

Girl Power Discourse in Contemporary Coming-of-Age Narratives

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Abstract

The essay focuses on the intersections between Girl Power media discourses and literature which has thus far been scrutinized mainly in relation to the chick lit genre. Caitlin Moran's novel How to Build a Girl is analyzed as an example of the influence of Girl Power discourse on another literary genre, the coming-of-age novel. The protagonist's process of growing up is read in the context of two contrasting narratives about postfeminist girlhood and also in the context of the Bildungsroman tradition. Moran's heroine appears both as a fusion of the can-do girl and at-risk girl versions of Girl Power, and also as a postmillennial variation of the classic female Bildungsroman heroine.

Keywords: Girl Power, the coming-of-age novel, the female Bildungsroman, can-do girl, at-risk girl, postfeminism