

Cork Programme

Ms Claire Ó Nualláin

["It is well-known that Cork is no school of painting." James Barry - Irish artist](#)

Ms Claire Ó Nualláin is a PhD researcher at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, funded by CHASE (AHRC) Doctoral Training Partnership. Her research examines the relationship between improvement, the fine arts, and Protestant identity in late eighteenth-century Ireland. Claire has previously worked as Curatorial Assistant at Christ Church Picture Gallery, Oxford, and has held positions at Dublin Castle and the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. She holds a BA in history from Trinity College Dublin and an MA in Eighteenth Century Studies from King's College London.

Dr Michael Waldron

["The Other James Barry: an uncle's unlikely gift"](#)

Dr Michael Waldron is an art historian, curator, and writer based in Cork, Ireland. He holds a PhD in English literature and has a background in literary criticism and art history. He is currently the Curator of Collections & Special Projects at Crawford Art Gallery, where he works directly with historic and contemporary art from Ireland's National Collection. His exhibitions have included *Recasting Casanova* (2019-24), *Laura Fitzgerald: I have made a place* (2021), and *Harry Clarke: Bad Romance* (2023-24). Dr Waldron is Deputy Chair of Sample-Studios and an editorial board member of *The Elizabeth Bowen Review*.

Dr Tom Spalding

Medical History Walking Tour

Dr Tom Spalding is a lecturer in the Media Communications Department at Munster Technological University in Cork, Ireland. He holds a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from University College Dublin, a Master's in Design from the Royal College of Art in London, and a PhD in design history from Technological University Dublin. His research focuses on the physical development of Cork city, which has begun largely ignored in the study of its architectural history. Spalding's book, "Designed for Life: Architecture and Design in Cork City 1900-1990," is a significant contribution to this field, offering a detailed examination of the city's design history.

Professor Noirin Russell

[The Story of Dr James Barry](#)

Professor Noirin Russell graduated from University College Cork in 2000 and completed specialist training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, obtaining memberships of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.



She works as a Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at Cork University Maternity Hospital and Honorary Clinical Professor at University College Cork. She was awarded an MD from University College Dublin in 2010 for research in fetal cardiac function and completed advanced training in fetal medicine in Necker Enfants Malades in Paris.

Since 2020, she has worked as Clinical Director of CervicalCheck, the Irish national cervical screening programme. She collaborated with the International Agency for Research and Cancer (IARC-WHO) to produce the 2022 Best Practice Guidelines on cervical cancer screening and is currently a member of the working group of the European Commission Initiative on cervical cancer (ECcVC).

Professor Russell's clinical and research interests include clinical leadership, cervical cancer screening, risk assessment in pregnancy, patient safety, quality assurance and staff engagement. She is interested in patient-focussed communication and society-wide discussion of harm in healthcare.

Dr Cathy Burke

[The Story of Dr James Barry](#)

Dr Cathy Burke is a senior Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH). She trained at University College Galway and completed a fellowship in minimally invasive gynaecological surgery and endometriosis at King Edward Memorial Hospital in Perth, Australia.

Her clinical expertise includes endometriosis, minimally invasive and robotic gynaecological surgery, and gynaecological ultrasound. She established the endometriosis clinic at CUMH, providing multidisciplinary care for patients with endometriosis and chronic pelvic pain, and serves as lead consultant for the Cork supraregional endometriosis centre. She is also involved in national work on endometriosis care pathways and professional frameworks.

Dr Susan Ward

[The Story of Dr James Barry](#)

Susan Ward has been a Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist since 1998 in Nottinghamshire; having trained in general surgery and urology to FRCS level, then obstetrics and gynaecology. She has been heavily involved in medical education having been a College Tutor, Training Programme Director and finally Head of School in charge of training for the East Midlands. The RCOG trainees' committee awarded her the inaugural 'National Trainer of the Year' Award in 2015 for her contribution to training.

For over 20 years she has been involved in the DRCOG and MRCOG examinations and was the Chair of the RCOG Examination and Assessment Committee until being elected RCOG Vice-president for Education in 2019. She has given talks about James Barry at RCOG Congress and other medical meetings.



Ms Harriet Wheelock

[The Story of Dr James Barry](#)

Ms Harriet Wheelock is Keeper of Collections in Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, with responsibility for the management and development of RCPI's Heritage Centre. This comprises the unique library, archive and historic items relating to the history of RCPI, and the history of medicine in Ireland. In 2018 the Heritage Centre received Full Accreditation under the Museum Standards Programme for Ireland, becoming Ireland's first accredited medical museum. Harriet is currently a PhD student in the TU Dublin School of Creative Arts, where her research focuses on the development and historiography of RCPI's heritage collections. She is the co-author with Dr Mary McAuliffe (UCD) of *The Diaries of Kathleen Lynn. A life revealed through personal writing* (UCD Press, 2023).

Dr Michael Robson

[History of Caesarean Section: from the first CS to the 10-group classification](#)

Dr Michael Robson is a Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at the National Maternity Hospital in Dublin, Ireland. He completed his MBBS at St Thomas's Hospital, London, United Kingdom, and previously worked as a Consultant and Clinical Director at Wycombe General Hospital, Buckinghamshire, England, before serving as Master of the National Maternity Hospital (2005–2011).

His clinical and academic interests focus on the management of labour and delivery, with particular expertise in intrapartum care, audit, and the aetiology of dystocic labour. Dr Robson is National Clinical Director for the development of Ireland's National Maternity Electronic Patient Record system and has contributed widely to innovations in maternity care audit and data systems.

Professor Richard Greene

[Debate: "We are performing too many caesarean sections."](#)

Professor Richard Greene, a graduate of Trinity College Dublin, gained much of his clinical experience in the Coombe Women's Hospital, Dublin. In July 1999, he took up a position as a Fellow in Maternal-Fetal Medicine in Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia, USA. On his return to Ireland in 2001, he joined UCC as a Senior Lecturer/Consultant in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. In 2007, he took up his current posts as Director of the National Perinatal Epidemiology Centre (NPEC) and Professor of Clinical Obstetrics, UCC.

Prof. Greene was instrumental in commissioning and establishing the new maternity services at CUMH and continues to maintain a senior management position within the service. His research interests include maternal-fetal medicine; epidemiology; health services research (incorporating risk management); quality of service; and translational research.



Prof. Greene has been involved in the development of a single, national chart for obstetrics and is centrally involved in the Maternal Newborn Clinical Management System (MN_CMS) Project (whereby a single, electronic medical record for all maternity hospitals is created).

Professor Brian Walsh

[Impact of C-Sections on Neonates: Clear Benefits and a Few Risks](#)

Professor Brian Walsh is a Principal Investigator at the INFANT Research Centre, University College Cork, and a Consultant Neonatologist at Cork University Maternity Hospital, Cork, Ireland. He graduated of Trinity College Dublin and was awarded a PhD from University College Cork in 2014 for research on biomarkers of hypoxic-ischaemic encephalopathy (HIE) in newborns. He completed advanced neonatal training at Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, where he served as Chief Fellow and later as an Attending Neonatologist.

His research focuses on the early identification of neonatal brain injury and the optimisation of neuroprotective strategies to improve outcomes for high-risk newborns. His current work includes neonatal encephalopathy, neuroimaging, machine learning approaches to risk prediction, and long-term neurodevelopmental outcomes.

Dr Mary McAuliffe

[James Barry- Reclaiming An Irish Trans History - Dr Mary McAuliffe](#)

Dr Mary McAuliffe is a historian, lecturer and Director of Gender Studies at University College Dublin, Ireland. Her research focuses on Irish women's and gender history, the history of sexuality, and the experiences of gendered and sexual violence during Ireland's revolutionary period. She completed her BA (Hons), MA, and PhD at the School of History and Humanities, Trinity College, Dublin (TCD). Dr McAuliffe is an award-winning scholar and public historian; she has published extensively on women's history in Ireland and is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

Dr Paul Corcoran

[Caesarean Section Trends](#)

Dr Paul Corcoran is a Senior Lecturer in Perinatal Epidemiology with the National Perinatal Epidemiology Centre (in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology) and with the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health.

Paul's degrees include a BSc "joint honours" degree in Statistics and Computer Science, a Master's degree in Statistics and a PhD in Epidemiology, all obtained at UCC. He has more than 70 peer-reviewed scientific publications and has contributed chapters to international texts.

Before joining the Centre, Paul was Deputy Director of the National Suicide Research Foundation and Adjunct Senior Lecturer with the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health.



He was a member of the writing group of Reach Out (Ireland's National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention), a Visiting Professor at the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Oviedo in Spain and Chair of the International Association for Suicide Prevention Special Interest Group on National Systems for Certifying Suicide Deaths.

Dr Karn Cliffe

[Debate: "We are performing too many caesarean sections."](#)

Dr Karn Cliffe is Director of Professional Standards – Midwifery at the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI). As a highly qualified nurse and midwife, she has extensive clinical, educational, and leadership experience across Ireland, Australia, and the United Kingdom.

She holds a Clinical Doctorate in Midwifery from the University of Stirling and has held senior roles in maternity services, nursing and midwifery leadership, the National Sepsis Programme, and the COVID-19 vaccination programme. In recognition of her contributions to nursing and midwifery, she was awarded a Fellowship of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and was appointed Adjunct Professor at the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin. Her interests include professional standards, clinical education, maternity care, and healthcare quality improvement.

Professor Rhona Mahony

[Debate: "We are performing too many caesarean sections."](#)

Professor Rhona Mahony is Executive Director of the Women and Children's Clinical Academic Directorate within the Ireland East Hospital Group and an Honorary Clinical Professor at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. Prof Mahony is an Obstetrician and Gynaecologist specialising in maternal and fetal medicine, she previously served as Master of the National Maternity Hospital, Dublin (2012–2018), one of Europe's largest maternity hospitals and is a Fellow of both the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.

She is a strong advocate for health equity and has received numerous honours, including honorary fellowships from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and UCD School of Medicine, as well as an honorary Doctor of Medicine from the National University of Ireland.

Ms Fiona Hanrahan

[Debate: "We are performing too many caesarean sections."](#)

Ms Fiona Hanrahan is Director of Midwifery and Nursing at the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, Ireland. With more than 30 years of experience in maternity and women's healthcare across Ireland and the United Kingdom, she has extensive expertise in both high-risk pregnancy care and physiological childbirth.



She is a strong advocate for evidence-based, person-centred maternity services, establishing Ireland's largest community midwifery service and led the development of innovative models of care supporting women and families. In her current role, she provides strategic leadership across nursing and midwifery services and contributes to national and international initiatives aimed at advancing quality, safety, and excellence in maternity care. Ms Hanrahan is a Fellow of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

Professor John Higgins

[Debate: "We are performing too many caesarean sections."](#)

Professor John Higgins is the Professor of Obstetrics & Gynaecology at University College Cork. He is the seventh person to hold this post since the foundation chair in 1849. He is a practicing Obstetrician & Gynaecologist at Cork University Maternity Hospital. He is the current Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at UCC.

John's subspecialty clinical and research interests are in the area of Maternal Fetal medicine. He has published widely on a range of topics including pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure in pregnancy), folic acid and pregnancy, twin pregnancy, and haemostatic alterations (changes in blood clotting) in pregnancy. In particular, he has explored the relationship between abnormal blood clotting and pregnancy complications including miscarriage, pre-eclampsia, fetal growth restriction, stillbirth and placental abruption. He has co-authored the National Guideline on Prevention of Venous Thrombosis in Pregnancy (2013) and is currently writing the guideline for Treatment of Venous Thrombosis in pregnancy.

Edinburgh Programme

Professor Andrew Horne is Professor at the University of Edinburgh and a leading researcher in women's health, with a particular focus in recent years on endometriosis and pelvic pain. He co-founded EXPPECT, an innovative initiative that brings together Scotland's first multidisciplinary pelvic pain and endometriosis clinical services with a closely integrated research programme. He currently serves as Director of the Centre for Reproductive Health at the University of Edinburgh.

Dr Karissa Patton is a historian of gender, sexuality, health, and activism. Her work explores local histories of healthcare, health activism, and politics of health and medicine. She is currently working as a Wellcome Trust Research Fellow at the Centre for Biomedicine, Self, and Society at the University of Edinburgh.

Dr Rosemary Townsend is an honorary consultant obstetrician and senior lecturer at NHS Lothian and a senior lecturer at Edinburgh Medical School. She is a graduate of Edinburgh Medical School and has always been passionate about the rich tradition of women's healthcare at Edinburgh and the research and innovation aiming to address the health needs of women globally.



Professor Richard Anderson is a professor at the University of Edinburgh and a leader in the field of reproductive health. His work spans areas such as fertility preservation and contraceptive development.

In 2017, in a UK first, he successfully performed a transplant of frozen ovary tissue into a woman recovering from cancer, allowing her to give birth. He is currently working on a clinical trial exploring male contraception and provides a specialist endocrinology service to the Edinburgh Gender Identity Clinic.

Dr Karen Edgar works as a Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh. Her area of interest is complex obstetric surgery and management of abnormally invasive placentation.

Lesley Stokes is the Head of Widening Participation Programmes at the University of Edinburgh and engages with under-represented groups throughout the student life cycle to raise aspirations, support access, and encourage success and progression. She works with the Medical School to ensure a diverse and supported student population.

Cape Town Programme

Dr Pauli van Heerden is a Maternal-Fetal Medicine subspecialist and academic obstetrician at Tygerberg Hospital and Stellenbosch University. Her work centres on high-risk pregnancy care and prenatal diagnosis, with particular interests in fetal growth restriction, hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, multiple pregnancy, and the interface between ultrasound findings and real-world clinical decision-making, especially in resource-constrained environments.

She has a strong commitment to strengthening ultrasound education through structure teaching, mentorship and simulation-based training, and is involved in research initiatives focused on obstetric ultrasound competency and scalable training solutions in South Africa and other low-and-middle income settings. Her academic activities include supervision of postgraduate students, exam development, and educational leadership within the department.

Dr Liesl de Waard is a Specialist in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Senior Lecturer at Stellenbosch University, and Head of Clinical Unit at Tygerberg Hospital. She is actively involved in maternal and perinatal health quality improvement initiatives and serves as the Western Cape representative on the National Perinatal Mortality Committee. Her academic and clinical interests include general obstetrics and surgical education. And she has a strong focus on improving health outcomes in low-and -middle income countries.



Professor Louise Du Toit is Professor of Philosophy at Stellenbosch University, South Africa, and Head of the Unit for Environmental Philosophy in the Centre for Applied Ethics. Her research focuses on feminist philosophy, particularly at the intersection of African and European thought, with interests spanning sexual violence, critical theory, phenomenology, ethics, environmental philosophy, and philosophy of religion.

Prof Du Toit is an internationally recognised scholar, she is the author and editor of numerous influential publications, including *A Philosophical Investigation of Rape: The Making and Unmaking of the Feminine Self* (Routledge, 2009). She has published extensively, supervised numerous postgraduate researchers, and is actively involved in international collaborations on themes including sexual violence, victimhood, women and war, and nonviolent resistance.
