

The New Joycians

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Teaching James Joyce is a tricky endeavor. Teaching James Joyce to secondary students who are fifteen and sixteen years old is exciting. I have the pleasure of teaching English at Deltona High School, located in central Florida in the United States. By most measures and metrics, it is an average high school on the surface. Nevertheless, it is the students who make the school exceptional. With my tenth grade English II students, I teach “After the Race” and “The Dead”, both short stories from Joyce’s *Dubliners* collection. However, I get more ambitious with my AICE/Cambridge tenth graders in General Paper; with them, I also teach *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and have a voluntary, weekly, extracurricular *Ulysses* Reading Group that meets for three-quarters of the school year. And it is these students who redefine “exceptional”.

After exploring Joyce’s shorter works during the first quarter of the school year, I offer the students the option of obtaining a copy of *Ulysses*, meeting once a week after school for around an hour – sometimes longer, and discussing that week’s reading of the novel. Of course, cookies or some other food – fried pork kidney during our discussion of the Calypso episode – is provided as well. This is not part of the regular coursework the students are engaged in on a daily basis. To reward the students who stick it out till May, I offer academic remediation through work in our readings that can apply to their General Paper course. To this end, the students have the choice of coming up with their own topics for a thesis paper based on Joyce’s works; they plan it out, study, write, and edit. I act as a faculty advisor, guiding their outlines a bit and pointing them to appropriate research.

The two papers included in this issue of *Qorpus*, by Jennifer Fuentes and Sarah Barrett, are examples of two of the most convincing, well-written, heavily researched papers that were turned in. The students’ papers have been only lightly edited by *Qorpus*. So, what the reader will find in them are fresh, genuine undergraduate approaches to Joyce’s works that represent the first academic steps of two promising members of the Joyce community. Other papers, also commendable in their own right,

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have been published on TeachingJoyce.com, the website I created and manage to share with and inspire teachers of the next generation of Joyceans. It is even more astounding that these students completed these papers while in isolation during the school closures of the Covid-19 pandemic that shut down Deltona High for the last quarter of the year. For this reason, please forgive any use of online sources where printed ones would be ideal. They were working with limited research capabilities. These are the first publications of the next generation of Joyce scholars and they remind us that regardless of the current state of the world, some literature is truly timeless.

A Portrait of the Author as a Young Man: The Reflections of James Joyce Socially and Economically in His Writing

Jennifer Fuentes

Whereas Stephen Dedalus in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* reflects James Joyce socially more than economically, Stephen Dedalus in *Ulysses* reflects James Joyce economically more than socially. In *A Portrait*, Stephen Dedalus is sent to Clongowes Wood College, a Jesuit school. Stephen finds himself becoming a victim of the rest of his peers' bullying. Stephen feels as if he didn't belong with the rest, no matter how much effort he put into making friends and fitting in. Stephen, like Joyce, felt the need to leave Ireland to find himself and pursue his writing career. Although Joyce does incorporate some of his childhood economics, Joyce focuses more on portraying Stephen's social status throughout *A Portrait*. In *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus has returned to Ireland and is struggling economically as a new and aspiring writer. Stephen is trying to thrive. To Stephen, Ireland stifles creativity and inspiration. As Stephen once said in *A Portrait*, "When the soul of man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets" ("*A Portrait*" 179). During the time *Ulysses* was being written, Joyce was living in Paris. Joyce incorporates his economic struggle as an aspiring writer in *Ulysses* and how that affected him economically.

In *A Portrait*, Stephen Dedalus reflects Joyce on a social level. Throughout *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Joyce makes Stephen's social struggle and improvements evident. The first social struggle for Stephen that was seen in the novel

was during his time in Clongowes Wood College. Stephen was very different from the rest of the kids at Clongowes Wood, from Stephen's appearance to the way he talked and thought. At Clongowes Wood, Stephen is repeatedly humiliated by his peers and teacher. One of the humiliating moments Stephen had to go through was the teasing caused by his classmates when they found out he still kissed his mother. Stephen doesn't understand where the teasing is coming from since he finds kissing his mother normal. Stephen has a different mentality than his peers. He worries about finding himself and his place in the world, as he wrote in his notebook, "Stephen Dedalus, Class of Elements, Clongowes Wood College, Sallins, County Kildare, Ireland, Europe, The World, The Universe" ("A Portrait" 7). This shows how Joyce, himself, doesn't know where he fits in, portraying this through Stephen. As Stephen ages in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, it can be seen that he starts to focus on his passion for writing and literature. The people of Ireland don't view writing as a successful career path. Stephen, however, continues to follow his passion.

Stephen ultimately ends up perceiving Ireland as stifling to his creativity. In order to escape the way most people in Ireland think about literature, Stephen leaves his country for Paris where he feels more people will understand his passions as an aspiring writer. Joyce was originally going to Paris to pursue a medical career instead of writing. "He decided to become a doctor, but, after attending a few lectures in Dublin, he borrowed what money he could and went to Paris², where he abandoned the idea of medical studies" (Atherton). Stephen was never interested in becoming a doctor. He used studying medicine as an excuse to leave Ireland while still being able to receive money from his family. Instead of pursuing his writing career, Stephen would meet with his friends who were writers or take small jobs that involved writing and literature.

Family economics are more of a background in *A Portrait*, but some economic situations that occurred tie into Stephen's social development, particularly regarding his father, Simon. Simon Dedalus's jobs varied throughout the novel. In the beginning of the novel, Simon Dedalus has a municipal job, which is how he can afford to send Stephen to Clongowes. As Simon starts to become financially unstable, he must move Stephen from Clongowes to Belvedere because he can no longer afford the tuition. "In a vague way he understood that his father was in trouble and that this was the reason why he himself had not been sent back to Clongowes," ("A Portrait" 39). Having Stephen go

² <https://www.britannica.com/place/Paris>

from a more prestigious school to one that doesn't have the same standards or resources does affect Stephen socially. When at Clongowes, Stephen might take notice in how his peers talked, in what they were able to afford, or how they were dressed. This is because his peers were from a higher economic level than he was. When at Clongowes, his peers didn't understand why Stephen liked literature and saw Stephen wanting to be a writer as pathetic and a waste of time. When Stephen went to Belvedere he was at a similar economic level as the rest of his peers, allowing for Stephen to create new relationships. For example, when Stephen confided in his friend, Cranly, who he met at Belvedere, about his artistic aspirations, Cranly didn't care what Stephen did as long as his friend was content.

Much like Stephen, Joyce moved several times due to his economic situation. Joyce's father, John Stanislaus Joyce, had a horrible drinking and gambling habit. Due to his bad habits, this led to John Joyce becoming bankrupt and losing his job in 1891. Because of John Joyce's mismanagement of money, he soon led his family to poverty. James Joyce had started going to Clongowes Wood because his father, at the time, had enough funds to send his son to the Jesuit boarding school. As time went on, John Joyce could no longer afford for James to keep attending Clongowes Wood. Therefore, James Joyce didn't go back to school for two years. Instead, he stayed home and tried to educate himself along with the help of his mother. "Meanwhile bills accumulated, the landlord was upon the family for his rent, and probably late in 1894, the Joyce prepared to move again" (Ellmann 41). James Joyce, along with his brother, later entered Belvedere College, which was a Jesuit grammar school. James Joyce did particularly well at Belvedere and even managed to be elected twice as president for the Marian Society. This shows how Joyce included some of the economic situations that he had experienced into his character, Stephen, as well as how they helped him and his character socially.

After Belvedere College, Joyce went on to University College Dublin. Later, Joyce felt that Ireland was no longer the place for him and went to Paris to pursue a medical career. "I did so, the reviews appeared a fortnight ago but I have received no money. My prospects for studying medicine here are not inviting" (Ellmann 11). Paris is where Joyce abandoned the thought of entering into a medical career and tried to focus on his writing. This ties into *Ulysses* where Stephen is back in Dublin and hadn't accomplished much in Paris.

James Joyce wrote and published *Ulysses* while living in Paris. During this time, Joyce was meeting new writers and expanding his literary opportunities. Much like Joyce, Stephen in *Ulysses* isn't sure at first what he wants as it can be seen that in the second chapter Stephen is teaching a class at the Clifton School in Dalkey. Joyce, too, taught as a means of supplementing his writing career financially. Upon sitting through the headmaster's lecture on money and hearing about being "generous" and "just", Stephen replies, "I fear those big words...which make us so unhappy." (*U* 2.264). Stephen, along with Mr. Deasy, both know that Stephen won't last long teaching. Stephen at this time didn't know how to pursue his writing career and looked for other options to support himself; one of these options was teaching.

Many people didn't take Stephen's writing career seriously. In their defense, they had never seen Stephen's work – not that there was much of it – therefore doubting that he would be a good writer. Stephen was also spending more money than he was earning, causing a financial strain. "Joyce devoted many hours to borrowing or begging money from friends and relatives" (Osteen 1). In chapter 2 of *Ulysses*, Stephen is making a mental note of all the people who he owes money to. Mr. Deasy is also lecturing Stephen on finances. "I paid my way. I never borrowed a shilling in my life. Can you feel that? I owe nothing. Can you?" (*U* 2.253-254). Stephen didn't know how to save his money, much like Joyce who always seemed to be in debt and when he wasn't in debt, he would go to lavish restaurants, buying a round of drinks for all his friends. Joyce would often ask his friends and family for money when he was in financial trouble. He had incorporated some of the economic situations he had gone through into *Ulysses*, showing how Stephen portrayed Joyce economically more than socially in this novel.

James Joyce shows through Stephen Dedalus some events that he went through socially in *A Portrait*. In *Ulysses*, Joyce incorporates more of his economic situations into the character. In *Ulysses*, Stephen is struggling to be taken seriously as a writer and must pursue other jobs in order to gain money. Although Stephen has a teaching job, he knows that job is not meant for him; Stephen is always in debt and when he does have enough money, he is spending it carelessly. This is fairly reflective of James Joyce, who would ask his family and friends when he was in financial trouble. In *A Portrait*, Joyce portrays himself more socially through Stephen. Stephen is trying to find his place and figure out where he belongs. Stephen wants to pursue a writing career but feels that people in Ireland don't support him and look at a writing career as foolish. Therefore,

Stephen wants to leave Ireland and move to Paris. Just as Stephen did, Joyce decided to leave Ireland for Paris and this was where he was able to meet new writers and establish the literary career he is known for today.

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"James Joyce's Aversion to and Use of Written Disclosure Therapy"

Sarah J. Barrett

James Joyce was an Irish novelist who had many experimental works in his writing career. He had drawn inspiration for these works from Gustave Flaubert, Henrik Ibsen, and other playwrights and novelists who founded and focused on realism as their literary style of writing. In 1905 Nora Barnacle and James Joyce had welcomed their son, Giorgio, into the world, followed two years later by their daughter, Lucia. Joyce had drawn inspiration for his works from not only other novelists, but from his own life. Throughout his adulthood, Joyce had been wary of receiving therapy or being psychoanalyzed. Joyce had only supported psychiatric therapy when it came to his daughter, Lucia, who had been treated by Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung and diagnosed as schizophrenic. Although he rejected the help of a therapist, he seemed to unconsciously search for an emotional outlet, which he found in his writing. When looking at his

writing, the issue he was faced with the most appeared to be his relationship with his wife, Nora. His form of emotional expression is seen most in “The Dead”, *Exiles*, and *Ulysses*, and the reader can see what could be described as a hyper-fixation on the topic of his wife’s past lovers. Time and time again, he inserted his life experiences into his work, most of these experiences being with jealousy and the feeling of expendability, specifically the interactions with his wife, Nora Barnacle.

In “The Dead”, James Joyce represents himself as the wealthy, educated, and pretentious character by the name of Gabriel Conroy. He and his wife, Gretta, find themselves traveling to his aunts’ home to celebrate Epiphany. The relationship between the two is written in a way that seems strained, as if there were underlying problems within the relationship. Throughout the story, Gabriel Conroy, the character representative of Joyce, had been focused on his wealth and status, seeing himself as above the other attendants of the Epiphany gathering (6th January). On the surface, his behavior comes off to the reader as being patronizing and condescending just for the sake of it. However, the further one reads, the more it seems that he changes himself to be perceived as what he believes his wife, Gretta, wants in a partner. He had expected her to be more interested in people who were affluent and well educated; someone who was dependable and could take care of her. She, however, reveals at the end of the story that she had loved a simple young man, Michael Furey, who had been in the gasworks.

With the revelation of her past, Gabriel had his own epiphany: he had given his all just to be second best. Gretta’s night had been brought to a dismal end upon the memories of her first love, Michael Furey, a character nearly identical to a man from Nora’s past who had suffered the same fate. This man, Michael Bodkin, had in fact been one of Nora’s past lovers, and he did pass away in the same fashion as Furey. This ending and its connection to the real world is a prime example of Joyce displaying his jealous tendencies regarding the men that his wife – represented here as Gretta – might have been attracted to, or even in love with. It feels like Joyce is saying “what did he have that I don’t, because I can be just as good, better even.” (Joyce, “The Dead”)

He shows in his writing that he had the inability to handle the idea of anyone else having been with his wife, as if he were supposed to be the first and last man that she should be with. They speak on the topic before Gretta goes to bed, “‘It was a person I used to know in Galway when I was living with my grandmother,’ [Gretta] said. The smile passed away from Gabriel’s face. A dull anger began to gather again at the back of his mind and the dull fires of his lust began to glow angrily in his veins. ‘Someone

you were in love with?’ he asked ironically” (Joyce, “The Dead”). The narrator goes on to note that Gabriel, and in turn, Joyce, was humiliated by his inferiority to the boy who was in the gasworks. He felt small at that time; he had been an afterthought in his wife’s mind.

In some of Joyce’s letters to and about Nora, he writes, “In a way I have no right to expect that you should regard me as anything more than the rest of men – in fact in view of my own life I have no right at all to expect it,” (“Letters” 28), and, “She has told me something of her youth, and admits the gentle art of self-satisfaction. She has had many love-affairs, one when quite young with a boy who died,” (“Letters” 45). He shared his pain with others, but it did not seem to be enough to let these emotions go, hence these emotions and thought processes being followed in many of his other works as well.

The form that Joyce chose to take in his play, *Exiles*, is that of Richard Rowan. He is once again faced with competition when he battles the threat of his wife, Bertha, leaving him for another man by the name of Robert Hand. There is a brief moment when Richard is speaking to his son, Archie, and says to him, “do you understand what it is to give a thing ... When you give it, you have given it. No robber can take it from you. It is yours for ever when you have given it. It will be yours always” (Joyce, “Exiles”). The ‘it’ in question is Bertha; he references the possibility of succumbing to the feeling that he cannot compete with Robert.

In one of his letters, Joyce talks about how insecure he really is regarding a young constable from Galway who had known Nora. Joyce wondered, “did my darling, my love, my dearest, my queen ever turn her young eyes towards him. I *had* to speak to him because he came from Galway but O how I suffered, darling” (“Letters” 195). Joyce had found himself caught up on his jealousy and fear that Nora might have loved someone else. In the same letter, Joyce writes that Nora is his “beautiful wild flower of the hedges” (“Letters” 195). This concept reappeared when Joyce wrote “Exiles”; Robert states that Bertha, a character obviously representative of Nora Barnacle, has a “face [like] a flower too—but more beautiful. A wild flower blowing in a hedge” (Joyce, “Exiles”). The difference between “Exiles” and “The Dead” is the increased focus on the romantic relationships between the characters. At the ending, Bertha is meant to choose between Richard and his rival, Robert Hand.

Again, Joyce expressed his anxieties within his letters, saying, “Nora does not seem to make much difference between me and the rest of the men she has known and I

can hardly believe that she is justified in this” (“Letters” 87). A similarity between “The Dead” and *Exiles*, however, is once again the people who invoked jealousy in Joyce were being inserted and used as inspiration for romantic rivals. Robert Hand happens to be inspired by Michael Bodkin.

Joyce’s novel, *Ulysses*, is one of the last examples of Joyce using his literature to express his underlying thoughts and emotions. This is one of the more interesting cases of Joyce using his writing to portray his more romantic emotions because he, under the disguise of the character Leopold Bloom, makes note that he is content with sexual intercourse outside of relations with Molly, the character representing his wife. There is a constant theme of sexual disconnect between Bloom and his wife, specifically because his problems, like Joyce’s, were mentally taxing rather than physical. This disconnection stems from the loss of Rudy Bloom, their son, who died at only eleven days old. It is less traditional when regarding other boys and men that came between the two, but the idea of someone drawing the characters representing Joyce and Nora further and further apart remains present. Though he is unwilling to have sex with his wife, Bloom still has physical desires; this is a fairly large change from the other characters representing Joyce, considering those characters had been loyal and expecting the loyalty of their wives. Here, both Leopold and Molly Bloom are cheating – Molly with Hugh “Blazes” Boylan, and Bloom with Martha Clifford, albeit as pen pals. This correlates with the letters Joyce had written during a similar period while married to Nora. Joyce writes in a letter:

It is very good of you to inquire about that damned dirty affair of mine ... I dare not address you by any familiar name ... I have lost your esteem. I have worn down your love. Leave me then. Take away your children from me to save them from the curse of my presence. Let me sink back into the mire I came from. (“Letters” 177).

Once again, James Joyce had written his life experiences into his work, using his characters to explore what he truly felt. In Jean Kimball’s “Autobiography as Epic: Freud’s Three-Time Scheme in *Ulysses*,” Kimball writes, “Joyce produced Bloom, a surrogate who was never acknowledged as such in Joyce’s lifetime, to take over a part of the burden of self-revelation in his fiction,” (476). Just as Bloom was a surrogate for Joyce, he once again uses a character of his, Hugh “Blazes” Boylan, as surrogate for another person he knew during his life, Oliver St. John Gogarty. His character, like all others Joyce inserts, had come from his past who had implied on occasion that, in the early stages of Joyce and Nora’s relationship, she had been unfaithful to him.

James Joyce had a recurring distaste for psychotherapy, caused by reasons unknown, and found himself rejecting it. Though against the thought of receiving psychotherapy himself, he had given that chance to his daughter, and unknowingly invited alternative versions of therapy into his readers' lives. He might not have been aware of it during his lifetime, but Joyce had been participating in writing therapy, also known as expressive disclosure, expressive writing, and written disclosure therapy. Research done by Soul Mugerwa and John Holden entitled "Writing Therapy: A New Tool for General Practice?" notes that, "one theory is that of emotional catharsis whereby the mere act of disclosure, essentially 'getting it off your chest' is a powerful therapeutic agent in itself," and that, "writing may facilitate cognitive processing of traumatic memories, resulting in more adaptive, integrated representations about the writer themselves, their world, and others." To claim that Joyce releasing his innermost thoughts through his writing to tackle his anxieties and feelings of jealousy is not comparable to a low level of psychotherapy would be wrong. Many professionals recommend the use of writing to assist with the organization of their patient's thoughts. It helps to ground the patient and give them a sense of stability. According to the aforementioned study by Mugerwa and Holden, practicing writing therapy can "reduce anxiety and depressive symptoms." Joyce is simply acting as the doctor and the patient, going through his life experiences as an adult and assessing them to make sense of them all. According to Suzette Henke, despite many of these experiences being him feeling inferior in the eyes of his wife, "[Joyce] was convinced that the twentieth-century society must grow beyond the infantile demands of sexual ownership. Yet he knew the visceral compulsions of jealousy, the conviction of betrayal, and the emotional need for marital fidelity," (333). He knows that his behavior is foolish, but there is a compulsion in him that brings him back to these topics, not only in his work, but in his life.

Throughout Joyce's life, he had experienced many anxieties about his shortcomings and exhibited fear of being second best to those he loved. He had displayed these feelings in his works to separate the feelings from himself and to examine them objectively, rather than let the emotions fester within him. James Joyce's writing had served him as a therapeutic experience, letting him escape his innermost emotions regarding the most sacred parts of his life.

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