

room by emma donoghue literary analysis

Room by Emma Donoghue: A Literary Analysis Unveiling Captivity, Resilience, and Freedom

Introduction:

Emma Donoghue's *Room* isn't just a gripping narrative; it's a masterclass in literary craftsmanship. This novel, adapted into an acclaimed film, explores profound themes of captivity, resilience, and the transformative power of love and freedom. This in-depth literary analysis delves into the intricate narrative structure, character development, symbolic imagery, and thematic resonance of *Room*, offering a comprehensive exploration for both seasoned readers and those newly acquainted with Donoghue's compelling work. We'll unpack the complexities of Jack's perspective, the nuanced portrayal of Joy's trauma, and the powerful exploration of the mother-son bond in the face of unimaginable circumstances. Prepare to re-examine your understanding of this powerful story.

I. Narrative Structure and Point of View:

Room employs a unique narrative structure dictated primarily by Jack's five-year-old perspective. This childlike voice, innocent yet surprisingly insightful, profoundly shapes our understanding of the events unfolding within the confines of Room. The narrative's simplicity belies its complexity; Jack's limited worldview initially obscures the full horror of his captivity, allowing the reader to gradually uncover the truth alongside him. This carefully controlled release of information creates a compelling narrative tension that keeps the reader engrossed. The shift in perspective once they escape into the "real world" highlights the jarring contrast between Jack's limited understanding of the outside world and the complexities of societal norms. The alternating perspectives of Jack and Joy, particularly after the escape, provide a richer, more nuanced understanding of their individual experiences and their evolving relationship. The initial innocence of Jack's narration starkly contrasts with the mature, often harrowing reflections of Joy, highlighting the emotional toll of prolonged captivity and the challenges of reintegration into society.

II. Character Development: Joy and Jack's Transformative Journey:

Joy Newsome, the protagonist, is a remarkable portrayal of resilience in the face of unimaginable trauma. Her unwavering devotion to her son, Jack, becomes the driving force behind her survival and her eventual escape. Donoghue skillfully depicts Joy's mental and emotional state, subtly revealing the psychological damage inflicted upon her while also showcasing her incredible strength and resourcefulness. Her internal struggles, often unspoken, are deeply affecting, resonating with the reader long after finishing the book.

Jack, despite his young age, displays a remarkable maturity and adaptability. His innocent observations belie a deeper understanding of his unusual circumstances. His limited vocabulary and understanding of the world outside Room are used strategically by Donoghue to emphasize the severity of his isolation and the gradual expansion of his worldview. His journey, marked by both confusion and wonder, reflects a child's extraordinary ability to adapt and find joy even in the face of adversity. His relationship with his mother is a powerful testament to the enduring strength of the mother-son bond.

III. Symbolism and Imagery: The Confined World of Room and the Expansive World Beyond:

Donoghue masterfully employs symbolism and imagery to amplify the themes of confinement and freedom. Room itself becomes a potent symbol, representing both a prison and a sanctuary. It's a microcosm of their world, filled with both love and limitation. The window, a seemingly insignificant detail, represents their only connection to the outside world, symbolizing hope and the yearning for escape. The contrast between the claustrophobic confines of Room and the vastness of the external world highlights the dramatic shift in their lives after their escape. Imagery related to light and darkness further underscores this contrast, with Room initially shrouded in relative darkness and the outside world initially overwhelming with its brightness and sensory overload. This powerful imagery enhances the reader's emotional response, amplifying the impact of the characters' experiences.

IV. Themes of Captivity, Resilience, and Freedom:

Room powerfully explores the multifaceted themes of captivity, resilience, and freedom. The narrative transcends a simple story of escape; it becomes a meditation on the human spirit's capacity to endure and overcome unimaginable adversity. The physical captivity of Room mirrors the psychological captivity inflicted upon Joy, highlighting the subtle yet significant forms of control and manipulation. The novel underscores the resilience of the human spirit, showing how even in the most dire circumstances, love and hope can prevail. The eventual escape, however, is not the end of their journey; it marks the beginning of a long and challenging process of healing and reintegration into a world that is both unfamiliar and often unforgiving. The concept of freedom transcends mere physical liberty, encompassing the freedom from trauma, the freedom to heal, and the freedom to create a new life.

V. Literary Techniques and Style:

Donoghue's writing style is deceptively simple, mirroring Jack's perspective. However, beneath the surface lies a sophisticated use of language and literary techniques. The use of first-person narration from a child's perspective provides a unique intimacy, allowing the reader to connect deeply with the characters' emotions and experiences. The deliberate use of vocabulary and sentence structure reflects Jack's developmental stage, adding authenticity and immediacy to the narrative. The narrative's shifts in perspective, from Jack to Joy, create a dynamic and multifaceted portrayal of their shared experience. Donoghue's skillful use of foreshadowing and suspense maintains the reader's interest and anticipation throughout the story.

VI. Conclusion:

Room is more than a captivating story; it's a powerful exploration of the human spirit's capacity to endure, adapt, and ultimately triumph over adversity. Donoghue's masterful use of narrative voice, character development, symbolism, and thematic exploration creates a literary experience that is both emotionally resonant and intellectually stimulating. The novel leaves a lasting impression, prompting reflection on the complexities of trauma, the strength of the human spirit, and the enduring power of love.

Outline of the Article:

Introduction: Briefly introduces Room and the scope of the analysis.

Chapter 1: Narrative Structure and Point of View: Explores the unique perspective of Jack's narration.

Chapter 2: Character Development: Examines the development of Joy and Jack as characters and their

relationship.

Chapter 3: Symbolism and Imagery: Analyzes the use of symbolic imagery within the novel.

Chapter 4: Themes: Discusses the major themes: captivity, resilience, and freedom.

Chapter 5: Literary Techniques: Explores Donoghue's stylistic choices.

Chapter 6: Conclusion: Summarizes the key findings of the analysis.

(Detailed explanation of each chapter point is provided above in the main article.)

FAQs:

1. What is the central theme of Room? The central themes are captivity, resilience, and the transformative power of love and freedom.
1. What is the significance of the title Room? "Room" symbolizes both confinement and sanctuary, representing the microcosm of Jack and Joy's world.
1. How does Jack's narration contribute to the novel's impact? His innocent perspective creates a unique intimacy and allows readers to gradually understand the horror.
1. What is the role of symbolism in the novel? Symbolism, particularly of light and darkness and the contrast between Room and the outside world, enhances the emotional impact.
1. How does the novel portray trauma and its effects? The novel realistically depicts the psychological effects of trauma on both Joy and, subtly, on Jack.
1. What are the strengths of Emma Donoghue's writing style in Room? Her deceptively simple style mirrors Jack's perspective while skillfully employing sophisticated literary techniques.
1. How does the novel explore the mother-son bond? The mother-son bond is central, showcasing the unwavering devotion and love between Joy and Jack.

1. Is Room suitable for all readers? Due to mature themes, it's best suited for mature young adults and adults.

1. How does the novel's ending contribute to its overall message? The ending is not a simple happy resolution but illustrates the ongoing challenges of healing and reintegration.

Related Articles:

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9. The Role of Setting in Room: Exploring the significance of "Room" as a character in the novel.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Room Emma Donoghue, 2023-04-06 In this deeply moving and life-affirming tale, a mother must nurture her five-year-old son through an unfathomable situation with only the power of their imagination and their boundless capacity to love. Written for the stage by Academy Award® nominee Emma Donoghue, this unique theatrical adaptation featuring songs and music by Kathryn Joseph and director Cora Bissett takes audiences on a richly emotional journey told through ingenious stagecraft, powerhouse performances, and heart-stopping storytelling. Room reaffirms our belief in humanity and the astounding resilience of the human spirit. This updated and revised edition was published to coincide with the Broadway premiere in Spring 2023.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Room Emma Donoghue, 2017-05-07 Kidnapped as a teenage girl, Ma has been locked inside a purpose built room in her captor's garden for seven

years. Her five year old son, Jack, has no concept of the world outside and happily exists inside Room with the help of Ma's games and his vivid imagination where objects like Rug, Lamp and TV are his only friends. But for Ma the time has come to escape and face their biggest challenge to date: the world outside Room.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: *Room* Emma Donoghue, 2010-07-23 Shortlisted for the Man Booker and Orange prizes NOW A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE This is a truly remarkable novel. New York Times Book Review It's Jack's birthday, and he's excited about turning five. Jack lives with his Ma in Room, which has a locked door and a skylight, and measures 11 feet by 11 feet. He loves watching TV, and the cartoon characters he calls friends, but he knows that nothing he sees on screen is truly real - only him, Ma and the things in Room. Until the day Ma admits that there's a world outside . . . Told in Jack's voice, Room is the story of a mother and son whose love lets them survive the impossible. Unsensational and sometimes funny, devastating yet uplifting, Room is a novel like no other. PRAISE FOR ROOM I've never read a more heart-burstingly, gut wrenchingly compassionate novel . . . As for sweet, bright, funny Jack, I wanted to scoop him up out of the novel and never let him go Daily Mail Room is a book to read in one sitting. When it's over you look up: the world looks the same but you are somehow different and that feeling lingers for days Audrey Niffenegger, author of The Time Traveller's Wife Room is one of the most profoundly affecting books I've read in a long time . . . John Boyne

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Akin Emma Donoghue, 2019-09-10 This soul stirring novel by the New York Times bestselling author of Room (O Magazine) is one of the New York Post's best books of the year. Noah Selvaggio is a retired chemistry professor and widower living on the Upper West Side, but born in the South of France. He is days away from his first visit back to Nice since he was a child, bringing with him a handful of puzzling photos he's discovered from his mother's wartime years. But he receives a call from social services: Noah is the closest available relative of an eleven-year-old great-nephew he's never met, who urgently needs someone to look after him. Out of a feeling of obligation, Noah agrees to take Michael along on his trip. Much has changed in this famously charming seaside mecca, still haunted by memories of the Nazi occupation. The unlikely duo, suffering from jet lag and culture shock, bicker about everything from steak frites to screen time. But Noah gradually comes to appreciate the boy's truculent wit, and Michael's ease with tech and sharp eye help Noah unearth troubling details about their family's past. Both come to grasp the risks people in all eras have run for their loved ones, and find they are more akin than they knew. Written with all the tenderness and psychological intensity that made Room an international bestseller, Akin is a funny, heart-wrenching tale of an old man and a boy, born two generations apart, who unpick their painful story and start to write a new one together. What begins as a larky story of unlikely male bonding turns into an off-center but far richer novel about the unheralded, imperfect heroism of two women. -- New York Times

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Slammerkin Emma Donoghue, 2002 Mary Saunders' lust for linen, lace and a shiny red ribbon leads her to a life of prostitution.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Wonder Emma Donoghue, 2016-09-20 Now a Netflix film starring Florence Pugh: In this "old-school page turner" (Stephen King, New York Times Book Review) by the bestselling author of Room, an English nurse is brought to a small Irish village to observe what appears to be a miracle—a girl said to have survived without food for months—and soon finds herself fighting to save the child's life. Tourists flock to the cabin of eleven-year-old Anna O'Donnell, who believes herself to be living off manna from heaven, and a journalist is sent to cover the sensation. Lib Wright, a veteran of Florence Nightingale's Crimean campaign, is hired to keep watch over the girl. Written with all the propulsive tension that made Room a huge bestseller, The Wonder works beautifully on many levels -- a tale of two strangers who transform each other's lives, a powerful psychological thriller, and a story of love pitted against evil. Acclaim for The Wonder: Deliciously gothic.... Dark and vivid, with complicated characters, this is a novel that lodges itself deep (USA Today, 3/4 stars) Heartbreaking and transcendent(New York Times) A fable as lean and discomfiting as Anna's dwindling body.... Donoghue keeps us riveted

(Chicago Tribune) Donoghue poses powerful questions about faith and belief (Newsday)

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Pull of the Stars Emma Donoghue, 2020-07-21 In Dublin, 1918, a maternity ward at the height of the Great Flu is a small world of work, risk, death, and unlooked-for love, in Donoghue's best novel since *Room* (Kirkus Reviews). In an Ireland doubly ravaged by war and disease, Nurse Julia Power works at an understaffed hospital in the city center, where expectant mothers who have come down with the terrible new Flu are quarantined together. Into Julia's regimented world step two outsiders—Doctor Kathleen Lynn, a rumoured Rebel on the run from the police, and a young volunteer helper, Bridie Sweeney. In the darkness and intensity of this tiny ward, over three days, these women change each other's lives in unexpected ways. They lose patients to this baffling pandemic, but they also shepherd new life into a fearful world. With tireless tenderness and humanity, carers and mothers alike somehow do their impossible work. In *The Pull of the Stars*, Emma Donoghue once again finds the light in the darkness in this new classic of hope and survival against all odds.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: We are Michael Field Emma Donoghue, 2014-09-11 In this profile, Emma Donoghue tells the story of two eccentric Victorian spinsters: Katherine Bradley (1846-1914) and her niece Edith Cooper (1862-1913); poets and lovers, who wrote together under the name of Michael Field. They wrote eleven volumes of poetry and thirty historical tragedies, but perhaps their best work - richest in emotional honesty and wit - was the diary that the two women shared for a quarter of a century, and these unpublished journals and letters form the basis for the groundbreaking *We are Michael Field*. The Michaels lived in a contradictory world of inherited wealth and terrible illness, silly nicknames and religious crises. They preferred men to women, and yet their greatest devotion was saved for their dog. Snobbish, arrogant eccentrics who faced bereavement and death with great courage, the Michaels never lost their appetite for life or their passion for each other.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Frog Music Emma Donoghue, 2014-04-01 From the New York Times bestselling author of *Room*, a young French burlesque dancer living in San Francisco is ready to risk anything in order to solve her friend's murder—but only if the killer doesn't get her first. Summer of 1876: San Francisco is in the fierce grip of a record-breaking heat wave and a smallpox epidemic. Through the window of a railroad saloon, a young woman named Jenny Bonnet is shot dead. The survivor, her friend Blanche Beunon, is a French burlesque dancer. Over the next three days, she will risk everything to bring Jenny's murderer to justice—if he doesn't track her down first. The story Blanche struggles to piece together is one of free-love bohemians, desperate paupers, and arrogant millionaires; of jealous men, icy women, and damaged children. It's the secret life of Jenny herself, a notorious character who breaks the law every morning by getting dressed: a charmer as slippery as the frogs she hunts. In thrilling, cinematic style, *Frog Music* digs up a long-forgotten, never-solved crime. Full of songs that migrated across the world, Emma Donoghue's lyrical tale of love and bloodshed among lowlifes captures the pulse of a boomtown like no other. Her greatest achievement yet . . . Emma Donoghue shows more than range with *Frog Music*—she shows genius. —Darin Strauss, author of *Half a Life*.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Lost Art of Reading David L. Ulin, 2010-06-01 Reading is a revolutionary act, an act of engagement in a culture that wants us to disengage. In *The Lost Art of Reading*, David L. Ulin asks a number of timely questions - why is literature important? What does it offer, especially now? Blending commentary with memoir, Ulin addresses the importance of the simple act of reading in an increasingly digital culture. Reading a book, flipping through hard pages, or shuffling them on screen - it doesn't matter. The key is the act of reading, and it's seriousness and depth. Ulin emphasizes the importance of reflection and pause allowed by stopping to read a book, and the accompanying focus required to let the mind run free in a world that is not one's own. Are we willing to risk our collective interest in contemplation, nuanced thinking, and empathy? Far from preaching to the choir, *The Lost Art of Reading* is a call to arms, or rather, to pages.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Landing Emma Donoghue, 2008-09-08 An

“engaging . . . entertaining journey,” *Landing* explores the pleasures and sorrows of long-distance love in the digital age (The New York Times Book Review). Síle is a stylish citizen of the new Dublin, a veteran flight attendant who’s traveled the world. Jude is a twenty-five-year-old archivist, stubbornly attached to Ireland, Ontario, the tiny town in which she was born and raised. When Jude meets Síle on her first transatlantic plane trip, the spark between them is instant. After a coffee shared at Heathrow Airport, both women return to their lives—but neither can forget their encounter. Over the next year, Jude and Síle connect through emails, phone calls, letters, and the occasional visit. But no matter how passionate, every long-distance relationship comes to a crossroads, because you can’t have a happily ever after when the one you love is a world apart . . . “[Donoghue] explores with a light, sure touch the subject of desire across distances of various kinds: generational, cultural, even spiritual.” —The New York Times Book Review “[A] charming tale.” —Kirkus Reviews

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: *Astray* Emma Donoghue, 2012-10-30 From the New York Times bestselling author of *Room* comes a moving set of historical stories spanning centuries and continents. The fascinating characters that roam across the pages of Emma Donoghue's stories have all gone astray: they are emigrants, runaways, drifters, lovers old and new. They are gold miners and counterfeiters, attorneys and slaves. They cross other borders too: those of race, law, sex, and sanity. They travel for love or money, incognito or under duress. With rich historical detail, the celebrated author of *Room* takes us from puritan Massachusetts to revolutionary New Jersey, antebellum Louisiana to the Toronto highway, lighting up four centuries of wanderings that have profound echoes in the present. *Astray* offers us a surprising and moving history for restless times.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Literature Richard Bradford, Madelena Gonzalez, Stephen Butler, James Ward, Kevin De Ornellas, 2020-09-03 THE WILEY BLACKWELL COMPANION TO CONTEMPORARY BRITISH AND IRISH LITERATURE An insightful guide to the exploration of modern British and Irish literature The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Literature is a must-have guide for anyone hoping to navigate the world of new British and Irish writing. Including modern authors and poets from the 1960s through to the 21st century, the Companion provides a thorough overview of contemporary poetry, fiction, and drama by some of the most prominent and noteworthy writers. Seventy-three comprehensive chapters focus on individual authors as well as such topics as Englishness and identity, contemporary Science Fiction, Black writing in Britain, crime fiction, and the influence of globalization on British and Irish Literature. Written in four parts, The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Literature includes comprehensive examinations of individual authors, as well as a variety of themes that have come to define the contemporary period: ethnicity, gender, nationality, and more. A thorough guide to the main figures and concepts in contemporary literature from Britain and Ireland, this two-volume set: Includes studies of notable figures such as Seamus Heaney and Angela Carter, as well as more recently influential writers such as Zadie Smith and Sarah Waters. Covers topics such as LGBT fiction, androgyny in contemporary British Literature, and post-Troubles Northern Irish Fiction Features a broad range of writers and topics covered by distinguished academics Includes an analysis of the interplay between individual authors and the major themes of the day, and whether an examination of the latter enables us to appreciate the former. The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Literature provides essential reading for students as well as academics seeking to learn more about the history and future direction of contemporary British and Irish Literature.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Glass Room Simon Mawer, 2009-10-27 Honeymooners Viktor and Liesel Landauer are filled with the optimism and cultural vibrancy of central Europe of the 1920s when they meet modernist architect Rainer von Abt. He builds for them a home to embody their exuberant faith in the future, and the Landauer House becomes an instant masterpiece. Viktor and Liesel, a rich Jewish mogul married to a thoughtful, modern gentile, pour all

of their hopes for their marriage and budding family into their stunning new home, filling it with children, friends, and a generation of artists and thinkers eager to abandon old-world European style in favor of the new and the avant-garde. But as life intervenes, their new home also brings out their most passionate desires and darkest secrets. As Viktor searches for a warmer, less challenging comfort in the arms of another woman, and Liesel turns to her wild, mischievous friend Hana for excitement, the marriage begins to show signs of strain. The radiant honesty and idealism of 1930 quickly evaporate beneath the storm clouds of World War II. As Nazi troops enter the country, the family must leave their old life behind and attempt to escape to America before Viktor's Jewish roots draw Nazi attention, and before the family itself dissolves. As the Landauers struggle for survival abroad, their home slips from hand to hand, from Czech to Nazi to Soviet possession and finally back to the Czechoslovak state, with new inhabitants always falling under the fervent and unrelenting influence of the Glass Room. Its crystalline perfection exerts a gravitational pull on those who know it, inspiring them, freeing them, calling them back, until the Landauers themselves are finally drawn home to where their story began. Brimming with barely contained passion and cruelty, the precision of science, the wild variance of lust, the catharsis of confession, and the fear of failure - the Glass Room contains it all.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Beatrice And Virgil [may-10] Yann Martel, 2010 When Henry receives a letter from an elderly taxidermist, it poses a puzzle that he cannot resist. As he is pulled further into the world of this strange and calculating man, Henry becomes increasingly involved with the lives of a donkey and a howler monkey--named Beatrice and Virgil--and the epic journey they undertake together.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Kissing the Witch Emma Donoghue, 1999-02-27 Thirteen tales are unspun from the deeply familiar, and woven anew into a collection of fairy tales that wind back through time. Acclaimed Irish author Emma Donoghue reveals heroines young and old in unexpected alliances--sometimes treacherous, sometimes erotic, but always courageous. Told with luminous voices that shimmer with sensuality and truth, these age-old characters shed their antiquated cloaks to travel a seductive new landscape, radiantly transformed. Cinderella forsakes the handsome prince and runs off with the fairy godmother; Beauty discovers the Beast behind the mask is not so very different from the face she sees in the mirror; Snow White is awakened from slumber by the bittersweet fruit of an unnamed desire. Acclaimed writer Emma Donoghue spins new tales out of old in a magical web of thirteen interconnected stories about power and transformation and choosing one's own path in the world. In these fairy tales, women young and old tell their own stories of love and hate, honor and revenge, passion and deception. Using the intricate patterns and oral rhythms of traditional fairy tales, Emma Donoghue wraps age-old characters in a dazzling new skin. 2000 List of Popular Paperbacks for YA

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Dear Miss Metropolitan Carolyn Ferrell, 2021-07-06 A finalist for the 2022 PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction A finalist for the 2022 PEN/Hemingway Award for Debut Novel Introducing an extraordinary and original writer whose first novel explores the intersections of grief and rage, personal strength and healing--and what we owe one another. Fern seeks refuge from her mother's pill-popping and boyfriends via Soul Train; Gwin finds salvation in the music of Prince much to her congregation's dismay and Jesenia, miles ahead of her classmates at her gifted and talented high school, is a brainy and precocious enigma. None of this matters to Boss Man, the monster who abducts them and holds them captive in a dilapidated house in Queens. On the night they are finally rescued, throngs line the block gawking and claiming ignorance. Among them is lifetime resident Miss Metropolitan, advice columnist for the local weekly, but how could anyone who fancies herself a "newspaperwoman" have missed a horror story unfolding right across the street? And why is it that only two of the three girls--now women--were found? The mystery haunts the two remaining "victim girls" who are subjected to the further trauma of becoming symbols as they continuously adapt to their present and their unrelenting past. Like Colson Whitehead's *The Nickel Boys*, Ferrell's *Dear Miss Metropolitan* gives voice to characters surviving unimaginable tragedy. The story is inventively revealed before, during,

and after the ordeal in this singular and urgent novel.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Restless William Boyd, 2012-12-01 It is 1939. Eva Delectorskaya is a beautiful 28-year-old Russian émigrée living in Paris. As war breaks out she is recruited for the British Secret Service by Lucas Romer, a mysterious Englishman, and under his tutelage she learns to become the perfect spy, to mask her emotions and trust no one, including those she loves most. Since the war, Eva has carefully rebuilt her life as a typically English wife and mother. But once a spy, always a spy. Now she must complete one final assignment, and this time Eva can't do it alone: she needs her daughter's help.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Inseparable Emma Donoghue, 2010-05-25 From a writer of astonishing versatility and erudition, the much-admired literary critic, novelist, short-story writer, and scholar ("Dazzling"—The Washington Post; "One of those rare writers who seems to be able to work on any register, any time, any atmosphere, and make it her own" —The Observer), a book that explores the little-known literary tradition of love between women in Western literature, from Chaucer and Shakespeare to Charlotte Brontë, Dickens, Agatha Christie, and many more. Emma Donoghue brings to bear all her knowledge and grasp to examine how desire between women in English literature has been portrayed, from schoolgirls and vampires to runaway wives, from cross-dressing knights to contemporary murder stories. Donoghue looks at the work of those writers who have addressed the "unspeakable subject," examining whether such desire between women is freakish or omnipresent, holy or evil, heartwarming or ridiculous as she excavates a long-observed tradition of (inseparable) friendship between women, one that is surprisingly central to our cultural history. Donoghue writes about the half-dozen contrasting girl-girl plots that have been told and retold over the centuries, metamorphosing from generation to generation. What interests the author are the twists and turns of the plots themselves and how these stories have changed—or haven't—over the centuries, rather than how they reflect their time and society. Donoghue explores the writing of Sade, Diderot, Balzac, Thomas Hardy, H. Rider Haggard, Elizabeth Bowen, and others and the ways in which the woman who desires women has been cast as not quite human, as ghost or vampire. She writes about the ever-present triangle, found in novels and plays from the last three centuries, in which a woman and man compete for the heroine's love . . . about how—and why—same-sex attraction is surprisingly ubiquitous in crime fiction, from the work of Wilkie Collins and Dorothy L. Sayers to P. D. James. Finally, Donoghue looks at the plotline that has dominated writings about desire between women since the late nineteenth century: how a woman's life is turned upside down by the realization that she desires another woman, whether she comes to terms with this discovery privately, "comes out of the closet," or is publicly "outed." She shows how this narrative pattern has remained popular and how it has taken many forms, in the works of George Moore, Radclyffe Hall, Patricia Highsmith, and Rita Mae Brown, from case-history-style stories and dramas, in and out of the courtroom, to schoolgirl love stories and rebellious picaresques. A revelation of a centuries-old literary tradition—brilliant, amusing, and until now, deliberately overlooked.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Only Girl in the World Maude Julien, 2017-12-12 For readers of Room and The Glass Castle, an astonishing memoir of one woman's rise above an unimaginable childhood. Maude Julien's parents were fanatics who believed it was their sacred duty to turn her into the ultimate survivor -- raising her in isolation, tyrannizing her childhood and subjecting her to endless drills designed to eliminate weakness. Maude learned to hold an electric fence for minutes without flinching, and to sit perfectly still in a rat-infested cellar all night long (her mother sewed bells onto her clothes that would give her away if she moved). She endured a life without heat, hot water, adequate food, friendship, or any kind of affectionate treatment. But Maude's parents could not rule her inner life. Befriending the animals on the lonely estate as well as the characters in the novels she read in secret, young Maude nurtured in herself the compassion and love that her parents forbid as weak. And when, after more than a decade, an outsider managed to penetrate her family's paranoid world, Maude seized her opportunity. By turns horrifying and magical, The Only Girl in the World is a story that will grip you from the first page

and leave you spellbound, a chilling exploration of psychological control that ends with a glorious escape.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: *The L-Shaped Room* Lynne Reid Banks, 2014-11-06 'Lynne Reid Banks' compassionate first novel examines the stigma of unmarried motherhood in pre-pill, pre-Abortion Act Britain... While the social climate has changed drastically since publication, a transgressive frisson still crackles from the pages' The Guardian Pregnant by accident, kicked out of home by her father, 27-year-old Jane Graham goes to ground in the sort of place she feels she deserves - a bug-ridden boarding-house attic in Fulham. She thinks she wants to hide from the world, but finds out that even at the bottom of the heap, friends and love can still be found, and self-respect is still worth fighting for.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: A Little Life Hanya Yanagihara, 2016-01-26 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A stunning “portrait of the enduring grace of friendship” (NPR) about the families we are born into, and those that we make for ourselves. A masterful depiction of love in the twenty-first century. NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST • MAN BOOKER PRIZE FINALIST • WINNER OF THE KIRKUS PRIZE A Little Life follows four college classmates—broke, adrift, and buoyed only by their friendship and ambition—as they move to New York in search of fame and fortune. While their relationships, which are tinged by addiction, success, and pride, deepen over the decades, the men are held together by their devotion to the brilliant, enigmatic Jude, a man scarred by an unspeakable childhood trauma. A hymn to brotherly bonds and a masterful depiction of love in the twenty-first century, Hanya Yanagihara’s stunning novel is about the families we are born into, and those that we make for ourselves. Look for Hanya Yanagihara’s latest bestselling novel, *To Paradise*.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Girls of Slender Means (New Directions Classic) Muriel Spark, 1998-04-17 Long ago in 1945 all the nice people in England were poor, allowing for exceptions, begins *The Girls of Slender Means*, Dame Muriel Spark's tragic and rapier-witted portrait of a London ladies' hostel just emerging from the shadow of World War II. Like the May of Teck Club itself—three times window shattered since 1940 but never directly hit—its lady inhabitants do their best to act as if the world were back to normal: practicing elocution, and jostling over suitors and a single Schiaparelli gown. The novel's harrowing ending reveals that the girls' giddy literary and amorous peregrinations are hiding some tragically painful war wounds. Chosen by Anthony Burgess as one of the Best Modern Novels in the Sunday Times of London, *The Girls of Slender Means* is a taut and eerily perfect novel by an author The New York Times has called one of this century's finest creators of comic-metaphysical entertainment.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: A Small Indiscretion Jan Ellison, 2015-01-20 NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE • With the emotional complexity of *Everything I Never Told You* and the psychological suspense of *The Girl on the Train*, O. Henry Prize winner Jan Ellison delivers a brilliantly paced, beautifully written debut novel about one woman’s reckoning with a youthful mistake. “Part psychological thriller, part character study . . . I peeled back the pages of this book as fast as I could.”—The Huffington Post At nineteen, Annie Black trades a bleak future in a washed-out California town for a London winter of drinking and abandon. Twenty years later, she is a San Francisco lighting designer and happily married mother of three who has put her reckless youth behind her. Then a photo from that distant winter in Europe arrives inexplicably in her mailbox, and an old obsession is awakened. Past and present collide, Annie’s marriage falters, and her son takes a car ride that ends with his life hanging in the balance. Now Annie must confront her own transgressions and fight for her family by untangling the mysteries of the turbulent winter that drew an invisible map of her future. Gripping, insightful, and lyrical, *A Small Indiscretion* announces the arrival of a major new voice in literary suspense as it unfolds a story of denial, passion, forgiveness—and the redemptive power of love. Praise for *A Small Indiscretion* “Ellison is a tantalizing storyteller . . . moving her story forward with cinematic verve.”—USA Today “Rich with suspense . . . Lovely writing guides us through, driven by a quiet generosity.”—San Francisco Chronicle (Book Club pick) “Delicious, lazy-day reading. Just don’t

underestimate the writing.”—O: The Oprah Magazine (Editor’s Pick) “Rich and detailed . . . The plot explodes delightfully, with suspense and a few twists. Using second-person narration and hypnotic prose, Ellison’s debut novel is both juicy and beautifully written. How do I know it’s juicy? A stranger started reading it over my shoulder on the New York City subway, and told me he was sorry that I was turning the pages too quickly.”—Flavorwire “Are those wild college days ever really behind you? Happily married Annie finds out.”—Cosmopolitan “An impressive fiction debut . . . both a psychological mystery and a study of the divide between desire and duty.”—San Jose Mercury News “A novel to tear through on a plane ride or on the beach . . . I was drawn into a web of secrets, a world of unrequited love and youthful mistakes that feel heightened and more romantic on the cold winter streets of London, Paris, and Ireland.”—Bustle “Ellison renders the California landscape with stunning clarity. . . . She writes gracefully, with moments of startling insight. . . . Her first novel is an emotional thriller, skillfully plotted in taut, visual scenes.”—The Rumpus “To read *A Small Indiscretion* is to eat fudge before dinner: slightly decadent behavior, highly caloric, and extremely satisfying. . . . An emotional detective story that . . . mirrors real life in ways that surprise and inspire.”—New York Journal of Books “If you liked *Gone Girl* for its suspenseful look inside the psychology of a bad marriage, try *A Small Indiscretion*. . . . It touches many of the same nerves.”—StyleCaster

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Hood Emma Donoghue, 2013-08-13 From the New York Times bestselling author of *Room*, *Hood* is a tale of grief and lust, frustration and hilarity, death and family. “*Hood* is thoroughly contemporary in how richly it depicts a beloved’s death to review a couple’s bumpy love history...This book’s real pleasures lie in its intimate insights, its accurate characters and its sharp, rich observations... the greatest achievement of *Hood* is how it captures the domesticity of erotic passion” – Boston Globe Penelope O’Grady and Cara Wall are risking disaster when, like teenagers in any intolerant time and place—here, a Dublin convent school in the late 1970s—they fall in love. Yet Cara, the free spirit, and Pen, the stoic, craft a bond so strong it seems as though nothing could sever it: not the bickering, not the secrets, not even Cara’s infidelities. But thirteen years on, a car crash kills Cara and rips the lid off Pen’s world. Pen is still in the closet, teaching at her old school, living under the roof of Cara’s gentle father, who thinks of her as his daughter’s friend. How can she survive widowhood without even daring to claim the word? Over the course of one surreal week of bereavement, she is battered by memories that range from the humiliating, to the exalted, to the erotic, to the funny. It will take Pen all her intelligence and wit to sort through her tumultuous past with Cara, and all the nerve she can muster to start remaking her life. Donoghue’s *Hood* is a masterfully crafted narrative of relationships and a daring, deft exploration of the love’s imperfection—and how it can nonetheless dominate our lives as we grow and change.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: *Patience and Sarah* Isabel Miller, 2010-06 Set in the nineteenth century, Isabel Miller’s classic lesbian novel traces the relationship between Patience White, an educated painter, and Sarah Dowling, a farmer, whose romantic bond does not sit well with the puritanical New England farming c...

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Breadcrumbs Anne Ursu, 2011-09-27 The winner of numerous awards and recipient of four starred reviews, Anne Ursu’s *Breadcrumbs* is a stunning and heartbreaking story of growing up, wrapped in a modern-day fairy tale. Once upon a time, Hazel and Jack were best friends. But that was before he stopped talking to her and disappeared into a forest with a mysterious woman made of ice. Now it’s up to Hazel to go in after him. Inspired by Hans Christian Andersen’s *The Snow Queen*, *Breadcrumbs* is a stunningly original fairy tale of modern-day America, a dazzling ode to the power of fantasy, and a heartbreaking meditation on how growing up is as much a choice as it is something that happens to us. In *Breadcrumbs*, Anne Ursu tells, in her one-of-a-kind voice, a story that brings together fifty years of children’s literature in a tale as modern as it is timeless. Hazel’s journey to come to terms with her evolving friendship with Jack will deeply resonate with young readers. Supports the Common Core State Standards

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Sealed Letter Emma Donoghue, 2009 Emily Fido Faithfull, a spinster pioneer in the British women's movement, is distracted from her cause by the details of her friend's failing marriage and affair with a young army officer, in this drama of friends, lovers, and divorce, Victorian style.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Last of Her Kind Sigrid Nunez, 2006-12-12 The paths of two women from different walks of life intersect amid counterculture of the 1960s in this haunting and provocative novel from the National Book Award-winning author of *The Friend* Named a Best Book of the Year by the San Francisco Chronicle and the Christian Science Monitor Sigrid Nunez's *The Last of Her Kind* introduces two women who meet as freshmen on the Columbia campus in 1968. Georgette George does not know what to make of her brilliant, idealistic roommate, Ann Drayton, and her obsessive disdain for the ruling class into which she was born. She is mortified by Ann's romanticization of the underprivileged class, which Georgette herself is hoping college will enable her to escape. After the violent fight that ends their friendship, Georgette wants only to forget Ann and to turn her attention to the troubled runaway kid sister who has reappeared after years on the road. Then, in 1976, Ann is convicted of murder. At first, Ann's fate appears to be the inevitable outcome of her belief in the moral imperative to make justice in a world where there are no innocent white people. But, searching for answers to the riddle of this friend of her youth, Georgette finds more complicated and mysterious forces at work. The novel's narrator Georgette illuminates the terrifying life of this difficult, doomed woman, and in the process discovers how much their early encounter has determined her own path, and why, decades later, as she tells us, I have never stopped thinking about her.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Garden of Last Days Andre Dubus, 2008 Explosive elements coverge one early September night in a Florida men's club revealing the seamy underside of American life at the moment before the world changed.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: Too Much Happiness Alice Munro, 2009-08-25 This stunning collection of stories demonstrates once again why Alice Munro is celebrated as a pre-eminent master of the short story. While some of the stories are traditional, set in "Alice Munro Country" in Ontario or in B.C., dealing with ordinary women's lives, others have a new, sharper edge. They involve child murders, strange sex, and a terrifying home invasion. By way of astonishing variety, the title story, set in Victorian Europe, follows the last journey from France to Sweden of a famous Russian mathematician. This daring, superb collection proves that Alice Munro will always surprise you.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: TransCanadian Feminist Fictions Libe García Zarranz, 2017-05-26 In this contradictory era of uneven globalization, borders multiply yet fantasies of borderlessness prevail. Particularly since September 11th, this paradox has shaped deeply the lives of border-crossing subjects such as the queer, the refugee, and the activist within and beyond Canadian frontiers. In search of creative ways to engage with the conundrums related to how borders mould social and bodily space, Libe García Zarranz formulates a new cross-border ethic through post-9/11 feminist and queer transnational writing in Canada. Drawing on material feminism, critical race studies, non-humanist philosophy, and affect theory, she proposes a renewed understanding of relationality beyond the lethal binaries that saturate everyday life. *TransCanadian Feminist Fictions* considers the corporeal, biopolitical, and affective dimensions of border crossing in the works of Dionne Brand, Emma Donoghue, Hiromi Goto, and Larissa Lai. Intersecting the genres of memoir, fiction, poetry, and young adult literature, García Zarranz shows how these texts address the permeability of boundaries and consider the ethical implications for minoritized populations. Urging readers to question the proclaimed glammers of globality, *TransCanadian Feminist Fictions* responds to a time of increasing inequality, mounting racism, and feminist backlash.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Spectator Bird Wallace Stegner, 2013-04-04 Literary agent Joe Allston, the central character of Stegner's novel *All the Little Live Things*, is now retired and, in his own words, 'just killing time until time gets around to killing me.' His parents and

his only son are long dead, leaving him with neither ancestors nor descendants, tradition nor ties. His job, trafficking the talent of others, had not been his choice. He passes through life as a spectator. A postcard from an old friend causes Allston to return to the journals of a trip he and his wife had taken years before, a journey to his mother's birthplace, where he'd sought a link with the past. The memories of that trip, both grotesque and poignant, move through layers of time and meaning, and reveal that Joe Allston isn't quite spectator enough. Wallace Stegner was the author of, among other works of fiction, *Remembering Laughter* (1973); *The Big Rock Candy Mountain* (1943); *Joe Hill* (1950); *All the Little Live Things* (1967, Commonwealth Club Gold Medal); *A Shooting Star* (1961); *Angle of Repose* (1971, Pulitzer Prize); *Recapitulation* (1979); *Crossing to Safety* (1987); and *Collected Stories* (1990). His nonfiction includes *Beyond the Hundredth Meridian* (1954); *Wolf Willow* (1963); *The Sound of Mountain Water* (essays, 1969); *The Uneasy Chair: A Biography of Bernard deVoto* (1964); *American Places* (with Page Stegner, 1981); and *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs: Living and Writing in the West* (1992). Three short stories have won O. Henry prizes, and in 1980 he received the Robert Kirsch Award from the Los Angeles Times for his lifetime literary achievements.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Gaze Elif Shafak, 2012-10-25 A beautiful and compelling novel, Elif Shafak's *The Gaze* considers the damage which can be inflicted by our simple desire to look at others I didn't say anything. I didn't return his smiles. I looked at him in the wide mirror in front of where I was sitting. He grew uncomfortable and avoided my eyes. I hate those who think fat people are stupid.' An obese woman and her lover, a dwarf, are sick of being stared at wherever they go, and so decide to reverse roles. The man goes out wearing make up and the woman draws a moustache on her face. But while the woman wants to hide away from the world, the man meets the stares from passers-by head on, compiling his 'Dictionary of Gazes' to explore the boundaries between appearance and reality. Intertwined with the story of a bizarre freak-show organised in Istanbul in the 1880s, *The Gaze* considers the damage which can be inflicted by our simple desire to look at others. Beautifully evoked - The Times Original and Compelling - TLS Plays with ideas of beauty and ugliness like they're Rubik's cubes - Helen Oyeyemi Entertaining and affecting - Publishers' Weekly Elif Shafak is the acclaimed author of *The Bastard of Istanbul* and *The Forty Rules of Love* and is the most widely read female novelist in Turkey. Her work has been translated into more than thirty languages. She is a contributor for *The Telegraph*, *Guardian* and the *New York Times* and her TED talk on the politics of fiction has received 500 000 viewers since July 2010. She is married with two children and divides her time between Istanbul and London.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: The Character of Rain Amelie Nothomb, 2007-04-01 The Japanese believe that until the age of three, children, whether Japanese or not, are gods, each one an okosama, or lord child. On their third birthday they fall from grace and join the rest of the human race. In Amelie Nothomb's new novel, *The Character of Rain*, we learn that divinity is a difficult thing from which to recover, particularly if, like the child in this story, you have spent the first two and a half years of life in a nearly vegetative state. I remember everything that happened to me after the age of two and one-half, the narrator tells us. She means this literally. Once jolted out of her plant-like, tube-like trance (to the ecstatic relief of her concerned parents), the child bursts into existence, absorbing everything that Japan, where her father works as a diplomat, has to offer. Life is an unfolding pageant of delight and danger, a ceaseless exploration of pleasure and the limits of power. Most wondrous of all is the discovery of water: oceans, seas, pools, puddles, streams, ponds, and, perhaps most of all, rain-one meaning of the Japanese character for her name. Hers is an amphibious life. *The Character of Rain* evokes the hilarity, terror, and sanctity of childhood. As she did in the award-winning, international bestseller *Fear and Trembling*, Nothomb grounds the novel in the outlines of her experiences in Japan, but the self-portrait that emerges from these pages is hauntingly universal. Amelie Nothomb's novels are unforgettable immersion experiences, leaving you both holding your breath with admiration, your lungs aching, and longing for more.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: In Other Rooms, Other Wonders Daniyal

Mueenuddin, 2011-10-01 Moving from the elegant drawing rooms of Lahore to the mud villages of rural Multan, a powerful collection of short stories about feudal Pakistan. An impoverished young woman becomes a wealthy relative's mistress; an electrician on the make confronts his desperate assailant to protect his most prized possession; a farm manager rises far in the world—but his family discovers after his death the transience of power; a maid, who advances herself through sexual favours, unexpectedly falls in love. In these linked stories about the family and household staff of the ageing KK Harouni, we meet masters and servants, landlords and supplicants, politicians and electricians, village women, and Karachi housewives. Part Chekhov, part RK Narayan, these stories are dark and light, complex and humane; at heart about the relationship between the powerful and powerless, bound together in life—and in death. Together they make up a vivid portrait of a feudal world rarely brought alive in the English language. Sensuous, graceful, melancholy, *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders* gives you Pakistan as you have never seen it. It marks the debut of an amazing new talent.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: *You Are One of Them* Elliott Holt, 2013-05-30 A hugely absorbing first novel from a writer with a fluid, vivid style and a rare knack for balancing the pleasure of entertainment with the deeper gratification of insight. More, please." —Maggie Shipstead, *The New York Times Book Review* (Editors' Choice) A story about Russia, the United States, friendship, identity, defection, and deception that is smart, startling, and worth reading regardless of when you were born." —Kathryn Schulz, *New York Magazine* Holt's beguiling debut... in which there is no difference between personal and political betrayal, vividly conjures the anxieties of the Cold War without ever lapsing into nostalgia. —The New Yorker Sarah Zuckerman and Jennifer Jones are best friends in an upscale part of Washington, D.C., in the politically charged 1980s. Sarah is the shy, wary product of an unhappy home: her father abandoned the family to return to his native England; her agoraphobic mother is obsessed with fears of nuclear war. Jenny is an all-American girl who has seemingly perfect parents. With Cold War rhetoric reaching a fever pitch in 1982, the ten-year-old girls write letters to Soviet premier Yuri Andropov asking for peace. But only Jenny's letter receives a response, and Sarah is left behind when her friend accepts the Kremlin's invitation to visit the USSR and becomes an international media sensation. The girls' icy relationship still hasn't thawed when Jenny and her parents die tragically in a plane crash in 1985. Ten years later, Sarah is about to graduate from college when she receives a mysterious letter from Moscow suggesting that Jenny's death might have been a hoax. She sets off to the former Soviet Union in search of the truth, but the more she delves into her personal Cold War history, the harder it is to separate facts from propaganda. *You Are One of Them* is a taut, moving debut about the ways in which we define ourselves against others and the secrets we keep from those who are closest to us. In her insightful forensic of a mourned friendship, Holt illuminates the long lasting sting of abandonment and the measures we take to bring back those we have lost.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: *The Cat's Table* Michael Ondaatje, 2012-06-12 From Michael Ondaatje: an electrifying novel, by turns thrilling and deeply moving—one of his most vividly rendered and compelling works of fiction to date. In the early 1950s, an eleven-year-old boy boards a huge liner bound for England. At mealtimes, he is placed at the lowly Cat's Table with an eccentric and unforgettable group of grownups and two other boys. As the ship makes its way across the Indian Ocean, through the Suez Canal, into the Mediterranean, the boys find themselves immersed in the worlds and stories of the adults around them. At night they spy on a shackled prisoner—his crime and fate a galvanizing mystery that will haunt them forever. Looking back from deep within adulthood, and gradually moving back and forth from the decks and holds of the ship to the years that follow the narrator unfolds a spellbinding and layered tale about the magical, often forbidden discoveries of childhood and the burdens of earned understanding, about a life-long journey that began unexpectedly with a sea voyage.

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: *Existentialism and Alienation in American Literature* Sidney Finkelstein, 1965

room by emma donoghue literary analysis: *Haven* Emma Donoghue, 2022-08-18 A story of

survival set in 600 AD Ireland; a parable of patriarchy, destruction and religion at sea, by Emma Donoghue, the bestselling author of Room. 'Everything a novel should be: compassionate, unpredictable, and questioning. Haven is Donoghue at her strange, unsettling best.' - Maggie O'Farrell, author of Hamnet In seventh-century Ireland, a priest has a dream telling him to leave the sinful world behind. Taking two monks with him, he travels down the Shannon in search of an isolated spot on which to found a new place of worship. Drifting out into the Atlantic, the three men find an impossibly steep, bare island inhabited by tens of thousands of birds, and claim it for God. But in such a place, far from all other humanity, what will survival mean? 'Haven is a beautiful, bold blaze of a book' - Rachel Joyce, author of The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry 'Beautiful and timely' - Sarah Moss, author of Summerwater 'Sinister, heart-wrenching and beautifully written' - The Times 'Combines pressure-cooker intensity and radical isolation, to stunning effect' - Margaret Atwood via Twitter 'Book of the Year' pick in The Irish Times, The Guardian, The Irish Post, RTÉ and The Times.

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