

# The Bloomsday Seminar, 16 June 2022

**Where:** The MC Showroom, Level 1, 48 Clifton St., Prahran

**When:** 4:00-5.30pm

## Joyce on Marriage and Gender

Chair: Dr Kevin Molloy,

Principal Librarian Victorian and Australian Collections, State Library of Victoria

### Book Now for Seminar and or Dinner (link)



#### Emeritus Professor Peter Kuch

University of Otago and Honorary Visiting Professor,  
University of New South Wales.

Peter was the inaugural Eamon Cleary Professor of Irish Studies at the University of Otago until his retirement in 2019. He holds an Honours degree from the University of Wales and an M.Litt and D.Phil from Oxford.

He is the author or many books on subjects as diverse as Yeats, Joyce, Eliot, Irish theatre, Irish literature, Irish and Australian film, literary theory, Australian literature, and Irish/Australian history, and his most recent book is *Irish Divorce/Joyce's Ulysses* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017)

#### 'Sherlockholmsing' *Ulysses* as Joyce's modern/postmodern 'novel of adultery'.

This presentation will explore what 'Sherlockholmsing' – probabilistic inductive reasoning – discloses about Joyce's *Ulysses* as a modern/postmodern 'novel of adultery.' It proceeds from the argument advanced by Jean-Michael Rabaté that 'Joyce's works and life obey an organic logic, and that this logic opens up a general problematic hinged around the discovery of a new type of writing.'

The presentation argues that one organic logic which can be fruitfully identified is Joyce's rewriting of popular nineteenth century genres: *Dubliners* as a rewriting of the nineteenth century short story, popularised by magazines and railway bookstalls; *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* as a rewriting of the popular *bildungsroman/kunstelroman*; and *Ulysses* as a

rewriting of the sensational ‘novel of adultery’, ranging from Trollope’s *Can you Forgive Her* and *He Knew He was Right* to Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary* and Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*.

It is Bloom who uses “Sherlockholmesing” to read Murphy, the sailor he and Stephen encounter in the Cabman’s shelter. And it is Bloom who employs probabilistic inductive reasoning when he returns to the marital bed in the early hours of 17 June 1904. Given that Bloom and Molly have thought about ‘divorce’ at different times of the day, “Sherlockholmesing” as a way of reading *Ulysses* will be offered for what it discloses about the state of the Blooms’ marriage, particularly in terms of Molly’s ‘Yes’. How affirmative is this ‘Yes’? How might it be read?



Honorary Associate Professor  
Frances Devlin-Glass OAM  
Deakin University.

Frances was the founding director of Bloomsday in 1994, and has been involved in script-writing, teaching Joyce and organising Bloomsday since then.

A graduate of the University of Queensland and the Australian National University, she has spent much of her professional life working on Irish Australian and Irish literary texts and feminism.

### ‘Great sweet mothers’ and a carnal ‘maid’: why French feminists embraced James Joyce.

The real-life doings of James Joyce could, in our times, have condemned him to be ‘cancelled’. Why, then, after the scarifying biographies, were the mothers of feminist literary theory so enamoured of James Joyce’s fiction? Two influential readers of his novels – H el ene Cixous and Julia Kristeva (two illustrious members of the ‘Holy Trinity’ of literary feminism) – were liberated by their reading of Joyce to think in new ways about how in his fiction he interrogates conventional understandings of sexuality and gender. This paper examines what they found to celebrate in his radical critique of sexuality: it charts Joyce’s shift from austere critique of the systems that constitute sexuality in *Portrait* to ‘warm full-blooded life’ in *Ulysses* via the fictional characters of May Dedalus and Molly Bloom (literary recreations of his mother and partner).