

Confluence of Gender, Nation and Identity: Insinuations of 'Disguise Techniques' in Kirsty Murray's *Children of the Wind Series*

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Abstract :

The paper examines underlying correlation and problematic around the concept of gender, nation and childhood in children's literature, particularly in historical novels for children. Children's literature is a repository of ideologies and a repertoire of 'socially constructed realities' such as 'gender and nation'. Children's literature serves as a breeding ground for culturing and dissemination of 'social constructions' because of the didactic principle traditionally espoused by the genre. For instance, Historical novels for children are a contested sub-genre that breeds such assumptions and ideologies to instruct the young reader through fiction. The paper argues that there is a narrative intersection of gender, nation and identity in children's historical novels. An overview of Kirsty Murray's *Children of the Wind Series* will substantiate and underpins the argument. The conflux of the nation, gender and identity confluence in the series project the power dynamics of the nations and racial hierarchy. Several tacit implications underlie the 'disguise' techniques employed in the *Children of the Wind* series as the disguise itself intersect with gender and national identity. The series fortifies the complex theme of gender, nation and identity subtly and intricately, which warrants a rereading of children's historical novels for the underlying clandestine and gendered nationalism.

Keywords: Gender, national identity, Irish-Australians, disguise, migrant, assimilation