



A Psychoanalytic Perspective on Reading Harry Potter

a seminar by Mary Pyle

Mary's doctoral thesis was based on exploring the unconscious reasons why the series appeals not just to the teenage group which it is aimed at, but is enjoyed by much younger children as well as adults of all ages. I approach the question from the object relations stance, in particular basing it on the ideas of Winnicott. Linking psychoanalysis and literature is not new but this brings in a new dimension.

Mary's primary degree was in English Literature which she subsequently taught to university entrance level. Later she trained in psychoanalysis which she has practised and taught for many years. She five original members of the Irish Forum for Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (IFPP) and later a member of the group which established the Irish Institute of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (IIPP). She has returned to English Literature and completed her doctorate on 'Harry Potter and the Unconscious Dimension' in 2022.



Mary featured in the national press on award of her doctoral theses from TCD and Jane Carroll, Ussher Associate Professor in Children's Literature, who was Mary's supervisor, said of it:

"Mary's thesis is a fabulous piece of work. It is an exciting and important contribution to our knowledge about the Harry Potter series and to the wider critical conversation about children's literature. As a project that drew equally on Mary's professional expertise in psychoanalysis and her deep passion for children's literature, this is an interdisciplinary thesis and there is so much in it for both scholars of psychoanalysis and scholars of children's literature to learn from and benefit from. It opens up whole new ways for these disciplines to speak to one another."

"Mary's work demonstrates that there are complex unconscious reasons behind our decisions to read and re-read certain books. Her work tackles many of the difficult themes in the series, notably, the central role of death in the books, and shows that combining psychoanalysis with children's literature offers us rich and innovative ways to understand and engage with these texts. This PhD is the culmination of many years of hard work and meticulous research. It is a fantastic achievement and I am so very proud of Mary."

Schedule

Saturday, 23rd Sept	
Siminar followed by Q&A	11:00 am to 12.30 pm
Location	Garden Room, Carmelite Centre, 56 Aungier St, Dublin 2, D02 T258.

Ticket Prices

Early Bird Ticket (until 08/09/2023)	€15.00
Full Price Ticket	€20.00
Student Early Bird Ticket (until 08/09/2023)	€10.00
Student Full Price	€15.00

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