

The Little Red Chairs

(2016)

By
Edna O'Brien

Irish Cultural Center
Book Discussion

Saturday, March 29, 2025
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

McClelland Library

Considerations for Discussion:

Note: Edna O'Brien is one of the leading Irish writers and is considered by some to have brought Ireland into the contemporary era. She first came to notice with The Country Girls (1960) and has won several awards for her works, including the 2018 PEN/Nabokov Award for Achievement in International Literature.

→→What do you know about O'Brien and her writings? Have you read other works by her?

→→Explore the meaning of the title, The Little Red Chairs. Does it resonate throughout the novel? If so, how?

→→→→What do you glean about Ireland from this novel? Can you describe the Ireland that she pictures in her work?

→→This novel seems to be filled with female characters. Describe some of these. How does O'Brien bring them to life?

→→Maureen Corrigan (NPR) says, "One of Edna O'Brien's best and most ambitious novels yet. *The Little Red Chairs* is personal and political; charming and grotesque; a novel of manners and a novel of monsters." Do you agree with her assessment? Select one of these contrasts to share with the group.

→→Consider the development of the novel (for example, the three locations; the motivations that define the central character; point of view of the narrative). What themes did O'Brien ask the reader to consider?

Looking ahead: Our last discussion will be on April 26. The subject for discussion is How to Build a Boat (2023) by Elaine Feeney.

Remember to get your suggestions for next season to Joyce (jeast@marshall.edu) or Mary (doolingwilber@yahoo.com).