to communicate something otherwise inexpressible; something which, in Dayan's words, lies outside of legal reason, which can be 'felt but not always understood, perceived but not comprehended'.<sup>24</sup> In the archive of Irish institutional abuse, dogs tell us about the diminished lives of those shut away.

Dogs communicate obliteration and indignity in death:

"And their graves are everywhere. Kids murdered for no reason, and buried like dogs all over the 5,000 acres of Letterfrack wilderness."<sup>25</sup>

"When a dog dies, it's treated better and it's buried better"<sup>26</sup>

"[The women buried in unmarked graves in Bohermore] are somebody's mother, some child's mother and some mother's child. And it's an awful thing to think. You wouldn't do it to a dog what they did. That you go up and down with no name."<sup>27</sup>

They are also associated with violence and neglect in life. Dogs are unpersons, who may be punished with impunity and whose everyday suffering may be ignored.

"He jumped straight at me, picked me up, threw me like a dog around the place"<sup>28</sup>

"If you hit a dog he'll squeal, a human, a little boy who was an orphan, feels just as much as a stray dog and that's the way we were treated."<sup>29</sup>

"Every child there went through that system [in Tuam], came out with pot bellies and why? If you starve an animal or a dog, what way do they look?"<sup>30</sup>

In these examples, "like a dog" is a final and complete status. To be "like a dog" is a mode of degraded embodiment. It is to be humiliated, cowering, beaten, starved, neglected, voiceless, disposable.<sup>31</sup> Dog status compounded other exclusions. As a mixed-race child in an industrial school, Rosemary Adaser was told she belonged, "beneath everybody else along with the dogs and the pigs on the farm."<sup>32</sup>

But there is also a sense in this archive of dog status as something more persistent and alive, which those institutionalised were made to internalise over time. Some forms of punishment—for example being made to eat from the floor "like you were a dog"<sup>33</sup>—might involve a sudden and violent reminder of a dehumanised, low, creaturely position.<sup>34</sup> For others, through repeated enforcement, dog status became an embodied disposition of compliance, a way of anticipating violence, as much as a sudden experience of enforced cruelty.

"...the training was excellent...When the whistle went I knew I had to stand. When the whistle went I knew I could sit. When the whistle went I knew I could eat food...better than any dog"<sup>35</sup>

"She would just go in [to her punishment] like a dog...She was so beaten down"<sup>36</sup>

At the same time, dogs tell us a story, not only about anticipating unilateral violence, but about the adaptation and self-formation necessary to survival. Halliday Sutherland observed this in the very young children he saw in Tuam Mother and Baby Home, when he visited in 1955. He describes a moment of chaos when the children crowded round him. He realised that this was because they hoped he might have come to adopt one of them. When a nun appeared to order their behaviour, he saw something doglike in how they inhabited her instruction:<sup>37</sup>

"Then a nun told them to stand on the lawn and sing me a song in Irish. This they did very sweetly. At the Dog's Home, Battersea, every dog barks at the visitor in the hope that they will be taken away."



Lily McAllister (~1920-1989) and dog Iggy. Lily was sent from St Joseph's Orphanage and Industrial School in Cavan town to the Magdalene Laundry in Forster Street, Galway, when she was sixteen. She escaped with a friend in the late 1950s. Photo courtesy the McDonagh family.

Survivors, similarly, note doglike qualities in their survival strategies. In the *Ryan Report*, for example, Letterfrack is described as “dog eat dog”:

“Yes, it was dog eat dog. It was survival, you had to do everything to survive, you know. You had to fight, scratch, you had to do everything for survival. There was no love or affection or caring from anyone, you know. And there was no one to talk to, you just had to form your own way of survival.”<sup>38</sup>

This animal state is collective, performed in a pack and shaped by the actions of others. It is base; often driven by hunger.

“[O]ne Brother would conceal sticks of bread in his cassock and distribute them to the boys: ‘As soon as he appeared we went around him like a pack of dogs looking for food.’”<sup>39</sup>

Simultaneously, it is quick, watchful, active and ruthlessly individual:

“[W]e’d be killing each other to get as much as we could, trample each other. We were all like vultures, like dogs eating off the ground to get as much as we could. We were so hungry. ... You were always looking out for a bit of food, the teacher’s dining room, you’d run in and grab what was left...”<sup>40</sup>

There is a sense of furtive hybridity here; of survivors as desperate shape-shifters. At the same time, they are never simply animals. Even dogs’ status is always ambivalent and indeterminate. They can be commensal<sup>41</sup> or companion animals,<sup>42</sup> deserving of sympathy, almost-kin, near-human. Stories of the lives survivors built in adulthood often include pet dogs.<sup>43</sup> We can find comfort and protection in their presence, and may see ourselves in them.<sup>44</sup> This duality means that dogs are liminal subjects; patrolling boundaries between human and non-human.<sup>45</sup> Survivors’ childhood stories of ‘becoming dog’ play on that liminality. They are able to hold what is childlike and what is doglike in close tension.

## Law’s Process and Presence

The experience of “becoming-dog” was produced by a legal regime which deliberately untethered institutionalised populations from the relational ties that secured their legal personhood. It was not merely that children entered the institutions via the rituals of criminal law (as many did), but that in the process of entering the institutions,



Letterfrack Industrial School (between 1870 and 1914).  
Photo: Lawrence Collection, National Photographic Archive.

they seemed to fall outside of the state's official knowledge and responsibility. Their status was transformed, in part, by severing them from other relationships of responsibility and care. Take Letterfrack. Children were removed from their homes, and committed to Letterfrack by District Court order, generally for offences such as minor theft and non-attendance at school.<sup>46</sup> Although their punishments were often framed in terms of children's welfare, non-attendance was associated with poverty, large families, poor housing and parental illness. These, in turn, were often construed in court as parental failure or incapacity.<sup>47</sup>

In the earlier part of the twentieth century the law did not treat their removal especially seriously; search for reports of their committals in rural newspaper archives and you will find them among the minor offences and troubles of the town; wandering pigs, illegal drinking, undipped sheep, unshod donkeys, unlighted bicycles, unmuzzled dogs.<sup>48</sup>

There were a few unmuzzled dog and "drunk" cases at the suit of the Constabulary. They bore no feature of unusual interest....There was an application to send a deserted child, about 9 years of age, to the Letterfrack Industrial School.<sup>49</sup>

How to explain the lack of protection afforded to these children? Dayan wonders whether stray dogs and paupers inhabit the same space in law; those who are unwanted are 'liable to extermination if their very destitution signals danger'.<sup>50</sup> In Ireland, children who were not visibly claimed and controlled, who were allowed to wander, or not kept in place,<sup>51</sup> could be appropriated by the state and passed to institutions which were trusted to use them productively; by industrial training, manufacture or fostering out to families who would use them for agricultural labour.<sup>52</sup> Scarcely any public funds were made available to keep children in their struggling family homes.<sup>53</sup>

City children were subjected to intense state surveillance, so that their prosecution was much more likely than if they had lived in the countryside.<sup>54</sup> The mass incarceration of children, for this reason, is often understood as class violence; as a deliberate severing of working-class family ties.<sup>55</sup> In 1971, the Irish Times reported on two small brothers from Fatima Mansions who had been sent to Letterfrack for 'mitching'. The judge had refused their grandfather's offer to take them into his home and supervise them there. Their mother had left hospital early after a miscarriage to attend their hearing. She described the wounded absence their removal left at home. The younger boy's dog, she said, did not eat for weeks after he left. Neither did she. She had dreams in which the Circuit Court promised to give her children back.<sup>56</sup>

Once they came to the attention of the courts, claims made or on behalf of these children, as members of a family could become ‘unreal’ to law,<sup>57</sup> as children became mere objects for disposal. They were not even able to exercise the residual rights—for example to legal advice and representation—afforded to adult prisoners.<sup>58</sup> Their parents could not effectively exercise rights in their place. This is most apparent in accounts of parents’ efforts to prevent their children from being sent away for non-attendance at school.<sup>59</sup> In 1970, Nell McCafferty documented exchanges between parents and District Justice Eileen Kennedy,<sup>60</sup> who presided over the Children’s Court at Dublin Castle.<sup>61</sup> Just one month before, a Committee chaired by Kennedy had recommended the end of the industrial schools system.

As the names of the child defendants were called they left their parents—if any parent had shown up—and stepped into the dock. The dock was the mouth of a huge, empty fireplace. The children cowered under its mantelpiece.<sup>62</sup>

McCafferty was appalled that Kennedy was continuing to send children to institutions that she herself had condemned. Her article vividly illustrates how sharply parents’ efforts to defend and keep their children could be put down.<sup>63</sup>

[A]n eight-year old boy denied telling his teacher that he took days off because he had to go out to buy whisky for his father. Justice Kennedy said: “Are you a liar as well as everything else?” The boy’s father objected to such language to his son.

Justice Kennedy: “I’m not asking you, I’m asking him.”  
The father: “So that doesn’t give me any say at all?”  
Justice Kennedy: “That doesn’t give you any say at all!”

...

Mother of convicted 12-year old boy: “What’s he done that he gets two years in Daingean?”  
Justice Kennedy: “I could send him until he’s sixteen”

...

A mother said her son was attending a psychiatrist.  
Justice Kennedy: “A lot of good it’s doing him”.



Children and nuns at Sean Ross Abbey, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary.  
Photo courtesy Adoption Rights Alliance / Brian Lockier.

Next page:  
*Land Without God*, 2019. Feature film written  
and produced by Mannix Flynn (pictured).



...

The father: "I've got him into a social club, with swimming and carpentry. I can promise he won't do it anymore."

Justice Kennedy: "Nonsense".

The judge's retorts suggest that parents' rights to lay claim to their children, and to advocate for them were, in many respects, already extinguished before they appeared in court. Children were non-persons, unshielded from violence: "outside the scope of all tangible law".<sup>64</sup>

From the moment of judicial decision,<sup>65</sup> children went to the detention cell downstairs, from there perhaps to a temporary Dublin institution, and then to Letterfrack. To Nell McCafferty, however, their transformation was visible and immediate:

"I placed my eye against the small grilled opening [in the door of the detention room]. When I had accustomed myself to the chilly draught and the gloom I could perceive some boys pacing up and down the bare dark brown, cold miserable holding place, popularly and accurately known as 'The Hole.' They swished back and forth, like animals at the zoo. Only, the animals have sunlight, and warmth in winter and food, and people to visit them, and they can see the sky."<sup>66</sup>



## Dogs Haunting the Institutional Abuse Archive

In recent years, survivors of institutional abuse, in Galway and elsewhere, have begun to demand new forms of legal recognition from the state. They are dissatisfied with the incomplete forms of redress that the state has offered to them and the partial investigation offered in a series of tribunals and investigations; the Laffoy/Ryan Commission (2009), the Residential Institutions Redress Scheme (2011), the McAleese Inquiry on Magdalene Laundries (2013) and its associated redress scheme, and now the Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation (ongoing; report repeatedly delayed). In particular, they object to the state's insistence on controlling the narrative, including by dragging its heels on memorialisation, limiting their freedom of expression, denying access to the courts and controlling, or allowing religious institutions to control, their access to surviving records of what was done to them. The last government attempted to legislate to seal records associated with institutional child abuse for 75 years.<sup>67</sup> Survivors are conscious of the legal space the state has built for them and are straining against its limits. The artist Mannix Flynn, who was abused as a child in Letterfrack, has documented his early efforts to sue the state.<sup>68</sup> Peter Mulryan from Ballinasloe has sued Tusla (the Child and Family Agency) in an effort to access the records of his missing sister, Marian. His mother was held in a Magdalene Laundry, and he was a child at Tuam Mother and Baby Home. Elizabeth Coppin is working with academics at NUI Galway to hold the state to account for her experiences as a young girl in Magdalene Laundries, and to preserve the stories of that experience. In 2020, the United Nations Committee Against Torture agreed to hear her case.<sup>69</sup> From this perspective, perhaps, survivors' dog stories—Peter Mulryan and Mannix Flynn are among those quoted above—can be read, not only as accounts of harm done in the past, but as demands on the present.

In Dayan's work, dogs have a unique capacity to haunt; they are liminal subjects at the boundary of spirit and body.<sup>70</sup> Dayan writes about a spectral white dog. In Irish folklore, the dog is most often black and goes by many names. It is associated with the dead, suppressed and chaotic. It may be a shape-shifting *púca*; ambivalent and boisterous, who may protect you from harm, or take you on a death-defying ride. More commonly, it may be the soul of one who has sinned, or a messenger, similar to a banshee, who barks or howls to signify that death or misfortune is coming. It may be a spectre that haunts a stretch of old road, at a liminal site, perhaps associated with fairies.<sup>71</sup> The dog may appear out of thin air, uninvited, unexpected and disappear just as quickly. It may have the power to protect or kill those who pass by. It has more power—more jurisdiction—over the spaces with which it is associated than any human, any official.<sup>72</sup>

In the West of Ireland dogs are another kind of powerful feature in the landscape and popular memory. The West is indelibly associated with the Great Famine. Many of the buildings in which women and children were abused date from Famine times; from earlier disciplinary responses to family collapse and destitution.<sup>73</sup> In Famine stories, the dead are not properly buried because the families and communities who would bury them are devastated.<sup>74</sup> Starving dogs dig up the corpses, and eat the remains.<sup>75</sup>

The very dogs which had lost their masters or were driven from their homes became roving denizens of this district and lived on the unburied or partially buried corpses of their late owners & others, and there was no help for it, as all were prostrate alike, the territory so extensive, and the people so secluded and unknown.<sup>76</sup>

The American writer Asenath Nicholson described her horror in realising that the ‘sleak dogs of Arranmore’ were feeding on the dead.<sup>77</sup>

“[On Achill island] was the bed of a little orphan girl, who had crept into a hole in the bank and died one night, with no one to spread her heath-bed, or to close her eyes, or wash and fit her for the grave. She died unheeded, the dogs lacerated the body, gnawed the bones and strewed them about the bog.”

Dogs appear in those handed down testimonies, not as symbols of victimhood but as a peculiar, dangerous threat of revelation. Marguerite Corporaal in *Relocated Memories* writes that these dogs represent something new and dark:<sup>78</sup>

“The idea of a past that must resurface inevitably and cannot be put to rest is also alluded to in various famine narratives that portray how the corpses of the Famine victims are not properly interred and are sometimes even dug up by dogs looking for meat”

Like the dogs that haunt the landscape, those that haunt testimonies of Irish institutional abuse have a peculiar function; they are less evidence of what was done, than an insistent demand for uncovering that is repeatedly rejected and suppressed. The things suppressed may be emotional, dark and irrational. It may be frightening. But neither fear nor reason can dispel them.

## Conclusion: Shape-shifting and Survival

Many of the people who survived Letterfrack, Tuam, Salthill and other places like them are exemplary legal subjects. They insist on forms of repair, accountability and truth-telling that might one day redeem Irish law and the state that underwrites it. More than that, however, they lay claim to people and family—mothers, siblings, children—who were diminished and dismissed by the state. People like Peter Mulryan are asking for investigations that would show where lost family members are buried. They are asking for databases and registers that would enable family members who want to do so to reconnect. They are asking for access to their records, for themselves, and for future generations of their own families. They are drawing, often, on care for those already dead, buried, and disappeared.

There is one final dog story about law and the West of Ireland. In local legend, Galway Bay is the place of a famous dog. In a fit of jealousy, Uchtdealb turned Tuiren, the pregnant aunt of Fionn mac Cumhaill, into a staghound of unparalleled beauty. She did this because Tuiren was betrothed to Uchdealb’s unreliable lover. Uchtdealb gave the dog to the Galway chieftain Fergus Fionnliath, who was famous for his hatred of dogs, in the hopes that the dog would be beaten or killed. However, the dog gradually won the chieftain’s affection, and he protected and cared for her. She gave birth to Bran and Sceolan, who became the famous hounds of Fionn.<sup>79</sup> Later, she resumed human form. In one sense, the legend illustrates Dayan’s argument; Tuiren is severed from family and made a stray—disposable and vulnerable to violence. When Fergus, against all his history, unexpectedly makes her his kin, she re-enters a familial site of safety. In the Fenian legends, animal hybrids are common. Love and recognition enable them to retake human form; though that form is sometimes fragile, and comes with burdens that can cross generations.

Dayan warns that when those excluded by law return, they may return to re-interpret or re-make the law.<sup>80</sup> Survivors of institutions are not only asking for better law. They are unmaking the law that harmed and traumatised them. They are aiming to replace it with law that validates and honours their family ties. Staying with the story of dogs, that unmaking is also always a demand; that others in power will offer recognition, even care.



Death memorial on Clare / Galway border.  
Photo: Caoimhín Ó Danachair. Courtesy UCD Folklore collection.



Community memorial at the Tuam children's burial site, 2020.

## Notes

- 1 Ryan, Sean Mr Justice. 'Report-Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, Vol. 1'. Stationery Office, 2009, Chapter 8 [518]. Throughout, my references are to paragraph marks in the Industrial Memories Project's searchable version of the report, available in <https://industrialmemories.ucd.ie/ryan-report/search/>
- 2 Ryan was the first major Irish state report into institutional abuse of children.
- 3 One is a reference to the *Kennedy Report*, Kennedy, Eileen District Justice. '*Reformatory and Industrial Schools System Report 1970 Chaired by District Justice Eileen Kennedy*'. The Stationery Office, 1970. This noted the absence of a 'watchdog committee', an auxiliary of state power, which might oversee industrial schools. A handful of references are to the verb 'dog'; used to refer to the ways in which the remainders of abusive regimes have clung to institutions and people and tracked them through time. Seventeen references are to live dogs; animals that lived in or in the vicinity of industrial schools, and who remain now in the memories of people who were once held in those places whether as pets (Ch 10 [3]) or as tools of abuse (Ch 7 [26] [234] and Ch 9 [218]) (see Tyler Wall, 'Legal terror and the police dog'). Peter Tyrell associates dog ownership at Letterfrack with power; Brother Keegan, the superior; Dr Lavelle; Mr Griffin, a teacher and Festy McDonald, an employee, all owned dogs. Festy's dog herded the school's sheep on Diamond Hill. Tyrrell, Peter, and Diarmuid Whelan. *Founded on Fear*. Random House, 2008, 78, 124, 192.
- 4 These were all varieties of quasi-carceral institution, church-run and state-supported, which 'managed' a range of social 'problems' concentrated around sexuality, reproduction and family. They pre-date the foundation of the state, and continued to operate into the 1970s and, in the case of the Magdalene Laundries, the early 1990s.
- 5 Joan McDermott in 'EU Hears Survivors' Tales of Horror from Ireland's "Mother and Baby Homes" | An Phoblacht'. Accessed 21 August 2020. <https://www.anphoblacht.com/contents/24411>.
- 6 Ryan, Sean Mr Justice. 'Report-Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, Vol. 1'. Stationery Office, 2009, Chapter 9[207]
- 7 Deputy Kate O'Connell, speaking in the Oireachtas on January 18, 2018, during debates on the 8th Amendment.
- 8 Dayan, Colin. *The Law Is a White Dog-How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons*. Princeton University Press, 2013.
- 9 See Alvarez-Nakagawa's reading of Dayan's work in Alvarez-Nakagawa, Alexis. 'Law as Magic. Some Thoughts on Ghosts, Non-Humans, and Shamans'. *German Law Journal* 18, no. 5 (2017): 1247–1276.
- 10 Butler, Judith. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* Verso Books, 2016.
- 11 For example, in the cases Dayan studies in Chapter 7, dogs can only become compensatable property through domestication.
- 12 Magdalene Laundries held women who had transgressed Catholic social teaching around unmarried womanhood; sometimes by becoming pregnant. Mother and baby homes were places where unmarried mothers gave birth, and where their children were held until they were adopted, fostered out# or died. Industrial schools held the children of the poor, often punished for petty crimes or removed from families considered unable to care for them. Some people passed through more than one such institution in their lifetime; perhaps entering an industrial school as a girl before being sent to a laundry. In some families, multiple members and multiple generations were affected; it was common, for example, for the child of a woman held in a laundry to be held themselves in a mother and baby home. What they had in common was violence; coercive family separation, neglect, suffering, death, violent punishment and all forms of abuse.
- 13 Galway, like much of Ireland, is marked with dog territory; Carrownamaddra, outside Kinvarra, Dog Island near Oughterard, Glenamaddy not far from Tuam, Carraig na gCon near Carna, Dog's Bay near Roundstone, Clochar na gCon beyond Indreabhán.
- 14 Mary Cummins, 'Boys and Brothers' *Irish Times*, July 30, 1972.
- 15 In 1954, the Christian Brothers made this their policy, against the objections of some District Court judges and the Department of Justice. From then, the industrial schools in Glin, Tralee and Saltill would not accept "offenders" Ryan, Sean Mr Justice. 'Report-Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, Vol. 1'. Stationery Office, 2009, Chapter 8 [518].
- 16 The state did not fund parental travel to visit children until 1971; Ryan, Sean Mr Justice. 'Report-Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, Vol. 1'. Stationery Office, 2009, Chapter 8 [501]. Even then, the journey from Dublin could not be achieved in a single day.
- 17 See e.g. *Connacht Tribune* May 16 1942; *Mayo News* September 22, 1962; 'Escapees Stole Car for their Getaway' *Connacht Sentinel* September 6, 1966.
- 18 e.g. *Connacht Tribune* September 25 1943.
- 19 See e.g. Chris Morash and Shaun Richards, *Mapping Irish Theatre: Theories of Space and Place* (Cambridge ; New York, 2013), 78.
- 20 See e.g. Mark Quigley, 'Modernity's Edge: Speaking Silence on the Blasket Islands', *Interventions*, v (2003); Henry Patterson, *Ireland's Violent Frontier: The Border and Anglo-Irish Relations During the Troubles* (2013).
- 21 Reflected in professional reports? 'Girl (13) Could not Read' *Irish Times*, January 6, 1961 on the committal of a child to St Joseph's Industrial School in Clifden. See also discussion with District Justice McCarthy at Ryan, Sean Mr Justice. 'Report-Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, Vol. 1'. Stationery Office, 2009, Chapter 8.
- 22 Saris, A. Jamie. 'Mad Kings, Paper Houses, and an Asylum in Rural Ireland'. *American Anthropologist* 98, no. 3 (1996): 539–554.
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- 26 Sheila O'Byrne in O'Keefe, Donal. 'Evening Echo News Feature: An Interview with Sheila O'Byrne, Mother and Baby Home Survivor'. *140 Characters Is Usually Enough* (blog), 20 January 2018. <https://ahundredandfortycharactersisusuallyenough.wordpress.com/2018/01/20/evening-echo-news-feature-an-interview-with-sheila-obyrne-mother-and-baby-home-survivor/>.
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- 29 Ryan, Sean Mr Justice. 'Report-Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, Vol. 1'. Stationery Office, 2009, Chapter 7 [451]
- 30 Peter Mulryan quoted in. "'I Was Put Into A Bag And Told I Was Going Into A Bog Hole'". *Broadsheet.ie* (blog), 18 June 2015. <https://www.broadsheet.ie/2015/06/18/i-was-put-into-a-bag-and-told-i-was-going-into-a-bog-hole/>.
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- 34 For a discussion of similar methods in contexts of torture see Olson, Greta. "'Like a Dog': Rituals of Animal Degradation in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* and Abu Ghraib Prison'. *Journal of Narrative Theory* 44, no. 1 (22 August 2014): 116–56. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jnt.2014.0002>.
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- 40 Ryan, Sean Mr Justice. 'Report-Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, Vol. 1'. Stationery Office, 2009, .Ch 9 [127]
- 41 Howell, Philip. 'The Trouble with Liminanimals'. *Parallax* 25, no. 4 (2019): 395–411.
- 42 Haraway, Donna Jeanne. *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*. Vol. 1. Prickly Paradigm Press Chicago, 2003.
- 43 See, for example, O'Connell, Brian. "'Dog Wanted for Company': The Story behind a Small Ad'. *The Irish Times*. Accessed 21 August 2020. <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/dog-wanted-for-company-the-story-behind-a-small-ad-1.4038995>.
- 44 Grinberg, Omri, and Yiftach Ashkenazi. '5 Who Let the Mad Dogs Out? Trauma and Colonialism in the Hebrew Canon'. *Postcolonial Animalities*, 2019, 89–107.
- 45 Dayan, *With Dogs at the Edge of Life*, xiii. Dayan, Colin. *With Dogs at the Edge of Life*. Columbia University Press, 2015, xiii.

- 46 See, for instance, 'Boy (11) Hopes to Start New Life', *Irish Times*, August 31, 1974. See further McCafferty, 'In The Eyes of the Law', March 16, 1973; Interview with Judge McCarthy, 'Irishman's Diary' *Irish Times*, October 11, 1956; 'Boy in court: Father Stays in Bed', *Irish Times*, January 17, 1963. At various times the law was that parents could apply to have their children committed to an institution, and often maintenance orders were made against parents. See e.g. 'Industrial School Case', *Westmeath Independent* September 20, 1924; 'A Hopeless Case' *Connacht Tribune*, June 17, 1944. Parents could be prosecuted for refusing to adhere to a maintenance order.
- 47 See e.g. McCafferty 'In the Eyes of the Law', *Irish Times*, March 10, 1973 describing the committal of two girls to Goldenbridge; McCafferty, 'Mickey v. The State', *Irish Times*, December 11, 1970. See Maguire, Moira J., and Séamas Ó Cinnéide. "A Good Beating Never Hurt Anyone": The Punishment and Abuse of Children in Twentieth Century Ireland'. *Journal of Social History* 38, no. 3 (2005): 635–652, noting that the state associated proper parental control with violence, and the administration of corporal punishment.
- 48 See e.g. 'Sent to Industrial School' *Connacht Tribune*, November 20, 1937.
- 49 "Tuam Petty Sessions" *Tuam Herald*, Sunday March 19, 1898.
- 50 Dayan, Colin. *The Law Is a White Dog-How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons*. Princeton University Press, 2013, 344.
- 51 On early overlaps in the development of the RSCPA and NSPCC see Flegel, Monica. *Conceptualizing Cruelty to Children in Nineteenth-Century England: Literature, Representation, and the NSPCC*. Routledge, 2016 61-70.
- 52 Fostering or 'boarding out' was an offshoot of the Poor Law. Children were fostered under a contractual relationship between the health board and the foster family. See further Horgan, Rosemary. 'Foster Care in Ireland'. *Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies* 3, no. 1 (2002): 30–50 on the history of 'boarding out'.
- 53 For an overview of the system see Buckley, Sarah-Anne. *The Cruelty Man: Child Welfare, the NSPCC and the State in Ireland, 1889–1956*. Manchester University Press, 2015.
- 54 Daly, Mary E. 'The Emergence of an Irish Adolescence: 1920s to 1970s'. In *Adolescence in Modern Irish History*, 199–215. Springer, 2015, 206.
- 55 Pierse, Michael. *Writing Ireland's Working Class: Dublin after O'Casey*. Springer, 2016. 209-210.
- 56 'A Promise that Could Not Be Kept', *Irish Times*, July 2, 1971.
- 57 Dayan, Colin. *The Law Is a White Dog-How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons*. Princeton University Press, 2013, 56.
- 58 Ryan, Sean Mr Justice. 'Report-Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, Vol. 1'. Stationery Office, 2009, Chapter 3 [24].
- 59 On the process by which a parent could apply for early release of their child see Ryan, Sean Mr Justice. 'Report-Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, Vol. 1'. Stationery Office, 2009, Chapter 3, [31] and discussion of one father's persistent campaign of letter-writing at Ryan, Sean Mr Justice. 'Report-Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, Vol. 1'. Stationery Office, 2009, Chapter 8, [704]. Generally, parents were confined to appealing to the Circuit Court, where their appeals were often rejected. A small number of habeas actions for wrongful committal were successful; for example, in 1952 the High Court granted an order releasing three sisters from Loughrea Industrial School and returning them to their father; a farmer from Killimor Co. Galway. He was represented by Sean MacBride; 'Killimor Father Gets Custody of Children', *Connacht Sentinel*, December 20, 1952. In the 1950s, Desmond Doyle successfully challenged s. 10 of the Children Act, 1941 which had been interpreted to permit the Minister for Education to deny the return of children to their parents ; *Re Doyle*[1989] ILRM 277. See also the efforts of Peter Tyrrell, a former resident of Letterfrack identified in the *Ryan Report* as Noah Kitterick.
- 60 Eileen Kennedy was the first woman to be appointed a judge in Ireland, in 1964. She died in Galway in 1983.
- 61 Michael Viney provided this description of the court, cited in Sarah-Anne Buckley, *The Cruelty Man: Child Welfare, the NSPCC and the State in Ireland, 1889–1956* (2015). "The children's court in Dublin is a disarming chamber of justice, functional and mellow as an old village schoolroom, with a turf fire burning in the grate. [Contrast McCafferty] Nobody wears uniform and there is no dock for the accused. But a mere appearance in this court allots a child his role in a formal drama. Up to now his relationships with the adult world have been fluid, malleable and fairly spontaneous. Now all the players, including him, take up a ritualised position. The policeman accuses him of wrong and refrains from comment . . . The probation officer contributes a brief Greek chorus on his home and school background. His mother, somewhat diminished by the setting offers her defense "He's a good boy at home" or rejection "I can't do a thing with him". What the boy himself may say is expressed in the non-committal formulas "I dunno sir". Only the justice seems free to improvise — but even he is tied, eventually, to ritualised alternatives of justice."
- 62 McCafferty, Nell. *Nell*. Penguin UK, 2016.
- 63 See similarly, 'Bad Bunch of Boys in Clara' *Offaly Independent*, September 11, 1954; 'Limerick Court Incident', *Cork Examiner*, June 3, 1957; 'Minor Sent to Letterfrack', *Connacht Tribune*, June 4 1960; 'Boy's Larceny Appeal Fails' *Connacht Tribune* January 13, 1962.
- 64 Arendt, Hannah. 'The Perplexities of the Rights of Man'. *Headline Series*, no. 318 (1998): 88.
- 65 See also 'System of Industrial Schools Needs Review', *Irish Times*, May 20, 1955; 'Fintan O'Toole: How to Honour Our Unshamed Magdalenes'. Accessed 21 August 2020. <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/fintan-o-toole-how-to-honour-our-unshamed-magdalenes-1.3521259?mode=sample&auth-failed=1&pw-origin=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.irishtimes.com%2Fopinion%2Ffintan-o-toole-how-to-honour-our-unshamed-magdalenes-1.3521259>.
- 66 McCafferty, 'In The Eyes of the Law', *Irish Times*, October 12, 1974.
- 67 McCarthy, Justine. 'Bill to Seal Ryan Commission Abuse Testimonies Put on Ice after Survivors' Campaign', sec. ireland. Accessed 21 August 2020. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/bill-to-seal-ryan-commission-abuse-testimonies-put-on-ice-after-survivors-campaign-jtwh0c0dh>.
- 68 Flynn, Mannix. *James X. Lilliput Press*, 2003.
- 69 www.hoganlovells.com. 'UN Torture Committee Delivers Preliminary Judgement against Ireland, Deciding to Hear Magdalene Laundries Case in Full'. Accessed 21 August 2020. <http://www.hoganlovells.com/en/news/un-torture-committee-delivers-preliminary-judgment-against-ireland-deciding-to-hear-magdalene-laundries-case-in-full>.
- 70 Dayan, Colin. *The Law Is a White Dog-How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons*. Princeton University Press, 2013, 18.
- 71 See 'Meeting the Black Dog' in Lenihan, Eddie, and Carolyn Eve Green. *Meeting the Other Crowd*. Penguin, 2004.
- 72 35 such Galway stories are recorded in the Schools Collection of the National Folklore Collection; <https://www.duchas.ie/en/src?q=%22black+dog%22&t=CbesTranscript&ct=GA>
- 73 The buildings at Letterfrack, for example, were built as part of a Quaker project of Famine Relief. Tuam Mother and Baby Home was originally a workhouse, built in 1841. The Sisters of Mercy took over Galway Magdalen Asylum in 1845. There were also workhouses in many of the towns where industrial schools were later built.
- 74 Breandán Mac Suibhne. 'Disturbing Remains: A Story of Black '47'. *The Irish Times*. Accessed 21 August 2020. <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/disturbing-remains-a-story-of-black-47-1.3365683>.
- 75 See further Gunilla Bexar, "The Great Irish Famine in History-Writing and Prose Fiction:" The Mutual Interplay of Two Narrative Genres" (2016).
- 76 Thomas Colville Scott, *Ireland: Journal of a Visit to Connemara*, 10. Galway, Moore Institute @ NUI. 'Ireland Illustrated: View a Record'. Text. NUI Galway. NUI Galway, 9 May 2018. Global. <https://ttce.nuigalway.ie/irelandillustrated/>.
- 77 In Helen E. Hatton, *Largest Amount of Good: Quaker Relief in Ireland, 1654-1921* (1993), 136.
- 78 Corporaal, Marguérite. *Relocated Memories: The Great Famine in Irish and Diaspora Fiction, 1846-1870*. Syracuse University Press, 2017, 116.
- 79 See versions in Lady Gregory, *Gods and Fighting Men: The Story of Tuatha de Danann and of the Fianna of Ireland* (1905); James Stephens, *Irish Fairy Tales* (1920).
- 80 Dayan, Colin. *The Law Is a White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons*. Princeton University Press, 2013, 252.