

Is Stephen Dedalus a Vampire? Bodily Breath, Creation, and Art in “Proteus” and “Aeolus”

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English

In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Stephen Dedalus theorizes that true beauty expressed by the artist “cannot awaken in us an emotion which is kinetic or a sensation which is purely physical. It awakens, or ought to awaken, or induces, or ought to induce, an esthetic stasis” (223). If this theory is true, then Stephen’s own body ought not to interfere with his process of artistic creation. His art should create a sense of stasis and removal from the physical world. Rather than be grounded in bodily experiences, his artistic creation should be rooted in the world of abstract essences and ideals that evoke a static emotion removed from embodied experience. How, then, can this theory of stasis be reconciled with Stephen’s apparently very bodily experiences related to his production of art, particularly his moments of respiration/breathing, in the “Proteus” episode in *Ulysses*?¹ Is what Stephen produces in “Proteus” (and, later, in “Aeolus”) really art, and, if so, what does this say about the nature of his vocation as an artist? How can what we glean from Stephen’s artistic efforts illuminate how we read the book and how we understand the nature of the other types of creation in *Ulysses*, especially Bloom’s advertising efforts?

In *Joyce’s Reading Bodies and the Kinesthetics of the Modernist Novel*, Carrie J. Preston argues that *Ulysses* “engage[s] the kinesthetic potential of language,” emphasizing—both in what the characters do and the effects of the characters’ actions on the reader—the role of the body in perceiving and interpreting language and art (*Reading* 233). Kinesthetic theory, applied to literature by early twentieth century theorist Vernon Lee, is an approach that focuses on the role

bodies play in perceiving and interpreting language and art. *Ulysses* “binds language to its source in human bodies” (*Reading* 248). Preston contends that in *Ulysses*, “Stephen’s own body undermines his claims to aesthetic stasis, an important irony often missed in autobiographical readings of the character” (234). Preston is breaking with the Gilbertian tradition of reading Stephen’s theory of artistic beauty as a reflection of Joyce’s own theory. In particular, her arguments contrast with Stuart Gilbert’s claim that “the artist’s aim [...] is to ban kinetic feelings from his readers’ minds, and in *Ulysses* we find the ideal silent stasis of the artist” (Gilbert 22).

The emphases on the movements of and changes in bodies throughout *A Portrait* and *Ulysses* are what undermines Stephen’s theory of esthetic stasis. The “Proteus” episode is particularly focused on movement of bodies, making it a compelling episode to analyze in light of Preston’s helpful claims. Indeed, critics like David Hayman have pointed out that “Proteus” can be read as a challenge to Stephen’s theory of stasis: “Why do these pages contain more potentially kinetic (in the dedalian sense of the non-static art) elements than any of Stephen’s musings elsewhere?” (7). The abundantly present “body” of Stephen throughout the episode—a body who records his physical sensations, makes many visual observations, and, most obvious of all, is physically meandering around Sandymount Strand—is, after all, perplexing when trying to reconcile Stephen’s theory of stasis with his physical “being”-ness. Preston’s kinesthetic theory can be used to explain this tension, and can be extended even further: Stephen’s kinesthetic practices are tied not only to his ability to *perceive* language and art, but also to his ability to *create* art.

Two particular moments of Stephen’s respiration/breathing in “Proteus” can be read as complicating (and yes, even undermining) his theory of stasis. In these two moments—one in which Stephen’s breathing seems to physically unite him with death, and one in which his breath

allows him to try to create a poem—Stephen’s breath effectively functions as a “bridge” between his embodied, sensory experiences and his movements toward esthetic, artistic stasis. At the same time, these moments of breathing illuminate the veracity of the nature of his role as an artist, a role that unites him with the voices of dead artists and allows him to create his own art. As Stephen wanders around Sandymount Strand, he contemplates the relationship between the observable things in the world and their true substance, the “ineluctable modality of the visible” (*Ulysses* 31).

The first instance of Stephen’s breath considered here appears to unite him with the dead: “Dead breaths I living breathe, tread dead dust, devour a urinous offal from all dead” (*Ulysses* 42). Sensorial breathing in of waste (offal/dust/urine) marks a communion between Stephen and the invisible world of dead bodies. The physical breathing in of waste, literally produced by past bodies, allows him to transcend the realm of the purely physical and unite, in a more immaterial sense, with the realm of the dead. Here, his breath functions as a “bridge” between his embodied experience and the abstract, and, in line with Christopher Kempf’s arguments, Stephen “cannot quite loose himself from the viscosity of ‘things,’” and thus his feelings of abstract communion “remain complexly tethered to the commodity forms from which they emerge” (30). Without his bodily breath, there would be no relationship with that which is beyond the visible. His senses are essential to his perception of his communion with an abstract world of the dead.

The macabre of Stephen’s communion is also significant. Why does he feel a communion with, out of all things, the dead? Of course, perhaps the gruesomeness of this instance of Stephen’s death-uniting breath may just point to his obsession with his mother’s recent death. Perhaps Stephen’s thoughts are inextricably centered on death in general.

Nonetheless, I argue that this moment crucially illuminates the nature of his role, or “vocation,” as an artist.

Stephen’s “vocation” as an artist cannot be considered without taking into account the priesthood he rejects in *A Portrait*. As Kevin Farrell argues, the constant reminders that Stephen could have been a priest “draw attention to Joyce's structural model in *A Portrait*, where Stephen's progression towards the life of the artist is made possible by his simultaneous progression towards the life of the priest” (30). Farrell marks a type of interdependence between the vocation of priest and artist that is helpful when parsing the meaning of Stephen’s deathly communion in “Proteus.” Once he embraces the role of the artist, Stephen calls himself “a priest of the eternal imagination” (*Portrait* 240). The following passage in the Bible’s account of creation is interestingly comparable to the creation Stephen is about to attempt: “then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul” (Gen 2:7). Stephen’s breath, like God’s breath, uses waste (see the use of “dust” in both passages) for creation. Stephen’s breath is steeped in waste and is a sort of reincarnation, or metempsychosis, of what has already existed (“God becomes man becomes fish becomes barnacle goose becomes featherbed mountain” (*Ulysses* 41-2)). This new priesthood appears to be a distortion of Catholic priesthood in the sense that it is grounded in communion with death, not life. Stephen’s breath, unlike God’s, brings him into communion with the dead, rather than with the living, as God’s breath appears to do. Additionally, the Bible accounts for God’s creation of the dust itself. God creates *ex nihilo*, while Stephen uses the materials of the existing waste of the world.

This claim that Stephen is ultimately unable to create *ex nihilo* builds on the similar claims of scholars like Calvin Thomas and Michael Schandorf. Thomas, in assessing Stephen's anxiety over artistic production, aptly argues that

Stephen's problem [...] is that language itself was someone else's before it was his. He cannot speak or write any words without unrest of spirit precisely because all speech was always acquired. Stephen's soul frets in the shadow of language itself, and he cannot accept its words precisely because he has not made them, because he cannot be the punctual origin and author of his own semiotic flow. (297)

Stephen thus faces what Thomas terms a "fundamental lack of priority" in his artistic endeavors (300). Using the "waste" of acquired language as his instrument of creative production makes it innately impossible for Stephen to create anything entirely new. Schandorf analyzes the influence of Percy Bysshe Shelley's work on Stephen (and Joyce), arguing that Stephen's decision to become an artist-priest is itself inspired by what Schandorf terms "Shelley's ethos," Shelly's conviction in the superiority of art to the church (418). Interpreted this way, Stephen's decision to become an artist is itself predicated on the promptings of past poets. It thus seems unlikely, if not impossible, that anything Stephen creates from this sort of interdependent vocation could be wrought *ex nihilo*.

The second instance of Stephen's breath considered here further emphasizes the recyclic quality of his artistic efforts. In addition to marking his communion with the dead as a new type of artist-priest, Stephen's breath is what allows him to begin sounding out the syllables for a poem: "His lips lipped and mouthed fleshless lips of air: mouth to her womb. Oomb, allwombing tomb. His mouth moulded issuing breath, unspeached: ooeehah: roar of cataractic planets, globed, blazing, roaring wayawayawayawayawayaway" (*Ulysses* 40). Preston argues that in this

experimentation, Stephen both “theorizes and models kinesthetic approaches to language” (*Reading* 242). Not only imitative of Stephen’s words, Stephen’s bodily efforts here are also necessary for his gestures at artistic creation. This body-centric moment in “Proteus” is a crucial moment of connection between Stephen’s body and his attempts at creating art that undermines his theory of stasis. It is only *after* Stephen’s non-static, sensory experimentation with kinesthetically sounding out words (issued by his breath) that he is able to physically write words down: “Turning his back to the sun he bent over far to a table of rock and scribbled words” (*Ulysses* 40). His body, united with waste and with the dead, provides the very materials for his ability to try to create, marking a clear and unignorable connection between the sensory realm and the “stasis” he believes art should induce.

To provide a comprehensive look into Stephen’s work as an artist, the originality and artistry of the poem itself needs to be evaluated. For his theory (that art should evoke esthetic stasis) to truly be undermined, what he produces on the beach would need to be true art. If what he produced were *not* true art, Stephen’s bodily breath would not be a true “bridge” that allows him to create, and it would be possible that artistic creation could still work in accordance with Stephen’s *A Portrait* theory. However, the lines Stephen begins to create on the beach *are*, in fact, art. In her book *Modernism's Mythic Pose: Gender, Genre, Solo Performance*, Preston helpfully argues that the invocation of kinesthetic experiences “highlights one of the central motifs of modernism: the desire to make sense of the body, to account for and somehow encompass bodily experiences in art, and to figure movement in words, sculpture, painting, and other media” (21). Crucially, Stephen’s kinesthetic experiences are integral to his creation of art. What he creates as a result of his efforts is a specific type of modern art, the nature of which (as I

will later describe) is closely connected with the dead, and with the breath-y communion Stephen experiences with waste and the dead.

Critics are not in accord when it comes to the nature of Stephen's "Proteus" poem, and have disagreed about whether or not it is a true work of art or a real act of creation. David Hayman calls Stephen's poem "semi-original" (8). Robert Adams Day argues that Stephen's poem is "a real act of creation" (183). Michael Murphy contends that Stephen's lines are "largely the waste product of what Stephen has ingested mentally" and Stephen ends up a "would-be maker of original things" (76, 78). Michael Seidel claims that the poem is "essentially a few lines cribbed from Douglas Hyd[e]" (419). Central to this critical terrain is the question of the degree to which Stephen's poem is original *or* a set of lines that overborrows from Douglas Hyde's, the first president of Ireland's, poem entitled "My Grief on the Sea." Interestingly, this poem is itself not actually Hyde's creation, but is a translation of a Gaelic folk song; the import of this point will be considered later. First, the similarities between the poems will be explored in detail, and the underlying questions at the heart of the critical debate over its originality will be brought to light.

Stephen's first draft of his poem, created mentally in "Proteus," reads as follows: "He comes, pale vampire, through storm his eyes, his bat sails bloodying the sea, mouth to her mouth's kiss" (*Ulysses* 40). The final draft of his poem, no longer prose-style but now versified, is revealed in the "Aeolus" episode:

On swift sail flaming

From storm and south

He comes, pale vampire,

Mouth to my mouth. (Ulysses 109)

Three of Hyde's six stanza poem, "My Grief on the Sea," are quoted here. Critics generally point to the last stanza to evince its similarities with Stephen's poem:

My grief on the sea,
 How the waves of it roll!
 For they heave between me
 And the love of my soul!
 [...]
 Were I and my darling—
 O, heart-bitter wound!—
 On board of the ship
 For America bound.
 [...]
 And my love came behind me—
 He came from the south;
 His breast to my bosom,
 His mouth to my mouth. (Hyde 130)

There are clear resemblances here. Day argues that Stephen "borrows Hyde's metrical pattern, the idea of someone's arrival, and 'south-mouth' rhyme, and the last line [...] but that is all" (186). Day doesn't mention several other (albeit obvious) thematic similarities: the storm, the sea, and a kiss. He also doesn't point out, though it is perhaps too obvious a similarity, that both poems (the "Aeolus" version and Hyde's) are quatrains with one rhyme on the end of the second and fourth lines. The metrical patterns of both poems (again, the "Aeolus" version and Hyde's) are indeed similar, except for the first line. The second and fourth lines of each poem contain

monosyllabic words and two stressed syllables per line. Stephen's version, however, has two neat iambs in each line, while Hyde's lines each contain one iamb followed by one anapest. The concluding lines are, of course, nearly identical except for Stephen's omission of the word "his."

Many critics have also found strains of poets other than Hyde in Stephen's verse.

Hayman contends that Stephen's poem "alludes among other things to Hamlet's attitude toward his 'unfaithful' mother" (8). If the poem's speaker is interpreted as Stephen's mother, then yes, perhaps the kiss can be read as a sort of macabre, unfaithful embrace between a woman and someone other than her husband. Referencing to Stephen's earlier sounding out of syllables at the beginning of this poetic process, Gilbert argues that the "womb-tomb (birth-death) rhyme has interesting Shakespearean and Blakean associations" (133).³ Harry Blamires even finds a connection between Stephen's poem that echoes back to Garrett Deasy's letter on foot and mouth disease from the "Nestor" episode: "'Mouth to my mouth' in the lyric counterpoints the 'Foot and mouth' theme" (51). This abundance of potential sources for Stephen's poem has led many of these critics to discount the validity of its artistic originality and instead characterize Stephen as a plagiarist.

Again, the question of the poem's artistry is intimately bound up in its associations and allusions to the works of earlier poets. Underlying the issue of originality in Stephen's artistry are two foundational questions about the nature of art: does art need to be totally original to be real art? Can "true" art draw from the works of other artists (in this case, other poets)? Though both versions of Stephen's quatrains are, in many ways, recycled from the words of earlier poets, this does not necessarily mean his quatrain is not art. Instead, it indicates the opposite. As T.S. Eliot suggests in his essay *Tradition and the Individual Talent*, drawing from the words of past poets does not preclude a work from being distinct or worthwhile. Doing so actually strengthens

the value and originality of the poem: “we shall often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of [a poet’s] work maybe those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously” (Eliot 48). Eliot highlights the interdependence of the creating poet and the voices of the dead: “No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the application of his relation to the dead poets and artists” (49). Recyclic metempsychosis is thus a hallmark of modernist artistic creation.

In this sense, then, Stephen’s poem is significant, individual, and valuable *precisely because* it draws on the voices of people like Hyde, Shakespeare, Yeats, and Blake. It is, as Day claims, a true act of creation. Within the context of “Proteus,” it is also notable that the poem’s significance is not necessarily diminished by two aspects of the scene of its creation that emphasize its secondhandedness: the facts that it is written on a “blank end” of a torn off piece of Deasy’s letter, and that the poet himself wears Mulligan’s castoff clothes (*Ulysses* 40). The valuation of the voices of other poets brings us back the previously-considered instance of Stephen’s breath, the moment in which he found communion with the dead through his breath. Stephen’s communion can be read as his initiation into the life of the modern artist, an initiation in which he physically communes with the dead and is able to produce individual words with his living body. Again, this art is only made possible by the “bridge” of Stephen’s breath.

Two obvious (and important) differences, however, between the translated words of Hyde and those of Stephen are Stephen’s focus on the body and his inclusion of the vampire character. These differences are Stephen’s additions to the recycled words of past poets, and these additions further clarify the nature of modern art. Preston points out that both versions of Stephen’s poem emphasize body parts and kinetic movement more than Hyde’s version (*Reading* 241). Indeed, Stephen uses the corporeal words “eyes,” “mouth,” “bloodying,” and the kinetic

movements “kiss” and “comes.” This shift in emphasis further destabilizes Stephen’s *A Portrait* theory of stasis; even the art he creates has a focus on the body and the movements of the body. The poem essentially articulates the physical journey and embodied experiences of its characters (the speaker and the vampire). Interestingly, the subjects of the poem are also caught up in the application of kinesthetic theories of language in the “mouth to my mouth” line, suggesting that the physical action in the poem of putting mouth (the vampire’s) to mouth (the speaker’s) is related, perhaps even necessary, for speaker’s ability to speak. The focus of Stephen’s work and the actions of the characters in the work itself are the kinetic movement of bodies, thus ironically subverting Stephen’s earlier claims of stasis.

Vampires themselves are mythic undead bodies that depend on the living, and Stephen’s use of this image further exposes the nature of the artistic interchange between the living and the dead. Vampires can only “sustain their miserable lives by having their astral bodies rob the life-blood from living persons” (Madame Blavatsky, in Seidel 419). Returning to the “mouth to my mouth” line, the physical union between the two characters evinces the idea that vampires are both wildly dependent on, as well as nourishing to, the living. Vampires both take life (from the living) and give life (in the sense that they create new life as they take away); this interdependence is highlighted even more by the fact that, of all the lines in Stephen’s quatrain, the “mouth to my mouth” one is the *most* similar to Hyde’s. As Preston argues, “The lover becomes a vampire, a creature that feeds on the blood of another living body, and also perhaps a figure for the way literature feeds on or borrows from other works” (*Reading* 241). The recycled quality of the poem’s form is compounded by the imagery it contains, and the combination further emphasizes the recycled nature of valuable art (espoused by Eliot).

Just as vampires both nourish and take life, modern art continually negotiates the relationship between dead words and living bodies. Thus, as Eliot says, the artist's progress is "a continual self-sacrifice" (53). Stephen sacrifices himself to his vocation, to the bodily breathing in of the remains and waste of the dead, and breathes out the syllables of inchoate art that eventually evolve into a created poem. Hyde, too, was in a sense "breathing in" the folkloric words of an Irish past when he translated "My Grief on the Sea" (and many other Irish poems) in the first place (Coffey *vii*). Hyde, the man who is typically cited as one of, if not the, primary source of Stephen's quatrain, is himself involved in the vampiric interplay between the dead and the living. The vampire-poets of the past never die and depend on the living for their life; artists like Stephen (and even Hyde) resultingly live in "not merely the present, but [in] the present moment of the past" (Eliot 59). Stephen, like all modernist artists, faces tension between living in the present now and dwelling on (and drawing from) the voices of dead artists.

Two additional moments of Stephen's musings in "Proteus" clearly show how Stephen acknowledges his identification with the dead, thus providing further evidence of his role as a modernist artist. Stephen thinks about the man who drowned nine days ago off Maiden's rock: "His human eyes scream to me out of horror of his death. I ... With him together down" (*Ulysses* 38). Stephen is considering whether he'd be hypothetically able to (or want to) save the dying man, and comes to identify himself with him. Soon after, a live dog comes to sniff the corpse of a dog on the beach: "The carcass lay on his path. He stopped, sniffed, stalked round it, brother, nosing closer, went round it, sniffing rapidly *like a dog* all over the dead dog's bedraggled fell [...] Ah, poor dogsbody! *Here* lies poor dogsbody's body" (*Ulysses* 39, emphasis added). Again, Stephen appears to identify himself with a dead body; the "here" can be interpreted as referring to himself, Stephen. Stephen simultaneously seems to be identifying

himself with the live dog, or, at least, he makes the link between the description of the live dog and the dog itself strangely tenuous with the phrase “like a dog.” Why include the phrase “like a dog” to straightforwardly describe a dog? Perhaps he is referencing, at least in some part, to himself. His creative process is, after all, like the doggish nosing of a carcass. In his attempts to create art and sound out words, Stephen comes across the word-carcasses of the poets who have gone before him. His ties to past poets place him in both the realm of the non-static, sniffing, sensory living and the surplus, dogsbody, drowned realm of the dead.

By the end of “Proteus,” however, Stephen is still not done writing his poem. The next draft of the quatrain is revealed in the Freeman newspaper offices in “Aeolus.” The climate of this episode varies immensely from that of “Proteus,” and the fact that Stephen’s poem is revealed here complicates, even seems (in an initial analysis) to challenge, the nature of its artistic value. “Aeolus” is filled with frantic newspaper and advertising work and verbose dialogue. As Harry Blamires points out, “There is ‘gas’ everywhere, not least the gas of inflated rhetoric and hectoring, wordy conversation. The rush of words, of rumor, of news, let loose daily from this pulsing, hectic organ, is pumped into the life of Dublin as newsboys are exhaled on to the streets” (45). Breath and respiration are also ubiquitous. Gilbert lists the “lung” as the schematic organ of “Aeolus” (175). The very environment of the episode is itself a breathy one in which rhetoric itself is portrayed as a kind of rhythmic respiration, a “Way in. Way out” (*Ulysses* 97). Even the newspapers contain information about airy things like flatulence and balloons, and the characters in the newspaper office mock the “inflated windbag” of overblown speech (*Ulysses* 98, 104). The poem’s revelation in such close proximity to this environment of

exaggerated and profit-minded prose certainly seems to—though it will be argued does not ultimately—degrade the value of Stephen’s art.

The foundation of this cheap rhetoric (what I will refer to as “Aeolean rhetoric”) is a kind of breathing, and breath functions throughout the episode as a bridge between the inhaling of information and the exhaling of rhetoric in the form of cheap dialogue, newspaper writing, and advertisements. In “Aeolus,” the breathing that was so personal for Stephen becomes the collectivized and mechanized breathing of the “lungs” of the press, or what Karen R. Lawrence refers to as the “agency of collective authorship” (394). Thus emerges a strong parallel between the breathing of this episode and the breathing of “Proteus,” a parallel that emphasizes a partial similarity between the art of cheap rhetoric and the art of poetry. The two particularly helpful parallels that will be considered here are Bloom’s advertising efforts and the stylistic format of the episode.

There are, firstly, some notable similarities between the artistic work of Stephen and the advertising work of Leopold Bloom. Both men are recyclers of previous material for their own creations. Bloom’s recycling efforts are more straightforward than those of Stephen. Like Stephen, Bloom’s creative effort is a very physical process. For the basis of his discussion of the advertisement, Bloom uses a physical cutout from a previous newspaper. Before Bloom visits Nannetti’s office, “Red Murray’s long shears sliced out the advertisement from the newspaper in four clean strokes. Scissors and paste” (*Ulysses* 97). Bloom tries to pitch the idea of for a new design for an advertisement for Alexander Keyes to Councillor Nannetti, the office’s master printer. The pitch is a verbal one, meaning Bloom is using his bodily breath and words for his attempts at artistic creation.

After Bloom tries to describe the advertisement for the ad, and Nannetti asks him for the design, Bloom says, “I can get it [...] It was in a Kilkenny paper” (*Ulysses* 100). Bloom is suggesting the Keyes advertisement use a design explicitly similar to the House of Keys symbol, the emblem of Parliament on the Isle of Man (which has Home Rule). In saying he can “get” the design from a past newspaper, it becomes apparent that the House of Keys symbol has already been used in a different paper, though not as a Keyes advertisement. Bloom’s use of the design specifically for the Keyes ad is a new idea and becomes, in a way, his addition to the creative process of artistic (and political) recycling. Here, Bloom’s position (similar to Stephen’s) as a recycler becomes clear, since he is using an already-used idea—an idea that like Hyde’s poem, is itself taken from another preexisting creation—for his own creation.

Additionally, the “scissors and paste” sentence, quoted above, has dual significance for the type of creation Bloom is working towards. First, it emphasizes the sense of collaging and reutilization that constitutes Bloom’s efforts. Like Stephen, Bloom is using past examples (in this case, an existing emblem and a piece in a past newspaper) for his efforts to create a piece of art (in this case, an advertisement). Secondly, as Francis Phelan points out, “scissors and paste” is also a reference to *Scissors and Paste*, a newspaper created by Arthur Griffith, the founder of the Irish nationalist republican political party Sinn Féin. The newspaper itself was designed to avoid censorship—Phelan refers to it as an “anti-censorship journal”—and was itself a literal collage of previously-published newspaper articles (147). Griffith used this publication method as an avenue for publicizing and circulating his own commentary about the current events in Dublin. Though physically repurposing and collaging the words of others, Griffith was still creating something new with commentary. In repurposing the House of Keys emblem for an advertisement, it is clear that Bloom, too, is using a collage-type method to convey a message,

one that subtly evokes the idea of Home Rule while at the same time advertising for Alexander Keyes's tea, wine, and spirits. Bloom is a recycler, but—similar to Stephen's vampire character—he adds a previously unincorporated dimension to the advertisement.

On a stylistic level, the construction of the “Aeolus” episode, particularly the inclusion of section headlines, is also reflective of the recyclic quality of Aeolean rhetoric. The inclusion of these headlines marks a point at which the “art” of the episode penetrates its very structure. As Stephen Donovan points out, the headlines “served as convenient devices for Joyce to foreground the ‘art’ of the episode—Rhetoric” (520). On another level, the interpolation of headlines throughout the episode play more generally on the stereotypes of journalistic language and newspaper formatting. Critical tradition,² as Donavon points out, has read “Aeolus” as “a straightforward indictment of journalism in Dublin and at large” (532). While this is partially true, a more rigorous analysis of the headlines/interpolations reveals that their inclusion is not quite so straightforward. Aside from a pure indictment of Dublin journalism, the headlines can be read as devices that reflect the way journalism, like poetry, is a great recycler of existing materials. The bizarreness of these headlines and the jolting interruption they cause for the reader emphasize the way old words and phrases insert themselves into new rhetoric. Indeed, as Lawrence aptly suggests, “The language of the novel is invaded by a language not its own, as if the pen received automatic writing and the voice could produce only an echo of other voices. Writing thus becomes an act of rewriting, the recycling of phrases which retain the memory of their prior use” (395). The formal inclusion of headlines thus is a formal element that emphasizes the recyclic quality of the episode itself.

After mentally reciting his revised quatrain, Stephen tries to divide himself once more from his surroundings to work on his poem. The formal construction of Stephen's thought process here is again illuminative of the nature of art:

Mouth, south. Is the mouth south someway? Or the south a mouth? Must be some.
 South, pour, out, shout, drouth. Rhymes: two men dressed the same, looking the same,
 two by two.

. *la tua pace*
 *che parlar ti piace*
mentrechè il vento, come fa, si tace.

He saw them three by three, approaching girls, in green, in rose, in russet, entwining, *per l'aer perso* in mauve, in purple, *quella pacifica oriafiamma*, gold of oriflamme, *di rimirar fè più ardenti*. But I old men, penitent, leadenfooted, underdarkneath the night: mouth south: tomb womb. (*Ulysses* 114)

Like his Hyde-influenced artistic efforts on Sandymount Strand, Stephen's efforts at creative production in "Aeolus" are infused (this time more explicitly) with the words of other poets. Stephen's thoughts here explicitly quote Dante's original Italian words from *Inferno* and *Paradiso*. Like the intrusions of the headlines, Dante's words vampirically interject themselves into Stephen's thought process, quite forcefully disrupting even the way the text is displayed on the novel's page. Dante's words themselves become intermingled with Stephen's, demonstrating the way poets incorporate the words of other poets. Directly after this interior thought process and mental interruption, Stephen is met with a second bodily interruption: O'Madden Burke tells him "Speak up for yourself" (*Ulysses* 114). Like his sounding out of rhymes on Sandymount Strand, Stephen has been speaking his creative process aloud; his body has yet again interpolated

itself into his artistic process, despite his theory of stasis. As Murphy suggests, “the demand of O’Madden Burke suggest[s] [...] the increasing pressure [...] that he respond to the reality around him” (545). Stephen’s triple interruption—Dante’s words, his (Stephen’s) own body, and O’Madden Burke’s words—is another reflection of the way the creation of art inevitably collides with and involves the words (and bodies) of others. Though this moment takes place in “Aeolus,” it emphasizes many of the same qualities of Stephen’s poem that were introduced in “Proteus,” providing further evidence that what is created in each episode, whether Stephen’s or Bloom’s or even Joyce’s, is actually quite similar.

It is still valuable, however, to consider the differences between Stephen’s poem and Bloom’s advertisements. One primary difference between their art is the materials each chooses to recycle. Bloom’s material is the physical clipping of a past newspaper issue, while Stephen’s materials are the words of another poet(s). It seems that Stephen’s materials are of a higher quality than Bloom’s. Yet, as Archie K. Loss contends in his analysis of the assortedness (or “collagey”-ness) of the visual arts in “Aeolus,” “any materials are valid as long as they are put to artistic use” (176). In this way, perhaps Bloom’s materials are just as valuable as Stephen’s. There is still one important difference between their art: the ends they serve. Stephen is decidedly not going to use his art for monetary ends; he even bristles as Crawford asks him to write something for him (*Ulysses* 111). Bloom, on the other hand, is creating an advertisement designed to win business for Keyes. It is not, then, the method by which Stephen and Bloom create their respective art, but the ends for which their art is created that marks the primary difference between their work. The poem and the advertisement are certainly created in similar ways. The sole way in which Stephen’s poem differs from the gassy rhetoric and advertising efforts in this episode is that his poem is not created for practical, utilitarian ends. Stephen and

Bloom's art is not foundationally different, but their creations are different in their degrees of purity, since Bloom's is created for a purpose other than existing for itself.

In the end, though, both types of art—the utilitarian, cheaper art of gassy rhetoric and the for-itself, modern art of poetry—are derived from, and are themselves constructions of, waste and deathly excess. Stephen's art is generated from the dust, waste, and “urinous offal” of the dead that he breathes (*Ulysses* 42). Bloom's art is a collage of other creations, reminiscent of what Simon Dedalus calls the “Shite and onions!” of Aeolean rhetoric (*Ulysses* 104). The artists, advertisers, and rhetoricians of *Ulysses* cannot work towards creation without their living bodies inevitably coming up against the waste and leftovers of what has already been produced by other (sometimes dead) bodies. Bloom and Stephen both fit the description Murphy gives of the artist's efforts: “he is a dog sniffing and partly digging up old dogsbodies, an intellectual cocklepicker or a ragman dealing in scraps of texts of poets and philosophers”—or, in Bloom's case, the literal scraps of newspapers (74). These scraps, as has been demonstrated, are valuable and essential, and can illuminate the way we approach the art of *Ulysses*—both the art that the novel contains as well as the art of the novel itself—as a whole. As Lawrence argues, Joyce “shows that all of life is significant, that all things are, in a sense, ‘newsworthy’ [...] Joyce's solution to a central problem of the English novel [of how to transform waste into art] is to include in his novel as much as possible of the ‘splendid waste of life’” (402). Joyce's decision to include seemingly castoff, dead waste as material for true artistic creation evinces the idea that waste, in a Joycean/modernist world, is supremely productive. Though Stephen and Bloom add their own dimensions to the art they create, each “artist” is still rooted in, and thus indebted to, the waste and words of the past.

What remains inescapable in this modernist world of artistic waste is the physicality of existing. As Preston argues, “In scenes featuring acts of reading and composition, the text calls attention to the bodies that produce words and influence the movements of those bodies” (*Reading* 246). Attempts both to understand and, as I have argued, to create, inevitably involve the non-static body, whether what is being created is an advertisement for monetary ends or a poem to exist for art’s sake. Bloom uses a physical newspaper cutout for his embodied visit to Nannetti, verbally explains his idea to him, and then must physically “get” the House of Keys emblem example about which he speaks. Stephen needs his breath to clarify his vocational calling to the life of the artist, uses his breath to produce a poem about kinetic bodies, and continues to use his body to refine his poem.

As embodied readers approaching the text, recognizing the approach of the text’s characters can help clarify the role we play in drawing meaning from what is written. Our bodies are necessary to approaching the text: as Preston argues, “Literary invocations of bodily performance forms [...] promote kinesthetic experiences that dislodge the seemingly static practice of reading” (*Mythic* 23). Both the text’s structure (as in the headlines in “Aeolus”) and the artistic processes of the text’s characters showcase experimentation with waste prior to production; our immersion in the words of Joyce of the past can be viewed similarly. Our bodies, like the bodies of Stephen and Bloom, play an active role in receiving and interpreting the words of *Ulysses*, words of a dead artist that can (and do) yet give life to the words and art of living bodies.

Notes

1. In the context of this argument, Stephen Dedalus will be read as the same character in both *A Portrait* and *Ulysses*.

2. Gilbert references *Romeo and Juliet*, II, iii: “The earth that’s nature’s mother is her tomb; / What is her burying brave, that is her womb” and Blake’s *The Gates of Paradise*: “The Door of Death I open found / And the Worm Weaving in the Ground: / Thou’rt my Mother from the Womb, / Wife, Sister, Daughter, to the Tomb, / Weaving to dreams the sexual strife / And weeping over the Web of Life” (133).

3. Donovan points specifically to Richard Ellmann, C.H. Peake, and Len Platt as proponents of the theory that “Aeolus” is essentially a critical take on Dublin journalism.

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