

JOYCEAN WORLDS

THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER — 5.15 – 7.00 BURNS 2

PLENARY PUBLIC LECTURE

Professor Vicki Mahaffey
(University of Illinois)

“Practicing Joyce”

In James 1.22-4, James tells his listeners to “be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like.” This is an illuminating passage to consider in relation to Joyce’s oeuvre, which he compared to “a nicely polished looking glass.”

I propose to survey the variety of things that theorists and critics (including myself) have attempted to *do* with the “mirror” of Joyce’s fiction. My goal is to present an argument about the kinds of images of themselves readers are invited to find in Joyce’s work, and how such revised self-images in return produce alterations in the practice of everyday life.

FRIDAY 4 OCTOBER — MORNING			
9.15-10.00	Dr Will Martin	<i>Ulysses</i> in the context of Irish oratory	Staff Club Billiard room
10.00-10.45	Dr Rochelle Simmons	Forthflowing on a Joycean Tide	
10.45-11.15	MORNING TEA		
11.15-12.00	Dr Charles Ferrall	“Nausicaa”: the commodity, popular romance and proverbial science	Staff Club Billiard room
12.00-12.45	Miri Jassy	Shh, She Isn’t Wearing Any: Revealing Nudity in Book Two of <i>Finnegans Wake</i>	
12.45-2.00	LUNCH & READING GROUPS — “Proteus” episode — <i>Ulysses</i>		

FRIDAY 4 OCTOBER — AFTERNOON			
2.00-2.45	Marco Sonzogni	From “Let Fly” to “Let flow”: Jim, Seamus and writing “for the joy of it.”	Staff Club Billiard room
2.45-3.30	Liam Guilar	<i>Ulysses</i> as the successful Modernist long poem: What I learnt about writing poetry from re-reading <i>Ulysses</i>	
3.30-4.00	AFTERNOON TEA Walk to Burns Building Room 4 Ground Floor—combine with English Department for Plenary Lecture		
PLENARY PUBLIC LECTURE Dr Tony Thwaites — BURNS 4 — 4.00-5.00. “Through the windr of a wondr in a wildr is a weltr as a wirbl of a warbl is a world”: Wakeing worlding Possible-worlds theory is a critical approach that treats fiction as a window onto an imagined world which it sees as ontologically complete and consistent. This paper looks at some of its claims and some of its limits, by turning to what <i>Ulysses</i> and <i>Finnegans Wake</i> do with something that approach generally doesn’t consider: the idea of utterance. Possible-worlds theory deals with what is said, not with the act of saying it. Here, I argue that once we take that obvious, irreducible and apparently simple dimension of all statements into account, the stabilities on which possible-worlds theory relies are unsettled—from inside, and in ways that have nothing at all to do with the banalities of relativism and subjectivity of opinion. In its attention to the utterance and to the event, Joyce’s writing leads us to other possibilities of thinking the idea of world: as inconsistent and incomplete, as verb rather than noun, and, fittingly, as work in progress.			

SATURDAY 5 OCTOBER — MORNING			
9.00-9.45	Professor Frances Devlin-Glass	Performing Abjection: Staging Joyce's Inscription of Bodies	Staff Club Billiard room
9.45-10.30	Dr Gabrielle Carey	Two Comedians: James Joyce and John Clarke	
10.30-11.00	MORNING TEA		
11.00-11.45	Morgan Pulver	Unreadable Joyce: Love from Narcissism to Nonsense	Staff Club Billiard room
11.45-12.30	Kerri Haggart	"Worlding <i>Ulysses</i> : Encoding Experience—Decoding Character"	
12.30-1.45	LUNCH & READING GROUPS		

SATURDAY 5 OCTOBER — AFTERNOON			
2.00-2.45	Jared Lesser	‘What he would shake off clings to his flesh’: Joyce and the Sacral Body	Staff Club Billiard room
2.45-3.30	Professor Peter Kuch	Bloom/ing strategies: ‘Can real love, supposing there happens to be another chap in the case, exist between married folk? Poser.’	
3.30-4.30 4.30-6.15	<p>“MONARCH” Albatross cruise — 1 hour cruise embarking at 4.30pm</p> <p>\$44 pp. if 10 book; \$49 pp. if fewer than 10 book</p>		

SATURDAY 5 OCTOBER — EVENING	
7.30-9.00	<p>Seminar Dinner at Little India, 308 Moray Place, Dunedin 03 477 6559</p>

Dr Will Martin

Ulysses in the context of Irish Oratory 9.15-10.00am Friday

In this paper, I will situate the recording of Joyce reading from the "Aeolus" episode of *Ulysses* in the context of the tradition of Irish oratory that emerges from the publication of anthologies such as Thomas Kettle's *Irish Orators and Oratory*. By choosing to record Professor McHugh's impersonation of John Taylor in the offices of the *Freemans Journal*, Joyce subordinates his own voice to a tradition of oratory that begins with the ironic pamphlets of Swift and comes to fruition with the political speeches of Henry Grattan, Daniel O'Connell and Charles Stewart Parnell. By contextualizing Joyce's performance of John Taylor's speech in this tradition, we can appreciate the emergence of a "public" voice in *Ulysses* that transcends the perspective of any individual character and begins to express the political consciousness of a nation.

Dr Rochelle Simmons

Forthflowing on a Joycean Tide 10.15-10.45am Friday

Even a cursory examination of John Berger's novel *G.* (1972) indicates Berger's tribute to James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), from the chapter headings to the last line. *Ulysses* taught Berger at fourteen 'literature is inimical to all hierarchies.' It epitomised freedom from convention, illegality, and lived experience. As the prototypical revolutionary modernist, avant-garde novel, *Ulysses* provided the adult Berger with a model for his revolutionary experimental, political text. Certain chapters of *Ulysses* exhibit Cubist characteristics, and they provide strong parallels with Berger's Literary Cubist collage. Both books experiment relentlessly with language and literary form. But there is a strand of sensed experience and materiality in Berger's writing, partly derived from Joyce's Bloom, where the debt is less obvious. This includes a stream-of-consciousness depiction of an elderly man's subjectivity in *Corker's Freedom* (1964) and a Marxist-phenomenological emphasis on sensed experience in Berger's art criticism and in *G.* Likewise, Berger's longstanding interest in everyday life can be related to Bloom, as well as Lefebvre. Berger avers: 'the lives of adult men and women,' and, indeed, *Ulysses* itself, were made of 'offal with flecks . . . of the divine. The first and last recipe!'

Dr Charles Ferrall

“Nausicaa”: the commodity, popular romance and proverbial science. 11.15-12.00 Friday

When Bloom in “Nausicaa” notices that Gerty is lame, there is an abrupt transition unlike anywhere else in *Ulysses*. Whatever comes after Bloom’s discovery cannot be pornography, popular romance or commodity fetishism. Nevertheless, recent critics of the chapter and of Joyce in general have stressed continuities between the two halves and between “literature” and pornography, advertising and sentimental romance. In this paper I consider the two sections in terms of Kant’s and Stephen Dedalus’ notions of aesthetic disinterest and the distinction between figurative and literal language. Gerty’s discourse is not pornographic by virtue of its use of “circumlocutions” and euphemisms (that is—figurative language), but she is neither sexually nor economically disinterested. By contrast, Bloom’s unliterary discourse is highly literal and yet, unlike the pornographic, also disinterested. Moreover, Bloom’s language combines the literalism of popular science with the figurative language of proverbs, idioms and sayings, all of which can be contrasted with Gerty’s clichés. It is both a form of modern empiricism and popular traditionalism. As such it is precisely the personal style that T.S. Eliot, approvingly, claimed was absent from Joyce’s writing.

Miri Jassy

Shh, She Isn’t Wearing Any: Revealing Nudity in Book Two of *Finnegans Wake* 12.00-12.45 Friday

Years on from the explicit monologue of Molly Bloom’s sexuality, Joyce found other ways to expose the weirdness and wonder of sex. The wordplay and witticisms of *Finnegans Wake* stand between the explicitness of sex and its daylight realisation. The dream world of the *Wake* is the perfect masque in which desires are recognisable, yet disguised.

Book Two of *Finnegans Wake* opens with an invitation to the theatre, and the nightly show, *The Mime of Mick, Nick and the Maggies*, begins again. The siblings Issy, Shem and Shaun, already fantastically mercurial, are transformed yet again into the love triad of Izod, Glugg and Chuff. This chapter is read often and accurately as the children’s acquisition of sexual self-knowledge, prior to the subsequent chapter of formal education in which they learn history, philosophy and geometry. The children’s street games, which fill the *Mime* chapter, instantly elevate the trio into adolescent admirers, driven to distraction by their newly discovered desires.

While the trio are play-acting, they are released briefly from the confines of their childhood world to become emblematic of young adults enacting their first sexual longings. The guessing game of the colour of Issy’s underpants is a well-established statement on Glugg/Shem’s frustration. This paper suggests that his guesses are futile, as she isn’t wearing any—and that Issy’s burgeoning sexual freedom forms a parallel with HCE’s desire for the same, although the consequences for their nudity are dramatically unlike. While Joyce dramatizes

sex in this distant and misty world of the unconscious mind in a surprisingly coy manner, readers are left in no doubt that underwear, like consciousness, is a movable frontier.

Marco Sonzogni

From “Let fly” to “Let flow”: Jim, Seamus and writing “for the joy of it” 2.00-2.45 Friday

In his *Guardian* tribute to Heaney, Roy Foster observes that *Station Island* (1984) ‘culminates in a visionary encounter with Joyce’ — ‘His voice eddying with the vowels of all rivers/ came back to me, though he did not speak yet, / a voice like a prosecutor’s or a singer’s, / cunning, narcotic, mimic, definite’— and that ‘Joyce spoke to Heaney in more ways than one.’

Listening to Heaney on *Desert Island Discs* years ago, Foster expected the Irish poet to choose the poems of his countryman W.B. Yeats ‘as his elected book, only to hear him demand *Ulysses* instead.’ Taking the lead from Foster’s conclusion—‘on reflection I was not surprised. His own capaciousness was Joycean’— I will look in this paper at Heaney’s writing before and after *Station Island* to identify some of the ways in which Joyce spoke to him and how the Bard from Bellaghy received Joyce’s instructions.

Liam Guilar

Ulysses as the successful Modernist long poem: What I learnt about writing poetry from re-reading *Ulysses* 2.45-3.30 Friday

In writing about a city where not everyone was desperate or delinquent, Joyce refuted Yeats’ belief that urban art was sterile and ugly, thereby providing an antidote to the rural nostalgia and urban pessimism that informs so much Irish and British poetry in the 20th Century.

Since the 1920s, poets seem to have faced a choice represented by the erudite, literary, isolated Stephen; the archetypal (post) Modernist poet, and his more social daylight counterpart, Bloom: between Pound or Paddy Kavanagh; Hill or Heaney. *Ulysses* suggests the choice is unnecessary. The two can be combined. Joyce’s painstaking reconstruction of Dublin is similar to Pound’s intimidating displays of erudition but unlike Pound, beyond the intimidating surface detail lies the reconstruction of a migrant’s dream of home.

Although Joyce’s early poems, to misquote Pound, were suitable for the family bible, *Ulysses* solves so many of the problems Modernist poetics created. It is not just a case of a narrative trajectory giving the work shape, or *Ulysses* as master class in the purposeful use of syntactic aerobatics: Joyce controls and exploits what Lecercle calls ‘The Remainder’, as a good lyric poet would, not across a few verses but throughout the length of the book.

Professor Frances Devlin-Glass

Performing Abjection: Staging Joyce's Inscription of Bodies Saturday 9.00-9.45

This paper raises the t/horny question of performing (as opposed to reading) Joyce's representation of the body. It emerges out of twenty years of performance of Joyce's texts, and the challenges they represent, specifically in the matter of enacting abjection, on the stage. When the abject is theorized, it is frequently in the contexts of power, or melancholia or horror. What is fascinating about Joyce's treatment of bodies is that the context is usually that of comedy, and the rigorous and critical analysis of codes and conventions surrounding the right and proper body. While it is tempting to play for laughs and shock effects that elicit laughter, and directors frequently do, the paper asks if there are limits to staging Joyce's most abject moments, and whether to do so is to dishonor or cheapen Joyce's insanely meticulous methods of building character.

Dr Gabrielle Carey

Two Comedians: James Joyce and John Clarke Saturday 9.45-10.30

A consideration of Joyce's influence on contemporary comedy and comedians, with particular focus on New Zealand-born comic, actor, satirist, writer and filmmaker, John Clarke.

Amid all the serious work on Joyce, the fact that he was essentially 'a song and dance man' is occasionally eclipsed. Can his comic style and influence be identified among contemporary satire and comedy and, if so, where and how?

This paper is based on intensive interviews with John Clarke, a long-time student of both Joyce and Beckett, and one of the most important interpreters of Australian politics and popular culture alive today. He is also one of the very few writers to have penned and performed a satire of *Finnegans Wake* itself.

Morgan Pulver

Unreadable Joyce: Love from Narcissism to Nonsense Saturday 11.00-11.45

How do the worlds of the reader interact with those of the writer as he or she goes about making sense of a text? If the worlds of the writer are the complex set of circumstances from which the text is produced, then one answer would be that the reader accesses them insofar as his or her own worlds provide the means of doing so. It is this commonality that can function as a measure of the relation between the two. But what happens when the text defies the reader, not through any shortcoming of his or her own (Martha Clifford finds that a world can emerge from a word even in the absence of its meaning), but through exuberance that multiplies sense to the point of engendering nonsense? This is the defiance that becomes so central to the way Lacan reads Joyce in his twenty-third seminar, where the indifference a young Stephen feels towards his schoolboy tormentors designates a writing that baffles through the play of its surface. We are left wondering about the kind of relation it is possible to have with Joyce if it has to be one maintained within the breach of a fundamental non-relation.

Kerri Haggart

"Worlding *Ulysses*: Encoding Experience—Decoding Character" Saturday 11.45-12.30

Joyce's *Ulysses* holds a mirror up to the world in which we live and reflects for us our own puzzling relation to the social and material world. Even today in a modern world, Joyce's *Ulysses* remains relevant because Joyce realistically encodes experience. And although modern world technology enables for us a very different kind of experience than that (for example) of Joyce's main character Leopold Bloom, the essence of human nature—our emotions, physiognomy, dispositions, states of mind, motivations and intentions—remain true. Applying real world, real mind research to Joyce's fictional characters and their embodied encounters in a social and material storyworld furthers investigatory strategies for *Ulysses*. Understanding how cognitive processes 'extend beyond the skin' to crisscross character in a continuum of the mind as distributed through the social storyworld allows us to decode character through establishing new connections.

Jared Lesser

‘What he would shake off clings to his flesh’: Joyce and the Sacral Body Saturday 2.00-2.45

Early reviewers were quick to note the Catholic tenor of Joyce’s work. However, many commentators saw an author with little care for the *sacra* of the Catholic Church. Writing in the *Manchester Guardian*, Stephen Gwynn declared that: ‘what he would shake off clings to his flesh’, though ‘he can touch, taste, and handle every abomination; only one thing is impossible, to profess a belief that he rejects.’ Though alluding to Stephen Dedalus, Gwynn’s assessment might well refer to Joyce himself. While a lifetime of conviction was not easily shed, for the author of *Ulysses* Catholicism would always remain a deeply embodied encounter.

The Catholic body is full of mysticism, symbolism, and unworldly practices, but through his fiction Joyce sought a way to deflate the puissance of the complex and enigmatic institutions of the Church. This paper examines the sacral body in Joycean thought, and underscores how that imagery was employed in a critique of the Catholic Church during his lifetime. Beginning with *Dubliners* and continuing through *Ulysses*, Joyce supplants the mysteries of the Church with ordinary displays of materiality, and in doing so, also undermines Church claims to hegemony and spiritual superiority. The sacral body emerges from a deeply embedded Catholic culture and tradition, even though ‘that culture and tradition that may turn against itself.’

Professor Peter Kuch

Bloom/ing strategies: ‘Can real love, supposing there happens to be another chap in the case, exist between married folk? Poser.’

Saturday 2.45- 3.30.

This paper, by engaging with Janine Utell’s *James Joyce and the Revolt of Love: Marriage, Adultery, Desire*, and similar works, argues that the Blooms’ commitment to one another is much more provisional than has previously been realised, that the full stop at the end of the *Ithaca* episode and Molly’s final ‘Yes.’ represent temporary accommodations rather than commitment or closure.

An analysis of the Blooms’ personal, family, financial, psychological, medical and sexual history reveals a relationship that is in crisis to the point that both Leopold and Molly have devised strategies that will either restore, reconfigure or rupture the relationship—though, given the evidence, it is either the second or third alternative that is the most likely.