The Hat Trick:
The Fluid Symbol of the Hat in James Joyce's Ulysses

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Introduction

The Trade paperback edition of *Ulysses*, published by Vintage Books in 1990, features no cover illustration except for a large black hat and pair of glasses, which seem to be worn by the word "Ulysses" itself. Though Joyce did not intend his book to be capped in such a way, we must nevertheless wonder what is so important about the hat that makes it worthy of a cover. We do not see Dublin, or the high seas which bore Ulysses home, or even the shadowy representations of Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus; we see a hat and some eyewear. This cover, as it turns out, is entirely appropriate. Joyce focuses much of his characterization on describing the hats of various characters. Unlike other articles of clothing, hats are not socially necessary; Joyce thus makes a deliberate choice to connect his characters to their hats, sometimes even metonymically reducing them to their hats. By its very nature, the hat is a barrier between the mind and the outside world; it can both hide a face and accentuate a face. As such, it becomes Joyce's symbol for psychic fragmentation, the major problem of *Ulysses*. Sheldon R. Brivic notes that "Stephen is aware that language itself … can stand for material things" (Brivic, "Time" 36). Joyce himself is aware material things can also stand for language, as in Stephen's thought: "These heavy sands are language" (*Ulysses* 3.288). In the image of the hat, Joyce creates a new form of language or art, a *new* way to reveal the self.

The modern world, however, is characterized by the inability to communicate, that is, to connect with other individuals and to understand oneself. We have seen many hats in literature which successfully communicate exactly what we are supposed to understand about the wearer.

Victorian literature, for example, often directly relates character and outer appearance; in *Hard Times*, for instance, Dickens characterizes Mr. Bounderby by describing his relationship with his hat: “So Mr. Bounderby threw on his hat – he always threw it on, as expressing a man who had been far too busily employed in making himself to acquire any fashion of wearing his hat” (*Hard Times* 27). Bounderby’s showy “self-made” character is perfectly revealed by his hat. The recklessness with which Bounderby puts on his hat is Dickens’ moral comment on Bounderby’s dangerous character. He is clearly defying social propriety as he has secretly defied truth and moral order. Hugh Kenner notes that we are momentarily afraid that Joyce will use the hat in a similarly predictable way. When Bloom “[takes] his hat from the peg over his initialed heavy overcoat and his lost property office secondhand waterproof,” he seems to exist “comfortably in fiction’s familiar world of nouns, all those *things* jostled by their attributes, all cerebration either an expository flight of a fly’s crawl over the obvious” (Kenner, *Ulysses* 46). Yet just after this description, Joyce reveals Bloom’s thought, “Where is my hat?” prompting Kenner to rejoice: “The heady experience of frequenting a novelist who does know [where his character’s hats are] may encourage us to turn back, expecting to find out more about Bloom than Bloom knows himself” (46-47). Indeed, this *is* what the hat does in Joyce’s novel.

In the world of Bloomsday Dublin, it is *always* hard to present oneself to the public through one’s outerwear because the public eye is many-faceted and easily distracted. We are not given one narrator’s moral commentary to guide us through the novel as we often are in Victorian literature. Indeed, the hat is closely tied to the theme of parallax, an idea that fascinates Leopold Bloom, in which an object appears to change when the viewer’s position changes. In *Ulysses,* we are presented with multiple unreliable narrators in order to better understand the phenomena of Bloomsday Dublin. Hugh Kenner notes, “Two different versions at least, that is

Joyce's normal way; and the uncanny sense of reality that grows in readers of *Ulysses,* page after page, is fostered by a neatness with which versions of the same event … reliably render one another substantial" (Kenner, *Ulysses* 75). While this parallactic technique may present a more accurate view of Dublin, we are often left without a reliable guide; we must make our own assumptions about most of Joyce's characters, just as they make their own, often misguided, assumptions about one another.

Many of Joyce's characters, like Bounderby, attempt to self-make through their choices of outwear. Yet this self-making often results in self-breaking, brought upon by the public misconstrual of one's self-presentation. Joyce, thus, subverts Dickens' technique to make it applicable to the modern world in which there is no traditional, governing moral truth. Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane describe the "apocalyptic" views of Modernism:

> It is the art consequent on the dis-establishing of communal reality and conventional notions of causality, on the destruction of traditional notions of the wholeness of individual character, on the linguistic chaos that ensues when public notions of language have been discredited and when all realities have becomes subjective fictions. (Bradbury and McFarlane 21, 27)

Joyce uses the hat in a distinctly modern way: to mark the crackup of the modern world and to misguide communication. Hat wearers in the novel often feel themselves cut off from the world around them, unable to successful communicate with the public because their ways are metaphorically blocked by their hats. Misperception of and miscommunication by the hat lead to the breakdown of human relationships in the novel.

Joyce employs the hat paradoxically both to hide certain aspects of self and to betray others. A key moment in the text occurs in 'Circe' when Leopold Bloom watches as his own hat betrays his secret, sexualized identity, Henry Flower: "(*A card falls from inside the leather headband of Bloom's hat)*" (15.726). This small moment encompasses the hat's function in the novel as a whole. Here, Bloom's hat, which has hidden a part of Bloom's self throughout the novel, reveals its secret, throwing Bloom to the mercy of the public eye and revealing him as an outsider. Bloom's hat, by regurgitating its secret, draws the public's attention to the sexual "sins" that Bloom has committed; it illuminates the sexual depravity of Dublin's inhabitants. Yet, after Bloom's hat betrays him, and he confronts his sins of the past, he emerges from 'Circe' triumphantly; the hat's revealing action sparks Bloom's reformation. Thus, Joyce uses the hat throughout *Ulysses* to reveal the myriad hidden sides of his characters; to illuminate the debased state of Ireland and its society as a whole; and ultimately to give us hope for the creation of a less broken world at the end of the novel.

Many critics, and notably Sheldon R. Brivic, believe that the world of the novel is so shattered that it cannot finally be put back together again. Because Stephen's and Bloom's relationships to time (i.e. their ages and their different ways of viewing their pasts) are radically different, Brivic believes that

> a reconciliation between Stephen and Bloom, if such a thing could occur or last, would constitute a triumph over time …. Time has enslaved Bloom and driven Stephen to revolt, and neither is capable of the attitude of harmonious equanimity necessary for a proper and fruitful relationship to time and to the world. (Brivic, "Time" 49, 50)

Yet Brivic ignores the implications of the hat. Through several repeating episodes centered on the hat, Joyce hints that the past ultimately works in the favor of Stephen, Bloom, and even Molly. The past's constant forays into the present allow our protagonists to relive and come to terms with their memories; Bloom, for example, is given three chances to save someone's hat and cannot properly do so until he has been prepared by his first two moments of failure. By accepting their own pasts, they are able to more fully understand themselves and to reveal these selves to others in a positive way. In glossing over the hat, Brivic, too, misses the key moment at the end of the novel in which Molly and Bloom finally open themselves to one another. He remains convinced that "if Bloom and Molly were consciously reconciled, the reality and vitality that depend on their opposition would diminish" (Brivic, "Metaphysics" 18). Yet, it is in their reconciliation that vitality, in the form of a madly beating heart, bursts onto the scene. Reading for the hat is necessary, for the hat provides the ultimate proof of reunion.

I agree, then, more with a reading like Margaret Harkness's, which suggests that by the end of the novel, Stephen and Bloom are purged by love and compassion. By the time we reach 'Ithaca', Bloom will be able to establish "a new regime [based on] real and valid human relationships" (Harkness 270). Indeed, Kenner, too, notes that "Bloom, at the end of 'Circe' seems a changed Bloom, courageous, ready of mind …. 'Circe''s rummaging amid the roots of his secret fears and desires has brought forth a new self-posession" (Kenner, *Ulysses* 127). I agree with Kenner's assertion that Stephen "dies" at the end of 'Circe' and is "resurrected … into a domain created by Poldy" (129). Bloom's salvation of Stephen's hat proves this; for, by saving Stephen's hat, Bloom invites Stephen to create a new identity based on compassion and acceptance. (Kenner, however, overlooks the power of Bloom's humanity and tends to focus on his lack of high intellect, asserting that this new world into which Stephen is accepted is

"bounded by a perfectly awful prose style" (129).) To the extent that miracle plays provide accounts of miracles, I intend to prove David Galef's statement that "Miracle plays often involve transformations, and Joyce provides and abundance, many of which are changes in fashion themselves" (Galef 422). Joyce utilizes the hat to bring about and then illuminate the transforming miracle that is the end of *Ulysses.*

In the first section of this paper, I will discuss how the hat functions as a barrier between the public identity and the private self; it ultimately serves to fragment the self or to reduce the self to a metonymy. This self-fragmentation or -reduction causes the disruption of productive human relationships in the novel. In the second section, we will see how the hat blocks artistic and sexual creation, as it does meaningful human connection, in the present day. I will discuss how Joyce uses the hat to satirize the Catholic Church and its sacraments in Dublin, revealing its dwindling importance. Ultimately, this breakdown of society is a direct result of the destruction of the unified self which is exasperated by the hat. However, Joyce often uses the hat to betray the fragmented self to the public and even to the wearer himself. By calling attention to the problem, the hat becomes necessary to the re-forging of identity. In the final section, we will see that the hat can be reborn into a more creative force through the acceptance of one's various selves. Both hatlessness and the creation of a new hat represent the meaningful exposure of the self to another person. The removal of the hat, brought about by Bloom's and Stephen's confrontations with their pasts, and subsequent reforming of Stephen's hat, spark the re-creation of human relationships and of the world.

Because 'Circe' is a laboratory in which all of these themes bubble and overflow, it is an ideal place to begin the exploration of Joyce's various usages of the hat. As a dramatic production, 'Circe' presents a kind of intensified microcosm of *Ulysses*, in which the characters

are often not *actually* there, but are in Bloom's or Stephen's minds. The narrative form of 'Circe' is broken by our uninhibited views into Bloom's subconscious where we see momentary thoughts become long and revealing enactments, much of which seems to go unnoticed by Bloom himself, who, like all humans, is practiced at ignoring shameful thoughts. Toward the end of 'Circe', we move more into Stephen's mind. While his "characters" are still figments of his imagination, Stephen, who has drunk absinthe, recognizes them as actual presences. Marguerite Harkness notes that in 'Circe', Joyce creates "the only mirror that is valid for our time, the mirror which reflects man's unconscious" (Harkness 259). What the unconscious shows are "images of the self and its desires that the subject does not want to recognize and that are hence elided in waking life;" or, parts of the self which the outward projection of *identity* hides (Devlin 883). These manifestations serve to magnify the themes and concerns of the novel as a whole.

Joyce's parallactic use of the hat in the novel as a whole becomes wildly frenetic in 'Circe'. The final line of the 'Oxen of the Sun,' "Just you try it on," which seems to be Joyce the director's command to his characters, becomes quite the understatement (*Ulysses* 14.1591). 'Circe' features over ninety quick costume changes and physical transformations, becoming what David Galef calls "The Fashion Show" of *Ulysses* (Galef 421). Yet, Galef notes, "the more Joyce covers with words *qua* clothing, the more he is dis-covering, explaining, exposing" (428). It is, thus, not only the abundance of lingerie that is revealing in *Ulysses*, but also the outerwear. Joyce's hurried and wild use of the hat in 'Circe' mirrors its more subtle appearances throughout the novel; we *must* read for the hat in 'Circe' in order to understand its role in the novel as a whole. In its most important and fiery role, the hat illuminates the fragmented identities of Stephen and Bloom, as well as the decomposition of the world in which they live, in such a wild

way that these themes are exploded. Indeed, it is only after the fulmination of costume, transformation, and fragmentation that the world can be made whole again.

Joyce opens 'Circe' with a grim and haunting description of nighttown, which is devoid of our two protagonists, but populated by silent "stunted men and women" and children. It is a dirty scene, featuring pigmies, deafmutes, and one "form sprawled against a dustbin and muffled by its arm and hat" (15.27). (This is the section's first image of the stifling nature of the hat.) The first sounds are disembodied voices, whistling in the distance, "Wait, my love, and I'll be with you" (15.11). Stephen Dedalus eventually "pass[es] though," and Leopold Bloom's first action in 'Circe' is to "appear" (15.62, 142). Their ghostlike advents not only further identify Bloom and Stephen as the "ghost of the unquiet father [and] the image of the unliving son," but also serve to indicate that we have passed into another world, a dirty, hazy, and magnified representation of Dublin (9.380-381). The world of 'Circe' is Dublin's reflection, as Joyce illustrates with Bloom's first unspoken passive action: From a hairdresser's window, a "concave mirror … presents to him lovelorn longlost lugubru Booloohoom." Bloom tries to pass by, but is caught by a vision of "the grin unstruck the bonham eyes the fatchuck cheekchops of jollypoldy the rixdix doldy" in a "convex mirror" (15.145-149). As the language is jumbled, though packed with insight, 'Circe' presents a distorted, but perhaps even more revealing, view of Dublin as well as of Stephen and Bloom.

At its most fundamental level, the hat is used to reveal its wearer's identity. Joyce's novel is full of self-conscious characters who are aware of others' perceptions of them, and they use their outerwear to both make and unmake themselves. What we must remember is that appearance may not only identify the self, or one's true character, but also may reveal what one desires to be in the eyes of others. Costumes, then, are most illuminating throughout *Ulysses*, and

they become even more revealing in 'Circe' in which "the gaze of the other is an agency not of insight but of exposure" (Devlin 884). Joyce re-hats Mr. Bloom with almost every different "part" he plays in this frantic drama, just as Bloom's imagination "hats" his visions of other characters. Each hat, those that Bloom both wears and imagines on others, speaks to Bloom's fluid emotions throughout the section. He changes from a "*high grade hat*" when he reveals himself as a dental surgeon immediately to red fez, and even to a blinding black skullcap when he is about to be hanged (15.720, 728, 1173).

Bloom's first costume change, and one of his most telling, is into a "*brown Alpine hat [and] gent's sterling silver Waterbury keyless watch*" (*Ulysses* 15.270).[i] His hat identifies him as a child, and indeed we watch as he explains to his angry parents how he so soiled his clothes. In an abrupt change of scene, Bloom, still in his muddy German cap, conjures up an image of Molly with a "*coin gleam[ing] on her forehead*" next to a turbaned camel (15.312). The stark difference in their outfits reveals Bloom's feelings of inadequacy to his wife. By replacing her usual hat with a coin, Bloom subconsciously identifies her both with riches and with sexual openness. Molly, who is called Marion in this section, emphasizing her adult and womanly identity, essentially *becomes* Bloom's Eastern fantasy, which is both sexual and economic in nature, and appears as such. It is with both pity and shameful amusement that we watch as he speaks to her, still picturing himself as a child: "I can give you … I mean as your business manager ... Mrs Marion ….. if you…." (15.325-326). Indeed, Bloom must wonder, what *can* he give Molly that she has not already gotten elsewhere? We are, thus, given a concrete image of Bloom's perceived marriage dynamic: a little boy trying to offer himself to a woman. It is important to note that the Alpine hat reemerges on the head of "Bello" as he uses Bloom as his footstool. This reincarnation of the hat further enforces the ambiguity of time and gender

throughout 'Circe' that gives it its dreamlike quality. It also connects two scenes in which Bloom feels himself to be sexually depleted; he is both Molly's and Bello's pawn. (Though, of course, he seems to derive some pleasure from playing the weaker "woman.")

In his marriage, Bloom is unable to feel fully confident; he must search back into days past to feel himself sexually potent. With the disappearance of Marion, Bloom recalls Mrs. Breen, once Josie Powell, the "prettiest deb in Dublin" (15.441-442). Mrs. Breen informs Bloom that he was "always a favourite with the ladies" and even goes so far as to call him "the lion of the night," a phrase which provides a strong contrast to one of Molly's exit lines: "Poldy!" (15.448, 447, 347). Molly omits the "Leo" from Bloom's first name, de-lioning him, reducing him. Just after Mrs. Breen's praise, Bloom transforms into a dapper "*squire of dames*" who wears a "*purple Napoleon hat"* (15.450, 464). When Bloom feels himself to be a sexual conqueror, he, in effect, transforms into one; his hat reflects his perception of himself. In the past, Bloom is Sceptre; in the present, Throwaway.

The "fashion show" illustrates that Bloom's identity is a fragmented one, full of many different hats which can be traded in and transformed at will. Throughout *Ulysses*, Bloom uses the band of his hat to hide the evidence of his pen-relationship with Martha Clifford, to whom he writes under the assumed name Henry Flower[ii]. Bloom, thus, hides his more sinful side (a side which writes dirty letters to a lady typist, at least) behind his hat; his hat functions as a disguise. Yet, in 'Circe', Bloom's hat betrays him, indicating that, in waking life, Bloom fears that he has not successfully hidden this side of himself: "(*A card falls from inside the leather headband of Bloom's hat.)"* (15.726). In 'Circe', especially, hats always reveal more than the wearer desires and sometimes prompts others' misperceptions of the wearer. The hat's regurgitation of his false identity prompts Bloom to momentarily imagine that he goes on trial for all of his accumulated

sins of the past, imagined and real. Despite the betrayal, Bloom "*scared, hats himself, steps back*" (15.758). He is not ready to 'unhat' himself, or to accept his self, sins and all; he continues to hide in his hat and even continues to divide himself into parts. After being accused by Dr. Mulligan of being "bisexually abnormal," Bloom "*holds his high grade hat over his genital organs,*" hiding his sexual parts as his hat once hid his sexual identity *(*15.1775-1776, 1787). This self-afflicted fragmentation has resulted in a damaged self. After being tried for defecating in a plasterer's bucket one night, Bloom wears a "*dinged silk hat sideways on his head*" (15.936). As we will see, the silk hat itself is associated with the fall of "old decency" in Dublin, and the battered, dinged, or crushed hat, which emerges throughout the novel, suggests someone torn down and rejected. The dent in Bloom's hat represents his agenbite of inwit, the guilt that plagues his conscience.

The hat also represents a troubled history for Stephen, who too will face the sins of his past in this section. Stephen's hat is often regarded as identifying him with the Catholic Church, a connection which he has attempted to break. This misidentification is personified in 'Circe' when, after the whore Florry calls him a "spoiled priest. Or a monk" and Lynch identifies him as a "cardinal's son," he metamorphoses into "*His Eminence Simon Stephen cardinal Dedalus"* (*Ulysses* 15.2649, 2650, 2654-2655). Though he begins to declaim with "*bloated pomp*," seemingly embracing his status as a Cardinal, he "*wears a battered silk hat sideways on his head*," just as Bloom does in his trial (15.2662, 2657-2658). The repetition of this hat reveals the fact that Stephen feels he has metaphorically shat on his old religion; though he rejects Catholicism, yelling, "*Non servium!"* he cannot forget it (15.4228). His hat thus functions as both a synecdoche and a metaphor: Synecdochally, the hat is a visible moiety of Stephen's self, representing a hidden part of his identity; metaphorically, the battered nature of the hat

represents the guilt he feels for his refusal to pray for his mother on her deathbed; it is an outward sign of an inner struggle.

Though Bloom is constantly engaged in a kind of hat parade, Stephen is hatless throughout most of 'Circe'; though we do not see him remove his hat in Bella Cohen's brothel, it nonetheless "sprawl[s]" on the pianola, where it remains until just before Stephen's Dance of Death, or the Black Mass (15.2072). His removal of his hat suggests that he does not feel comfortable in the identity that has been placed upon him by Mulligan and by the many others who misperceive him. Though he is sure of his artistic aspirations, he cannot seem to put on the artist's hat, so to speak. Or, perhaps he fears exposing more to others than he wishes. In order to reinforce the betraying nature of the hat, Joyce animates Lynch's cap, which taunts Stephen about his intellectual failures:

> STEPHEN. You remember fairly accurately all my errors, boasts, mistakes. How long shall I continue to close my eyes to disloyalty?
>
> THE CAP. Ba!
>
> STEPHEN. …. The reason is because the fundamental and the dominant are separated by the greatest possible interval which….
>
> THE CAP. Which? Finish. You can't. (15.2099-2109)

The hat is able to hide "errors, boasts, mistakes" from others, but it cannot forget the failures that it hides; Stephen is constantly aware of his own artistic and moral failures, though these faults are hidden from the public, and notably Bloom's, eye.

In the exchange, Joyce materializes one of the most important functions of the hat: throughout *Ulysses* the hat represents a kind of condom which blocks both physical and artistic production. Lynch's cap blocks Stephen from finishing his "pornosophical philotheology" (15.109). Similarly, the hat must be removed before sexual coition is achieved. For Bloom, sexual achievement is a thing of the past. A fragment of the most overt act of affirmation in all of *Ulysses* appears in 'Circe': Bloom confronts the nannygoat that witnessed his lovemaking to Molly in the "Ben Howth rhododendrons" on the day that he proposed marriage (8.911). He affirms their love and moral right to make love in public: "Regularly engaged. Circumstances alter cases" (15.3373). In this moment of assertion, and memory of sexual achievement, Bloom is "*hatless,*" exposed in a positive way, to another human being (15.3372).

Though sexuality has been degraded in Bloom's present life, from marriage and love to brothels, cuckoldry, and lust, the image of the hat remains the same; it must be removed before true coition is achieved. It is telling that a man's hat and waterproof hang in the doorway of the brothel in nighttown, a place where sexual coition is achieved mechanically (15.2033). Because every appearance of Blazes Boylan, the ultimate sexual usurper, is marked by the presence of his straw boater hat, Joyce does not even feel the need to finish the image when he introduces Boylan in Circe: "*Over the well of the car Blazes Boylan leans, his boater straw set sideways, a red flower in his mouth*" (15.3738-3739). The flower in Boylan's mouth materializes his metaphorical masticating of Bloom (and, in lewder sense, of Molly, Bloom's "mountain flower" (18.1606).) But Boylan does not stop at eating Bloom's leftovers; in Bloom's imagination, he walks into Bloom's house to meet "Madam Tweedy in her bath" and, on his way in, "*he hangs his hat smartly on a peg of Bloom's antlered head"* (15.3764, 3767). Bloom has metamorphosed into the antlered hat rack that sits in the doorway of the brothel. The antlers, of course, reveal

outwardly his status as a cuckold. The idea that Bloom has become not a hat wearer, but a hat *rack* indicates that he has lost his identity as a husband and has become an agent in his own cuckolding. As he becomes Bello's footstool, he also becomes Boylan's piece of furniture, subdued again by both female and male sexual superiority. Yet, Bloom seems to subconsciously enjoy the prospect of Molly's copulating with another, even as he dreads and fears it, for he watches through the keyhole: "Show! Hide! Show!" (15.3815). Boylan's removal of his hat suggests that he will indeed complete the sexual act with Molly. Molly, on the other hand, announces that she is "in [her] pelt. Only [her] new hat and a carriage sponge" (15.3770). Though the "new hat" is associated with Boylan*,* as we will see, the fact that Molly remains in her hat indicates that she is not ready to fully expose herself to Boylan; indeed, we find out later that Molly has found parts of her afternoon with Boylan distasteful: "has he no manners nor no refinement nor no nothing in his nature slapping us behind like that on my bottom" (18.1368-1369).

Molly's retaining of her hat is the first of several images of hope toward the end of 'Circe'. After confronting the ghost of his mother, Stephen, hat on head, smashes a chandelier and flies from the brothel back into the decay of the streets, where he must grapple with another rotting woman: Old Gummy Granny, who represents Ireland. Old Gummy Granny "*in sugarloaf hat appears seated on a toadstool, the deathflower of the potato blight on her breast*" (15.4578-4580). Ireland, which has been betrayed by the ugly and plebian potato, still attempts to maintain a decadent identity, as symbolized by the pointed hat whose name recalls the packing of sugar. This sugarloaf hat presents an identity *better* and in stark contrast with the real self. This is also the pinnacle of Joyce's use of the hat to point out decomposition in modern Ireland; the hat is a false but nostalgic image. Stephen says to the Granny: "How do I stand you? The hat trick!

Where's the third person of the Blessed Trinity?" (15.4590-4591). Generally used to mean the achievement of a positive feat three times during a sporting competition, the hat trick, according to W. Y. Tyndall, also refers to when an "Irishman covers a turd on the street with his hat. He tells a policeman it is a bird and goes off for help, asking the policeman to stand guard in the meantime" (Tyndall 209). Here, Ireland is the very turd which is being covered: it is the toadstool that a dressed-up image tries to hide.

Bloom, of course, does *not* use a hat to cover his actual defecation in the bucket in the street, and he is confronted by his "crime" in 'Circe.' Nevertheless, he is accused of doing this very thing earlier in the section after narrowly escaping a streetcar: "Hey shitbreeches, are you doing the hat trick?" (*Ulysses* 15.195). The hat trick, here, has the connotation of escape. Because of the repetition of the language, we must associate Bloom with the hat trick to which Stephen refers in his question to Old Gummy Granny; he becomes the third person of the Trinity. He has been established as the Father (to Stephen); and as the Holy Ghost (for, as he enters the brothel, Lynch exclaims "Enter a ghost and hobgoblins" (15.2068)); and now he becomes the Son, the savior for whom both Ireland and Stephen yearn. Bloom has barely escaped death at the streetcar's hand and has emerged on the scene to redeem Stephen from Privates Carr and Compton in reality, and from Old Gummy Granny in his mind, who has just thrust "*a dagger toward Stephen's hand*," a writer's most important instrument (15.3737). Stephen collapses and lies "*prone, his face to the sky, his hat rolling to the wall*" (15.4748-4748). Though Stephen is in the position of Christ, Bloom is the savior in this scene, an idea materialized when he "*follows and picks* [Stephen's hat] *up*" (15.4749-4750). While Stephen imagines himself as an artistic savior, we are meant to see Bloom as a very human and compassionate savior, an idea which will be fleshed out in the course of this paper. He restores a new version of identity to Stephen and, as

we will see, this is one which is now open to change. He creates Stephen anew. After confronting his mother and his religion, he can accept Bloom as his "secular savior," a title made concrete by Bloom's saving of Stephen's hat (Walsh 334).

Identity and Disguise

Throughout *Ulysses*, Joyce uses the hat as a mediator between the identity and the self, the two parts of one's whole nature. The word "identity" throughout this paper will be defined by the Oxford English Dictionary definition: "a distinct impression of a single person or thing presented to or perceived by others." Thus, one's identity is a thing of the public sphere; it is all aspects of personality that one deems suitable to present to others. The word "self" will refer to all of one's personal qualities, public and private, known and unknown. The self is more mysterious than the identity; as it contains the unconscious, one's own self can be recondite. Like the identity, however, it is fragile, and can be broken or confused if its many facets remain hidden or ignored. The hat is used by wearers (and, certainly, by Joyce) to market or to communicate the self, creating an identity. It can simultaneously function as a kind of shield or disguise, a way to keep certain things private. It cuts up the self, and reveals only parts (often unintended parts) to other human beings. The hat can be controlled by the wearer in this way.

Yet, the hat straddles the line between self-presentation and self-betrayal; what it communicates is often either unintended or misconstrued. In *Ulysses*, hat wearing can bring about three ends: conscious betrayal, in which the wearer intends to reveal something about the self and is successful; unconscious betrayal, in which the hat reveals more than the wearer has intended; and public misconstrual, wherein the wearer is misperceived by others, creating a false

identity for the wearer in the public eye. Public misconstrual is closely tied to the theme of parallax. Because the hat is at cross purposes with itself, its implications are often contradictory. Yet, Joyce deploys these contradictions with an end in mind: the successful manipulation of the hat in some instances draws our attention to the many moments when the hat's "message" becomes uncontrolled.

The first character we meet in *Ulysses*, or, as David Galef says, "the first fashioned character," is Buck Mulligan (Galef 428). Mulligan is a rash, sarcastic and confident fellow who seems to be a fairly prominent member of Dublin society. Unlike Stephen, who shies away from the creation of popular Irish literature, Mulligan is tied to the Irish nationalist literary movement, a movement which Stephen thinks betrays good and intellectual literature. Though he can be loosely referred to as Stephen's friend, Mulligan is more aptly described as the usurper of Stephen's home. He is, thus, one modern representation of the suitors who usurp Ulysses' and Telemachus' home in Ithaca. Though it is perhaps an unconscious act that he seizes the first few lines of *Ulysses* (and even the final line of the chapter: "Usurper"), he very deliberately usurps Martello Tower (*Ulysses* 1.744). Stephen correctly reflects, "He wants the key. It is mine. I paid the rent. Now I eat his salt bread. Give him the key, too. All. He will ask for it. That was in his eyes" (1.631-632). More outrageous than usurping Stephen's home, Mulligan goes so far as to usurp Stephen's ownership over his own identity, rechristening him "Kinch" and his hat, the "Latin Quarter hat" (1.519).

Mulligan is one of our rare characters whose hat seems to perfectly fit him, mocking and usurping as he is. Our first impression of him as "ungirdled" (1.3) reveals that he is not hiding; even when he does try to hide behind his hat, we hear exactly what he "tries" to stifle: "As he trod across the thick carpet, Buck Mulligan whispered behind his Panama to Haines: 'Parnell's

brother. There in the corner'" (10.1043). His hat is no disguise, but a mere decoration, a "bauble" (9.490). Because Mulligan does not use his hat to disguise himself, Joyce has very carefully chosen Mulligan's hat. He wears the most celebrated version of the straw hat: a Panama hat, which, incidentally, are not made in Panama, but in Ecuador; Panama has "usurped" Ecuador's hat glory. His hat thus reveals his most important role as usurper.

Buck seems to be conscious of his role in the novel; indeed, the first image we see is one which is fraught with self-consciousness, calling our attention to this theme throughout the rest of *Ulysses*. Buck Mulligan enters "from the stairhead, bearing a bowl of lather on which a mirror and a razor lay crossed" (1.1-2). He begins to put on a show, pretending to be a priest giving Mass. He enjoys playacting in solitude for a moment and then, craving an audience, the gaze of another, he calls for Stephen to come and watch. Mulligan is thus the first of many characters who plays a part for the benefit of others. His prop, the mirror, speaks to his desire to "see [himself] as others see [him]" (8.662). And he seems to like what he sees; in any case, he enjoys both watching and participating in his own frivolity. He has no problem uniting the viewer with the performer; he recognizes himself as both by seeing himself in an unbroken mirror

Mulligan's attitude toward the mirror recalls Stephen's memory of his childhood self looking in the mirror, a comparison which identifies Mulligan as a self-confident child: "I was young. You bowed to yourself in the mirror, stepping forward to applause earnestly, striking face. Hurray for the Goddamned idiot! Hray! No-one saw: tell no one" (3.136-139). The young Stephen, like the current Mulligan, both performed and applauded; as it is now, it is only Mulligan who can unite these two roles. The adult Stephen's commentary on his child self emphasizes his embarrassment of his private self; uncomfortable in the public eye, he, here, admits his desire to hide and to disguise. This discomfort crops up throughout the novel; for

example, Stephen ruminates, “Bath a most private thing. I wouldn’t let my brother, not even my own brother, most lascivious thing” (3.236-238).

We witness Stephen’s current reaction toward his reflection when Mulligan further asserts ownership over Stephen’s identity by giving him a form: he holds his mirror out to Stephen and exclaims, “‘Look at yourself … you dreadful bard!’” (1.134). Stephen looks into the mirror, and we are given another moment of extreme self-consciousness: “Hair on end. As he and others see me. Who chose this face for me? This dogsbody to rid of vermin” (1.136-137). Stephen does not identify with the body that he sees; his sense of self is not one with his outer appearance. Rather, he focuses on how others see him, how others give identity to him. He does not recognize the performer that he sees, and thus cannot applaud. There is a miscommunication between the self and the identity (over which Mulligan has asserted dominance). Stephen seems to recognize this, but is unable to change, when he thinks, “God, we’ll simply have to dress the character. I want puce gloves and green boots. Contradiction. Do I contradict myself? Very well then, I contradict myself” (1.515-517).

This change is a result not only of the growth into adulthood, but of the transition into the modern world, or, more specifically, modern Ireland. We do not notice that Mulligan’s mirror is “cleft by a crooked crack” until Stephen does; it does not seem to apply to Mulligan himself, who is not fractured as Stephen is (1.135-136). Stephen calls the mirror into which he looks “‘a symbol of Irish art. The cracked lookingglass of a servant’” (1.146). England has usurped Ireland, making it its servant. The Irish people, thus, are as unsure of their identities as Stephen is; are they English or Irish? Many popular Irish artists at the time revived old Celtic images and language, both of which had been lost, in order to assert the Irish identity. This revival, intended to threaten England, actually threatens to impede the formation of a *new* Irish identity and to

usurp Stephen's yearning for something literarily new. At its worst, popular Irish art was more like the "prize titbit [,] *Matcham's Masterstroke*" with which Mr. Bloom "wipe[s] himself" (4.502, 537). The art of modern Ireland has regressed either chronologically, or intellectually, or both, due to its lack of self. Because the mirror is cracked, Stephen (the artist) is cracked, and he will be able to produce only broken and incomplete art.

The breakdown of Stephen's identity, and his subsequent inability to produce artistically, is mirrored in Joyce's writing style. In the 'Scylla and Charybdis' section, Stephen asserts his own view on identity: "But I, entelechy, form of forms, am I by memory because under everchanging forms" (9.208-209). Henry Staten notes that Stephen's self-assertion cannot last; he does not yet undersand his own identity, and thus "he slides through the agency of the first-person pronoun back into the soup of alphabeticity" (Staten 388):

> I that sinned and prayed and fasted.
>
> A child that Conmee saved from pandies.
>
> I, I and I. I.
>
> A. E. I. O. U. (*Ulysses* 9.210-213)

Stephen's thoughts, like his artistic endeavors, break apart into letters.

Stephen seems to identify himself with a specifically Irish identity when looking into the cracked mirror, yet he also takes pains to break away from his Irishness. Though given by Mulligan, a fact which reinforces the rift between the hat and Stephen's actual self, the name "Latin Quarter hat" sticks in Stephen's mind into the 'Proteus' episode; he thus identifies himself more with a French Bohemian neighborhood than with Dublin. The part he tries to play when wearing this hat is that of the artist, not that of the Dubliner. (Of course, he cannot forget his

Irishness, and is thus occasionally embarrassed by his French affectations.) These two radically different self-identifications illustrate that Stephen has no fixed identity: he has only his goal of being an artist, which, because of his fragmented self, he cannot achieve. He cannot reconcile his Irishness with his artistry, an idea expressed also by Sarah Joseph: "He feels both that [his Dublin background] is a part of him and that he is cut off from it" (Joseph 584). He sees himself sequentially, a slew of disconnected parts between which he must flit. Indeed, he imagines needing to hide his identity as a murderer: "Other fellow did it: other me. Hat, tie, overcoat, nose" (*Ulysses* 3.182). With a different hat, he becomes a different "me."

Shortly after reasserting the name "Latin Quarter hat," Stephen re-names his hat, calling it his "Hamlet hat" (3.390)[iii]. Of course, the connections between Stephen and Hamlet are myriad, and ultimately serve to bolster the theme of Stephen's search for paternity: "*Amor matris*, subjective and objective genitive, may be the only true thing in life. Paternity may be a legal fiction. Who is the father of any son that any son should love him or he any son?" (9.842-845). Yet in this name, Stephen also seeks to identify himself with a great literary figure, not one who is dis-fathered and inactive, as most tend to see Hamlet, but one who *moves toward action*. Stephen sees that he is stalled, but wants to become active, to produce something[iv]; indeed, he revises the title of his hat once again, rejecting the inactive "Hamlet hat" or "Latin Quarter hat": "Stephen looked on his hat, his stick, his boots. *Stephanos*, my crown, My sword" (9.946-947). He becomes the warrior prince, with his hat as his crown and his ashplant as his sword. (This image also furthers the theme of paternity: Stephen mirrors Rudy at the end of 'Circe,' who wears a helmet.) Yet, this momentary assertion of action is deflated when Stephen realizes once more that his clothing does not reflect him*self*, but is stifling him: "His boots are spoiling the shape of my feet. Buy a pair. Holes in my socks" (9.947-948). These are most likely Buck's old

boots that he wears, a fact that reinforces the fact that he has thrust an identity upon Stephen, one which is distasteful to him.

In addition to having his identity thrust upon him by others, Stephen's own attempts to express an identity (i.e. through the self-named "Hamlet hat") are misperceived. Misperception is one result of parallax; we see others from our own specific points of view, not realizing that they may look different from a different angle. As we have already seen in 'Circe', Stephen's hat links him to his old view on the Catholic Church, and his childhood desire to become a priest, in the eyes of Florry and Lynch. Of course, he has now violently rejected this old self: Stephen tells himself, "Cousin Stephen, you will never be a saint … You prayed to the devil in Serpentine avenue that the fubsy widow in front might lift her clothes still more from the wet street" (3.128-131). Even the narrator of 'Ithaca' mistakes Stephen's intentions with his hat in this way, calling it "Diaconal" (17.126). As Sheldon R. Brivic notes,

> Stephen has scarcely any possessions except for his hat and his staff. He gives up his job and his home, and his personality exists outside of his relations to family and society. While Stephen possesses a certain creative power or potentiality because he has cultivated the freedom and the individuality of his personality, the selfhood that he possesses cannot express itself and is in danger of self-destruction or perversion because of its opposition to all sensible phenomena. It cannot exist in a vacuum. (Brivic, "Time" 32-33)

Because Stephen cannot reconcile the parts of his self, he cannot create an identity which embodies both his history with the Catholic Church and his subsequent rejection of it to pursue his artistic career.

For Stephen, there is perhaps one way out of this "vacuum," one way to become successfully communicative again: the establishment of a human connection. When he clears his mind of all its intellectual clutter, he knows this: "I am lonely here. O, touch me soon, now. What is that word known to all men? I am quiet here alone. Sad too. Touch, touch me" (*Ulysses* 3.434-436). Is compassion, of which Bloom is champion, the word that Stephen longs for? We must note that Bloom is the only Dubliner who does not attach his own perception to Stephen's hat, revealing his humility. When Bloom sees Stephen for the first time, he calls the hat only what it is: "wide" (6.40). Bloom, thus, gives Stephen the agency to name his own hat.

Like Stephen, Bloom realizes that we must all "dress the part." However, while Stephen thinks with such sarcasm, such dejection, Bloom seems simply to muse on the subject: While "nursing" his hat, he thinks, "These pots we have to wear. We ought to have hats modeled on our heads" (5.355-356). The word "nursing" implies that Bloom's hat is like his baby; this apt comparison describes the way that identity is created[v]. Parts of oneself are reborn in the identity, represented by the hat. Though Bloom feels that he "has" to wear one, it is not in order to isolate parts of his self, but rather to create an identity that will allow him to *fit in* with society, to uphold standards of fashion and propriety. Stephen rejects Irish society, as is evidenced by both titles he uses for his hat, while Bloom seeks to be a part of it. Brivic notes that Bloom's personality "tends to be composed of the sum of his social position, his possessions, his background, his home, his relations to those around him, his job, his scientism (which strives for objectivity) and so forth" (Brivic, "Time" 32). Furthermore, in Bloom's more optimistic mind, hats *can* be perfectly modeled to fit the self. Indeed, he remembers that Milly once found "the little mirror in [Professor Goodwin's] silk hat … All we laughed" (*Ulysses* 4.293-295). Mirrors (which reflect the self) and hats come together in Bloom's mind. If there is a crack in the mirror,

Bloom simply overlooks it. Not because, as Brivic asserts, he "has very little sense of self," but because he is always striving for improvement, both for the self and for society (Brivic "Time" 32); Bloom believes "[f]aultfinding [is] a proverbially bad hat" (*Ulysses* 16.790). Perhaps this "fault" refers not only to an imperfection, but more literally to a crack.

This is not to say that Bloom has escaped the fragmentation of the self that Stephen experiences; quite the opposite. Indeed, Bloom's own hat represents his fragmentation in a more overt way than any other hat we see. Bloom takes his hat down from a peg in his house in 'Calypso': "The sweated legend in the crown of his hat told him mutely: Plasto's high grade ha. He peeped quickly inside the leather headband. White slip of paper. Quite safe" (4.68-71). Though Bloom does not intentionally refer to his hat as a crown, as Stephen does, the comparison nonetheless hints at something chivalric and triumphal in Bloom's nature. Yet this is immediately deflated when the legend on the crown is revealed as a brand name, the sad coat of arms of the modern world. This slip of paper that Bloom refers to bears his pen-name "Henry Flower," with whom a lady typist, Martha Clifford, carries on an affair through letters. Bloom's hat, thus, carries not an accurate image of himself (as a mirror might), but proof of a hidden part of his self. He has split himself quite clearly into a celibate husband for Molly and a sexual writer for Martha. (Later, we will see that he becomes physically sexual in the presence of Gerty.) His self-bifurcation causes us to wonder if he becomes an agent in his own cuckoldry. Bloom muses, after finding a pin in Martha's letter to him, "Out of her clothes somewhere: pinned together. Queer the number of pins they always have. No roses without thorns" (5.276-278). The slip of paper in his hat recalls Martha's pin: it is a hidden threat. Traditionally, pins hold pieces together, while the hat pulls pieces apart. In *Ulysses*, however, pins are always threatening to fall out. Thus, hat and pins (or, Stephen's *pens*?) introduce instability.

As Stephen's assertion of self melts into letters, Bloom's hat dissolves into a "ha," and remains a "ha" even two episodes later: "Under their dropped lids his eyes found the tiny bow of the leather headband inside his high grade ha" (5.23-24). The reappearance of this abbreviation indicates that Bloom, too, is breaking into parts. Walking along the quay, a man places a throwaway into Bloom's hands and he reads it: "Bloo … Me? No. Blood of the Lamb" (8.8-9). Bloom recognizes his name even when it is missing letters, or perhaps *because* it is missing letters. (Has the pin struck so deep as to draw blood from Bloom?) Much later in the novel, we discover that Bloom is listed as attending Dignam's funeral in the newspaper as "L. Boom" (16.1260). Bloom is referred to as "Boom" throughout the rest of the 'Eumeus' section. Most significantly, Martha's letter to Henry Flower contains an extra 'l': "I called you naughty boy because I do not like that other world. Please tell me what is the meaning of that word?" (5.245-246). This phrase resonates with Bloom throughout the day: *that other world*. Is this where Bloom's missing 'l' has gone? It seems that part of his self has become trapped in his pen-relationship with Martha, and it is his hat that allows this section of his self to remain disguised. Bloom will have to reject his hat in order to re-form, to merge his sexual and husbandly selves.

Fascinated by parallax, Bloom seems to find imagining the points of views of others "an intellectual pastime" (Devlin 884): "Walk after him now make him awkward like those newsboys me today. Still you learn something. See ourselves as others see us" (*Ulysses* 13.1056-1058). Unlike self-consciousness, which attempts to hide certain aspects of the self, parallax attempts to cohere, to create one image from various angles. Despite Bloom's drive toward self-coherence, he is what Devlin calls "guiltily self conscious" in the 'Lotus Eaters' episode:

> When he retrieves the post-office-box card from his hatband but hides his gesture by pretending he has taken off his hat to wipe his brow, Bloom is putting on an

act for an imagined other, performing for a gaze that is not actually there. (Devlin 884)

Bloom feels the need to hide behind his hat, to use it as a disguise. This self-consciousness is out of the ordinary for Bloom, who asserts his Irish identity even to the violent citizen in ‘Cyclops’: “I was born here. Ireland” (*Ulysses* 12.1431). Using his hat as a fragmenting agent, Bloom becomes Stephen’s ghost: “[A ghost is] One who has faded into impalpability through death, through absence, *through change of manners*” (9.147-149, italics added for emphasis).

But we must wonder if Bloom subconsciously tries to put himself back together again, for when he leaves homes in “Calypso” (or, when he leaves Molly to pursue an unfruitful relationship with Martha) he forgets his hat: “Where is my hat by the way? Must have put it back on the peg … Funny, I don’t remember that” (4.485-486). Part of him tries to open himself to human connection by taking off his hat, by remaining whole. His “husband” identity is most important to him, so he forgets his slip of paper. As Calypso holds Ulysses prisoner, Molly has a hold on Bloom (or at least on one representation of him: his hat). Indeed, he feels uncomfortable in his hat all day; he must set it straight in ‘Lestrygonians’. In ‘Sirens,’ the chapter that takes place during Boylan’s meeting with Molly, Bloom re-hats himself, presumably after having removed his hat for a while (“Where’s my hat.”), and subsequently becomes “Blmstup” and “I feel so lonely Bloom” (11.1122, 1126, 1136). His fracturing hat *closes* him to wholeness and to human connection, and he seems to feel this. (Indeed, Bloom’s outerwear prompts Gerty to believe that he is the saddest and loneliest man she has ever seen.) Bloom recognizes that he does not feel comfortable in his hat until the “pin” is taken out: “His right hand came down into the bowl of his hat. His fingers found quickly a card behind the headband and transferred it to his

waistcoat pocket. So warm … Then he put on his hat again, relieved" (5.24-28). It seems he is itching to take his hat off throughout the whole day.

Bloom's struggling relationship with his hat is one of many indications that Bloom is an outsider amongst Dublin society, as Stephen is. In 'Cyclops', Alf Bergan says of the mentally unstable joke victim, Dennis Breen, "Do you know that he's balmy? Look at his head. Do you know that some mornings he has to get his hat on with a shoehorn?" (12.1045-1047). The "insider" Dubliners have no trouble putting on their hats in the morning, it seems. Indeed, the hat to the average Dubliner is simply a thing of propriety which should be doffed in the direction of a passing hearse or passing royalty. A hat is simply a sign of a civilized nature; Dignam, for example, is lamented by Simon Dedalus as "as decent a little man as ever wore a hat" (6.303). Bloom, it seems, is among the Dennis Breens of Dublin society, not only because he is Jewish, but even for such reasons as that his father committed suicide. Even when he attempts to kindly fix John Henry Menton's hat, he is rebuffed. Yet even when he is most rejected, he imagines the point of view of the other, and blames himself: "I ought to have said something about an old hat or something" (7.171-172).

Bloom is an outsider not only in society as a whole, but even in his own marriage, possibly because a broken self cannot sustain human connection. After 'Circe' Bloom's hat becomes "very dilapidated;" it seems as old and rejected as the hat that Bloom laments joking about (16.220). Blazes Boylan, on the other hand, is referred to by Molly as a new hat (18. 85). In all of *Ulysses*, Boylan is our only really two-dimensional character; Joyce gives him no redeeming qualities. Even as he buys Molly a present, he is presented as an immoral liar, pretending his gift is "for an invalid" (10.322). It is for this reason that Boylan is reduced to a metonymy: he is often solely identified by his "white disc of a straw hat," indicating that perhaps

a new hat is all he is, a shell for Molly to try on (6.199). The fact that Joyce chooses to give Boylan a straw hat ties him to Mulligan; they are both usurpers. As Mulligan carries Stephen's key, Boylan is invited into Molly's bed in Bloom's place; Bloom notices "the imprint of a human form, male, not his" (17.2124). Bloom, an outsider, has forgotten his key at home, and, at the end of the day, must climb his garden wall to enter his house. (Incidentally, Boylan is also identified by the jingling of his car throughout the day, recalling both the jingling of keys and the jingling of Molly's bedsprings.) Boylan, in essence, *becomes* his hat, the hat of the ultimate usurper; in this case, it is not desirable to have a hat that perfectly reflects the self. As we have seen earlier, this is a new kind of critique that Joyce makes; in earlier literature, one's hat naturally reflects the self, and this is desirable.

Both of our keyless heroes, outsiders in their own homes, wear hats that incorrectly communicate their selves and project false identities. Their hats serve to fragment them further. It thus comes as no surprise to us when the "insider" Myles Crawford, whose keys are "jingling … in his back pocket … then in the air and against the wood as he lock[s] his desk draw," exclaims, "Where's my hat?" (7.459-460, 457). We expect the presence of keys to indicate that there is a lack of hat. However, Joyce subverts our expectations when "[the] editor [comes] in from the inner office, a straw hat awry on his brow" (7.469). The fact the Crawford wears a straw hat here connects him with Boylan; both characters also jingle. Indeed, Crawford later "*blazes*" (15.807). Joyce contradicts the established role of the hat, presenting us with the only hat-wearing possessor of keys to his own home. Because Myles Crawford has successfully united both key and hat, he must be the most *whole* of all men; indeed his hat "aureol[es] his scarlet face" in 'Aeolus'; in 'Circe', his "*scarlet beak blazes within the aureole of his straw hat*" (7.957, 15.807). Crawford's hat insinuates that he is a sacred figure, an angel; it may seem that

his oneness with his hat elevates him. Yet, his connection with Boylan implies the opposite. Indeed, Joyce does not write in earnest, here. The 'Aeolus' chapter, in which Crawford appears and which is echoed later in 'Circe', seeks to undermine elevated language and rhetoric; even the title compares this kind of language to hot air. Joyce's diction is so exaggerated he must be being sarcastic, insinuating that no human being can be perfectly whole. In this way, he slyly gives us hope for the re-forging of Stephen and Bloom.

Decay and Sexuality

Though sexuality is traditionally and biologically associated with creation and life, Joyce enters into Modernist discourse by focusing on unproductive or misguided sexuality. Indeed, he ties sexuality more clearly to decomposition and death in *Ulysses*. The two ends of the lifecycle are impossible to separate; this is especially evident in Bloom's thoughts during Dignam's funeral in 'Hades': "Whores in Turkish graveyards. Learn anything if taken young. You might pick up a young widow here. Men like that. Love among the tombstones. Romeo. Spice of pleasure. In the midst of death we are in life. Both ends meet … Molly wanting to do it at the window" (6.757-762). Bloom's final thought refers to the day that Rudy was conceived. His death after only eleven days has led to an almost eleven year period in which Molly and Bloom have not had sex. Death, in this case, has interrupted creative sexuality and has contributed to the decay of their marriage: "Could never like it again after Rudy" (8.610). Stephen, too, who seems to fear both sex and death, ruminates on the "allwombing tomb" (3.402). The most overt symbol of the interconnectedness of sexuality and decay is that of the hanged man with the erection which crops up in both 'Cyclops' and 'Circe': "*A violent erection of the hanged sends gouts of*

sperm spouting through his deathclothes on to the cobblestones. Mrs Bellingham, Mrs Yelverton Barry and the Honorable Mrs Mervyn Talboys rush forward with their handkerchiefs to sop it up" (15.4548-4552). In the midst of this death scene, sexuality has become unproductive: these women have handkerchiefs rather than wombs. Joyce will use the hat to further connect decay and sexuality and to block productive sexuality.

As we have seen, the breakdown of the self (one form of decay in the modern world) leads to a fracture in human connection, including sexual connection. Joyce adds another layer to this equation: Throughout *Ulysses*, the decay of the body and its physical functions is intrinsically connected to the decay of Ireland and its social functions. As the physical act of sex is degraded, the country itself is. Accordingly, the hanged man above is the Croppy Boy, the Irish martyr who "love[s his] country beyond the king" (15.4535). Brivic notes that this correlation is "soundly based upon a major convention of modern European literature whereby the attitude of a man toward a woman is equated with his attitude toward the world, perhaps because woman represents the essence of man's earthly attractions and attachments" (Brivic, "Time" 33). This idea is perfectly manifested in Stephen, who is repulsed by most women[vi] and who tries to stifle his association with Ireland; and in Bloom, who adores his wife Molly despite his troubled relationship with her.

We must note that the majority of the women in the novel are growing older and more unattractive. Mrs. Breen, for example, is, in Bloom's eye, "Shabby genteel. She used to be a tasty dresser. Lines round her mouth. Only a year or so older than Molly" (*Ulysses* 8.267-268). Yet some women are outright *rotting*. Old Gummy Granny, the anthropomorphized representation of Ireland itself, appears, as we have seen, with marks of the potato blight on her breast. Robert Merritt informs us that potatoes were "popularly referred to as 'earth's testicles'

(*turma de tierra*) by Spanish conquistadors" (Merritt 270). Thus the mark of the potato blight on Old Gummy Granny's breast suggests both agricultural and sexual betrayal. Because Old Gummy Granny is sitting on a toadstool, we are meant to understand that Stephen bases her physical appearance on the old milk woman who comes to Martello Tower in 'Telemachus'; Stephen imagines this "wandering crone" as "a witch on her toadstool" (*Ulysses* 1.404, 401). Though she pours them milk, it is "not hers," for she has "woman's unclean loins" and "[o]ld, shrunken paps" (1.398, 421, 398). Though she does not speak Irish (a fact which mocks the revivalist movement), this shrunken woman represents Ireland itself; no longer productive or fertile, it has become "a country full of rotten teeth and rotten guts" (1.412).

Joyce's other decaying woman is Stephen's mother herself, who appears to Stephen from the grave several times throughout the day as a reminder that he refused to pray for her at her deathbed. Mrs. Dedalus' "wasted body" is "*noseless, green with gravemould …* [and with a] *blackened withered right arm"* (1.270, 15. 4159, 4218). As Old Gummy Granny is Ireland personified, May Dedalus is the Catholic Church, which is intrinsically tied to Irish society. She has become "'beastly dead' with the willingness of devout religion" (Brivic, "Time" 34). Described by Stephen as a "Chewer of corpses," she is remembered as an active participant in the communion. As she is decaying, the role of Catholicism decays; religion in Dublin becomes unproductive.

In keeping with this idea, Joyce reduces a group of churchgoers into metonymies. When Bloom enters a church to pass time before Dignam's funeral,[vii] he watches three women receive communion: "Her hat and head sank. Then the next one. Her hat sank at once. Then the next one: a small old woman" (5.346-348). It is appropriate that these women "sink" rather than "bow," for in these sentences, we watch as women not worship but decompose. Bloom first sees

a covered head, a fragment of a body and of a self. This image then transforms into nothing but the cover. The final image of the old woman recalls our original old woman, the milkmaid. These women, thus, finish their gradual decomposition by rotting. Humans have become inhuman, illustrated not only by Joyce's use of metonymy but his degradation of the sacrament of Catholic communion into mere cannibalism, a desperate and inhuman violation of the physical body. The Catholic May Dedalus is, of course, a "Chewer of corpses." The association between communion and cannibalism is one which runs throughout *Ulysses*, and especially in Bloom's mind when he sees the various hats taking communion: "They don't seem to chew it: only swallow it down. Rum idea: eating bits of corpse. Why the cannibals cotton to it" (*Ulysses* 5.351-352). This image serves to illustrate the idea that the uncanny has disappeared from religion; the sublime miracle of transubstantiation is not possible in the modern world. As religious communion is degraded, so is the human connection that once took place in the Catholic community. The church, which once made us feel "Not so lonely. In our confraternity," has become part of a world in which "everybody [is] eating everybody else," and we are left as only heads and hats (5.363-364, 7.214).

The degradation of religion in Dublin is evident not only in its participants and their hats, but in its leaders and their hats. In the first section of 'Wandering Rocks', Joyce introduces Father Conmee, who identifies himself as "The superior, the very reverend John Conmee S. J." (10.1). This highfalutin identity that Conmee wishes to present to the world is embodied by his "silk hat" (10.30). Silk is a traditional symbol of elegance, and Joyce upholds this symbol, for Bloom believes in all earnestness that silk hats are "[r]elics of old decency" (6.234). Father Conmee thus identifies himself with the traditional values of the Church and of propriety in general, and he seeks to use his hat in such a way as to parade these values: "Father Conmee

liked cheerful decorum" and "disliked to traverse on foot the dingy way" (10.121, 114). He "doff[s] his silk hat and smile[s]" at a lady, Mrs. Sheehy, to show his respect. Later, he "raise[s] his hat to the Blessed Sacrament," St Joseph's church, for "aged and virtuous females" (10.81, 80). He does this despite his true inclination that these females "occasionally… were also badtempered" (10.81-82). Conmee's fancy hat seems to successfully hide his egotistic and greedy self to the Dublin public; yet, Joyce's revelation of this self, in contrast with Conmee's presented identity, critiques both Conmee as a person and the role of the Catholic Church in Ireland. When a one-legged soldier holds out a "peaked cap for alms," Conmee refuses him money but instead "blesse[s] him in the sun" (10.10); this offering is, of course, unproductive. It is eventually the sensual arm of Molly Bloom that offers the soldier a coin, a fact that emphasizes human compassion over strictly religious compassion.

In the middle of Father Conmee's section of 'Wandering Rocks', Joyce allows Mr. Denis J Maginni to intrude into the narrative, marking the first of many intrusions in the chapter. Maginni is a professor of dancing who wears a "silk hat, slate frockcoat with silk facings, white kerchief tie, tight lavender trousers, canary gloves, and pointed patent boots" (10.56-57). Maginni's elegant outfit, complete with "old decency" silk hat, appears more like a costume than everyday apparel. Yet, this is fitting: he is a performer by profession. His intrusion into Conmee's section functions to identify Conmee, too, as a mere performer, not a chosen vessel of God. Conmee's silk hat is the same as Maginni's: a costume. Indeed, Joyce refers to the women whom Bloom watches taking communion as "blind masks" (5.353). The church service has become nothing more than a spectacle meant to repeat old beliefs, but not to produce. The battered silk hat that Stephen wears in 'Circe' when he is imagined as a Cardinal materializes the deconstruction of religion.

In modern Dublin, the silk hat of old decency is at best nostalgic; it has been transformed into the crushed hat, of which there are many in *Ulysses.* As the sacrament of communion is debauched in the form of May Dedalus, so is the sacrament of marriage in her ruined headgear. She emerges in 'Circe' wearing "a wreath of faded orangeblossoms and a torn bridal veil" upon her "scant and lank" hair (15.4158, 4160). The torn veil of course symbolizes adultery, the tearing apart of a committed marriage. Her blossoms remind us of Bloom, whose own marriage has faded and been threatened by adultery. One of the agents in the "crushing" of Bloom's marriage to Molly is John Henry Menton, who is listed as one of Molly's suitors in 'Penelope.'[viii] After Dignam's funeral in 'Hades', Bloom remarks to Menton, "Your hat is a little crushed" (10.1018). The "dinge in the side of [Menton's] hat" recalls the torn veil, symbolizing the corruption of marriage. (10.1015). The crushed hat also serves to mark Menton as someone who has been rejected, put to the side; Molly has rejected his affections. (Of course, we are not meant to feel sympathy for Menton, who rebuffs Bloom's attempt to help him.) In this situation, both the sacrament of marriage and Menton himself have been discarded. Indeed, after Molly's afternoon with Boylan, Bloom finds his own hat to be "dilapidated" (16.220). He, too, is a rejected suitor. The hat's revelation, in both Menton's and Bloom's cases, is one example of the hat's uncontrolled, betraying nature.

Charles Parnell is revealed as a rejected *savior* by his hat. Parnell was the leader of the Irish Home Rule movement in the late nineteenth century, and for many he seemed almost as a god, the redeemer of Ireland who could bring Ireland out of its decaying state. Even in 1904 there are rumors that connect Parnell to Christ: "Dead he wasn't. Simply absconded somewhere. The coffin they brought over was full of stones" (16.1304-1305). However, regardless of Parnell's current whereabouts, his status as Ireland's savior was ruined by the proof of his

adultery with the English woman Kitty O'Shea. According to the barkeep in 'Eumaeus', "That bitch, that English whore, did for him …. She put the first nail in his coffin" (16.1352-1353). By becoming sexually "exploited" by the English, Parnell publicly degrades as much as Ireland has degraded under English usurpation. His participation in adultery (and, thus, his rejection of the sacrament of marriage) further ruins him in the eyes of most Irishmen (though, of course, not in Joyce's, who colors Parnell as a savior earnestly). Parnell's status as a rejected savior is embodied by his hat, "a silk one" which Bloom picks up "in the crush" (16.1513, 1515). The word "crush" literally refers to "general hullaballoo" which followed Parnell's fall from his "pedestal" (16.1510, 1509). However, Joyce's unusual use of the word here functions to connect Parnell's hat to Menton's crushed hat. Once a savior with a proper silk hat, Parnell becomes a ruined man with a ruined hat, "nipped in the bud of premature decay" (16.1184). We are meant to *feel* the loss of a true savior when Bloom describes returning to the hat to Parnell. Joyce describes Parnell as "panting and hatless and whose thoughts were miles away from his hat at the time all the same being a gentleman … he turned round to the donor and thanked him with perfect *aplomb*" (17.1516-1523). His characterization as "hatless" identifies him as one who is open, who does not disguise his intentions. Indeed, he does not think here about how to present himself to the public; he simply *is.* Yet because "Joyce's typical Dubliner is more loyal to whore and glass than to wife or country," he has Ireland destroy her savior (Merritt 275); the country becomes "[t]he old sow that eats her farrow" (*Ulysses* 15. 4582).

Even those hats which do not become physically crushed in *Ulysses* are similarly debased. Joyce uses the straw hat in particular to connect sexuality with physical decay, both of the body and of Dublin. As we have seen, Blazes Boylan, our most sexually vigorous and imposing figure, becomes nothing more than his straw boater hat. Boylan is the only character in

Ulysses who achieves his sexual goal in the present; we must, therefore, associate the straw hat with sexual success, with the possession of the male key to the female lock. (Remember that Joyce's other possessors of keys, Crawford and Mulligan, too wear straw hats.) Yet, Boylan is an adulterer, sullying a marriage. Thus, in the present day, 1904, the straw hat is associated with both sexual vigor and dirtiness. Indeed, we witness a literally sullied straw hat when Father Conmee passes "a bargeman with a hat of dirty straw" on Mud Island (10.102). The straw hat is a favorite among Dublin's whores as well as its bargemen, some of whom are as bedraggled as Dublin itself: For instance, Bloom sees "[t]he face of a streetwalker glazed and haggard under a black straw hat" in 'Eumaeus' (16.704).

The straw hat also connects sexuality and decay in the memory of Bloom's father, Rudolph, who poisons himself, according to Molly, because he loved his deceased wife too much: "his father must have been a bit of a queer to go and poison himself after her still poor old man I suppose he must have felt lost" (18.1061-1062). We learn in 'Ithaca' that he kills himself "after having though not in consequence of having purchased at 3.15 p.m. on the afternoon of 27 June 1886 a new boater straw hat, extra smart" (17.628-629). Rudolph Bloom's purchase of the straw hat directly before his death predicts the reunion between him and his wife, and thus the renewal of marriage; yet, this love reunion can come only with death. In the world of the living in Bloomsday Dublin, the hat cannot be reconciled with real sexual connection, but only with demeaned sexuality. In order to reconnect, one must either leave the world or lose the hat.

Nevertheless, Joyce presents the hat as catalyst for sexuality, but this passion is always unfruitful and misguided; indeed, Molly remembers putting on a "hat at the window" to entice a male neighbor to meet her outside, but to no avail (18.705). This is evinced most overtly by Bloom's fruitless emission behind a rock on the beach at Sandycove in the 'Nausicaa' section.

‘Nausicaa’ is written in the pretty and silly style of ladies’ magazine, reflecting the language with which Gerty Macdowell thinks of herself and of the world around her. Joyce critiques this style of writing as being masturbatory by having it color an episode depicting Bloom’s masturbation. Gerty, the object of Bloom’s sexual fantasy, wears “a coquettish little love of a hat of wideleaved nigger straw contrast trimmed with an underbrim of eggblue chenille and at the side a butterfly bow of silk to tone” (13.156-158). Gerty’s hat thus mixes the silk of old decadence with the straw of modern sexual degradation; this mirrors the mix of the “silk” writing style with the “straw” subject matter of the chapter while also indicating Gerty’s misunderstanding of modern Dublin. Several times she gazes at Bloom, whose face is “the saddest she ha[s] ever seen,” from “under the brim of her new hat” (13.370, 368). She thus attempts to maintain her refined identity (“there was a languid queenly *hauteur* about Gerty”) while secretly enjoying Bloom’s gaze (13.97). Her hat, which Bloom believes was “[b]ought to hide her face,” disguises her inner sexuality (13.838). At the same time, she uses her hat to entice Bloom’s sexual attentions, performing the part of the temptress for him by removing her hat for just a moment to “settle her hair” (13.509). By removing her hat, she surrenders herself to him sexually. Her immediate re-hatting of herself, however, negates the connection, and the sexual act becomes nothing but Bloom’s spilled seed and Gerty’s menstrual blood.

Joyce ties Stephen and Bloom together in a moment of synchronicity by having Bloom masturbate behind what very well might be the same rock on which Stephen attempts to write a poem earlier in the novel. Stephen, alone, feels a moment of sudden self consciousness: “If I were suddenly naked here as I sit? I am not” (3.390-391). Stephen rejects the bodily, and cannot understand why our souls “shamewounded by our sins cling to us yet more, a woman to her lover clinging” (3.421-423). (Bloom, of course, embraces his body, and understands why a woman

might cling to her lover.) Reassured, Stephen looks out at the sea, the "handmaid of the moon" and tries to ponder its sublime association with motherhood: "Bridebed, childbed, bed of death, ghostcandled" (3.396)[ix]. He cannot; his thoughts move immediately from sex to death, a connection which provides the inspiration for his short poem: "He comes, pale vampire, through storm his eyes, his bat sails bloodying the sea, mouth to her mouth's kiss" (3.396-397). Disappointed with his own creative effort, he thinks, "Who ever anywhere will read these written words?" and he subsequently "cram[s] the scribbled note and pencil into a pocket, his hat tilted down on his eyes" (3.414-415, 437-438). The fact that Stephen covers his eyes with his hat recalls Gerty; both are the agents to fruitless discharges. Their hats, which are used to disguise, prevent productivity. Yet Stephen's position is more analogous to that of Bloom. Stephen's artistic creation, like Bloom's physical creation, amounts to nothing, so he thrusts it into his pocket. Incidentally, Bloom puts his hand in his pocket to hide his masturbating, and later complains that he has gotten his pocket wet. At the end of the episode, Stephen, too, leaves behind a physical discharge: "He laid the dry snot picked from his nostril on a ledge of a rock, carefully. For the rest let look who will. Behind. Perhaps there is someone" (3.500-502). Does Stephen somehow predict that Bloom is behind him? Indeed, Bloom comes to this exact spot, and he becomes one of the only characters who does indeed look for and after Stephen. Sheldon Brivic notes that "[Stephen and Bloom] are made for each other and their thoughts touch each other on levels below the surface to weave a submerged structure of vision" (Brivic, "Metaphysics" 16). Stephen finally walks away in his "cockle hat," a new name which further connects him to Bloom, the cuckold (*Ulysses* 3.487). Indeed, the final lines of 'Nausicaa' are "[Gerty] noticed at once that that foreign gentleman that was sitting on the rocks looking was

Cuckoo Cuckoo Cuckoo" (13.1301-1306). Stephen's hat ties poetic creation to sexual creation. Both Stephen and Bloom long to create, but find that they cannot[x].

Meaningful sexual connection and successful written communication are analogous everywhere in *Ulysses*; a flawed sex life is expressed (or not) in illegibility or perversion of language. We have seen this especially in the case of Bloom's "high grade ha." The hat serves to fragment the self, causing the degradation of human relationships. The hat reveals Bloom's sexual forays (as well as Stephen's literary attempts) as being generally one-sided, shameful expressions in which there is more disguise than intimacy. When Bloom's unconscious imagines Dr. Mulligan revealing Bloom's sexual perversions in 'Circe', "*Bloom holds his high grade hat over his genital organs*" (15.1787). Bloom has recently been accused of lying to and flirting with Martha Clifford, his pen-friend, and of sending "*improper letters*" to "[s]*everal highly respectable Dublin ladies*," one of whom he has asked to "soil his letter in an unspeakable manner" (15.1079, 1071). Bloom's sexual interactions, here, are completely unproductive (as is his whole relationship with Martha, as we have seen). They are based on mentality rather than physicality; Bloom confuses his head and sexual organs, and thus he covers his genitals with his hat. The placement of his hat, which alludes to the condom, illustrates the hat's role in blocking productive sexuality. Joyce uses the hat as a figurative obstacle to sexual reproduction not only in Bloom's unconscious but idiomatically in Dublin, where references to outerwear are often euphemisms for condoms.

The prevalence of the use of the actual condom in Dublin is directly discussed in 'Oxen of the Sun', a chapter which links sexual production with literary production overtly: this episode is concerned both with the figure of maternity and the birth of the English language. Stephen wishes to return to a more fruitful version of sexuality when he says, "But, gramercy, what of

those Godpossibled souls that we nightly impossibilise, which is the sin against the Holy Ghost, Very God, Lord and Giver of Life?" (14.225-226). Henry Staten claims that Stephen's aversion to the condom comes from his fear "that he might have been aborted, or even through contraception or masturbation before being conceived –'impossibilized'" (Staten 388). Indeed, this does seem to be on Stephen's mind throughout the day; for instance, when he sees a midwife, he does not think of new babies, but imagines in her bag a "misbirth with trailing navelcord, hushed in ruddy wool" (*Ulysses* 3.36-37). Stephen's immediate assumption of death rather than life illustrates that sex in modern Ireland has become preemptively abortive.

Buck Mulligan, always the mocker, proposes a ridiculous cure to the sterility of Ireland. Because "[i]t grieved him plaguily … to see the nuptial couch defrauded of its dearest pledges," he proposes that he become "*Mr Malachi Mulligan. Fertiliser and Incubator. Lambay Island"* (14.671-672, 600). He will offer himself as an impregnator to all women. Of course, Mulligan is being facetious; in reality, he spends much of his evening praising condoms. Bannon, a suitor to Milly Bloom, regrets that he has forgotten to "take [his] cloak along," which sparks this discussion (14.772-773):

> I know of a *marchand de capotes*, Monsieur Poyntz, from whom I can have for a *livre* as snug a cloak of the French fashion as ever kept a lady from wetting. Tut tut! cries Le Fecondateur … they have a rain that will wet though any, even the stoutest cloak. A drenching of that violence, [an authority] tells me, *sans blague,* has sent more than one luckless fellow in good earnest posthaste to another world[xi]. (14.776-784)

The use of the word “cloak” (or sometimes “waterproof”) as a euphemism for condom is appropriate not only because of their functional similarities, but because the hat and the waterproof are often featured together in *Ulysses*. As we have seen in ‘Circe’, Bloom notices a man’s hat and waterproof hanging on the antlered hat rack at the entrance to Bella Cohen’s brothel; they have been removed before sexual coition. In his home on Eccles Street, Bloom’s hat, too, hangs with his waterproof; fittingly, Bloom’s waterproof is “secondhand” (4.67). If the hat blocks meaningful sex, the waterproof blocks productive sex. Together, they create the destructive sexuality of Ireland.

These ideas shed light on the sexual and marital trouble between Molly and Bloom: “She disliked umbrella with rain, he liked women with umbrella, she disliked new hat with rain, he liked woman with new hat, he bought new hat with rain, she carried umbrella with new hat” (17.706-708). We are presented, here, with a metaphorical microcosm of their marriage as a whole. It is most likely Bloom, whose thoughts constantly return to his deceased son, who could never “like it again after Rudy;” he, thus, likes women with an umbrella, fearful of producing another child who may die (8.610). Molly resents Bloom’s lack of affection toward her: “it’s a wonder Im not a shriveled hag before my time living with him so cold never embracing me except sometimes when hes asleep … Id throw my hat at him” (18.1399-1402). She, thus, dislikes the “umbrella” between them, and would gladly remove her hat (albeit violently) if it would mean the removal of the umbrella. Yet, Bloom’s lack of affection has led Molly into adultery. He is an agent in his own cuckolding when he buys Molly “a new hat” (a phrase which stands for Boylan throughout *Ulysses*). But indeed, Molly carries an umbrella with her new hat, for she thinks, “he didn’t make me pregnant” (18.1123). Sexual sterility and human

disconnection have met in this marriage, resulting in its decomposition despite Molly's assertion that "there was no love lost between us thats 1 consolation" (18.967).

The umbrella is associated with the fruitless emissions in Stephen's "*A Pisgah Sight of Palestine* or *The Parable of the Plums*" as well (7.1057-1058). In his parable, two elderly "Dublin vestals…[p]urchase four and twenty ripe plums from a girl" and climb to the top of Nelson's pillar (7.923, 941). Stephen is careful to note that these two virgins "take their umbrellas for fear it may come on to rain" (7.934-936). Once atop the pillar, they begin to "[spit] the plumstones slowly out between the railings." (7.1026-1027). We must note that Stephen (via Joyce) uses the term "plumstone" rather than "seed," negating the possibility of creation from the seed. Furthermore, all fruit has been ripped from these stones, which are rejected. Stephen tells this parable to shed light on the sterility of modern Dublin; sexual connection and fruitfulness are only possible in the past.

These plumstones must remind us of the day that both Bloom and Molly remember throughout the novel: the day that Bloom proposed to Molly on Howth hill. After his encounter with Gerty on the beach, Bloom looks up at Howth hill and thinks, "All quiet on Howth now. The distant hills seem. Where we. The rhododendrons. I am a fool perhaps. He [Boylan] gets the plums, and I the plumstones" (13.1097-1099). The present sterility of his marriage characterizes his thoughts here. Yet earlier in the day, Bloom recalls that while the two of them were making love, "a nannygoat [walked by] surefooted, dropping currants" (8.911-912). These currants, unlike the plumstones which are dropped, are agents in the productivity of the land, of Dublin. Furthermore, Bloom relishes the memory of Molly "[giving him] in [his] mouth the seedcake warm and chewed … Joy: I ate it: joy" (8.907-908). In the past, there are seeds; in the present, stones. These two images of fertility correspond with Bloom and Molly's lovemaking, which is

intimate and productive, a precursor to their marriage. Molly recalls that Bloom wore “his straw hat the day I got him to propose to me” (18.1573-1574). Including even the marvelous fashion show that is ‘Circe’, this is the only time in the novel that Bloom wears a straw hat, which here loses its dirtying connotations; this is illustrated when Bloom affirms his and Molly’s shared connection and moral right to make love in public: “Regularly engaged. Circumstances alter cases” (15.3373). When Bloom makes this assertion, he is “*hatless*;” his image of himself transforms to fit the modern world (15.3372). In the past, a straw hat *can* indicate positive sexuality; in the present, only hatlessness allows loving sexual connection. This memory, though it serves to juxtapose the fertile past with the sterile present, also gives hope for the future, for the scene on Ben Howth is the last image of the novel as a whole. In our minds, Bloom finishes re-formed, in full intimacy with Molly.

History and Creation

The images of sterility and fragmentation that color *Ulysses* may seem to shed light only on the lack of hope and inability to create in the modern world. Yet, as Joyce annihilates the world, he creates the possibility for a new one. James McFarlane notes that “[t]he very vocabulary of chaos – disintegration, fragmentation, dislocation – implies a breaking away or a breaking apart. But the defining thing in the Modernist mode is not so much that things fall *apart* but that they fall *together* (recalling appropriately the derivation of ‘symbol’ from *symballein*, to throw together)” (McFarlane 92). Joyce, as the creator, has a particular vision and goal in mind, and though his characters are sometimes broken and inactive, they move toward wholeness, just as the world moves toward reformation.

Joyce uses the hat (or, the removal of the hat) to illuminate the forming of a positive relationship between Stephen and Bloom and the re-creation of the marriage of Bloom and Molly. In Stephen's case, the hat symbolizes the reforming of Stephen's own identity. Indeed, in this section we will see that even the hat can be re-created to fit one's self in a more positive way. In becoming whole, he is able truly to communicate with Bloom; though, in the end, he is not dependant on Bloom. The removal of both Molly's and Bloom's hats in the end of the novel symbolizes a renewal of marital openness. By positively exposing themselves, they are able to reaffirm their connection and symbolically become one being.

In order to understand the hat's final role, we must delve into the role of history in the novel. In *Ulysses*, the past has the ability to break down and reform, characterizing the present and creating the future. Without Bloom's past dealings with hats, he cannot come to use the hat in a positive light; the past, thus, positively informs the present. Joyce plays with idea in 'Oxen of the Sun', a chapter whose narrative form traces the evolution of the English language and English writing styles from a pre-English Latinic syntax to the present Modernist style. Joyce announces himself as the creator of this world by altering narrative form; the characters are, of course, unaware of the way in which they are being presented. The presence of a creator in this world gives a hope to Bloomsday Dublin:

> The unconscious that Joyce represents is not merely an idea within the brains of his creatures. It is a network of connections through time and space that extends beyond any awareness but the most absolute. We can see this, for example, in the linguistic development of the foetus in *Ulysses* which represents a cultural history everyone in 'Oxen in the Sun' shares. (Brivic, "Metaphysics" 17)

Bloom, Stephen, and others are *connected*, not only in their awaiting of the birth of Mina Purefoy's child, but in their cultural history. Though Joyce's characters do not know it, their world is moving toward the creation of a new writing style. Of course, the Modernist ending to 'Oxen', in which the group leaves the hospital and goes to a bar, is the most broken and confused section: "Hark! Shut your obstropolos. Pflaap! Pflaap! Blaze on. There she goes. Brigade! Bout ship. Mount street way. Cut up! Pflaap! Tally ho. You not come? Run, skelter, race. Pflaaaap!" (*Ulysses* 14.1569-1571). This broken language is *necessary* to the reality of the modern world; its confusion does not negate its symbolic association with "bright one, light one … quickening and wombfruit" that Mina Purefoy is currently delivering (14.2). Hugh Kenner describes the production of 'Oxen': "What is born in this birth-chapter, after forty paragraphs *in utero*, seems to be disembodied Speech, which promptly fills the universe with its yells" (Kenner, *Voices* 79). Kenner's assertion links the finale of 'Oxen' with Stephen's identification of God as "a shout in the street" (*Ulysses* 2.386). The end of this section, thus, prepares us for the revelation of Bloom as savior; the past has pushed forward to new creation.

As past writing styles color the action of the present, memories resurrect throughout the novel. Indeed, memories punctuate the present quite as often as the silk hat makes its way into modern hat wearing. Stephen cannot recognize the past as creative force; he is the only creator that he will recognize when he says to Bloom, "You suspect … that I may be important because I belong to the *faubourg Saint Patrice* called Ireland for short …. But I suspect…that Ireland may be important because it belongs to me" (16.1160-1165). In his mind, "[h]istory … is a nightmare from which [he] is trying to awake" (2.377). He believes that his past (including his family and his country) is negatively affecting his ability to create artistically; he cannot embrace these things about himself and allow them to shape his future. For this reason, Stephen is constantly

renaming his hat; he must flit between his various identities. Of course, Stephen's past does literally begin to haunt him. His mother's nightmarish appearance in 'Circe' is enough to make one wish to escape the past. Yet Stephen does not realize that Mrs. Dedalus' apparition actually gives him the advice he needs to move forward, though unknowingly. Stephen begs his mother, "Tell me the word, mother, if you know now. The word known to all men" (15.4191-4192). She responds, "Who had pity for you when you were sad among strangers?" (15.4197). Though she seems to be referring to herself, the answer to her question is also Bloom, who pities him among the crowd of medical students in 'Oxen':

> [S]ir Leopold that had of his body no manchild for an heir looked upon him his friend's son and was shut up in sorrow for his forepassed happiness and as sad as he was that him failed a son of such gentle courage (for all accounted him of real parts) so grieved was he also in no less measure for young Stephen for that he lived riotously with those wastrels and murdered his goods with whores. (14.271-276)

Bloom's compassion is the word for which Stephen searches. Bloom is the promised end that Joyce creates for Stephen, and it is toward Bloom that Stephen moves.

For Bloom, memories are sometimes haunting, sometimes heartening; his memories of the early stage in his marriage to Molly often prove to be both. In remembering the day he proposed to Molly, he also reflects on the sad state of their current marriage: "She kissed me. I was kissed. All yielding she tossed my hair. Kissed, she kissed me. Me. And me now. Stuck, the flies buzzed" (8.916-919). Yet, he is able to delight in his memory of their old home on Harcourt road: "Swish and soft flop her stays made on the bed. Always warm from her. Always liked to let

herself out. Sitting there after till nearly two taking out her hairpins. Milly tucked up in beddyhouse. Happy. Happy" (8.198-201). We must note that Bloom's memory of marital bliss is characterized by Molly's "letting herself out;" her removal of her stays and her hairpins predicts the removal of Bloom's hat which will be necessary before returning to a similar state of happiness.

Of course, Bloom understands the "irreparability of the past": "Can't bring back time. Like holding water in your hand." (17.975, 8.610). As Joyce has illustrated in 'Oxen', time moves forward linearly; Joyce's world moves toward a destined goal. Although this theological vision is first articulated by the ridiculous Mr. Deasy -- who says to Stephen that "[t]he ways of the Creator are not our ways…. All human history moves toward one great goal, the manifestation of God" (2.380-381) -- Joyce as a creator does seem have a related goal in mind. The straight path of history is complicated by the presence of the past in the present, but these repetitions of past events ultimately serve to move time *forward* to Joyce's intended ending: the re-forming of the world.

The productive repetition of the past is most overtly illustrated through Bloom's salvation of Parnell's, Menton's and Stephen's hats. As we have already seen, Parnell's and Menton's crushed hats connect them by marking them both as outcasts or rejects. Bloom is aware of a larger connection between these two events:

> [Parnell says to Bloom,] *Thank you, sir,* though in a very different tone of voice from the ornament of the legal profession whose headgear Bloom also set to rights earlier in the course of the day, history repeating itself with a difference, after the burial of a mutual friend when they had left him alone[.] (17.1523-1527)

Bloom's fixing of Menton's hat is *history repeating itself with a difference.* Indeed, Joyce notes that "[A]s a matter of strict history, Bloom was the man who picked [Parnell's hat] up" (17.1514-1515). This implies that it was Bloom's fate[xii] to be the man who attempted to restore Parnell to his proper public image, to restore to him his identity as savior. He was almost an agent in the saving of Ireland here, but his attempt ultimately fails. His attempt to restore Menton's hat also fails, for Menton rebuffs him and waits for Martin Cunningham to fix the ding in his hat. Bloom, though an outsider, feels himself destined to be a savior of Ireland; not for any political gain, though he fantasizes about this, but out of sheer compassion for his fellow Dubliners[xiii]. These repetitions of history, or, these moments of failed compassion, prepare Bloom for his moment of success: the salvation of Stephen's hat at the end of 'Circe'. Time has moved forward to reach the moment in which Bloom's sympathy can win out.

'Circe' represents a microcosm of *Ulysses* as a whole; it is a section in which Bloom and Stephen confront their pasts and the problems with which they have been dealing throughout the day. At the very end of 'Circe', Stephen challenges the ghost of his mother and finally escapes from her. Ruth M. Walsh argues that Stephen's final meeting with May Dedalus allows Stephen to re-form:

> Stephen is divided against himself. Before the novel ends, what Joyce will show is … integration of self …. In the 'Circe' episode, with the black Mass as a climax to Stephen's most vivid and terrible hallucination, Joyce purges forever Stephen's subconsciousness of the nightmare of religion. (Walsh 330)

Stephen emerges from the nightmare of his past and, no longer trying to escape history (as we see when he affirms that Ireland belongs to him in 'Eumaeus'), he realizes that "some of the

nightmare is good: the acceptance of the fantasies of man's unconscious, the validity of human relationships" (Harkness 270). After 'Circe', Stephen will be able to connect his various disconnected identities.

The explosion of hallucination that is Stephen's reformation is overwhelming, and he "*totters, collapses, falls, stunned. He lies prone, his face to the sky, his hat rolling to the wall*" (*Ulysses* 15.4748-4749). Joyce paints Stephen as a Christ figure here, but we are meant to understand that Stephen is *not* a savior, only a person transformed or reborn. What is most important about Stephen's characterization in this moment is his loss of his hat. Bloom, who has followed Stephen outside and who will stick by him even when it may prove threatening to his reputation, "*follows and picks* [Stephen's hat] *up*" (15.4749-4750). The hat's figurative value changes in this moment. Stephen has grappled with his past throughout this section, and has made it through the nightmare of history triumphantly, understanding himself more fully. When his hat rolls off, Stephen symbolically rejects his Mulligan-imposed, fragmented identity that has blocked his artistic creativity. Thus, when Bloom later returns the hat to Stephen, it is as though the hat, too, has been reborn; Bloom restores to Stephen the possibility of forging a *new* and more creative identity, one which encompasses all aspects of his past and present selves.

This marks the third time in the novel that Bloom has saved someone's hat, an idea that recalls the hat trick. The phrase "hat trick" when directed at Old Gummy Granny refers directly to its scatological connotations; it is she who hides a metaphorical turd (the decay that is Ireland) under a nice hat (nostalgic fantasies about Ireland's grandeur). Yet, the hat trick, as has been discussed, also establishes Bloom as the third person of the trinity, the savior. Furthermore, the hat trick in a sporting event refers to a positive feat being achieved thrice. When in reference to Bloom, the hat trick loses its cruder meaning. (For, as we have seen, Bloom literally does not

employ the excremental hat trick.) Though Bloom's first two attempts to save hats (those of Parnell and Menton) proved failures, his third is successful; he becomes a savior. In order to more fully connect this with the hat trick, Joyce repeats three times at the end of 'Circe' that Bloom holds Stephen's hat and ashplant. This repetition openly mirrors the sporting hat trick and establishes Bloom's holding of Stephen's hat as a positive feat.

It is Bloom's compassion for other humans that propels him to repeat his hat trick and become the new savior for Ireland. Bloom's status as savior is concretized when Stephen refers to him as "*Christus* or Bloom" (16.1092). Ruth Walsh notes that Stephen's acceptance of Bloom as a secularized Christ is enough to reveal his "change in attitude toward religion" (Walsh 335). Despite Stephen's language, Joyce certainly does not establish Bloom as a second coming of Christ; he is a *secular* savior above all else, sent to reestablish human connection in modern Dublin. Bloom is not perfect, he is human (which, in many ways, makes his saving qualities all the more miraculous). In 'Circe', Bloom imagines himself a "*bareheaded*" savior, the leader of a "golden city… the new Bloomusalem" (15.1442, 1544). In his fantasy, John Howard Parnell embraces him and says, "Illustrious Bloom! Successor to my famous brother!" (15.1513-1514). Bloom has become a new Charles Parnell, and not only because he is "illustrious" but because he "ha[s] feet of clay" like "their idol" Parnell (16.1508). Indeed, Bloom attempts to write Gerty a message in the sand which recalls the passage from Revelation: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord" (Rev.i.8): "I…. Useless.… AM. A. No room. Let it go…. He flung his wooden pen away. The stick fell in silted sand, stuck" (*Ulysses* 13.1258-1270). Bloom's message ends up reading something quite similar to what he imagines Molly saying to him: "O Poldy, Poldy, you are a poor old stick in the mud!" (15.329-330). This message also *almost* allows Bloom to name himself "Ulysses." He opts, instead, for "Useless."

He is simultaneously a savior and a figure made of mud, a hero and an outcast. But in the end it is his humanity that saves; in this world where the sublime has disappeared, human miracles are still possible.

The miracle that Bloom performs is the re-creation of the possibility for real human relationships. We must note that even after 'Circe' and Stephen's recognition of Bloom as a savior, the two still do not completely understand one another. Bloom is still concerned with the physical and the economic, while Stephen is still preoccupied by the intellectual and the artistic:

> Stephen thought to think of Ibsen, associated with Baird's the stonecutter's in his mind somehow in Talbot place, first turning on the right, while the other who was acting as his *fidus Achates* inhaled with internal satisfaction the smell of James Rourke's city bakery, situated quite close to where they were, the very palpable odour indeed of our daily bread, of all commodities of the public the primary and most indispensible. (16.52-58)

They cannot understand each other perfectly because "they do not completely understand themselves…. But they understand more of themselves than they have before" and this is what will make all the difference (Harkness 270). Each man's capacity for self-awareness will allow them to reveal themselves to each other and begin "the annihilation of the world" and the "inauguration of a new era or calendar" (17.464, 463).

Joyce connects Stephen and Bloom through the image of the hat in 'Ithaca', a section which begins with the two "united" on "parallel courses" (17.2, 1). For the first time, Bloom consciously removes his hat and reveals himself positively to another human being. Bloom, keyless, must climb over the garden wall to enter his home while Stephen awaits him. Finally,

“the man reappear[s] without his hat, with his candle,” and Stephen follows him inside (17.117). As a “competent keyless citizen,” Bloom has finally “proceeded energetically from the unknown to the known through the incertitude of the void” (17.1019-1020). Along the way, he has replaced his hat with a candle; he has exchanged voluntary disguise and fragmentation for light, warmth and revelation. While a hat is fashioned for one, the effects of a candle may be shared. Indeed, Bloom later feels “satisfied,” despite certain disappointing events of the day (Molly’s adultery with Boylan, for example, or his fight with the citizen in Barney Kiernan’s), to have “brought a positive gain to others. Light to the gentiles” (17.351, 352-353). He has brought light literally to Stephen, here, but he has now also revealed to him the power of human compassion and love. Inside of Bloom’s home, the hatless couple participates in the only fruitful conversation of the day (and of the novel). Marguerite Harkness comments on the importance of Bloom’s and Stephen’s acts in ‘Ithaca’:

> The rituals pre-‘Circe’ are obviously wrong; they do not work; they are not effective; they describe the malady of Dublin. But the rituals after ‘Circe’, the cocoa drinking and the symbolic urination of Bloom and Stephen, are much truer and more symbolic of community than are the earlier rituals. (Harkness 262)

The removal of their hats, and Bloom’s re-creation of Stephen’s hat at the end of ‘Circe’, allows the two to participate in meaningful and creative communion.

At the end of ‘Ithaca’, “at the door of egress,” “Bloom set[s] the candlestick on the floor. Stephen put[s] the hat on his head” (17.1032-1033). It may seem that the rejection of the candle and the subsequent retention of the hat predict a collapse of the short-lived moment of valid connection. However, we must remember that this is a new hat for Stephen, one which Bloom

has endowed with new possibilities for identity. Stephen's refusal to stay the night on Eccles Street *does* add a sense of ambiguity to the possibility that this relationship will continue. Regardless, Bloom has given Stephen his own positive ending and, thus, he does not stay the night because "he no longer needs Bloom. Although he recognizes the similarity of their suffering, Stephen is now prepared to go forth alone" (Walsh 335). Stephen now understands what it is that Bloom represents; he has already been reintegrated within himself, which has prepared him forge valid human relationships.

Reentering the house, the hatless Bloom "reassume[s] the candle" and eventually goes to his bedroom, where Molly is asleep (*Ulysses* 17.1271). Looking around the room, Bloom sees a "commode, one leg fractured, totally covered by a square cretonne cutting, apple design, on which rested a lady's black straw hat" (17.2102-2103). The nature of Molly's hat (black straw) symbolizes her participation in an unproductive and dirtying sexual act. This is likely why Joyce situates her hat atop a fractured piece of furniture; we are reminded of the broken Bloom's own transformation into a hat rack in 'Circe'. Yet her hat has been removed, as it is not when Bloom imagines her copulation with Boylan. This indicates that Molly is more fully open to Bloom that she is to Boylan. Of course, she recognizes that she has found pleasure in some aspects of her affair: "God knows hes a change in a way not to be always and ever wearing the same old hat" (18.83-84). Bloom *is* this old hat, which she enjoys exchanging for Boylan, the new hat. However, Joyce gives us hope for our "old hat" when Molly remarks that "wom[e]n cut up this old hat and [patch] up the other" (18.472). In participating in adultery, Molly has indeed been cutting up Bloom; the deterioration of their sexual relationship has led to his pursuit of the imaginative affairs that his hat disguises. We are now given hope that she has done so in order to be able to repair her marriage, to patch up and recreate her Poldy. She will figuratively cut up

Bloom's hat (the ultimate symbol of his broken identity) and renew it. In this way, she will become the savior of his hat as he is to Stephen's, giving it a new and more creative connotation. Indeed, she imagines that she will wake up in the morning and reestablish a sexual relationship with Bloom: "Ill put on my best shift and drawers and let him have a good eyeful out of that to make his mickey stand for him" (18.1508-1510). She then remembers that her menstrual period has come and thinks, "you wouldn't know which to laugh or cry" (18.1534-1535). It seems, however, that she is more inclined to regret this heartily, for she continues thinking, for the rest of the novel, about her memories with Bloom.

In the bedroom, we are in the presence of two exposed, hatless people; Joyce invites us to understand the possibility of a reformation of connection here. Indeed, one of Bloom's final actions in the novel is to "remov[e] a pillow from the head to the foot of the bed" (17.2112-2123). This action mirrors the removal of a hat from the head and predicts the subsequent entering of Bloom into the warm bed, with his head at Molly's feet. In their sleeping positions, Bloom and Molly finally form a circle: "In motion being east and both carried westward, forward and rereward respectively, but the proper perpetual motion of the earth through the everchanging tracks of neverchanging space" (17.2307-2310). The fact that they are moved both forward and rereward implies a reestablishment of true connection: their memories of marital bliss will be reborn in the future; history will repeat with a difference. Indeed, the novel ends with Molly's memory of Bloom's marriage proposal on Howth hill. It is as though the whole novel, which by its very nature is wandering and moving forward, has been destined to reach this past moment:

> [H]e kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him and drew him down

> to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes. (18.1604-1609)[xiv]

Joyce does not punctuate any of Molly's thoughts throughout 'Penelope' except her final one. He ends with a final period as though to indicate Bloom ends finally and irrevocably with a "Yes." Staten notes what many have criticized about Molly's acceptance of Bloom's proposal, but gleans positivity and affirmation nonetheless: "The ground of her affirmation is thus that very nonuniqueness of substitutablility that constitutes the abyss of erotic anxiety…. Erotic rapture is a fall into this same abyss of the decompositional combinatorium, only with a yes and a madly beating heart" (Staten 391). As Bloom is a faulted and human savior, his relationship with Molly is broken and, perhaps, ordinary. But this is what makes it miraculous; humanity is what *provides* the perfume and the beating heart. By removing their hats and getting in bed, Molly and Bloom become two halves of circle, which by nature has no beginnings or ends. Forming one whole, Bloom and Molly finally meld into one another at the end of *Ulysses*.

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[i] Joyce very deliberately identifies Bloom as wearing a "keyless watch" here. Bloom's watch is an important figure throughout *Ulysses*, notably because it stops at 4:00 pm, the time that Boylan is due to meet Molly; thus, Bloom's watch stops at the moment of his cuckolding. The fact that Bloom's watch is keyless when he talks to "Ms. Marion" doubly enforces his cuckolded status: he holds not the key to his own home, or the metaphorical key to Molly's lock. The images of the hat and the key are intertwined throughout *Ulysses*, as will be discussed later in the paper.

[ii] Note that the fragmentation of Bloom's identity is re-revealed, and made even more concrete, later in 'Circe' when Henry Flower, Bloom's sexual side, and Virag, Bloom's scientific side, both emerge. Though Bloom's relationship with Martha is sexual, it takes place only in Bloom's mind; it is a relationship built around written words. Thus, Henry Flower appears "*caressing on his breast a severed female head*," the only part of Martha with which he has a sexual relationship (15. 2620). Virag, subsequently, unscrews his own head and holds it under his arm, becoming only a body. (And even a mere animal, for his final line is "Quack!" (15. 2638)) Bloom's two separate identities are confused: the intellectual head becomes a body; the sexual body becomes a head. They do not yet merge, but metamorphose.

[iii] Stephen adopts this "Hamlet hat" in effect to "play a new part." Yet, Hamlet is very distinctly identified by Ophelia as being hatless when he is playing mad: "Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced; / No hat upon his

head; his stockings foul'd, / Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle" (*Hamlet* 2.1.75-77). If Shakespeare uses the hat in the same way Joyce does, we may be tempted to believe that Hamlet is not "playing" at all, but is actually mad, revealing his true self. Stephen, on the other hand, is certainly trying on a part.

[iv] Eliot's quintessential inactive, modern man, J. Alfred Prufrock, undergoes the same conflict. Unlike Stephen's, the self-doubt and self-catechism that characterize Prufrock do not result in a final act of heroics. Prufrock is quick to note "No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be" (Eliot 111). He, perhaps, once thought that his "hundred indecisions" likened himself to Shakespeare's protagonist, no doubt because of his preoccupation with old literature (32). Yet, he has discovered, now, that he is more like a Polonius, "one that will do / To swell a progress, start a scene of two" but not fit to end heroically (112-113). And what is worse, he feels that his shared characteristics with the Prince Hamlet result, in the modern world, in his characterization as "almost ridiculous -- / Almost, at times, the Fool" (118-119). Not a Hamlet, Prufrock finds that he is not a John the Baptist or an Odysseus either. He ends stagnant and drowning, watching others ride forward on the waves, perhaps toward Ithaca, toward familial reconciliation. Unlike Prufrock, Stephen will finally move forward.

[v] This metaphor also speaks to Bloom's feminine nature, which is nowhere more evident than in 'Circe', in which he not only gives birth to eight children, but is even called "she." Because 'Circe' reveals Bloom's unconscious, it seems that he tries to hide his womanly affectations from the public eye; he tries to confine it to his self, though others often see it in his identity. For example, he is unmanned behind his back by Lenehan in 'Wandering Rocks' when he describes to M'Coy his fondling of Molly: "Every jolt the bloody car gave I had her bumping up against me. Hell's delights! She has a fine pair, God bless her …. I was tucking the rug under her and settling her boa all the time. Know what I mean?" (10. 358-362). It is, thus, appropriate that Bloom "nurses" only when his hat has been removed.

[vi] Sheldon Brivic notes that "Stephen seldom thinks of women, and when he does he reveals a deepseated fear and repulsion with regard to them" (Brivic, "Time" 39). For example, he remembers a Parisian prostitute: "When night hides her body's flaws calling under her brown shawl from an archway where dogs have mired … A shefiend's whiteness under her rancid rags" (3. 375-379). He is not entranced even by a virgin to whom he gave a "keen glance": "Bet she wears those curse of God stays suspenders and yellow stockings, darned with lumpy wool" (3. 430-432).

[vii] Of course, the mere idea of a church being used to pass time negates its function. Bloom does not enjoy the Catholic service for its religious teachings, but for its more earthly pleasures, such as music: "Mr Bloom looked back toward the choir. Not going to be any music. Pity" (5. 394-395). Even racier, Bloom finds church to be a "[n]ice discreet place to be next to some girl" (5. 340-341).

[viii] Like most recent critics, I am of the belief that this list of suitors refers mostly to *prospective* suitors, and that Molly has only committed adultery once, on this very day, with Blazes Boylan.

[ix] This is one of many times that the sea is likened to the mother. In 'Telemachus' Buck Mulligan asserts, quoting Swinburne, that the sea is "our great sweet mother" (1.80). For Mulligan, the sea is sublime, "mighty" (1.85). Stephen, with his own mother on his mind, is unable to view the sea in this way; he reduces it to human phlegm: "The ring of bay and skyline held a dull green mass of liquid. A bowl of white china had stood beside her deathbed holding the green sluggish bile which she had torn up from her rotting liver by fits of loud groaning vomiting" (1.106-110). Stephen's view of the world's beauty is colored by his disappointment with the human body; that is to say that he cannot find it beautiful. The description of the sea as "snotgreen" in this passage foreshadows Stephen's picking of his nose while he gazes upon the sea in the 'Proteus' episode.

[x] Joyce's use of the hat as a block to productive creation carries over into his other works. In his story "The Encounter," the mysterious masturbator is the only character whose hat is mentioned. He wears a "jerry hat with a high crown" (16). A jerry hat is a stiff felt hat; his hat seems to function, thus, in a rather Victorian way. Its stiffness

crudely refers to the man's sexually excited state. The hat's high crown ties him to both Stephen and Bloom, two of the only characters in *Ulysses* whose hats are associated with crowns; all three, of course, participate in unfruitful creation. Joyce's use of the crown to tie these three cases together is perhaps an ironic comment on the crown's (England's) exploitation of Ireland: it leads to nothing but sterility.

[xi]Note that Martha Clifford "[does] not like this other world" (5.245). The idea that "a drenching" could send one to another world further sheds light on the arid nature of Bloom's relationship with Martha.

[xii] Bloom is a strong believer in fate, and indeed he is a fated character, for Joyce creates the destinies of his characters. As he was meant to save Parnell's hat, he believes he was meant to meet Molly: "First night I saw her at Mat Dillon's in Terenure. Yellow, black lace she wore. Musical chairs. We two the last. Fate. After her. Fate. Round and round slow. Quick round. We two. All looked" (11.725-727). Furthermore, he believes, "Still there's destiny in it, falling in love" (13.973). Stephen, too, finds that his path is fated. When confronting the apparition of his mother, he defends himself, saying, "Cancer did it, not I. Destiny" (15.4186).

[xiii] If we are to read *Ulysses* in direct conjunction with *Hamlet,* to which it is often compared, it would seem that Stephen (our Hamlet-hatted protagonist) should be the character fated to set Dublin back on track. After meeting the ghost of his father, Hamlet laments, "The time is out of joint: O cursed spite / That ever I was born to set it right! (1.4.189-190). Bloom's empathy allows him, here, to become a kind of shape-shifter, taking on Stephen's Hamlet role himself. In an act of utmost humaneness, Bloom redeems Stephen of his task, as it were.

[xiv] Henry Staten notes that this final passage recalls textual forces from throughout *Ulysses*, such as the *a, e, i* progression of Stephen's A E I O U, the cemetery wall from Cunningham's riddle, and the emphasis on Shakespeare's first name, Will. The resurrection of these themes further illustrates that the novel has been consciously building up to Molly's affirmation of Bloom. The image of the cemetery wall, Staten notes, reveals that "Molly's yes entails … the will to die… and this is all the more affirmative of life" (Staten 391).