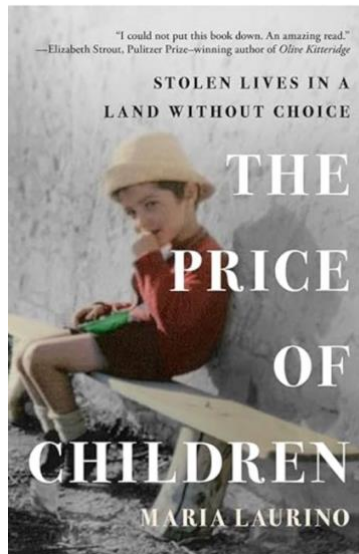


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“I could not put this book down. An amazing read.”
—Elizabeth Strout, Pulitzer Prize–winning author of *Olive Kitteridge*



THE PRICE OF CHILDREN
Stolen Lives in a Land Without Choice

by Maria Laurino

on-sale October 15, 2024

ISBN: 9781504099233

\$21.99 paperback original, 324 pp

As debates over women’s reproductive rights take center stage again in American politics this fall, bestselling author Maria Laurino’s new book **THE PRICE OF CHILDREN: Stolen Lives in a Land Without Choice** (on-sale October 15, 2024; Open Road Media) reveals a stunning, never-told story that underscores how much could be at risk for women in contemporary America.

THE PRICE OF CHILDREN is an astonishing account of how the Vatican and American Catholic Church sent nearly 4,000 Italian children to the United States for adoption between 1950 to 1970, falsely labeling them “war orphans” and later “orphans.” These children had been born to thousands of unwed Italian mothers who, confronted with religious stigmas and social pressures of the time, were forced to relinquish their babies. Some mothers signed forms they didn’t understand; others were lied to or told their baby had died.

Laurino’s investigation began with a revelation from her own family—she discovered that her cousin had been one of these babies adopted from Italy. Now told through the voices of its perpetrators and victims, **THE PRICE OF CHILDREN** reveals stories of cruelty and corruption, of shameful decisions made by the powerful over the powerless. Beyond this shocking story, Laurino’s work speaks to the legacy of patriarchy and how ancient Christian beliefs about female purity continue to affect women’s place in the world today.

Today, millions of Americans are proclaiming, “We’re not going back,” in response to the decision of a Catholic majority of Supreme Court justices who overturned *Roe v. Wade*. **THE PRICE OF CHILDREN** is a riveting reminder of a time when families were torn apart and lives ruined because powerful religious forces and a compliant government dictated the course of women’s lives.

Please be in touch soon to arrange an interview with Maria Laurino around the book’s October release.

[Please See Discussion Topics Here](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maria Laurino is an American author, essayist, and journalist. She is the author of *Were You Always an Italian?*, a bestselling memoir exploring how class prejudice and stereotypes affected Italian-American identity; the memoir *Old World Daughter, New World Mother*, a meditation on contemporary feminism; and *The Italian Americans: A History*, the companion book to a national public television documentary. A former staff writer for the *Village Voice*, Laurino’s journalism has appeared in numerous publications including the *New York Times*, *The New Republic*, *Washington Post*, *Nation*, and *Salon*, and her essays have been widely anthologized. Laurino teaches creative nonfiction in the undergraduate writing program at New York University and lives in New York City.

EARLY PRAISE FOR THE PRICE OF CHILDREN

“I could not put this book down. An amazing read. Laurino eloquently unfolds the nefarious history of the Italian ‘war adoptions’ in a manner that is entirely readable and clear as a bell, her research precise and well rendered. I was spellbound by the variety of stories revealed here of heartache, of children longing for their mothers and mothers forced to give up their children.

Lives were changed irrevocably, and [Laurino] warns us that they can be changed again in a similar, though more-up-to date manner. One of the best books I've recently read."

—**Elizabeth Strout, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Olive Kitteridge***

"By shedding light on the mistreatment suffered by single mothers of that time, [*The Price of Children*] invites all women to defend those civil rights which, today, are questioned in many parts of the world."

—***Vanity Fair Italia***

PRAISE FOR MARIA LAURINO'S PREVIOUS WORKS

"Finally, someone has had the intelligence and the honesty to go beyond the stereotypes, not only the usual negative ones (Godfather, angry guido) but the too-easily-accepted sickly sweet positive stereotypes – earthiness, the Renaissance, wonderfulness of family. Ms. Laurino's [*Were You Always an Italian?*] is so completely original and informative."

—**David Chase, creator of *The Sopranos***

"Maria Laurino has produced a nuanced, scrupulously thoughtful yet vividly dramatized account of the intersections between gender and ethnicity. Her book [*Old World Daughter, New World Mother*] will fascinate all who have coped with an Old World mama in the kitchen, a New World baby in the crib, and multiple volumes of feminist scholarship in the library."

—**Sandra M. Gilbert, author of *The Madwoman in the Attic***

"Wonderful – [*The Italian Americans* is] of vital importance to anyone interested in how a single ethnic group has had a profound and long-lasting influence on every aspect of American society."

—**Stanley Tucci**

"*The Italian Americans* is **clear, fresh and vivid**. It answers a thousand questions about where we came from, how and why our ancestors got here, and why we think and act as we do."

—**Russell Shorto**

"*The Italian Americans* is a **revelation**—a rich and truthful history, full of little-known information, insight, and narrative color, giving full dimension to people far too often reduced to stereotype."

—**Gay Talese**