

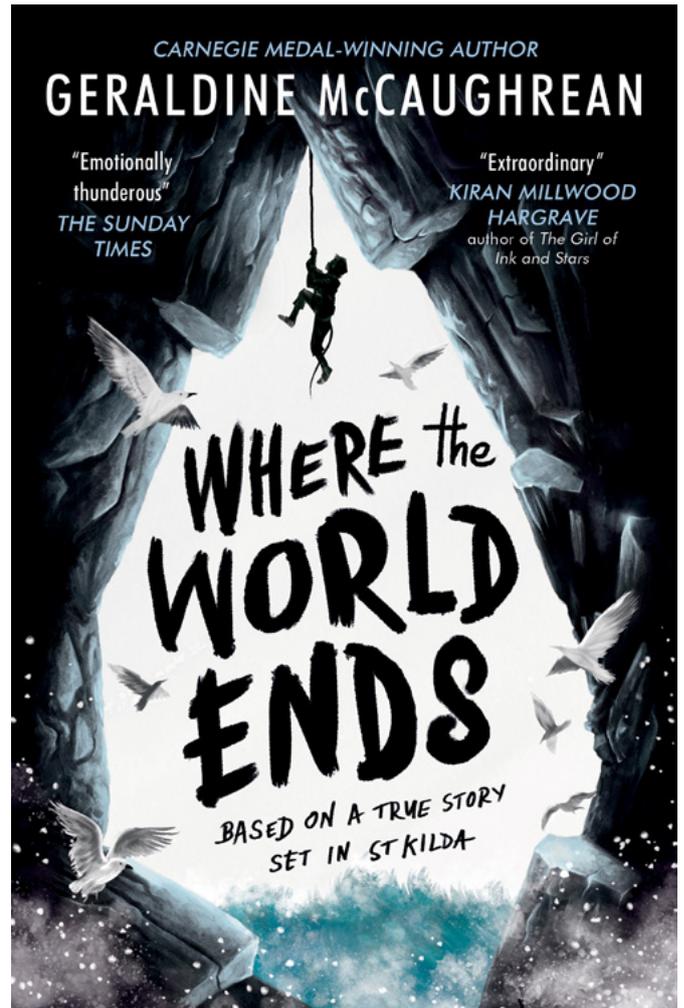
WHERE THE WORLD ENDS

By Geraldine McCaughrean

Usborne

2018 Carnegie Medal shortlist,
eligible for Amnesty CILIP Honour

'The unforgiving landscape and the struggle to survive in it are evocatively portrayed... Relationships are believable and beautifully written.' *Judging panel*



UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Article 3: We have the right to life, and to live in freedom

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Every summer, boys and men are dropped off on a remote sea stac in St Kilda to harvest birds for oil, meat and feathers. Just for a few weeks. But this time no one returns to collect them. The stac, a jagged rock, is an unforgiving and barren place, and the group are abandoned to endure storms, starvation and terror for nine months.

Mainly told through the eyes of Quilliam, one of the boys, *Where the World Ends* is a story of courage, friendship and survival. It explores gender inequality, and how quickly behaviour changes under extreme circumstances and its impact. It is based on a true story – which makes it even more compelling.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THIS STORY

The right to be treated equally whatever our differences; to education; to a standard of living adequate for health and wellbeing; to a good life; to safety; to own property; to take part in the government of their country; to freedom of expression.

YOU CAN TALK ABOUT...

The cover

- How do you feel when you look at the picture of the stac?

Power

- Why are only men in the Parliament of Elders?
- What should the adults on the stac do to protect the children?

- Does the children's power increase? What helps this happen?
- How do Quill and 'Minister' Cane use different methods to control the group?
- How does Cane ensure Quill loses his influence?
- Domhall Don and Mr Farris protect John when her gender is revealed. Why should they have to?

Discrimination and bullying

- Quill reflects that Kenneth bullies 'for the fun of it'. Why do people deliberately choose to hurt others?
- Kenneth assaults John and threatens to rape her. Does he face any consequences? What should happen to him?
- What would you have done to stop Kenneth?
- What motivates Cane's violent treatment of Quill? Why doesn't Quill tell anyone?
- Quill says 'No one tells tales on a bully 'for fear the bully makes him pay afterwards' (page 95). Is this true today? Do adults understand this?

Gender

- John's mother raises her as a boy – and doesn't tell her. What impact does that have?
- How does everything change for John when the others find out?
- Quill lists 'girl things she might have liked or wanted'. Do you think there are girl and boy things?
- Why do Murdo and Quill worry about John being taken up by Cane? What can we do if we are worried about the safety of a girl or woman we know?
- Kenneth uses 'such a girl' as an insult. How do boys talk about girls today? Is it disrespectful? Do boys consider girls equals?
- How can we change people's attitudes and behaviour?

Friendship and family

- Why does John choose Callum?

- Quill tells Murdo about John. Why? Would you?
- What do you think about Lachlan's wish to stay on the stac? Why doesn't Quill know until they get back to the island?
- Does Quill's story-telling and calling the other children 'Keepers' help them feel better? Why?

Finally

- Is there some hopeful message about humanity to be found in this tragedy?

ACTIVITY

Three adults on the stac were responsible for the safety and welfare of the children. Write a letter to one of them describing how you felt they behaved, what you think of them and what they should have done.

RESEARCH

Research the real story of the party of eight who went over to Stac an Armin (or Warrior Stac) from Hirta and were marooned for nine months in 1727. Why isn't it widely known? What happened to the boys? Who lives on Hirta now? Read the afterword.

Find out about Amnesty's campaign for the rights of women and girls. How do these rights relate to the story? [amnesty.org.uk/womensrights](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/womensrights)

'They lived in the Present: the Past was past mattering, the Future a shapeless improbability. And yet, they had come this far: why should they not persist? spring, summer, autumn, Dead Time.' *Quilliam*

WE ARE ALL BORN FREE AND EQUAL

The atrocities of World War II sparked a determination to protect the rights of all human beings everywhere. On 10 December 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The preamble says it must be shared, learned by children and be a part of all our lives.

When using these notes, you can download for reference:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights simplified version, especially useful for younger children [amnesty.org.uk/udhr](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/udhr)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child [unicef.org/crc](https://www.unicef.org/crc)

For more free educational resources from Amnesty International go to [amnesty.org.uk/education](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/education)



The CILIP Carnegie & Kate Greenaway Children's Book Awards

