



The Centre for Research on Children's and Young Adult Literature
at the University of Wrocław has the honor to invite you to the 29th lecture
in the series "International Voices in Children's Literature Studies"

Dr Jennifer Mooney

'Lad'- dishness in Contemporary Irish YA Fiction



DATE: 8 April 2025

TIME: 18.00 (CET)

VENUE: MS Teams

If you are interested in taking part
in the lecture, please register
[here](#)



In the last two decades, the Irish publishing industry has become increasingly dominated by women writers, who have put front and centre their desire, their agenda even, to explicitly politicise writing in order to challenge institutional and cultural violence, especially sexual violence, against women and girls where it remains and to provide younger readers with role models reflective or suggestive of a new, hoped-for cultural landscape. Whether or not it is also a direct corollary of the dominance, during the mid-to late 2000s few Irish YA texts offered sophisticated or complex depictions of straight or cis adolescent males and men characters – especially in the role of protagonist. In this talk, I explore how Irish YA writers approach writing masculinity by focusing primarily on two novels that explore gendered violence and sexual assault. Irish writer Louise O'Neill's *Asking For It* (2015), is written from the perspective of a teenage girl; *The Eternal Return of Clara Hart*, written by English writer Louise Finch and published in Ireland by Little Island in 2022, is written from the perspective of a teenage boy. I ask whether these authors oversimplify the extent and force of patriarchy as a universal system of oppression by amplifying individual men and boys' behaviour, reflecting a problematic 'lad culture' collective which contributes to the prevalence of sexual violence against women and girls. Alternatively, are they challenging normative beliefs about traditional masculinity by considering how social expectations to do with gender affect boys' negotiation of hegemonic masculinity?

Jennifer Mooney is Assistant Professor at the School of English, Dublin City University, where she is chair of its MA in Children's and Young Adult Literature degree programme. She is the author of *Feminist Discourse in Irish Literature: Gender and Power in Louise O'Neill's Young Adult Fiction* (Routledge, 2023).