

Departmental Forum, 2025–26

**Female Characters in the Contemporary Irish “Novel of Elsewhere”
(Anne Enright, Sebastian Barry, Colm Tóibín)**

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The presentation will introduce Anne Enright’s novels *The Gathering* (2007), *The Green Road* (2015) and *Actress* (2020), Sebastian Barry’s novel *On Canaan’s Side* (2011) and Colm Tóibín’s novels *Brooklyn* (2009) and *Long Island* (2024) as accounts of female migration from Ireland and tales of loss, split, departure, disruption and rejection, which need healing. The Hegarty women in *The Gathering*, the Madigan women in *The Green Road* and the mother and daughter in *The Actress* expose fractured family ties but also challenge the stereotype of the doomed mother-child relationship in Irish fiction, against a globalized background. In *On Canaan’s Side*, old Lilly Bere recounts her life story in the aftermath of her grandson’s suicide in the attempt to come to terms with suffering; though she clings to America as a new Canaan, it seems that persecution, racial discrimination and wars have accompanied her across the Atlantic. Eilis Lacey in *Brooklyn* portrays the exile of a young Irish woman in the US in the 1950s and draws attention to more recent approaches to migration in Ireland, her story being resumed 20 years later in *Long Island*. The presentation will focus on how these foundational contemporary Irish novelists reshape female identity under the influence of the Irish American space.

Wednesday, 15 October 2025 @ 15:00

Department of English Studies Conference Room

[9 Klimentos Str.](#) (2nd floor, Eliades Building), 1061 Nicosia

All welcome!