

Annie Dunne

(2002)

By

Sebastian Barry

Irish Center Book Club
Phoenix Irish Center
Central Avenue

Meets Saturday, January 31, 2026
McCelland Library
Norton Room
10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Sebastian Barry is one of the leading Irish writers today. We read **The Whereabouts of Eneas McNulty** a couple years ago. Barry is praised for his use of language and his ability to construct plots.

Discussion Guide

--One reviewer (San Francisco Chronicle) said that “Annie Dunne emerges from the novel as one of the most memorable women in Irish fiction”. How would you defend this statement?

--What did you enjoy about the novel? What changes—if any—would you suggest to the author?

--The Guardian compared the book to Beckett’s play, **Waiting for Godot**, “**Waiting for Godot** has been described as a play in which nothing happens, twice. **Annie Dunne** is a novel in which nothing happens many times.” What do you think the reviewer is talking about?

--Discuss the Irish history that looms behind the story of Annie Dunne.

--Why does Annie identify with the crab-apple? How does Sebastian Barry use the hills and trees of Kelsha to describe the people who live there, especially Annie?

--Discuss Annie’s relationship with Billy Kerr.

--How do Annie and Sarah relate to the children in different ways? Do the children favor one woman over the other?