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The Value of James Joyce

Margot Norris's *The Value of James Joyce* explores the writings of James Joyce from his early poetry and short stories to his final avant-garde work, *Finnegans Wake*. His works include some of the most difficult and challenging texts in the English literary canon without diminishing his impressive popularity beyond the scope of academia. A democratic impulse may be counted as an important feature of this paradox: that Joyce's stylistic and linguistic experiments never lose their focus on a world of characters whose everyday activities comprise the stories of life in Ireland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, even as some of the most famous texts are given structures derived from ancient Greek literature. *The Value of James Joyce* examines not only the significance of the ostensibly ordinary, but also the function of natural and urban spaces, classical and popular culture, and the moods, voices, and language that give Joyce's works their widespread appeal.

Margot Norris is Chancellor's Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Emerita, at the University of California, Irvine. She is the author of several books and numerous articles on the work of James Joyce, including *The Decentered Universe of "Finnegans Wake," Joyce's Web: The Social Unraveling of Modernism, Suspicious Readings of Joyce's "Dubliners,"* and *Virgin and Veteran Readings of "Ulysses."* From 2004 to 2008, she served as president of the International James Joyce Foundation.

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