

Bertrand Russell's Life and Legacy

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Foreword

In 2015, for its first ever meeting in Europe, the Bertrand Russell Society alighted on Trinity College, Dublin, courtesy of Peter Stone, who teaches there. The Society's cowbell was rung to summon participants to sessions on a range of topics associated with Russell, as reflected in this diverse volume. Squirrelled away high above Trinity's panelled library and the Book of Kells, Russellians from the four corners gathered to share enthusiasms and personal research, as testified here.

The Society itself is a thriving part of Russell's legacy. Founded in 1974, four years after Russell died, it meets annually, usually in North America. A tenderfoot member, Dublin was my first 'BRS'. A year later, I hotfooted it to Rochester, New York State, and spoke about 'Russell and China', which is an abiding interest. My route took me via the Russell Archives at McMaster University in Ontario. McMaster is the leading global centre for Russell Studies which, in 2018, will mark the 50th anniversary of its acquisition of Russell's papers. Kenneth Blackwell, who catalogued the papers at Plas Penrhyn, Russell's home in North Wales, and later in London, followed the collection to Canada, where he is to this day Honorary Archivist of the world renowned Russell Archives.

All this perhaps goes to show the vitality of Russell's 'legacy'. On what is it based?

Russell's life was long and eventful. Married four times, he eventually found contentment with Edith, with whom he shared his ninth and tenth decades, full of activism against the hydrogen bomb, the long war in Vietnam, in defence of political prisoners, and for liberty and social justice. His last public statement, in early 1970, was about Palestine:

'The tragedy of the people of Palestine is that their country was "given" by a foreign Power to another people for the creation of a new State.'

Russell's engagement with such enduring political causes might be thought to give him some purchase on modern minds. But his attraction also lies elsewhere, particularly in his extensive writings.

New translations of Russell's herculean output (some 70 books; hundreds of thousands of letters and articles) continue to appear: during recent years, into Russian and Turkish, Macedonian and Marathi, Chinese and Catalan. Today, it's likely that more people around the world read Russell than during his lifetime. In China, a recent reprint of *History of Western Philosophy* ran to 60,000 copies. The centenary of Russell's visit to China in 1920/21 fast approaches, and there are plans for a major academic conference to mark the occasion.

Facebook's Bertrand Russell page has some 113,000 followers, from Saudi Arabia to Turkey, Iran to India, Brazil to Britain, Africa to the Americas. The quotable Russell features regularly on FB:

'I see before me a shining vision: a world where none are hungry, where few are ill, where work is pleasant and not excessive, where kindly feeling is common, and where minds released from fear create delight for eye and ear and heart. Do not say this is impossible. It is not impossible.'

This posting, taken from *Human Society in Ethics and Politics* (1954), received some 900 likes, 390 shares, and a rather modest 21 comments, including one young woman in Brazil who remarked that 'to me, this statement of Bertrand was not "entirely" logical ...' Russell's gift for stating positively how to confront life's many challenges perhaps explains some of his wide ranging appeal.

The present 'anthology' is eclectic, reflecting that the Society invites submissions and constructs an agenda around what is received. It is a commendably democratic process, in the true spirit of the man himself, which cultivates many flowers. Everyone has a say. As the editor remarks of Russell, it is 'very easy to remain interested in him once that interest is aroused'. *Bertrand Russell's Life and Legacy* offers a fresh invitation to enter Bertie's world, which challenges, consoles and intrigues during difficult times.

Tony Simpson

Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation

Nottingham, July 2017

Editor's Introduction

Bertrand Russell was one of the most important figures in twentieth-century analytical philosophy.¹ With Alfred North Whitehead, he co-wrote *Principia Mathematica* (1910, 1912, 1913), which revolutionized the study of the foundations of mathematics. His reputation as an intellectual giant thus seems secure. But Russell died in 1970, over four decades ago. Moreover, Russell passed away at the age of 97. At the time of his death, it had been twenty years since he had made any serious contribution to the field of philosophy. (His last major work of technical philosophy, *Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits*, came out in 1948, and had only a limited impact at the time.) Perhaps, then, Russell will soon be remembered by reputation only. Before too long, perhaps he will become one of those figures in philosophy who receives a well-earned nod whenever the history of the field is recited, but no further attention than that.

Fortunately, such a concern is unfounded. There is little reason to fear that Russell will turn into an intellectual footnote any time soon. For one thing, Russell addressed a wide variety of topics in his philosophical writings—not just the philosophy of mathematics and logic, but epistemology, metaphysics, the philosophy of mind, the philosophy of science, the philosophy of language, and ethics. (Indeed, just about the only major area of philosophy in which Russell conducted no work was aesthetics.) Admittedly, his work has been superseded in many ways—the frontiers of research into the foundations of mathematics, for example, have already traveled quite far since *Principia Mathematica* was written. But Russell was an admirably gifted writer, with an astonishing ability to lay out his ideas as clearly as the subject matter (which could at times be very difficult) allowed. And so Russell remains an excellent introduction to the study of philosophy. Philosophers still assign Russell's *Problems of Philosophy* (1912) in introductory philosophy classes around the world, and the students are amply rewarded for their

¹ For a brief introduction to Russell—who he was, and what he did—see Stone (2016).

engagement with this text.² And so while the philosophy world has moved beyond Russell in many ways, his books will not be gathering dust on library shelves for quite some time.

But Russell remains a figure worthy of attention for reasons that extend far beyond the realm of technical philosophy. Throughout his adult life, Russell was an outspoken public intellectual engaged with vitally important issues of his day. War and peace, women's rights, world government, religion, love, sex, socialism, education—all of them received serious attention in Russell's public interventions. During the last twenty years of his life, for example, Russell focused his attention on the Cold War and the dangers posed by nuclear weapons. This activism led to a number of books during this period, such as *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare* (1959). But it also led to the foundation of the Pugwash Foundation, which brings scientists together from around the world to discuss vital science-related international problems (the organization received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995), as well as the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, which carries on Russell's activist legacy to this day.³ And so any politically-concerned citizen of the world can benefit from considering Russell's interventions in the public sphere. (Russell's exceptional skill as a writer makes it even easier to obtain this benefit.)

And Russell's interventions in the world were more than just intellectual. Russell was the sort of man who has been everywhere and met everyone. The number of people who can be connected with Russell—through personal acquaintance, correspondence, or some other route—is astonishing. Of course, the list includes many of the biggest names in philosophy in the twentieth century - from Alfred North Whitehead (his mentor and collaborator), G.E. Moore (with whom he attended university at Cambridge), Ludwig Wittgenstein (his most famous and most temperamental student),⁴ and Jean-Paul Sartre (with whom Russell convened the International War Crimes Tribunal against the U.S. War in Vietnam). It also includes many great politicians and statesmen, including Lord John Russell (prime minister from 1846 to 1852 and from 1865

² Alan Schwerin advances the study of this classic text through his contribution to this collection.

³ Nancy Doubleday's paper in this collection considers the lessons that can be learned from Russell's legacy of peace activism.

⁴ Ádám Tamás Tuboly's paper in this collection connects both Russell and Wittgenstein to another great philosopher, Rudolf Carnap.

to 1866, and Russell's grandfather),⁵ V.I. Lenin (with whom Russell had a personal audience during a visit to Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution), Nikita Khrushchev, and John Foster Dulles (both of whom engaged in a public correspondence with Russell that was published in the *New Statesman*). It includes great names from the artistic world, including T.S. Eliot (with whose wife Russell had an affair), D.H. Lawrence (with whom Russell attempted a disastrous political collaboration during World War I), Joseph Conrad (after whom Russell named both of his sons), and Paul McCartney (who credits Russell with raising his awareness about the Vietnam War).⁶ And it includes Russell's many lovers, some famous (Vivienne Eliot), but most relatively obscure.⁷ Russell, as they say, got around.

Tim Madigan has proposed an excellent method for measuring the scale of Russell's influence, a game he calls "Six Degrees of Bertrand Russell." The purpose of this game, which Madigan models upon Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon, is to see if "any figure from the past two hundred years or so could be connected with BR in as few steps as possible" (Madigan 2016, p. 25; see also Madigan 2010). I've found myself playing this game at surprising times. Once upon a time, for example, I was a graduate student conducting a little research on the 19th-century writer William Morris. As part of that research, I requested a pamphlet on Morris through interlibrary loan by the anarchist Colin Ward. While conducting my research, I learned that Ward's wife, Harriet, was the son of journalist Griffin Barry and Dora Russell, Bertrand's second wife. (Bertie and Dora had an open marriage that ended rather badly. My contribution to this collection discusses Harriet's memoir of her father and the light that it sheds on Russell's life.) A "Russell number" of 3, albeit a connection that is still quite direct.

But that's too easy. So how about a more creative connection? The pamphlet by Ward that I had requested via interlibrary loan came from the Fiske Kimball Fine Arts Library, at the University of Virginia. Kimball had been that university's first professor of art and

⁵ Tim Madigan's paper in this collection revisits the controversial legacy of the prime minister.

⁶ For a clip of McCartney discussing his connection to Russell, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3m2r0Ln0rU>.

⁷ In this collection, Eileen O'Mara Walsh speaks of her mother's brief affair with Russell.

argument offered in this book reveals significant limitations to Russell's philosophical approach.

Following this are two papers that consider Russell the atheist and (in)famous critic of religion. Chad Trainer finds much merit in Russell's views on mysticism, contrasting those views favorably with those of "New Atheist" Sam Harris. Raymond Younis, in contrast, raises some concerns regarding Russell's work *Religion and Science* (1935)—concerns similar to those raised by Schwerin with regard to *Problems of Philosophy*. Both men fear that in many ways, Russell may be overstating his case and that anyone wishing to carry on Russell's legacy in the areas of philosophy and religion should be mindful of the places in which he may have stumbled.

The final section of the book considers Russell's political legacy. A paper by Tim Madigan revisits the Russell family tradition in politics via a discussion of Russell's grandfather, Lord John Russell. As Prime Minister, Lord Russell infamously failed to take meaningful action to end the "Great Hunger" in Ireland. Madigan revisits this terrible historical episode through the eyes of a tribunal called to evaluate Lord Russell's conduct. This tribunal, like numerous others in recent times, was inspired by the International War Crimes Tribunal convened by Russell and Sartre. Madigan thus ably illustrates how Russell's approach to politics can inform activists today—even as they pass judgment upon Russell's own grandfather. The final paper of the book, by Nancy Doubleday, concludes the book by illustrating how Russell can be used to inform students concerned with world peace today.

This book thus constitutes an invitation, if one were needed, to the world of Bertrand Russell. Those new to Russell, but with an interest in biography, philosophy, religion, or politics, will hopefully find something to learn here. This may spark an interest in learning more about Russell. It may even motivate them to investigate other aspects of Russell's legacy; many people interested in Russell's peace activism, for example, have subsequently become drawn to his philosophy, and vice versa. But this book is not just intended for the Russell neophyte. The book sheds fresh light on a number of topics central to Russell studies—his connections to other philosophers, for example. Scholars well-versed in Russell studies will enjoy grappling with the treatment given to these topics here.

This book originated at the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Bertrand Russell Society (BRS), held at Trinity College Dublin. The members of this society have promoted the study of Russell's life, thought,

work, and legacy for four decades. All believe that Russell remains fresh and relevant today, despite all of the years that have passed since his death. This book is offered to the reader with the same message in mind.¹⁰

¹⁰ All of the contributors, but especially the editor, are grateful to Vernon Press for the invitation to publish this book.

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I. Russell the Man

Chapter 1

An Affair Remembered: Bertrand Russell and Joan Follwell, 1927-1929

Eileen O'Mara Walsh¹

When I was a young girl in the nineteen-twenties, my family were pioneers in the Socialist movement. We were all members of the I.L.P., and as we lived in the backwoods (in the ancient and beautiful city of Salisbury), we had to work very hard indeed for the cause. My family is lower middle class, and by the standards of the day, well-to-do, [and so] our part was to give hospitality to visiting speakers. At this time, I managed to combine a very intense personal life, which included the dancing craze of the day, tea-dances, military balls and love affairs, with a very real and serious enthusiasm for the movement.

It was in this way that I met Bertrand Russell, or rather, that he met me, for me he was just another political guest (we had Emmanuel Shinwell the previous weekend). It is true, as I remember that I took particular care in arranging the bedside books (*Madame Bovary* and Daudet's *Sapho*). Also, as I waited for the bus at Harnham Bridge, I felt a little more than the usual excitement and anticipation that an important speaker normally aroused. I am sure this was not because he was "Lord" Russell; it was because he was a writer and I had secret ambitions of my own. These I confided to him as we walked home. But I was dismayed, and my parents were quite nonplussed, when he asked after supper if we might be left alone together so that I could show him some of my 'work!' This work was practically non-existent—two

¹ I would like to thank McMaster University for permission to reprint here the transcript of the interview of Joan Follwell O'Mara by Harry Pollock.

chapters of an autobiographical novel, but he asked me to read it aloud to him. I had not proceeded very far when it became clear to me that he was far more interested in my mouth than in the words I was reading. So I said, with genuine feeling but with quite false naiveté: “You are just like all the others!” And he admitted with the utmost gravity that he was.

- Joan Follwell O’Mara, on the occasion of the 1971 acquisition by McMaster University of twenty-three letters to her from Bertrand Russell written between 1927 and 1929.

In 1932, Joan Follwell married Power O’Mara, eldest son of Joseph O’Mara, well-known operatic tenor and member of a wealthy merchant family from Limerick, Ireland. Eighty years later, their youngest daughter (me) embarked upon a journey to rediscover their story and try to solve the mysteries and silences that had shadowed my childhood and trace the route that took an Irish War of Independence exile to meet and marry an English socialist and erstwhile lover of Bertrand Russell. I set out by delving into my memories of childhood in Limerick and adolescence in Dublin when Patrick Kavanagh paid my bus fare home, and my mother scolded Brendan Behan for putting his boots up on the kitchen table. This is how my memoir, *The Third Daughter*, came to be written and then published in April 2016.

This brief essay offers an account of the background and youth of my mother, Joan Follwell. It focuses on the pivotal role Bertrand Russell played in her intellectual development. In writing about my parents, I found that whereas my father’s history was vague and difficult to re-create, the images of my mother’s girlhood and youth she had recounted so vividly to me brought her early life effortlessly to the page. As Bertrand Russell suggested in one of the twenty-odd letters he wrote to her,² she may well have had undeveloped literary talent which expressed itself largely through her letters as well as through sporadic attempts at composition, both of prose and poetry. Her distinctive firm rounded script, first seen in her girlhood correspondence with Bertrand Russell, became smaller in maturity, and finally trailed away into the sloping downwards scrawl of scattered thoughts from the sad hospital wards of her last few months of life.

² All of the surviving letters between Russell and Follwell can be found in the appendix to O’Mara Walsh (2015).

Joan's father, Edward Follwell, was born in 1880 of middle-class parents, but his mother was widowed early, and he went to work as an office boy at twelve years of age. This experience turned him into an early activist in the budding British Labour Party and led him to identify all his life with Charles Dickens, so much so that he used to tour local halls and meeting houses giving readings of Dickens to earnest working men's groups. Joan's mother's maiden name was Davis. She came from Bristol. Joan's lucid memories of her mother's early death make for sad reading a hundred years on:

The first time I entered a Catholic Church I was nine years old. It was somewhere in North London, a wild and stormy night, the evening before my mother was sent to hospital for the last time. I was walking with my father and ahead of us were my mother and my little brother, he was hanging on her arm and she was wiping her nose through her veil. She was beginning to cry already, and I knew what it would be like when we got home, so I was glad when my father stopped before a building from whose half-open door light shone out. Inside it was brighter than anything I had ever imagined, people were standing and singing, and we stood too, not singing but staring at us, at the lights, and the sweet-smelling incense that rose from the altar. When everyone sat down we sat too, but when a bell rang, and everyone knelt we continued to sit, my father disregarding with a smile the gestures that beckoned us to follow suit. I would gladly have knelt, felt our conspicuousness painfully as the bell rang again and all heads were bowed but ours. We came out again into the starry night while my father talked of Joseph McCabe, Boyd Barrett and the beauties of rationalism (so unlike Little Therese). When we reached home, my brother was in bed, and my mother's lamentations were louder than ever before. "When I am dead, you will be sorry."

My heart had broken already earlier in the evening when I had looked without seeing the comic film my father had thought would cure my mother's grief—I knew then, sitting in the plush seat feeling in the darkness her agony, that we were doomed. In the morning she was gone. I never saw her again. After her death, my brother and I never spoke her name (Follwell n.d.).

After her mother's death, Joan was sent to St Gilda's Convent School in Yeovil, Somerset. Why Joan's father, a confirmed atheist, ever sent her to a Roman Catholic boarding school is obscure. Her resulting conversion to Catholicism was at first passionate, then lapsed into agnosticism, reviving again upon her marriage but remaining idiosyncratic with leanings towards mysticism and ritual and hatred for the dogmatism and prejudices of the Irish Catholic Church. Although her religion is not mentioned in her correspondence with Russell, she often spoke about his disapproval of her leanings towards the Catholic Church, going so far as to say he would lose respect for her intellect if ever she yielded again to the call of Rome.

By the time she met Bertrand Russell at Harnham Bridge, Salisbury on that April evening in 1927, Joan Follwell was leading a carefree existence in provincial Salisbury, working as a comptometer in the nearby town of Melksham, a typical prototype of the "flapper" era, enjoying tea dances, the films of Rudolf Valentino, short skirts, and the Eton crop. From the evidence of my mother's reported memories of Russell, together with her writing, and the lengthy interview she gave to McMaster University representative Harry Pollock in 1970, her meeting with him was a catalyst which influenced her throughout her life.

What follows is the transcript of that interview.

* * *

Joan O'Mara (JO'M): Well, I was going to tell you actually that I only met him twice to talk to.... three times....the first time in my own home, the second time I had dinner with him and the third time I slept with him.

Harry Pollock (HP): Otherwise you corresponded?

JO'M: Yes, he was very tenacious...it lasted over three years but the sleeping wasn't a success so I gave him up.

HP: May I hear a letter?

JO'M: (*Reads a letter from Russell*)

Telegraph Hill, Harling Petersfield

Sunday, June 20th, 1929

My very dear Joan,

Your letter came yesterday evening and I was overjoyed to get it. I want very much to have you come Saturday and am passionately anxious that you should stay till Sunday. You say you hope we shan't be disappointed in each other. Of course, we can't really tell as we hardly know each other. You may find me disappointing from a physical point of view: I can no longer be sure of being as potent as I could wish, although in feeling I am as passionate as I ever was. I think it very unlikely that I shall be disappointed in you. Although I know (or think I do) the outline of the things you have to tell me: that you love one man, and wish you were faithful to him, and believe you cannot love anyone else deeply. But you can get from me certain mental things that I think you will feel worth having; at least that is what I am hoping. I believe I can give you understanding and encouragement and an atmosphere in which all your shyest thoughts can expand. - One practical question: shall we stay at my flat, or at an [sic] hotel? The advantages of the latter are that you can have breakfast in bed; if you come to me you can have only what we can prepare ourselves, or else we must go out to breakfast. Also we must, in my flat, pay some slight deference to the landlady's scruples, by going out separately (if at all) in the early morning. (She is quite friendly, and only wants not to *have* to know. She lives on the ground floor, and I on the third.) Send me a line as to what you prefer; also, when you know, what time to expect you, and what time you have to leave on Sunday. I shall be in town on Wed night, and return to town on Sat morning; I shall stay in town on Sat night in any case.

I am feeling much more than a "mild" excitement. I am nervous for fear I may disappoint you; you will find me more satisfactory on subsequent occasions, as I shall be shy at first. Goodbye for the moment—and bless you. B.

HP: How old was Bertrand Russell then?

JO'M: I think he was about 57 but I'm not sure—we met in 1927 and he was 97 when he died—it's a sum we could work out—he was nearly sixty and I was twenty-one.

HP: How did you come to meet Bertrand Russell, or correspond with him?

JO'M: I met him because he stayed in our house when I was a young girl—he came to speak at a political meeting and my family gave him hospitality as we used to do to visiting speakers.

HP: What was your background—was this in London?

JO'M: No this was in Salisbury, Wiltshire—a cathedral city and it was the custom in the Labour Party because funds...one of the interesting things is that Bertrand Russell wasn't rich, he had really given up his inheritance, whatever it was. He really did live by his writing, his lectures, all that kind of thing. He didn't stay at an hotel; he accepted the hospitality of workers of the Labour Party in whatever town he might be speaking in.

HP: Was he married at the time?

JO'M: He was married to Dora Russell who was originally Dora Black—she is still alive—he was living with her, they had been running a school for children and in between he gave lectures or wrote books. He came to Salisbury to speak at a public meeting and he stayed at our house. I remember I walked home with him. I knew, because I always knew, that he was attracted towards me but I didn't realise he was going to make a frontal attack as you might call it—in other words—we had a small ordinary middle-class home and when we had had supper he asked my parents if he could talk to me alone. He asked them either to leave the room, or sit in another room, I can't remember which, it rather upset them, but still we did, he asked me to show him, I had told him I was trying to do some writing, he asked me to show him what I was writing, which I did. Then he asked me to read it out loud to him. Then I realised he was more interested in me than in any writing talent I might have.

HP: Was this before your correspondence with him?

JO'M: Oh, I had never met him before in my life...

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About the Contributors

Nancy C. Doubleday joined McMaster University in 2009, where she holds the Hope Chair in Peace and Health, in Peace Studies, and is Associate Professor of Philosophy. She also holds associate appointments at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, and at the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health.

Tim Madigan is President of the Bertrand Russell Society and co-editor, with Peter Stone, of the book *Bertrand Russell, Public Intellectual* (Tiger Bark Press, 2016). He is Professor and Chair of Philosophy and Director of the Irish Studies Program at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York.

Nikolay Milkov teaches philosophy at the University of Paderborn, Germany. He is the author of the books *Kaleidoscopic Mind: An Essay in Post-Wittgensteinian Philosophy* (Rodopi, 1992); *Varieties of Understanding: English Philosophy After 1898* (2 volumes, Peter Lang, 1997); and *A Hundred Years of English Philosophy* (Kluwer, 2003). He edited *Ziele und Wege der heutigen Naturphilosophie*, by Hans Reichenbach (Felix Meiner, 2011); (with Volker Peckhaus) *The Berlin Group and the Philosophy of Logical Empiricism* (Springer, 2013); and *Die Berliner Gruppe* (Felix Meiner, 2015). He has also translated Wittgenstein's *Tractatus, Philosophische Untersuchungen*, and *Bemerkungen über die Grundlagen der Mathematik* into Bulgarian.

Alan Schwerin is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Monmouth University. He served as President of the Bertrand Russell Society for fifteen years. With an interest in empiricism, he has written extensively on the thought of Bertrand Russell and David Hume. His most recent book is on Hume's investigations into issues from the philosophy of the mind; it is entitled *Hume's Labyrinth: A Search for the Self* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012).

Peter Stone is Ussher Assistant Professor of Political Science at Trinity College Dublin. Before that, he taught Political Science at Stanford University and held a Faculty Fellowship at Tulane

University's Center for Ethics and Public Affairs. He is the author of *The Luck of the Draw: The Role of Lotteries in Decision Making* (Oxford University Press, 2011), the editor of *Lotteries in Public Life: A Reader* (Imprint Academic, 2011), and the co-editor, with Tim Madigan, of *Bertrand Russell, Public Intellectual* (Tiger Bark Press, 2016). He has been a member of the Bertrand Russell Society for over 20 years and recently served as its Vice President.

Ádám Tamás Tuboly is Junior Research Fellow at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The subject of his Ph.D. thesis was the history of quantified modal logic in the twentieth century, but his research also includes the history of analytic philosophy, especially logical empiricism. He has authored articles on the philosophy of Rudolf Carnap and Philipp Frank and is currently editing several works dealing with various aspects of logical empiricism.

Chad Trainer is an independent scholar and Chair of the Bertrand Russell Society. He works as the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO's legislative director. He recently published a paper entitled "Would Bertrand Russell Have Used E-mail?" in *Bertrand Russell, Public Intellectual*, edited by Tim Madigan and Peter Stone (Tiger Bark Press, 2016). He lives with his wife, Cara, and his daughter, Colette, in central Pennsylvania.

Eileen O'Mara Walsh was born in Limerick, Ireland in 1941 and began her career with the Irish Tourist Board in Paris in the late 1960s. She set up her first business, the O'Mara Travel Company, in 1978, and subsequently established two further companies, Visit Ireland Inc. in 1982 and Heritage Island Ltd in 1992. Her career in the fields of Irish business and the tourist industry includes serving as Chair of the Great Southern Hotels Group, the Irish Tourist Industry Confederation, and Forbairt (the Irish government business development agency). She is also a former Director of Aer Lingus, Irish Airlines. On retirement, she studied English Literature and French in University College Dublin, where she received a first class degree. She was also awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the Dublin Institute of Technology in recognition of her contribution to Irish business and the tourism industry. She is currently a member of the International Women's Forum. Her memoir, *The Third Daughter: A Retrospective*, was published by Lilliput Press Dublin in 2015.

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