argues, Backus, 'strongly implies a connection between . . . O'Brien's right to publish and the new mode of investigative scandal that Stead launched the following year'. Could it possibly be that Stead has been credited for a genre of (sex scandal) journalism that O'Brien had actually begun? On this, Backus is clear: she argues that prior to the *United Ireland* series Stead's actions 'would have been unthinkable'. In the latter portion of the book Backus maps Joyce's relationship to scandals and how his works reflect scandal's appeal and its dangers. While the chapter on the significance of Stead in Joyce's work is somewhat underdeveloped, the book comes into its own when examining the presence and influence of the scandals that engulfed Parnell and Wilde. As a work that successfully transcends the boundaries between journalism history and literary criticism, it is highly recommended.

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THE CRUELTY MAN: CHILD WELFARE, THE NSPCC AND THE STATE IN IRELAND, 1899–1956. By Sarah Anne Buckley. Pp 225, illus. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013. £75.

A carefully-chosen photograph from the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland's Darkest Dublin collection depicting five vulnerable children, all of whom appear to be under the age of ten, adorns the cover of this book. Three boys occupy steps in a doorway, the youngest, a little girl, stands in the foreground grasped by one of the seated older boys and her slightly older brother, a toddler too, stands on the top step sobbing heavily. It is a heartrending vista, the whitewashed walls are blackened with dirt, there are no adults and no smiles. The viewer is led to imagine all sorts – that the older boy is the primary caregiver of his four younger siblings and that they are probably hungry. However, we should not be so easily led; photography implying neglect and poverty should always be viewed with a healthy degree of scepticism. This image is part of a collection compiled by an inspector of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (N.S.P.C.C.) in 1913, and inasmuch as Dr Thomas Barnardo's 'stolen childhood' photographs were proven to be fakes in the 1870s, the possibility cannot be ruled out here. The child's distress was more than likely caused by his guardian being behind the camera and not beside him. It is both manipulated and manipulating and underpinned with the reductionist deserving versus undeserving poor discourse, which unjustly vilified parents in circumstances that were so often beyond their control. It is an apt and clever way to introduce us to the history of child protection in Ireland.

The book begins with a note on sources explaining that the parameters of the study were shaped by the patchy archive and key moments of the N.S.P.C.C. in Ireland – its foundation in 1889 and its evolution into the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (I.S.P.C.C.) in 1956. As Buckley argues, the history of Irish lifecycles, in particular, that of childhood, remains underrepresented and the limited representation of children in Irish legislation discussed in chapter one goes somewhere towards explaining why. But, we are informed, this is not unique. Chapter two locates the study in the wider historiography of the 'invention of childhood' and social class. After all, child protection was primarily an elite pursuit that rescued working-class children from inebriate and errant parents. Chapter three traces the evolution of the ways in which the N.S.P.C.C. recognised neglect and provides some astonishing instances of how mixed religion relationships, promiscuity and unmarried parentage were viewed with suspicion. In this transition period, as Buckley shows, church–state collusion in a range of children's services – charity, education and medical – disenfranchised poor families at every juncture. During this timeframe we are reminded that proselytism still posed a threat and

charitable agencies were in fierce competition for souls. This precipitated the shift Buckley identifies in N.S.P.C.C. functions. Chapter four provides ample evidence of the role of N.S.P.C.C. as an agent for state-run institutions, particularly industrial schools – now widely recognised as work camps characterised by extraordinary levels of inhumanity – and moved it farther from its own ethos of child protection in the home. The next chapter deals with incest and immorality and associated legislation, which, as we are told was invariably portrayed through discourses of deviancy, degeneracy and as working class problems. In this chapter, the litany of failures on the part of the state to protect women and children (both sexes) from perpetrators of vile sexual crimes is chronicled, critically analysed and tough questions are posed. The final chapter outlines how the concept of family was dictated by social trends, and it traces how gendered notions of parental responsibility changed from Victorian to post-Independence Ireland and how 'deserted wives' and 'beaten wives' were recognised and framed in the wider discourses of child protection.

From the outset the reader is acutely aware of the poignancy of this book. The subject matter is sombre and the thematic approach is weightier still. Each chapter could, with minor tweaking, stand alone; each theme is dealt with chronologically but I do not see any other methodological recourse. This book not only provides a nuanced foundational work in the historiography of Irish childhood it also fills a significant void in our knowledge of how the dynamics of poverty functioned across Irish society. Buckley's book joins a range of recent scholarship, particularly that of Virginia Crossman, Lindsey Earner-Byrne, Olwen Purdue and Elaine Farrell, whose seminal work places Irish scholarship at the cutting edge of social history internationally. Although the study of the N.S.P.C.C. ends with 1956 Buckley does not shy away from engaging with contemporary debates on the rights of the child in Ireland. Throughout the book she points to several unfulfilled mandates and responsibilities. It is meticulously researched, discursive and a lively, if depressing, read. More importantly, it challenges its readership to use a wider lens when looking at the ever-enduring problem of child protection. The study of cruelty to children in an era when it was routinely conflated with abject poverty and its moral judgement is a difficult subject matter –even for the most seasoned of scholars. That this book emanates from a Ph.D. study bodes well for the current state and the future of Irish history.

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TEDDY LUTHER'S WAR: THE DIARY OF A GERMAN-AMERICAN IN AN IRISH-BOER COMMANDO. Edited with an introduction by Donal McCracken. Pp160. Pinetown, RSA: 30 Degrees South Publishers Ltd, 2013. £12.95 paperback.

War diaries, soldiers' letters and memoirs feature as important sources for the history of the Irish diaspora, providing scholars and students with many vivid texts to illustrate the emigrant's life in uniform. The military dimensions of the diaspora – and by extension the experiences of ordinary soldiers – are considered particularly important essentially because experience in combat was considered crucial by the mid-Victorian generation of Fenians. Certainly, many had experience in the U.S. Civil War, while some advanced nationalists, such as John MacBride (who fought) and Patrick Egan (who mustered troops) had links to the Anglo–Boer War (1899–1902). Many of their countrymen rallied to the Boer flag.

Donal McCracken, the foremost scholar of Irish Southern Africa, and a widely published author on the Boer War period, has uncovered something different, but related, and it is a gem. The diary of T. W. 'Teddy' Luther, who served in the 201st Regiment of New York volunteers and Blake's Brigade Pretoria is the memory of a man who signed up