

“This is potentially of interest to anyone concerned with how we grow up, how we are shaped, and how the way that young people are drawn into whatever religious faith into which they are born, how this supposedly, avowedly benign process is enacted can have deeply malign effects on the individual and so on society in general.”

— Karl French, literary reviewer —

## THE SHAMEFUL STORY OF SIN INSIDE OUR CHURCHES

Most adults born in Britain were taught his ideas, by law. St Augustine’s ancient hair-shirt texts shape our society – our government, our schools, and darkly, how we relate to ourselves and each other.

In school we learn values at odds with modern notions of decency and fair play. According to polls, we tend to reject religion later in life, but billions of neural connections made in our infant brains are fixed. Augustine’s teaching on sex and sin pervades our culture, normalising negative thought patterns.

Following his doctrine on penance, the Church of England service admits sin and begs forgiveness or mercy twenty-four times. In faith schools today, infants are told to recite similar prayers, often by a cleric. Schools do not set out to sexualise pupils, but an authority figure causing a child to feel guilt and shame is a known child grooming technique.

Tracing his religious background, the author suggests Augustine’s teaching plays a more influential role in child sexual abuse and adult mental well-being than has generally been recognised. The lucid descriptions of faith school drill and doctrine will stir readers who suppose Christianity is a benign influence, to think again.

Michael Moloney is the pseudonym of an acclaimed British writer. He served as altar boy and chorister while attending boarding schools in Ireland and England, where he faced abuse. With the Vatican decrying critics of the church as ‘Friends of the Devil’, he thought back to the drill and doctrine of his church schooldays. In this book Moloney shows how Augustine’s darkness has ensnared us all. Lorna Graham, a teacher for 26 years, brings faith schools to life depicting the struggle to educate pupils openly and objectively.

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