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Asylum

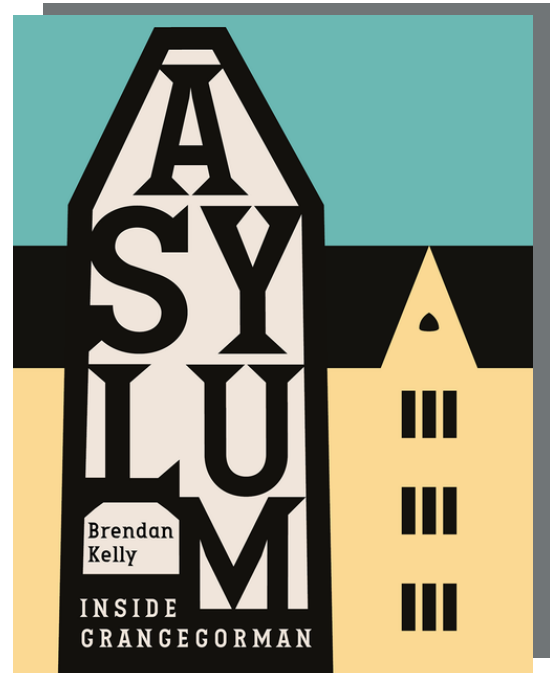
Inside Grangegorman

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Brendan Kelly

In 1814, the Richmond Lunatic Asylum at Grangegorman in Dublin started an extraordinary programme of asylum building across Ireland, aimed at alleviating the suffering of people with mental illness who were homeless, in prison, or confined in appalling circumstances. By the 1950s, Ireland had proportionately more people in 'mental hospitals' than any other country in the world. On a given night, the number of people in Ireland's psychiatric hospitals was more than double those in all our other institutions put together: prisons, laundries, mother and baby homes, industrial schools, orphanages.

But what was the life of a patient in an asylum really like? From digging in the archives of letters, patient records and medical notes, Brendan Kelly gives us the unique opportunity to delve into the stories of the patients sentenced to live in Grangegorman from the early 19th century to modern day, when it closed its doors in 2013.



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In addition to his medical degree (MB BCh BAO), he holds masters degrees in epidemiology (MSc), healthcare management (MA), and Buddhist studies (MA), and an MA (jure officii) from Trinity College Dublin; doctorates in medicine (MD), history (PhD), governance (DGov), and law (PhD); and a higher doctorate in history (DLitt).

He has authored and co-authored over 300 publications in peer-reviewed journals, over 600 non-peer-reviewed publications, 21 book chapters and book contributions, and 17 books (11 as sole author). He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, and Trinity College Dublin.

In 2018, he became Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Law and Psychiatry and in 2020 was elected as Dun's Librarian at the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.

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