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even literary identity may not be capable of being sharply distinguished. The ambiguity derives in part from the conceptual nature of vision—the beam in someone's eye may be the mote in your own. The ambiguity and excess of Joyce's text, threatening, dangerous as it may seem, like Bloom, is finally redeeming, if not redeemed. But what of the women saints, and poor Mrs. Bermingham (initials, M. B.), whom Joyce surely would have added to his list if she had only made the grade in time? The mock ascension of Bloom and the suggestion of Elijah's fiery chariot at the conclusion of this chapter mirror or parody the ascension of the *true* Messiah (or, the devil goes to heaven), and of all the saints, suggesting the way in which such movements take on a political trajectory when, as Cioran points out, they seek to "colonize upwards"; but it speaks to the women saints most poignantly of all, in that their ecstatic rise becomes a displacement, a veiled image of the heliotropic gesture of desire, a bloodstone sacrifice.[52] They are history's scapegoats, as much as Bloom, as much as even the citizen, whose mission to banish false gods (one of Elijah's tasks), is not only mocked but a mockery. In the "politicoeconomy," this creation by means of loss, the idols of nationalism/sainthood and the cult of martyrdom are replaced by the labor of art, where the verbal excesses and extravagances become a kind of productive rather than destructive indulgence. Joyce's labor of art in all its excess and economy is, like Bloom's labor of love, just less than a saving grace.

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A Metaphysics of Coitus in "Nausicaa"

JOHN BISHOP

"Nausicaa" develops the "parallactic" technique put lengthily into play in "Cyclops" by presenting its reader with alternate perspectives on the same scene, though here only two of them rather than many: the first half of the episode, an indirect (and female) monologue, offers a mediated account of Gerty MacDowell's view of a flirtatious encounter with Bloom on Sandymount Strand; the second half, a direct (and male) monologue, offers Bloom's unmediated reflections backward over the same events. A few weird internal references to "Cyclops" within "Nausicaa"—Gerty's grandpapa Giltrap owns Garryowen, the dog with which the citizen "ars[es] around" Dublin (12.752–53, 13.232–33)—perhaps encourage us to see large contrasts and parallels being drawn between the two chapters. "Cyclops" parodically erodes idealized representations of "the best traditions of manly strength and prowess" (12.911), of heroism and ideal masculinity; "Nausicaa" analogously undercuts representations of the "womanly woman" and of idealized femininity and purity (13.435).[1] The first of three chapters to which Joyce respectively assigned the symbols of Virgin, Mother, and Whore, "Nausicaa" moreover initiates in *Ulysses* a sustained exploration of conventional representations of women—an exploration that comes to incomplete completion only when Molly, in "Penelope," gives voice to her own idiosyncratically unconventional womanhood and declares that she doesn't "like books with a Molly in them" (18.657–58).

Why Joyce chose to write "Nausicaa" in two distinct parts and styles, from two points of view—in a doubly gendered and genred form—is one of the larger critical questions posed by the chapter. Karen Lawrence, seeing Joyce amplifying the contrastive technique put into play in "Cyclops," finds the chapter's "parallactic" comparativism and parodic exposure of sentimental fiction superfluous—more of what had already been done well enough in the chapter before.[2] And other readers have accounted for the distinctly binary form of "Nausicaa" by playing up the obvious difference between its two sections and reading the chapter as a Joycean version of "he said, she said"—or, in Bloom's idiom, "says she and says he" (13.1146). Gerty's monologue, from this perspective—densely mediated by her immersion in the language of advertising and of

sentimental and domestic fiction of the kind epitomized by Maria Cummins's *The Lamplighter* (13.633)—exemplifies something like the cultural constructedness of femininity ("the nature of woman [as] instituted" [13.457]), her interiority an effect of the external social forces and discursive systems that have come to shape her. Stimulated by advances in commodity aesthetics and in feminist theory and criticism over the past decade, recent critics of Joyce have in fact done so much brilliant work on Joyce's intricate differentiation of Gerty's femininity from Bloom's masculinity—on his analytical critique of its constructedness—that "Nausicaa" has come to seem in the criticism a chapter that centers on Gerty. The emphases necessitated by such studies, however, have the effect of minimizing attention to the second half of the chapter, seeing it in a deterministically gendered relation to the first part and so construing the relation between Gerty and Bloom as one of victim and victimizer, symptom and disease, effect and cause. As a female, an unreflexive pawn of commodity culture, and even a commodity herself, Gerty resolves, often enough, into a victim of a system of production in which Bloom, as male, predator, and advertising agent, is the complicitously participating counterpart.

Why and how these two parts (and partners) are coupled, however, may be questions central to a chapter that seems profoundly invested in an exploration of the singularity of pairing—of why and how couples come together, and mating comes about. Having "gone together" in Joyce's conception and writing of the chapter, certainly—or, to give the verb its Latin equivalent, *coitus* ("having gone together")—the two parts of "Nausicaa" arguably require analysis together, as surely do any two partners in any other two-body relation ("Always see a fellow's weak point in his wife" [13.972–73]). The chapter itself highlights its thematic interest in pairing and doubling by focusing on twins in its opening pages—indeed, in the narrator's insistently tautological phrasing, on "two twins" (13.41, 13.363, 13.492, 13.505). The redundancy calls attention to the cognate relations of the word "*twi*ns" to the number "*two*," and in turn to the chapter's setting at "*twi*light," "be*twee*n" two agents and states of illumination: all three of these words—"twins," "twilight," "between" (Derrida's *entre*)—derive from a common proto-Indian European root designating "two."[3] Their structural centrality to a chapter otherwise full of references to divided halves and twinned pairs in turn highlights the chapter's interest in the cipher for the couple, the number two: Gerty, we learn, "would be twentytwo in November" (13.221–22) and is situated not simply between "two twins," but between two girlfriends as well: Edy Boardman, "one of your twofaced things, too sweet to be wholesome" (13.279–80), "as cross as two sticks" (13.260); and Cissy Caffrey, who "in two twos . . . set that little matter to rights" (13.614–15). At once virtually identical and indistinguishable, and yet discernibly individualized, the "two twins," like the two girlfriends and the two priests conducting the benediction in the Star of the Sea Chapel, moreover exemplify forms of pairing and doubling that are central to the chapter and recur at almost every level of its design.[4] In part because of its imitation of the alliterative style of the sentimental romance, for

instance, but also because of its intrinsic thematic interest in pairing, the first part of the chapter resorts to an almost incessant form of alliterative doubling: phrases like "away in the west," "sun was setting," "lingered lovingly," "sea and strand," and "proud promontory" (13.02–4) occur everywhere in Gerty's monologue—"she tickled tiny tot's two cheeks" (13.257, need they have been counted?). Equally prominent are curiously doubled terms and phrases: "boys will be boys" (13.41); "honour where honour is due" (13.96); "hoping against hope" (13.179–80); "a might that he might be out" (13.149); "and often and often she thought and thought" (13.459–60); "and yet—and yet!" (13.188); and so forth.[5] Proper names, comparably—both those that Joyce invented and those that he borrowed—are subject to a peculiar kind of consonantal doubling: apart from Cissy Caffrey and baby Boardman—"Cissy Caffrey told baby Boardman to look up, look up" (13.253)—the chapter introduces us to "grandpapa Giltrap" (13.232, 13.343), "the Widow Welch" (13.85), "Madame Vera Verity" (13.109–10), "Flora MacFlimsey" (13.35), "the litany of Our Lady of Loreto" (13. 287–88), and "W. E. Wylie who was racing in the . . . races" (13.135). Manifold doubling operations pervade Bloom's monologue, too, though they seem to take a more substantive than formal shape, simply perhaps because Bloom thinks more explicitly than Gerty about coupling ("Man and woman that is. Fork and steel. Molly, he" [13.992–93])—and also about pairs: "Pretty girls and ugly men. Beauty and the beast" (13.836–37); "Long and the short of it. Big he and little she" (13.982–83).[6] Cumulative attention to various copulative effects like these, at any rate—no matter whether we attribute them to Joyce's intention or the binary properties of language—makes the act of coupling itself, in countless forms and manifestations, a central feature of a chapter dramatically built around a couple and the fantasy of coupling. The need to read Gerty's monologue dynamically through and against Bloom's is signposted in the text not only by these pairing effects, but also by the chapter's attention to various focalizing objects which move back and forth between them: the Caffrey twins' ball, in the first section, which links Bloom and Gerty as a ball links Odysseus and Nausicaa in *The Odyssey;* the characters' erotically correlated game of throwing and catching glances and eyes; and the movement of a bat between Gerty's and Bloom's sections. "Nausicaa," finally, takes place *between* two parts and partners, each differentiated and both united, whose interdependence requires their analysis together. "Suppose there's some connection" (13.1014), as Bloom puts it; "must be connected" (13.1036). Rather than holding the two sections of "Nausicaa" in a fixed and simple relation of gender opposition, the chapter's sustained thematic attention to forms of twinning, coupling, and pairing invites us to see them connected in every possible way that pairs can connect: under operations not simply of opposition, but also of doubling, parallelism, likeness, differentiation, sequentiality, complementarity, asymmetrical reflection, inversion, and so forth. What otherwise might be a statically drawn episode becomes under this form of analysis a variety of "mutoscope pictures" (13.794) in which perspectives and understandings continually change

if we "look at it other way round" (13.1219); "yes now, look at it that way" (13.1030).

Some of the chapter's doubling effects also arise, perhaps, from its preoccupation with mirroring and—in both specular and speculative senses of the word—"reflection." While both parts of the chapter provide us with the characters' mental "reflections" on events and circumstances, both also reflect on physical mirrors and reflections (13.162, 13.192, 13.919–20, 13.1261–62). This happens, in part, because mirrors, like other frames that contain images, represent representation—as do the various pictorial magazines in which Gerty sees the ideal images after which she models her "real" self ("*Art thou real, my ideal?*" [13.645–46]). "The lovely reflection which the mirror [gives] back to [Gerty]" (13.162)—a cipher for her own self-reflexivity—emerges also from the frames of "the Woman Beautiful page of the Princess Novelette" (13.110) and "the *Lady's Pictorial*" (13.151), either of which, as titles, could fittingly be assigned to the first half of "Nausicaa." Because the "action" of Gerty's monologue is so ocular and voyeuristic, but also because Gerty tends almost autonomically to translate her perceptions into idealizing representations, Joyce designated the eye as the organ governing the first half of "Nausicaa" and painting as the art governing the chapter as a whole. Frank Budgen, himself a painter, was the first to elaborate on these schematic clues by pointing out how pictorially Gerty frames and views "the evening scene" on Sandymount Strand (13.09–10), how reflexively she pictures herself to herself and throws her perceptions of "reality" into idealizing representations:[7] "she could see far away the lights of the lighthouses so picturesque she would have loved to do with a box of paints because it was easier than to make a man" (13.627–29). The stoppage of Bloom's watch—in turn suggesting the stoppage of time—intensifies these pictorializing effects by calling attention to the largely static "action" of the first half of "Nausicaa": since both characters (even Bloom, despite his manual activity) largely stay still while theatrically posing and modeling for each others' voyeuristic benefit, the first half of the chapter entails the staging of something like pictorial *tableaux* or charades (13.486, 13.815, 13.1106–16) and so takes on the representational status of a painting. The world here is spectralized in ways suggested by the chapter's continual evocations of portraiture and painting—"pictures and engravings and the photograph" (13.231–32), "edifying spectacle[s]" (13.285), "illuminated views of Dublin" (13.465). In details like these, as in his schema, Joyce calls such elaborate attention to "painting" and the eye, surely, because the eye is the organ of idealization: "ideas," along with their more perfect forms ("ideals," "idols," "eidolons," and "idealizations"), all derive from the Greek *eido* ("to see"), in part because the process of looking enables one to "know" an object or person in the absence of any real contact with it at all. This is Gerty's (like most adolescents') experience of the world in the first half of "Nausicaa": in the absence of any real contact with Bloom (or other potential mates), she draws her romantic and sexual speculations about men from literary

and pictorial idealizations; the romanticizing style of her monologue, complementarily, presents her not as she is, but as she would like to see herself and as she would like Bloom to see her.[8] Bloom himself is framed and idealized in her vision, finally, as if he were her "beau ideal" (13.209), "a foreigner, the image of the photo she had of Martin Harvey, the matinée idol, only for the moustache which she preferred because she wasn't stagestruck like Winny Rippingham" (13.416–18). Insofar as the two halves of "Nausicaa" might be seen to stand in more than an oppositional relation to each other, however—as sequential complements or asymmetrical reflections—everything that might be said about Gerty during her specular coitus with Bloom might also be said of Bloom as well.

"LOOK AT IT OTHER WAY ROUND"

In the schema for *Ulysses* that he passed on to Gorman and Gilbert, Joyce labeled the "technic" of "Nausicaa" "tumescence"/"detumescence"—suggesting not only that the chapter follows out the rhythm of sexual excitation and deflation (with orgasm occurring at the moment in which Gerty's monologue slips over into Bloom's, in the paragraph in which fireworks go off [13.715–40]), but also that its two parts may be related more as sequential complements than as contrastive opposites: Gerty's monologue, to put it simply, is precoital, while Bloom's is postcoital. Narrative omissions and asymmetries in the episode's representation of events of the hour, moreover, reinforce this sense that the chapter's two narratives complement as much as they oppose each other. Readers of *Ulysses* have long noted that odd gaps of unrepresented time punctuate Joyce's otherwise detailed account of June 16, 1904, and that one such gap takes place between "Cyclops" and "Nausicaa": we only learn after the fact that between his visit to Barney Kiernan's pub and his appearance on Sandymount Strand, Bloom has traveled with Martin Cunningham to the Dignams's house to help arrange the affairs of the widow and orphans.[9] Two no less critical, yet unexamined gaps of unrepresented time transpire within "Nausicaa" itself, since we never learn exactly what moves through Bloom's mind during the first part of the episode, while he is undergoing tumescence and masturbating, or what occurs to Gerty during the second part of the episode, while she travels home and Bloom desultorily fights off his deflated thoughts of agedness, fatigue, and the manifold miseries of domestic life. Even so, details scattered through both parts of the episode enable us to draw inferences about what happens when, as Bloom recommends, we "look at it other way round" (13.1219).

As her monologue comes to its climax, we learn that Gerty

> knew too about the passion of men like that, hotblooded, because Bertha Supple told her once in dead secret and made her swear she'd never about the gentleman lodger that was staying with them out of the Congested Districts Board

> that had pictures cut out of papers of those skirtdancers and highkickers and she said he used to do something not very nice that you could imagine sometimes in the bed. (13.700–6)

Her recollection of a story heard about a man masturbating while viewing pinup girls or cheesecake photos resonates with Bloom's recollection, in the second part of the episode, of his experience in Dublin's "adult" bookstore: "A dream of wellfilled hose. Where was that? Ah, yes. Mutoscope pictures in Capel street: for men only. Peeping Tom. Willy's hat and what the girls did with it. Do they snapshot those girls or is it all a fake?" (13.793–96). If we want to know what the girls did with that hat, Gerty cannily provides us with the only possible answer: "something not very nice that you could imagine." The conflation of the two passages suggests that Bloom's (male) equivalent to the kind of pictorial idealizing that Gerty engages in while allowing Bloom to stare at her is pornographic scene staging ("for men only"); or, more bluntly, that the male equivalent to the kinds of sentimental and romantic fiction in which Gerty finds compensatory relief for her own real-world deficiencies is pornography. If Gerty frames Bloom in such a way as to staticize him and enhance his resemblance to a culturally produced image of the ideally desirable male (Martin Harvey, the matinee idol), it cannot be surprising that Bloom complementarily seems to have staticized and framed Gerty in such a way as to minimize her ordinariness and to enhance her resemblance to a pornographically yielding pinup girl ("I'm all clean come and dirty me" [13.797]). "Thought something was wrong by the cut of her jib," Bloom thinks when he discovers, in the aftermath of his orgasm, that Gerty is lame; "Jilted beauty. A defect is ten times worse in a woman. . . . Glad I didn't know it when she was on show" (13.773–76). Insofar as we are able to reconstruct Bloom's fantasies about Gerty retrospectively, in the absence of their direct representation, he seems to have indulged in a form of pictorializing indistinct from that practiced by the fellow "Wilkins," whom he recalls later in his monologue:

> Did she know what I? Course. Like a cat sitting beyond a dog's jump. Women never meet one like that Wilkins in the high school drawing a picture of Venus with all his belongings on show. Call that innocence? Poor idiot. His wife has her work cut out for her. Never see them sit on a bench marked *Wet Paint*. Eyes all over them. (13.908–12)

Bloom's judgmental condescension notwithstanding, he does not seem at all that different from Wilkins, since in the first part of "Nausicaa" he himself—though in his head and not with a pen—seems to have been "drawing a picture of Venus with all his belongings on show," complementing and spectrally accompanying Gerty's pictorially idealizing fantasies with painted—and wet—ones of his own.

That Bloom engages in a form of pornographic iconicizing while Gerty is romantically idealizing him is furthermore suggested by the ease with which, in the second half of the chapter, he elides her with Martha (who has provided him with a verbal, rather than pictorial, form of excitement). At one point in his monologue, in fact, recalling a phrase from Martha's letter ("Then I will tell you all"), he thinks that she and Gerty might be the same:

> Then I will tell you all. Still it was a kind of language between us. It couldn't be? No, Gerty they called her. Might be a false name however like my name and the address Dolphin's barn a blind.
>
> *Her maiden name was Jemina Brown*
> *And she lived with her mother in Irishtown.*
>
> Place made me think of that I suppose. All tarred with the same brush. (13.943–50)

Though Dolphin's Barn might well resemble Irishtown in being in a poorer section of Dublin, it may be Bloom's thoughts on sexually exciting agents more than on "place" which lead him into reflection, in a couplet, about the allures that lead to coupling.[10] "Tarred with the same brush"—painted in the same style—Martha and Gerty respectively represent in his mind the verbal and visual forms and media of pornographic allurement.[11] In turn, then, the continual pairing of Gerty and Martha in Bloom's monologue ("Martha, she" [13.782]) raises the interesting question of whether the masturbatory fantasy that Bloom entertained about Gerty can have been all that different from the fantasies we see him cultivating under the memory of inducements like Martha's letter elsewhere in *Ulysses*. "Like to be that rock she sat on. . . . Also the library today: those girl graduates. Happy chairs under them" (13.1084–88): indications like these raise the possibility that Bloom may have imagined masochistically submitting to Gerty in much the same ways that he imagines submitting to Martha or, for that matter, Bella ("little naughty boy. . . . I will punish you" [5.247–52]; "Exuberant female. Enormously I desiderate your domination" [15.2777]). If so, it is finally hard to see Bloom simply as the predatory male in "Nausicaa"; in some ways, he emerges from the chapter as the familiarly disempowered male known to us through other parts of the novel, a disabled twin to Gerty.

Joyce's decision to give the wishfully "perfect" Gerty a "defect," a "shortcoming"—a limp—becomes, from this perspective, more strategic than malicious, since the word "limp," after all, is applied more than once—and more than to Gerty—to Bloom throughout *Ulysses*. In "Lotus-Eaters," where Bloom initiates the line of thought that will come to its climactic realization only in "Nausicaa" ("Also I think I. Yes I. Do it in the bath. . . . Combine business with pleasure" [5.503–5]), his penis is figured as "the limp father of thousands" (5.571); and in "Circe," where he humiliates himself into thumb-twiddling inaction in what is traditionally the arena of male sexual prowess, the brothel, he imagines the massive brothel keeper sizing him up and finding him coming up short: "What else are you good for, an impotent thing like you? . . . It's as

limp as a boy of six's doing his pooly behind a cart" (15.3127–31). In "Nausicaa," comparably, Bloom thinks of Gerty's limp in a way that reflects ambiguously on his own: as he rearranges his wetted clothing, he thinks, "O Lord, that little limping devil," in a context that makes it not entirely clear whether the phrase refers to Gerty or his own exhausted member:

> Funny my watch stopped at half past four. Dust. Shark liver oil they use to clean. Could do it myself. Save. Was that just when he, she?
>
> O, he did. Into her. She did. Done.
>
> Ah!
>
> Mr Bloom with careful hand recomposed his wet shirt. O Lord, that little limping devil. Begins to feel cold and clammy. Aftereffect not pleasant. Still you have to get rid of it someway. (13.846–53)

Bloom and Gerty are made to reflect on each other by way of the "limp" in "limping" here, which bears the weight of both their real-world deficiencies. "But for that one shortcoming," Gerty thinks, "she knew she need fear no competition" (13.649–50); and something comparable might be said of Bloom, whose marital unhappiness we know to be occasioned by one psychogenetic "shortcoming" which in his mind leaves Molly resentfully unfulfilled and willing to entertain Boylan. Indeed, the word "limp" appears again late in the chapter, while Bloom thinks of avoiding a return home in order not to have to face his wife ("Better not stick here all night like a limpet. . . . Go home. . . . No. Might still be up" [13.1211–13]). The distinct kinds of "limp" borne by Gerty and the profoundly emasculated Bloom, furthermore, tend to equalize them as victims. One of the many distinct effects served by Bloom's discovery of the stoppage of his watch at 4:30 in "Nausicaa," in fact, is to foil Boylan's and Molly's aggressively real and not uninjurious coupling against Bloom's and Gerty's fantasized liaison and to ask us, as readers, to weigh the difference between the pairings. Bloom and Gerty, we realize, both severely disempowered, have real-world shortcomings for which they seek compensation through fantasy—Gerty in a fantasy of sentimental love and domestic romance made available to her through romantic fiction, Bloom in a fantasy of unproblematized virility and sexual conquest made available to him through pornographic fiction. Pornography, from this perspective, serves much the same function for the disempowered male as romantic fiction does for the disempowered female, supplying him with the illusion of unproblematized masculinity ("Still, I feel. The strength it gives a man. That's the secret of it" [13.859–60])—and in turn forcing a reformulation of the well-known and astonishingly oversimplistic formula coined by Robin Morgan and enlisted by movements against pornography: "pornography is the theory, masturbation is the practice."[12] "Nausicaa," we might finally note, is a chapter panoramically full of vignettes of males in trouble and need—not simply Bloom, but Wilkins, Gerty's alcoholic father, the drunkards praying for their reformation at the retreat, and others to be noted below.

If the narrative asymmetries of "Nausicaa" enable us to infer that Bloom was doing a (male) version of what Gerty herself was doing during the first half of the chapter—pictorially idealizing her, although as a pornographically compliant pinup girl rather than as a romantic matinee idol—they also help us to resolve the vexed question of how much Gerty "knows" about the sexual character of her flirtation with Bloom by enabling us to see that she, too, is doing a version of what he is when he masturbates. Though Joyce called the technic of "Nausicaa" "tumescence"/"detumescence" in the schema that he passed on to Herbert Gorman and Stuart Gilbert, the character who most clearly experiences tumescence in "Nausicaa" is the masturbating Bloom, whom we only see in the second, detumescent half of the chapter. His reflections on the rhythm of sexual release that he experiences in the hour during which "Nausicaa" takes place, however—"My fireworks. Up like a rocket, down like a stick" (13.894–95)—enable us retrospectively to see that Gerty, too, though in displaced form, undergoes a kind of tumescent, sexual excitement during her monologue. Tumescence (literally the swelling up of parts of the body as a result of their engorgement with blood during sexual arousal) is something that Gerty seems to experience more in the upper than lower parts of her body—"the blood of the south" (13.969), as Bloom puts it, rushing north and, rather than engorging her loins, suffusing her face with displaced symptoms of sexual excitation in the form of a blushing that seems only to deepen and swell as her monologue progresses:

> And just now at Edy's words [intimating that Gerty has a "sweetheart"] . . . a telltale flush, delicate as the faintest rosebloom, crept into her cheeks. . . . (13.119–21)

> Gerty MacDowell bent down her head and crimsoned at the idea of Cissy saying an unladylike thing like that out loud she'd be ashamed of her life to say ["beeoteetom"], flushing a deep rosy red. . . . (13.264–66)

> A delicate pink crept into her pretty cheek. . . . She felt the warm flush, a danger signal always with Gerty MacDowell, surging and flaming into her cheeks. (13.360–67)

A "telltale" sign and "danger signal" because it reveals that "embarrassing" but unexpressed thoughts have begun drifting into her awareness—thoughts that "she'd be ashamed to say" out loud—Gerty's blush is something like a (clitoral) erection gone haywire: occasioned by sexual thinking (or, at times, a stifled rage), it shows that her blood has become tumescently animated but, in ways mapped out by Freud in his accounts of hysteria conversion, has rushed to the

wrong part of the body—the head, rather than the genitalia. Worrisome enough to have caused Gerty to notice an ad for "blushing scientifically cured" (13.113) on "the Woman Beautiful page of the Princess Novelette" (13.110), her flushing is a form of confession that not coincidentally reveals itself in confession: "when she told him [the handsome Father Conroy] about that [menstruation] in confession, [she] crimson[ed] up to the roots of her hair for fear he could see" (13.453–54). As she succumbs more and more deeply to her erotic flirtation with Bloom over the first half of "Nausicaa," therefore, the increasingly tumescent ensanguination of her face amounts to an unconscious confession of a sexual arousal which—because of her youthful inexperience and Catholic inhibition—she seems unwilling and unable fully to acknowledge:

> the swift answering flash of admiration in his eyes . . . set her tingling in every nerve. . . . He was eying her as a snake eyes its prey. Her woman's instinct told her that she had raised the devil in him and at the thought a burning scarlet swept from throat to brow till the lovely colour of her face became a glorious rose. (13.513–20)

> she had to lean back more and more to look up after it [the Roman candle], high, high, almost out of sight, and her face was suffused with a divine, an entrancing blush from straining back and he could see her other things too, nainsook knickers, the fabric that caresses the skin . . . and she let him and she saw that he saw and then it went so high it went out of sight a moment and she was trembling in every limb. . . . (13.721–28)

A number of terms here furthermore suggest that just as Gerty's tumefying bloodstream is displaced upward from her loins to her head while she daydreams about Bloom, so too her sexual thoughts, which, because they are not consciously articulate, are displaced from "lower" to "higher" forms that help account for some of the peculiar investments of her monologue. "Suffused with a divine . . . blush," for instance, her face becomes "a glorious rose" as she flirts with Bloom—likening her, even more fully than her blue and white wardrobe, her statuesque pallor, and the conflation of her monologue with the Litany of Our Lady of Loreto already do, to the Blessed Virgin, the "mystical rose" of Catholic literature (13.374); and in imagining Bloom "eying her as a snake eyes its prey," she seems comparably to biblicize his penis. These adjustments clearly enable Gerty to think of herself as a good girl—again, like the Blessed Virgin, "a radiant little vision in sooth, almost maddening in its sweetness" (13.511–12)—while she is in fact half-consciously entertaining naughty thoughts and encouraging them in Bloom. The fact that she visualizes her underwear and even imagines its caressing feel while leaning back, ostensibly, to view a Roman candle that itself fades out of view—at least until it begins "gush[ing] out . . . a stream of rain gold hair threads" (13.738–39)—suggests that even while her attention is cast upward, her mind gravitates toward lower things

which never quite achieve full representation in her awareness. Bloom's reflections on the displaced sexual energies of frustrated convent-school girls and "nuns with whitewashed faces" in the second half of "Nausicaa," however (13.809–13)—the manual agitation of "their rosaries going up and down" recalling the masturbatory activity which he comparably displaced by winding his watch—enable us to see the whole of Gerty's spiritually swollen and empurpled monologue as a form of "pantomimic" masturbation in which she unconsciously entertains all the thoughts that might normally accompany the process of sexual excitation and gratification (tumescence and detumescence) while allowing them to undergo a sublimating conversion that at times makes them almost unrecognizable.[13] From a passage quoted earlier—where Gerty fantasizes about "the gentleman lodger" (see 13.700–706)—we know that Gerty knows more about male sexuality than her monologue explicitly acknowledges. Her awareness of exactly what Bloom is doing when he masturbates is suggested not simply by passages like this, however—or by Bloom's canniness to her maturity ("Did she know what I? Course. Like a cat sitting beyond a dog's jump" [13.908–9])—but also by her monologue's recurrent preoccupations with what Joyce advertised in his well-known letter to Frank Budgen as the "namby-pamby jammy marmaladey" style of "Nausicaa": the many jams, puddings, and syrups that occur to Gerty while she daydreams about Bloom seem to be displaced indications that she knows full well what happens when he climaxes and produces his own "jam."[14]

"IN THE HIDING TWILIGHT"

In Gerty's empurpled monologue, a glorious sunset erotically "fold[s] the world in its mysterious embrace" (13.01–2)—coloring it, like Gerty and the Virgin herself, a "mystical rose" (13.374) and in turn leading Gerty to reflect on its romantic scenic splendor:

> She gazed out towards the distant sea. It was like the paintings that man used to do on the pavement with all the coloured chalks and such a pity too leaving them there to be all blotted out, the evening and the clouds coming out and the Bailey light on Howth. . . . (13.406–9)

Bloom, by contrast, whose detumescent monologue everywhere tends to flatten the illusions of hers, sees the same sunset with a distinctly unromantic scientific disinterest, as an effect of difractible electromagnetic radiation ("Colours depend on the light you see" [13.1132]):

> Some light still. Red rays are longest. Roygbiv Vance taught us: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. A star I see. Venus? Can't tell yet. Two. When three it's night. Were those nightclouds there all the time? Looks like a phantom ship. No. Wait. Trees are they? An optical illusion. Mirage. (13.1075–79)

Insofar as "twilight"—once again etymologically meaning "between-light" or "two-light"—can be interpreted not simply as the blazened close of day but also as the beginning of the descent into night, Bloom also tends to see its darker and more sinister sides. For him, the twilit seascape on Sandymount Strand signifies not the rosy horizons of romantic possibility, as it does for Gerty, but the fading of day and—again, like the stoppage of his watch—the winding down and ending of time: "Useless. Washed away. . . . Hopeless thing sand. Nothing grows in it. All fades" (13.1259–67). These deflationary perspectives arise in Bloom's mind in part because of his disillusioned middle age ("Never again. My youth. Only once it comes. Or hers" [13.1102–3]), but also because his detumescent monologue takes place in the depressive postcoital letdown following the chapter's orgasmic turning point. As Bloom puts it in remarks that might apply not only to his reflections on sexual climax but also to the whole second half of "Nausicaa," "My fireworks. Up like a rocket, down like a stick" (13.894–95)—or, "aftereffect not pleasant" (13.852).

Bloom is aware that a certain amount of romantic illusion building and idealizing theatricality is essential to the act of lovemaking: "See her as she is spoil all. Must have the stage setting, the rouge, costume, position, music. The name too. *Amours* of actresses. Nell Gwynn, Mrs Bracegirdle, Maud Branscombe. Curtain up" (13.855–57). And in the first half of the chapter he not only embraces such illusions (by not "see[ing Gerty] as she is"), but encourages them also in Gerty by doing some acting and posing himself: "Saw something in me. Wonder what. Sooner have me as I am than some poet chap with bearsgrease plastery hair, lovelock over his dexter optic. To aid gentleman in literary. Ought to attend to my appearance my age. Didn't let her see me in profile" (13.833–36).[15] But details like these, by exposing the posturing and stagecraft of their flirtation, make Bloom and Gerty both begin to seem, in the deflationary second half of "Nausicaa," indistinct from the bee that Bloom recalls "last week [getting] into the room playing with his shadow on the ceiling" (13.1143–44): in the first part of the chapter, each has cultivated in himself and projected onto the other a wishfully idealizing "mirage," indulging a form of "optical illusion" by seeing in his partner and himself—as if with a semi-blinding "lovelock over his dexter optic"—the shadow of fertilizable attractiveness.[16]

One effect of Bloom's detumescent monologue then is to undo massively such illusions by reconsidering, from the perspective of a soberingly postnaturalistic scientism, the romantic and medievally spiritual understandings of love sustained in Gerty's section: to say this in another way, if Gerty's tumescent monologue resembles the kind of inflationarily aggrandizing fantasy that goes into foreplay prior to the act of lovemaking, Bloom's detumescent monologue reads like the set of depressing realizations about oneself and one's partner that follows.

Where Gerty daydreams of "love [as] a woman's birthright" (13.200), for instance, a fulfillment of personal destiny in the realization of a dream come true ("Here was that of which she had so often dreamed" [13.427–28]), Bloom

tends to see their mutual attraction, in the deflationary aftermath of their spectral coitus, as the unremarkable consequence of sheer animal and physical forces. "Still you have to get rid of it some way" (13.853), he thinks, considering the pressures that have led him to discharge his pent-up sexual fluids over a girl who now begins to seem not the model "specimen" of Irish girlhood of Gerty's monologue ("Gerty MacDowell . . . was, in very truth, as fair a specimen of winsome Irish girlhood as one could wish to see" [13.79–81]), but as a "specimen" in the more rawly detached and scientific sense: "Curiosity like a nun or a negress or a girl with glasses" (13.776–77).[17] Far from being "perfect," Gerty becomes most distinguishable from her friends by her "defect" ("Jilted beauty. A defect is ten times worse in a woman. . . . Glad I didn't know it when she was on show" [13.774–76]). And where, like all young people smitten with an infatuation, she thinks of herself, Bloom, and their relations as unique and special—"she felt instinctively that he was like no-one else" (13.429–30), "he was her all in all, the only man in all the world for her" (13.671–72)—the middle-aged and maritally burned-out Bloom, who has earned his scars and come to "understand all the ways of the world" (13.897), tends to see himself and Gerty in the aftermath of their flirtation as just another random couple among millions doing the quotidian business that millions have done for millions of years: "All quiet on Howth now. . . . Where we [he and Molly]. . . . All that old hill has seen. Names change: that's all. Lovers: yum yum. . . . Nothing new under the sun" (13.1097–1105). At moments in his monologue, Bloom even tends to regard their meeting as a random collision indistinct from billions of others that ensue from globally vast and impersonal processes of animal mating. Women are figured in his thoughts as schools of fish or groups of other creatures, individually indistinguishable and driven to pair under animal impulsions:

> Because they want it themselves. Their natural craving. Shoals of them every evening poured out of offices. . . . Catch em alive, O. (13.790–92)
>
> Mat Dillon and his bevy of daughters. . . . (13.1106–7)
>
> Women buzz round it [the "mansmell" of sperm] like flies round treacle. (13.1037–38)

And men emerge no differently, as creatures subject both to physical forces of magnetic attraction and repulsion (13.984–96) and to fundamentally Darwinian motivations: "Dress they [women] look at. Always know a fellow courting: collars and cuffs. Well cocks and lions do the same and stags" (13.829–30).[18] Gerty, from this naturalizing perspective, comes to resemble not the singularly desirable "ideal" of her own monologue (13.211), but a creature as ordinary as "a cat sitting beyond a dog's jump" (13.908–9), fascinated but scared by the animal she has roused. Even the smiles that she and her girlfriends exchange while flirting with Bloom—"showing their teeth at one another" like Molly and Josie

Breen (13.814–19)—start to seem a matter of competitive fang baring among mammalian rivals over the meager available prey. Where Gerty's monologue apotheosizes and deifies the act of lovemaking, in short, Bloom's detumescent monologue deflates its significance to animal and physical levels—making the two sections of "Nausicaa," in part, something like the contradictory accounts of a "beauty and the beast" (13.837).

The antisentimental naturalism of Bloom's monologue heightens the poignancy of Gerty's situation, finally, by allowing us to see how utterly ordinary and unromantic her life likely is. Surmising that Gerty, like "shoals" of single women, is "out on spec probably" (13.808)—hoping to find someone—he infers her loneliness and her eagerness to escape the tedium of a servile home life ("Go home to nicey bread and milky and say night prayers with the kiddies" [13.854–55]), commiserating with her in turn for the dependent passivity with which she, like her companions "and the children, twins they must be, [are] waiting for something to happen. Want to be grownups. Dressing in mother's clothes. Time enough, understand all the ways of the world" (13.895–97). He also sees that the acquisition of that understanding will bring an end even to the ephemeral, constrained freedom which he has just seen her enjoy on Sandymount Strand:

> Sad however because it lasts only a few years till they settle down to potwalloping and papa's pants will soon fit Willy and fuller's earth for the baby when they hold him out to do ah ah. No soft job. Saves them. Keeps them out of harm's way. Nature. Washing child, washing corpse. Dignam. Children's hands always round them. Cocoanut skulls, monkeys, not even closed at first, sour milk in their swaddles and tainted curds. (13.952–58)

In the same way that Joyce enables us to infer what Bloom might have been imagining during the tumescent half of "Nausicaa," he allows us, through Bloom and the romance-puncturing revelations of Gerty's own monologue, to infer what likely happens to Gerty when, in the detumescent second half of the chapter, she returns home to her alcoholically abusive father and bedridden mother and the thrilling prospect of "gazing out of the window dreamily by the hour at the rain falling on the rusty bucket" (13.294–96).

"YOU HAVE A BEAUTIFUL FACE BUT YOUR NOSE?"

As the explosion of fireworks causes "Nausicaa" to pivot from Gerty's to Bloom's point of view, a host of broad metamorphoses sweep over the chapter: the evening star called "Mary, star of the sea" in Gerty's monologue (13.08) becomes the fleshier "Venus" in Bloom's ("A star I see. Venus? Can't tell yet. Two" [13.1076–77]). Veneration concordantly modulates into venery; and, as the dominant colors in the first half of the episode—mystical "rose" (13.121, 13.230, 13.520) and shrinking "violet" (13.230, 13.642)—evaporate into invisible fragrances (13.1002, 13.1009), Bloom's nose gains ascendancy over the idealizing eye.

In his schema for *Ulysses,* Joyce indicated that the organ governing the first half of "Nausicaa" was the eye, the second half the nose—for reasons, no doubt, demonstrated by the profoundly anti-idealizing function that Bloom's nose exercises throughout his monologue. Ideal forms of love and sex are visualized, spectralized, in daydreams and fantasies like those that both Bloom and Gerty entertain as they pose for and eye each other in the first part of the episode. Real love, by contrast, necessitates an actual gritty contact with another person in all of his or her unpredictable psychological and physical peculiarity.[19] A realization of this kind occurs gradually to Bloom as twilight deepens on Sandymount Strand, visibility diminishes, and he awakens to the gradually diffusing scent of Gerty's "rose" perfume and the darker aroma of "roses" which he imagines it to be masking ("Roses, I think. She'd like scent of that kind. Sweet and cheap: soon sour" [13.1009–10]).[20] She becomes to him an object of scent rather than of vision. Prompting him to reflect on the inverse relation of light and smell—the darker it is, he reflects, the more powerfully smells become evident (13.1012–15)—the perception awakens him to the aroma of the world around him, but also causes him to compare Gerty, with her unseasoned taste for the generic, unfavorably to Molly, the poignantly articulated memory of whose manifold scents and aromas ("the perfume of the time before" in her worn dresses, the scent of her stays and bathwater, and even her shoes) attest to a long and intimate personal history together (13.1010–13, 13.1022–25). What wakens in Bloom's monologue as darkness obscures the visible and his nostrils open to the world, in other words, are dimensions of coupling that may be more intimate, immediate, and primitive, less susceptible to idealization and cultural coding, than the kinds of idealization in which both Gerty and Bloom indulge in the first part of the chapter—dimensions of coupling, in fact, that Gerty's sentimental monologue, given its recurrent preoccupations with deodorization, perfumatory censing, and the "look" of the nose, does everything to obscure.[21] Bloom's monologue teems with the kind of olfactory reminiscence that could only ensue from the experience of intimate contact with actual and imperfect people ("Because you get it out of all holes and corners" [13.1026–27]). He recalls not simply Molly's alluringly familiar aromaticism ("Clings to everything she takes off" [13.1022]), but also, among other things, the smell of menstrual discharges (13.826–27, 13.1031–33); the odor of armpits (13.1026); the smell of baby's diapers (one real consequence of the act of lovemaking), "sour milk in their swaddles and tainted curds" (13.957–58); the smell of both good and bad breath (13.936, 13.1035–36);[22] the idiosyncratic weirdness of people's predilections for strange aromas ("All kinds of crazy longings. . . . Girl in Tranquilla convent that nun told me liked to smell rock oil" [13.779–81]); and the experience of waking up next to someone with a hangover ("Worst of all at night Mrs Duggan told me in the City Arms. Husband rolling in drunk, stink of pub off him like a polecat. Have that in your nose in the dark, whiff of stale boose. Then

ask in the morning: was I drunk last night?" [13.963–66]). Whether they repulsively deromanticize or merely familiarize, the range of minuscule and humanizing smells that Bloom recalls here has the effect of eroding with particularity the conventional portraits of lovemaking drawn in the first part of "Nausicaa."

These aspects of adult amatory relations, enabled by intimacy and fleshy contact, fall well outside the idealizing conventions of Gerty's monologue, and in turn help to explain a number of weird preoccupations around which Bloom's thoughts gravitate in the second half of the chapter: his comic speculations on the erotic power of musk, for instance, and the pheronal attraction to each other of dogs, other mammals, and, by implication, humans ("Animals go by that. Yes now, look at it that way. We're the same" [13.1026–31]); his correlated interest in the movements and motivations of birds and, more prominently, the humanoid little bat that flits from Gerty's monologue into his own;[23] and, everywhere beneath these objects of curiosity, his obliquely conveyed absorption in the ideas of unconscious attraction and "animal magnetism." This is yet another function served by Bloom's discovery of the stoppage of his watch in "Nausicaa": his puzzlement about its malfunctioning leads him, immediately before his thoughts on olfaction, into a meditation on "magnetic influence" (13.984)—a term popularized by Mesmer—and, in particular, the "magnetic influence" of Boylan and Molly on each other and himself, the "hidden attraction" that mysteriously draws Gerty and himself together from different poles of Dublin (13.982–96). Whether "magnetic fluids" of the kind postulated by Mesmer, Puységur, and their successors shared the physical characteristics of a fluid irradiated like the musky grains of scent that Bloom's nose detects emanating from Gerty (13.1015–21) or those of radiation transmitted through an invisible ether was a matter of debate while belief in animal magnetism flourished; even so, some reflection on its hidden "intercessory" power—a correctively sexualized and physical counter to the spiritualistically "pure radiance" (13.08) attributed to the Blessed Virgin in the "radiant little vision" of Gerty's monologue (13.511)—seems to underlie Bloom's thoughts on olfaction and its permeating role in coupling. Particularly because historians of science have come to see eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theories of animal magnetism as precursors to a modern theory of the Unconscious—but also because Bloom characterizes smell as a "mysterious thing" (13.1015) capable of impinging on consciousness "without [one's] knowing it" (13.1021)—what seems at stake in his reflections on the subliminally attractive and repulsive powers of smell in lovemaking are large questions of the unconscious determinants of human coupling, the role of "personal magnetism" and even that of what Bloom calls "instinct" (13.1129).[24] When coupled with and read against Gerty's monologue, accordingly, Bloom's in turn raises even larger and more irresoluble speculations about the delicate ways in which culture and nature—"the conventions of Society with a big ess" (13.666) and "crazy longings" (13.779)—must mutually intervene to enable the act of human pairing. As happens everywhere else in the double narrative of "Nausicaa," "twice nought makes one" (13.977).

Something of this conflationary sort occurs, perhaps, in many of the memories Bloom sustains in "Nausicaa" of Molly—in passages where eye and nose, romantic scene painting and familiarizing olfactory intimacy come synaesthetically together rather than standing opposed:

> And when the painters were in Lombard street west. Fine voice that fellow had. How Giuglini began. Smell that I did. Like flowers. It was too. Violets. Came from the turpentine probably in the paint. Make their own use of everything. Same time doing it scraped her slipper on the floor so they wouldn't hear. (13.1000–1004)

> Nightstock in Mat Dillon's garden where I kissed her shoulder. Wish I had a full length oilpainting of her then. June that was too I wooed. The year returns. (13.1090–92).

Passages like these, in which Bloom dwells paradoxically on the smell of painting (or of a visually memorable scene), complement those in which Gerty dwells on the look of the nose. Bloom's (mnemonic) romantic scene painting in passages like these is altogether different from the kind of visual idealizing in which he and Gerty indulge in the first half of the chapter.

"WHEN YOU GO OUT NEVER KNOW WHAT DANGERS"

The coordination of Gerty's romantic and domestic fantasies in the first part of "Nausicaa" with the Litany of Our Lady of Loreto—given their mutual glorification of the figure of an idealized mother who, capable of "powerful protection" (13.380), serves as a "comfortress" (13.442) and "haven of refuge for the afflicted" (13.444–45)—leads to a view of domestic love as a source of protection, shelter, and security. For the adulterously wounded Bloom, by contrast, marital love is anything but secure, since it leads to the immense pain of betrayal and, potentially, abandonment. If one effect of Gerty's monologue is to play up fantasies of the kinds of bliss and protective comfort that love can afford, one countereffect of Bloom's monologue is to dramatize the kinds of pain and anguish to which it makes one vulnerable. These range, in his characteristically encyclopedic thinking, from forms of mere physical or venereal pain—thoughts on friction burns, "white fluxions," rashes and skin irritations punctuate his monologue (13.979–81, 13.1081–84, 13.1194)—to forms of psychological pain like those ensuing from but not exclusive to adultery. His meditations on the bereavement of widows and widowers, for instance (13.1225–39), and on the separation of sailors (like Odysseus) from their wives (13.1152–62)—both reflecting the anguish of the loss of attachment—are an overdetermined effect of both his visit to the Dignam household and his fears of losing Molly. Revealing the matured experience of someone who has long ago passed through the excitement of romance and courtship rituals into the anguish of a long-soured

marriage, his thoughts open up yet another contrastive way of reading the two sections of "Nausicaa": Gerty's monologue is not simply postcoital, but also premarital, while Bloom's is not simply postcoital, but postmarital as well. Bloom's susceptibility to these darker kinds of thought on the consequences of loving is deepened, moreover, not simply by his recent experience of betrayal, but by the gathering darkness into which the second half of "Nausicaa" moves.

The beginning of the fireworks display, at the exact moment when Gerty's monologue gives way to Bloom's, indicates precisely the time when "twilight" becomes more dark than light, dark enough for man-made illumination to become visible and outshine sunlight. In the darkness that gathers as the fireworks display continues and Bloom's monologue progresses, accordingly, a world once pervasively visible and aglow with illumination starts to produce from within itself, in isolated and scattered spots, specks of light that ward off a deepening night: stars, glowworms, and streetlights start to appear, along with homes and lighthouses illumined from within (13.1068–80, 13.1124, 13.1137–38, 13.1166–84, 13.1212). At the same time, the vision which made possible the erotic posing and flirtation of the first part of the chapter becomes occluded and fallibly deceptive (13.1076–79). Under these conditions, it becomes harder for Bloom to see, easier for others out there on the prowl in the dusk to see him:

> A last lonely candle wandered up the sky from Mirus bazaar . . . and broke, drooping, and shed a cluster of violet but one white stars. They floated, fell: they faded. The shepherd's hour: the hour of folding: hour of tryst. From house to house, giving his everwelcome double knock, went the nine o'clock postman, the glowworm's lamp at his belt gleaming here and there through the laurel hedges. And among the five young trees a hoisted lintstock lit the lamp at Leahy's terrace. By screens of lighted windows, by equal gardens a shrill voice went crying, wailing. . . . Twittering the bat flew here, flew there. Far out over the sands the coming surf crept, grey. Howth settled for slumber, tired of long days, of yumyum rhododendrons (he was old) and felt gladly the night breeze lift, ruffle his fell of ferns. He lay but opened a red eye unsleeping, deep and slowly breathing, slumberous but awake. And far on Kish bank the anchored lightship twinkled, winked at Mr Bloom. (13.1168–81)

If Bloom, like Gerty, was the aggressive voyeur in the first part of the chapter, here, by contrast, he imagines himself spotted and watched. Not unreasonably, he becomes vulnerable in this position and is put in mind not of the excitement, but of the danger of chance encounters, particularly for women, and even of the possibility of being mugged and hurt:

> Howth. Bailey light. Two, four, six, eight, nine. See. Has to change or they might think it a house. Wreckers. Grace Darling. People afraid of the dark. Also glowworms, cyclists: lighting up time. Jewels diamonds flash better. Women. Light

> is a kind of reassuring. Not going to hurt you. Better now of course than long ago. Country roads. Run you through the small guts for nothing. Still two types there are you bob against. Scowl or smile. Pardon! Not at all. (13.1068–74)

In the same way that the twilight, romantically scenic to Gerty, begins to seem ominously gloomy and even dangerous to Bloom, so too do the lighthouses, lightships, beacons, and ocean-going vessels that recur to him here and throughout his monologue (13.1068–70, 13.1164–65, 13.1180–87). For Gerty, these were picturesque components of a romantic seascape illumined by the sun (13.02–8, 13.627–28); for Bloom they become emblems of frail, huddled, human families—like Grace Darling's—seeking mutual protection by illuminating from within a universe dark with always encroaching disaster. Much the same is true of Gerty's and Bloom's reflections on "vessels": in Gerty's monologue, underscored as it is by the Litany of Our Lady of Loreto ("spiritual vessel, pray for us, honourable vessel, pray for us, vessel of singular devotion, pray for us, mystical rose" [13.373–74]), "vessels" are conceived as repositories of spiritual power capable of benevolent intercession in worldly affairs; in Bloom's monologue, by contrast, they become frail containers of human cargo barely strong enough to ward off the catastrophe of imminent engulfment:

> Dreadful life sailors have too. Big brutes of oceangoing steamers floundering along in the dark, lowing out like seacows. . . . Others in vessels, bit of a handkerchief sail, pitched about like snuff at a wake. . . . Hanging on to a plank or astride of a beam for grim life, lifebelt round him, gulping salt water. . . . (13.1148–61).

Retrospectively, of course, Bloom's thoughts on the dangers of the chance outing or encounter—"Something in all those superstitions because when you go out you never know what dangers" (13.1159–60)—reveal an awareness of the possibility that Gerty might well have encountered in the strange man with whom she has flirted more the ill-intentioned "scowler" than the benignly smiling admirer ("two types there are you bob against. Scowl or smile"); indeed, this awareness leads him in a later section of his monologue to worry more particularly about the safety and security of his daughter, who resembles Gerty in being too young to have learned the need for cautiously prudent fear ("Milly, no sign of funk. . . . Don't know what death is at that age" [13.1187–89]).

"MUTOSCOPE PICTURES"

In the schema he prepared for Carlo Linati, Joyce called the style of "Nausicaa" a "retrogressive progression" rather than a tumescent/detumescent sequence—in part perhaps because Bloom's matured and postcoitally disillusioned realizations cast retrospective insight back over Gerty's; in part because Bloom's dalliance with Gerty within view of Howth causes him, like Rip Van Winkle, to return in memory to the time of his courtship with Molly

(13.1109–16); but also perhaps because "Nausicaa" "quotes" and critically reworks earlier scenes from Joyce's writing. A chapter whose two parts are already crisscrossed by proliferating doublings and contrasts, in other words, becomes even more elaborately paired with yet other scenes in Joyce's works. "Nausicaa" takes place in the same locale as "Proteus," for instance—on Sandymount Strand—and countless parallels, as critics have shown, accordingly weave the two chapters into each other.[25] Stephen's interest in the Aristotelian "diaphane" returns in Gerty's and Bloom's fascination with her "transparents" (13.426, 13.502, 13.716, 13.929, 13.1262); Stephen's morbid study of a dog sniffing another dog's corpse gets comically reprised in Bloom's thoughts about the sniffing of dogs in love (13.1028–30); and the bat that appears in Stephen's disturbing quatrain about the life-draining powers of love sails out of literature and into the twilight in which Bloom and Gerty woo. Bloom also gives concrete life to Stephen's more abstract thoughts on menstruation (3.393–98, 13.777–84, 13.822–27, 13.1031–33); and he recalls, like Stephen, the shards of a dream from the night before (3.365–69, 13.878, 13.1240–41).

But in another form of "retrogressive progression," as critics have extensively shown, "Nausicaa" also heavily evokes the fourth chapter of *A Portrait of the Artist* and, in particular, the scene in which Stephen, like Gerty and Bloom, stares with erotic fascination at the bird-girl on the beach.[26] The twinning of these two scenes—one in which an adolescent girl and the other in which an adolescent boy gazes in beatifying rapture at a member of the opposite sex—makes it difficult to see the division of "Nausicaa" into two parts as one of gender opposition. Since, in many ways, Gerty might be regarded as a female version of Stephen, the two parts of the chapter seem divided more along generational than gender lines: Gerty and Stephen are young, while Bloom is middle-aged, hurt, and beyond the kind of idealizations to which Gerty and Stephen are given. Gerty, who "would be twentytwo in November" (13.221–22), is a few months younger than the Stephen of *Ulysses,* and, like him, though she reflects a different level of culture and educational experience, might be said to have been contaminated by literature:[27] Stephen reads the philosophers and fathers of the church, while Gerty reads magazines and romances, but both have let literature and the imagination overpower their experience of the world. Gerty's imaginary relations to Reggy Wylie, moreover, are not that different from Stephen's equally spectral relations to "E. C.": her desire to discover her "beau ideal" (13.209) somewhere in reality—in Reggy Wylie, in Bloom *("Art thou real, my ideal?"* [13.645–46])—recalls pretty directly Stephen's desire to "meet in the real world the unsubstantial image which his soul so constantly beheld" of a female who would "transfigure" him (*P* 65). Both Gerty's monologue and *A Portrait,* furthermore, offer extended accounts of adolescent pretension: the Byronic posturing of Stephen's "Madame, I never eat muscatel grapes" (*P* 63), for instance, reappears in Gerty's "wonder[ing] why you couldn't eat something poetical like violets or roses" (13.230). Even the pervasive theological undercast of Stephen's character and consciousness in *A*

Portrait and *Ulysses* reappears in "Nausicaa," though in a distinctly feminized and Mariolatrous form. The effect that Joyce gets by enabling us to see Gerty as a female version of Stephen is also, finally, Homeric.[28]

Given their mutual preoccupations with painting and portraiture, it might even be said that Gerty's half of "Nausicaa" evokes the whole of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*—for which, incidentally, "the *Lady's Pictorial*" is nothing much more than a re-gendered synonym. Like that novel, though in capsule form, the chapter offers a telescopic account of male and female acculturation and development from infancy to adolescence. Striking details from early parts of *A Portrait* reappear in mutated form in the first part of "Nausicaa": the infantile language, a bedwetting incident (13.393–403), "little mariner[s]" (13.64)—Stephen sings a hornpipe while the twins, like Joyce in the earliest photographs ever taken of him, wear "sailor suits" (13.14)—a child being pushed and falling in the dirt (13.47–62), and, of course, the exploration of adolescent pretension. In the chapter's first line of dialogue, baby Boardman is ominously being taught how to say, as any full-grown Irishman must if he is to survive, "I want a drink" (13.26). And in the "altercation" of the twins over a sandcastle modeled on the Martello tower—one of them as "headstrong" as the other is "selfwilled" (13.42–48)—we see the primordia of the rivalry between Stephen and Mulligan: rather than fighting over the key ("It is mine. I paid the rent" [1.631]), they fight with their sister for possession of a ball (13.247–50). The twins' names, it has been suggested, "represent warring soldiers and sailors (Tommy Atkins and Jack Tar respectively),"[29] and so map out two possible futures for these boys, as do parallel traits attributed to the three girlfriends: Cissy Caffrey, the athlete and tomboy (13.275–77, 13.478–84, 13.754); "squinty Edy" Boardman (13.128), the girl with glasses and all that they might imply; and Gerty, "the womanly woman" (13.435). All three girls are also obviously in training to become mothers: Gerty, already "just like a second mother in the house" (13.325–26), has taken on her mother's and father's responsibilities (10.1205–11, 13.320–34); Cissy, gifted with a "quick motherwit," is helping to raise her twin brothers (13.75); and Edy, too, is "pretending to nurse the baby" (13.522–23). Gerty and her companions, Bloom notes—all of them like Milly Bloom in undergoing "growing pains" (13.1202)—"want to be grownups. Dressing in mother's clothes. Time enough, understand all the ways of the world" (13.896–97). Their posturings and pretensions, like Stephen's, are an essential part of their growing up, since only by pretending can they grow into the roles they aspire to fill.

Like all young people, as Richard Ellmann has pointed out—and not least like Stephen of *A Portrait*—Gerty thinks of herself as unique and exceptional ("she was something aloof, apart, in another sphere, . . . she was not of them and never would be" [13.602–3]), though her sense of singularity is paradoxically conveyed in a style that is imitative, conventional, and heavy with implications of mass reproduction.[30] One effect of this tension is to highlight the youthful naïveté of Gerty's thinking, the vast discrepancy between her own belief in her exceptionality and our perception, corroborated by Bloom, of the sheer itera-

tive ordinariness of her circumstances and desires ("Names change: that's all. Lovers: yum yum"). Bloom's monologue, by contrast, not only puts Gerty's into perspective but also works in just the opposite way: though Bloom thinks of himself as barely passing muster in the ranks of the ordinary (even his wife finds him dull on June 16), he does so in the signal stream-of-consciousness style for which *Ulysses* in part earned its reputation as a work of avant-garde literary innovation. As a counterfoil to Gerty's monologue, one of the effects of his, paradoxically, is to recuperate a sense of how exceptional and singular the ordinary can be. In reading Bloom's monologue, the reader may also feel—in another form of "retrogressive progression"—the pleasure of a return to the familiar, particularly after the virtuosic stylistic experimentation of *Ulysses* from "Wandering Rocks" through the first part of "Nausicaa," and even something of a nostalgia for the "normative" stream-of-consciousness chapters that placed us "inside" of Bloom early in the novel. This nostalgia for a past experience doubles with Bloom's nostalgia for Molly and the early years of his marriage (and with Odysseus's for home), and arguably solidifies our attachment to Bloom as a character here. For the style of his monologue in "Nausicaa" is not quite the same as that of the interior monologues of the chapters extending from "Calypso" through "Lestrygonians": it is much more elliptic and fragmentary. "Suppose I when I was? No. Gently does it" (13.831–32 [undid my trousers]); "Besides I can't be so if Molly" (13.837 [ugly]); "It's so hard to find one who" (13.869). One has to be familiar with Bloom, canny to his tics and habits of association, to fill in the blanks and read fragments like these.[31] The experience of reading his monologue therefore complements and contrasts with the experience of reading Gerty's: rather than experiencing the delight and thrill of novelty, as Bloom and Gerty do in their tumescent states, we experience the pleasure of returning to the familiar. Somewhere between two such poles as these, too, our experience of pairing happens—whether we look, like Gerty, for the foreign and exotic and unique in our partners, or like Bloom, for the comfort and security of the familiar.

"STILL THERE'S DESTINY IN IT"

"Nausicaa" is also thematically preoccupied with the question of whether the mysteriously intimate business of pairing is determined by what the chapter variously calls "fate," "kismet," or "destiny" (13.99, 13.973, 13.1062, 13.1239); or occasioned by the opposing operations of luck, accident, contingency, and mere chance (13.179–85, 13.226, 13.349, 13.651, 13.808, 13.1157, 13.1249–51, 13.1271). At the end of the chapter, on the one hand, when Bloom tosses away the stick with which he wrote his incomplete message to Gerty in the sand, he thinks of their meeting as fortuitously random:

> He flung his wooden pen away. The stick fell in silted sand, stuck. Now if you were trying to do that for a week on end you couldn't. Chance. We'll never meet again. But it was lovely. Goodbye, dear. Thanks. Made me feel so young. (13.1270–73)

From this perspective, couples match up, rub together, and blaze up into fricative heat for the same indeterminably fluky reasons that fires burst out in grass:

> Howth a while ago amethyst. Glass flashing. That's how that wise man what's his name with the burning glass. Then the heather goes on fire. It can't be tourists' matches. What? Perhaps the sticks dry rub together in the wind and light. Or broken bottles in the furze act as a burning glass in the sun. (13.1137–41)

But "Nausicaa"—its tumescent first half in itself a kind of hypermagnifying and "burning glass"—makes it clear that there is more to the stirring up of heat and fire than sheer indeterminacy. Bloom, after all, has been seeking some form of sexual attention and gratification since he picked up Martha's letter and the idea of masturbating at nine in the morning (hence the pressing density of phrases from her letter throughout "Nausicaa"). And Gerty, "wearing blue for luck, hoping against hope . . . because she thought perhaps [Reggy Wylie] might be out" (13.179–83), is also obviously culturally primed and "waiting for something to happen" (13.896). "Out on spec," as Bloom puts it while meditating on Gerty and her friends—out, that is, on the chance of finding someone—"they believe in chance because like themselves," presumably, they do not know exactly what they are looking for except that they are certainly looking (13.808–9). And those who look tend to find, though not perhaps what or where they thought ("never know what you find" [13.1249]): "they say if the flower withers she wears she's a flirt. All are. Daresay she felt I [was flirting]. When you feel like that [flirtatious] you often meet what you feel" (13.827–29). Bloom's and Gerty's spectral liaison, in short, seems to come about "accidentally on purpose" (13.485), as a result of forces somewhere halfway between aleatory happenstance and purposive determination. Isn't this the way it always happens? For, as Bloom notes while thinking about the odd circumstance that brought the Caffrey twins' ball—and Gerty's attention—rolling his way, "every bullet has its billet" (13.951): nothing, that is, happens by chance. In Bloom's case, moreover, dalliance with Gerty within view of Howth serves the therapeutically wishful and hardly random purpose of somewhat undoing the injury he has incurred on June 16, by rejuvenating a sustained memory of his youth and courtship of Molly ("Made me feel so young"): "June that was too I wooed. The year returns. History repeats itself. . . . All quiet on Howth now. . . . Where we. . . . So it returns. Think you're escaping and run into yourself. Longest way round is the shortest way home" (13.1092–1111). Who knows but that Bloom under different circumstances—were he ten years younger and, by chance, unacquainted with Molly—might not have pushed his meeting with Gerty one stage further: "Suppose I spoke to her. What about? Bad plan however if you don't know how to end the conversation [that is, to stop the escalating involve-

ment]" (13.862–63); "French letter still in my pocketbook. Cause of half the trouble. But might happen sometime, I don't think" (13.877–78). For Gerty has, in another of the chapter's innumerable doublings—and notwithstanding the condescension with which readers have often understood her—enough of Molly in her to enable us to see back through her naïveté into the naïveté of Molly's youth, too: the breathless strings of conjunctions (particularly "becauses") that link her thoughts at times anticipate the peculiarities of Molly's "style" (13.179–87, 13.695–708); she is also like the young Molly in Gilbraltar in being superstitious, and in "waiting, always waiting to be asked" (13.208); and she is, after all—however great the "mistake in the valuation" (13.1125)—attracted to the "foreign gentleman that was sitting on the rocks" (13.1302; compare with 13.415–17, 13.656–59) for all the same reasons that Molly was:

> Looking out over the sea she told me. Evening like this, but clear, no clouds. I always thought I'd marry a lord or a rich gentleman coming with a private yacht. *Buenas noches, señorita. El hombre ama la muchacha hermosa.* Why me? Because you were so foreign from the others. (13.1206–10)

The only difference between then and now is the clarity and conviction with which Bloom wooed Molly ("Evening like this, but clear, no clouds"), as opposed to the moral and emotional ambiguity with which he relates to Gerty. Even so, "Molly and Milly" (13.785), "Molly and Josie Powell" (13.814), "Martha, she" (13.782): Gerty spectrally evokes and doubles for so many of the significant women in Bloom's life that she comes to resemble "that half tabby-white tortoiseshell in the City Arms with the letter em on her forehead" of Bloom's recollection (13.1136–37)—an amalgamation of remotely recognizable prototypes amid which stands out the primary sign of Molly.

"Still there's destiny in it, falling in love" (13.973), Bloom therefore thinks, in considering how strange it is that from the limited pool of eligible candidates who form a person's inevitably small and circumscribed social world—think of Smalltown, USA—and especially given the infinite idiosyncrasies of desire ("it's so hard to find one who" [13.869]), people nonetheless manage regularly to find each other, pair up, and mate: "as God made them he matched them" (13.976). Do they do so for romantically fated and impelling reasons or simply because of a circumstantial luck of the draw? Part of the wonder of Bloom's monologue is its spectacular meditation on the ubiquity and weirdness of coupling, the mysteriousness with which individuals of all shapes and proclivities somehow manage—like the exotic orchid which the Duchesse de Guermantes keeps on her balcony in Proust's novel—to find an appropriately receptive other:[32]

> Just compare for instance those others. Wife locked up at home, skeleton in the cupboard. Allow me to introduce my. Then they trot you out some kind of a nondescript, wouldn't know what to call her. Always see a fellow's weak point in his wife. Still there's destiny in it, falling in love. . . . Chaps that would go to the dogs if some woman didn't take them in hand. Then little chits of girls, height of a shilling in coppers, with little hubbies. As God made them he matched them. . . . Or old rich chap of seventy and blushing bride. Marry in May and repent in December. . . .
>
> Other hand a sixfooter with a wifey up to his watchpocket. Long and the short of it. Big he and little she. . . . Woman and man that is. Fork and steel. Molly, he. (13.970–79, 13.992–93)

And the characteristically encyclopedic list goes on: "pretty girls and ugly men marrying. Beauty and the beast" (13.836–37); "a married man with a single girl" (13.873); Milly and a "young student" (13.928); "nurse Callan" and "young doctor O'Hare" (13.960–61); "poor man O'Connor" and "some good matronly woman in a porkpie hat to mother him" (13.1232–34); "and Mrs Breen and Mrs Dignam once like that too, marriageable" (13.1232–34). Even the citizen has a wife—and a sister-in-law with "three fangs in her mouth" who is on the marriage market ("Imagine that early in the morning at close range. Everyone to his taste as Morris said when he kissed the cow" [13.1221–25]). Like Bloom and Gerty—and the two stylistically disparate monologues through which they are mediated—even the weirdest of all things in "Nausicaa" pair. The chapter is infinitely preoccupied with the process through which this happens: with the circumstantiality of meetings; the dynamics of flirtation and ways of advertising availability (13.916–17, 13.922–23); the tricks and subterfuges of invitational allurement (13.796–805, 13.993–96, 13.1007–8); the awkwardness of first dates ("Worst is beginning" [13.879; compare with 13.862–66]); the fashions and forms of courtship rituals (13.829–33, 13.838–40); the monumental significance of the first kiss (13.886–91); the disillusionments and habituating routine following marriage ("aftereffect not pleasant"). In one way of reading it, "Nausicaa" amounts to a metaphysics of coitus. Its two parts (and partners) draw out an immense field of tensions and contrasts—between femininity and masculinity, youth and age, culture and nature, conventionality and idiosyncrasy, idealism and practicality, fate and chance; between tumescent idealization and detumescent letdown; between naive inexperience and world-weary maturity; between the wish to be and find someone singular and unique and the wish to be and find someone companionably familiar; between the wish for security and union with a mate and the fear of being hurt and afflicted with loss. Somewhere amid the play of all these proliferating tensions and differentiations, pairing up surely and sometimes love take place.

Reading the Disabled Woman

Gerty MacDowell and the Stigmaphilic Space of "Nausicaa"

ANGELA LEA NEMECEK

As readers of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, we first encounter Gerty MacDowell during "Wandering Rocks." Joyce's encyclopedic account of the activities of both major and minor characters on the afternoon of June 16, 1904 fleetingly presents a host of physical and cognitive differences. From the one-legged sailor patriotically singing on Eccles Street; to the blind stripling on his way to retrieve his tuning fork from the Ormond Bar; to the harried and eccentric figure of Cashel Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdall Farrell, who accidentally knocks the blind stripling down; to Gerty herself, carrying her father's "lino letters" and walking too slowly to catch a glimpse of the vice regal cavalcade (*U* 10.1207), "Wandering Rocks" presents brief displays of difference matter-of-factly.

Three episodes later, in "Nausicaa," the state of physical difference with which *Ulysses* is heretofore peripatetically concerned finally becomes the object of more sustained engagement. Through Gerty's brief relationship with Leopold Bloom, we begin to see that physical difference occupies a crucial position within the novel, helping to illuminate a space in which models of identity and social relations that rely on normative bodies can begin to be challenged and revised. While I am not suggesting that Joyce himself intended a radical critique of ableism, I believe that an examination of Gerty's character reveals her crucial role in shoring up the novel's implicit questioning of compulsory normativity. Far from being a conventional, sentimental heroine, Gerty MacDowell embodies a powerful resistance to eugenic ideologies of standardization that pervade the twentieth century, positing in their place an ethics of bodily particularity.

MODERNISM AND EUGENIC IDEOLOGY

To examine Gerty's relationship to ideologies of standardization, we must first understand the pervasiveness of eugenic ideology during the modernist period. Disability theorist Lennard J. Davis has written extensively about the development of the concept of the "normal" body, and its particular relationship to disability in the twentieth century. Davis traces the beginnings of corporeal norming to the rise of statistics—specifically, to the work of nineteenth-century French mathematician Adolphe Quetelet.[1] Observing that "[s]tatistics is bound up with eugenics," Davis notes the ways in which statistics seek to identify and manage deviations from the norm, thereby creating the notion of a "standard" body (26). Indeed, Sir Francis Galton, the British statistician who infamously coined the term "eugenics," took Quetelet's notion of the "normal distribution" one step further by ranking various deviations, which led to "[a] new ideal of ranked order [that] is powered by the imperative of the norm, and then is supplemented by the notion of progress, human perfectibility and *the elimination of deviance*, to create a dominating, hegemonic vision of what the human body should be" (35, emphasis mine). In addition to being rooted in a fundamentally racist and classist fear of cultural "degeneracy,"[2] this hegemonic vision of the normal body excluded a range of people with disabilities: the deaf, the mentally ill, the cognitively disabled, alcoholics, and those with congenital anomalies, among many others (Davis 38).

This eugenic ideology of bodily perfectibility persisted well into the twentieth century in both America and Europe and, despite its later association with Nazi extremism, was a staple of mainstream culture during the 1920s. In 1927, the Supreme Court case *Buck vs. Bell* explicitly legalized forcible eugenic sterilization in the U.S., which, in some states, remained legal until the mid-1970s.[3] Although less widely practiced in Britain, compulsory sterilization enjoyed a reasonable degree of approval within the scientific community (Davis 38). Many British health officials who were uncomfortable with compulsory sterilization vigorously campaigned for what they called "voluntary sterilization" during the 1920s and early 1930s.[4] Scientists were by no means the only prominent cultural figures to support eugenic programs. The list of modernist writers on both sides of the Atlantic who subscribed to eugenic philosophy is a long one, including T. S. Eliot, George Bernard Shaw, Rebecca West, and H. L. Mencken.[5] Tellingly, Joyce was among a handful of authors to speak

out against eugenics in his writings, most notably using Stephen Dedalus in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* to launch a critique (Childs 13). Stephen disputes what he calls the "dreary" notion that women's beauty functions merely as a vehicle for the propagation of the species, stating, "I dislike that way out. It leads to eugenics rather than to esthetic" (*P* 244). Because Joyce was writing at a time when this ideology was so pervasive, and because he himself was skeptical of it, examining Gerty MacDowell's physical difference in relation to eugenic notions of standardization and perfectibility seems all the more important.

CLAIMING GERTY AS A DISABLED WOMAN

Most critics have regarded Gerty as a character contaminated by the trappings of an emergent mass culture and consumer-based society. When her disability is discussed, it is largely read as a symbol—or even a *result*—of the social "disease" from which she suffers. Although some recent "Nausicaa" critics have regarded Gerty as sexually subversive, they have failed to reconcile her disability with, or include her disability in, this transgressiveness. Other scholars have acknowledged her disability only insofar as it establishes Gerty as a kind of second-rate disabled character who lacks the acute social awareness of the blind stripling. In short, Gerty is generally read as conventional, uninteresting, and flat, or as somehow subversive *in spite of* her disability. I will argue that the critical failure to read Gerty's presence as socially transformative stems largely from a failure to register her identity as that of a *disabled woman*, with all the particularities attendant upon that dual designation. The primary framework underlying this part of my analysis is Alexa Schriempf's "interactionist bridge" between feminism and disability.

Schriempf's model of reconciling feminist concerns with disability issues originates with Michelle Fine and Adrienne Asch's premise that "disabled women in general do not deal with the same oppressions that non-disabled women do."[6] Noting that disabled women "have not been 'trapped' by many of the social expectations feminists have challenged"—such as forced marriage, subordinate paid work, and childbearing—Schriempf contends that we must not take the typical *feminist* concerns to be necessarily those most pressing in the lives of disabled women (54). An interactionist way of looking at identity, Schriempf argues, will help uncover the complex and inseparable intersections among disabled and

female identities in a way that additive models of oppression have not and cannot.

The almost universal failure to read Gerty comprehensively arises from a failure to see her as not merely disabled, or merely female, but as a disabled woman—that is, as a site where critical concerns about gender and sexuality, as well as those about disabled embodiment, are intricately interwoven. A feminist reading of Gerty that dismisses her disability effectively excludes disability from female identity, just as a disability studies reading of Gerty's character that does not take into account the particularities of gender excludes female identity from the realm of disability criticism.

In establishing Gerty's interactionist identity, I will explore the unique critical potential inherent in her disabled female presence. This potential is linked to the inter-subjective emotional and sexual pleasure she shares with Bloom and, more specifically, to their stigmatized identities. Underlying this piece of my analysis is Erving Goffman's stigma theory. Goffman coined the terms "stigmaphobe" and "stigmaphile" to characterize two possible orientations toward marks of social difference. In the stigmaphobic orientation, which describes the way the world of dominant culture operates most of the time, "conformity is ensured through fear of stigma."[7] In other words, "stigma" here is just that—a mark of shame, contamination, difference, all of which Goffman sums up as "spoiled identity." The stigmaphilic ethos, by contrast, enables the formation of what Goffman calls a "cult of the stigmatized."[8] In this space of possibility, the stigmatizing mark that makes a person different, and which would otherwise be a source of social rejection, actually becomes the basis for social affiliation. Michael Warner succinctly summarizes this orientation:

> The stigmaphile space is where we find a commonality with those who suffer stigma, and in this alternative realm learn to value the very things the rest of the world despises—not just because the world despises them, but because the world's pseudo-morality is a phobic and inauthentic way of life. (43)

What Warner calls the "stigmaphile space" becomes, then, not only a site where social relations on the basis of physical difference are possible, but also a space in which mainstream social relations *must* be deconstructed, examined, and revised so that a more authentic morality can be achieved.

By reading Gerty and Bloom's exchange of glances and pleasure in terms of its stigmaphilic content, we can begin to reclaim the critical space that the scene on Sandymount Strand helps to expose inside the world of *Ulysses*, one in which configurations of non-normative bodies offer possibilities for social relations not rooted in conformity. Moreover, even Gerty's activities as a consumer, which may seem at first glance to be merely stigmaphobic attempts at social standardization, furnish ironic proof of the very intransigence of Gerty's physical difference and, therefore, of the fundamental impossibility of conformity. The persistence of Gerty's difference presents a powerful challenge to a eugenicist society preoccupied with the perfectibility of the body—a critique that is possible only because her identity as a disabled woman affords her critical distance from the all-consuming project of commodified, standardized femininity. The stigmaphilic space of Joyce's novel thus provides an opportunity for re-imagining social relations that do not require, or even tacitly affirm, normative bodies.

CRITICAL RECEPTION OF GERTY: A BRIEF HISTORY

In dismissing Gerty as banal and vapid, several critics have emphasized her link to a sentimentalist predecessor, Gertrude Flint of Maria Cummins' 1854 novel *The Lamplighter.* Suzette Henke writes that Gerty has been "brainwashed by popular literature"[9] and suggests that her "embarrassing proximity to the heroines of popular romance may account for her surprising lack of popularity as a subject of critical attention" (132). Extending this dismissive attitude, Patrick McGee seeks to treat Gerty not as a character at all but "as style,"[10] an approach that draws upon Joyce's own claim, in a letter to Frank Budgen, that "Nausicaa" captures a "namby-pamby marmalady drawersy (alto la!) style" (*LI* 135).

More recent work has complicated these notions of Gerty's "namby-pamby" emptiness, suggesting, for example, she presents an ironic variation on the feminine virtues presented in *The Lamplighter*,[11] and that her sexual agency during her masturbatory encounter with Bloom subverts the cultural norm of women as mere objects of men's scopophilic gaze.[12] Indeed, most of the scholarly work that grants Gerty any critical agency and self-awareness stresses her relation to the interconnected issues of gender, sexuality, and embodiment.[13] Despite a surging critical interest in the status of "the body" in literature, not all forms of embodiment have been adequately treated by Joyce criticism.

Specifically, the difficult nexus of female and disabled embodiment at which Gerty is positioned leads to limited readings of her identity. For example, Philip Sicker importantly contends that Gerty's sexual enjoyment during "Nausicaa" is gender-subversive, asserting that the pleasure Gerty takes during the masturbatory encounter with Bloom amounts to "transgressive behavior as a desiring subject" (118). Borrowing from Laura Mulvey's work on the scopophilic male gaze, Sicker argues that Gerty breaks the rule of female passivity and returns Bloom's gaze, in "a series of brief, intense glimpses" (118). Gerty ultimately behaves within this scene much as a male voyeur would, violating the gender norms that dictate women should merely be passive spectacles for men's erotic viewing (118). Further, Gerty's strategic manipulation of the erotic scene as she poses and reveals her body constitutes a show by which Gerty becomes the "mastering spectacle" (118).

This analysis ultimately sets Gerty's disability apart from her gender-subversiveness, reading her limp as a kind of limitation on her agency. Concluding that, despite her sexual transgressiveness, "her behavior must operate within a punishing framework of patriarchal *confinement*" (118, emphasis mine), Sicker links her limp with the limitations on her sexual power. Using the same diction of confinement to describe Gerty's disability as he uses to characterize the limitations of her sexual agency, he states that Gerty is "[c]onfined to her rock" (109). Calling her "*limited* by gender and bodily injury to covert watching" (120, emphasis mine), and "physically *restricted* and embarrassed by her painful limp" (117, emphasis mine), Sicker attributes pain and confinement to her physical disability—even though we are never told it causes either one—suggesting in no uncertain terms that disability hinders her agency.

This reading misses two crucial points: First, Gerty's disabled limb, and her strategic revelation of her disability, are literally central to the sexual provocation of "Nausicaa." Second, her identity as an eroticized, disabled character does not represent a limitation on gender transgression, but an interconnected form of sexual subversiveness. I will address each of these points in turn.

FOLDING DISABILITY INTO SEXUAL SUBVERSIVENESS: NORMATE DRAG IN THE STIGMAPHILE SPACE

Speaking of herself in an idealizing third-person narrative voice—a narratological disguise that mirrors her sartorial self-decoration—Gerty does

consider the possibility that her limp might be a detriment to her sexual appeal; she should have secured a husband by now, and the fact that she has failed to do so can only be attributed to her disability:

> . . . for she felt that the years were slipping by for her, one by one, and but for that one shortcoming she knew she need fear no competition and that was an accident coming down Dalkey hill and she always tried to conceal it. But it must end, she felt. If she saw that magic lure in his eyes there would be no holding back for her. (*U* 13.649–53)

The use of a third-person narrator, and the wording of her limp as "*that* one shortcoming," call into question whether Gerty herself views her disability as a shortcoming, or whether the narrator merely parrots the judgments of society. While ostensibly hiding her limp, Gerty goes to great lengths to decorate it. Wearing shoes that are "the newest thing in footwear" (13.165), Gerty shows off her "wellturned ankle" with its "perfect proportion" (13.167). The narrator goes on to tell us that Gerty's "shapely limbs [are] encased in finespun hose with highspliced heels and wide garter tops" (13.170). These passages suggest that Gerty, whether consciously or unconsciously, seeks to draw attention to the parts of herself that, as she might put it, "Society with a big ess" shuns (13.666).

Gerty's legs are not, however, merely decorated as passive objects for erotic male viewing; she also uses them to propel Bloom's sexual arousal and her own orgasm. As Sicker observes, intermittently quoting the episode:

> Sitting on a rock with legs crossed, she swings her foot to the rhythms of the nearby church music; then, "tingling in every nerve," she more vigorously "swung her foot in and out in time" (13.514, .498). As she leans further and further backward, ostensibly to view the Roman candles overhead, she is "trembling in every limb" (.728) . . . After this momentary spasm Gerty, like [Havelock] Ellis's young woman, walks slowly away from her solitary seat and rejoins the social collective. (93)

Although Sicker aims mainly to underscore the relationship between Gerty's masturbation and Ellis's sexological accounts of young, self-pleasuring women, we should also note that this entire passage centers upon

the sexual valence of Gerty's legs. She not only decorates and poses them as part of her lure for Bloom's gaze, but her legs also become the physical mechanism by which she stimulates *herself* to orgasm—suggesting that the term "short*coming*" works punningly to link physical disability and sexual pleasure.

These details about the sexualization of Gerty's legs and feet suggest a kind of self-conscious masquerade, as she shows off, and makes central to the sexual act, the very feature which she knows might render her unacceptable in the eyes of her target audience. Drawing on Joan Riviere's work, Tobin Siebers explains the concept of masquerade: "Riviere's 'woman,' however, puts on a socially stigmatized identity as her disguise . . . She displays her stigma to protect herself from her own anxiety and reprisals by men, but she does not pass."[14] Seen in this light, Gerty's choice quite literally to *display,* even accessorize, the very source of her stigma reveals a kind of stigmaphilic orientation: she embraces and makes central to her identity the very part of her self that would earn her pity or contempt in the world at large.

Thus, when Gerty flaunts her source of stigma for Bloom's viewing pleasure, she chooses her stigma as a source of affiliation. She causes Bloom (unknowingly at this point) to gaze upon and desire her for the very feature that, according to cultural mores, he *should* revile. This ongoing flaunting of her limb also makes the scene of revelation—in which Bloom first recognizes Gerty as "lame"—function as another kind of sexual climax. To analyze the scene of revelation properly, we must regard Gerty's decision to stand and walk—and to do so only after the orgasmic portion of the episode—as planned and intentional.

When she contemplates "that one shortcoming," we can see that Gerty appears interested in revealing her disability to Bloom, but wants to do so only on particular terms: ". . . she always tried to conceal it. But it must end, she felt. If she saw that magic lure in his eyes there would be no holding back for her" (13.653). The "magic lure" can be read as Bloom's sexual pleasure; and the cryptically uttered "it," which Gerty only says "must end," is the concealment of her limp. That is, after Bloom experiences his orgasm, Gerty will reveal her limp. This revelation represents not only the climax of her sexual management of Bloom, but also suggests a newfound openness Gerty exhibits about her disability.

Hiding her disability in plain sight, then choosing to reveal it on her own terms, Gerty initiates a game of disability "hide and seek" that parallels the general erotic titillation of "Nausicaa" that Sicker describes:

> . . . Gerty's erotic performance . . . constitutes what Roland Barthes terms a sexual "staging of appearance and disappearance": *her displayed body remains partly covered in the process of unveiling, promoting in the same moment a sense of visual absence and of imagined presence, a hybrid pleasure born of regulated disclosure and strategic concealment.* Despite his fiction of voyeuristic authority, Bloom is fleetingly aware that Gerty, and women in general, deliberately shape his pleasure . . . Gerty shares both his pleasure and the knowledge of what has produced it. Understanding the male voyeur's mounting desire to fantasize the removal of visual barriers, *[Gerty] manipulates various veils—from her hat to her undergarments to the dim evening light—which become the keys to her own complex erotic enjoyment.* (Sicker 95, emphasis mine)

Gerty's and Bloom's mutual pleasure stems from her careful management of the erotic scene. However, one "veil" that Gerty manipulates and Sicker overlooks is her disability. The parallel between Gerty's "regulated disclosure and strategic concealment" of her body in general, and of her disability in particular, is no accident. Gerty's disability, and her strategic deployment of it, works to constitute both her desire and Bloom's and to set the stage for much of the sexual pleasure—and subversiveness—written into this scene.

Indeed, much of Gerty's gratification arguably arises from her knowledge that Bloom takes pleasure in her body without knowing that it deviates from the norm. To put it bluntly, he desires a "cripple," but one he implicitly and unquestioningly reads as a "normate," temporarily reifying the code of bodily normativity that society makes compulsory.[15] The dichotomy between the cripple Gerty *is* and the normate that Bloom *mistakes her for* also reveals itself compellingly in the comparison between Gerty and the physically normative "skirtdancers and highkickers" (13.704), whom she understands to be the object of male desire: ". . . and [Gerty] wasn't ashamed and [Bloom] wasn't either to look in that immodest way like that because he couldn't resist the sight of *the wondrous revealment half offered* like those skirtdancers behaving so immodest before gentlemen and he kept on looking, looking" (13.730–3, emphasis mine). Both Gerty and the skirtdancers strategically use their legs to entice men sexually, but Gerty's legs are decidedly *not* normative. The "wondrous revealment half offered" as Gerty allows Bloom a glimpse up her skirt presages the other "revealment" that occurs when Gerty stands to walk: the disclosure of her limp.

Gerty encourages, even enforces, Bloom's desire without revealing her disability until he has already masturbated to her "show" of kicking legs. In this way, she participates in a kind of normate drag show, "dressing up like" a normative woman, but soon enough revealing her deviation from that norm. Here, Judith Butler's notions about gender performativity can help to illuminate the nature of the binary between normate and cripple that Gerty simultaneously invokes and troubles during her sexual encounter with Bloom:

> As much as drag creates a unified picture of "woman . . ." it also reveals the distinctness of those aspects of gendered experience which are falsely naturalized as a unity through the regulatory fiction of heterosexual coherence. *In imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself—as well as its contingency . . .*[16]

Just as gender drag reveals the contingency of gender, so too Gerty's performance of able-bodiedness reveals the social construction of normativity. Here, Gerty only appears to be a normate because of social presumptions about which bodies are desirable and which are not[17]; in other words, her sexual appeal, even her very presence inside this scene of erotic fantasy, automatically constructs her as a presumed normate. Gerty's "performance" therefore exposes and ultimately destabilizes the ideology of compulsory able-bodiedness that organizes Bloom's perceptions of her.

Schriempf describes what I would argue is a similar, albeit more contemporary, kind of normate drag when discussing the appearance of disabled model Ellen Stohl in a 1987 issue of *Playboy*:

> In the porn shots, her disability is rendered invisible. Her wheelchair, her primary means of mobility, is absent. She does not pose standing, but always sitting or lying down; there are no visible indications of her paraplegia. Yet, [the editors] include photographs of her in her everyday life, doing things that are not typically perceived as things that disabled people can participate in. A distinction is being made between her life as a sexual being and her life "on the streets"; in one, she has a clearly depicted sexuality, in the other; she has a clearly visible disability . . . (56).

Although Schriempf's analysis stresses the admittedly problematic visual segregation of Stohl's sexuality from her disability, she usefully

exemplifies a complex staging of able-bodiedness alongside a simultaneous revelation of disability—a pairing that productively troubles the dehumanizing presumption that a paraplegic has no intelligible sexuality or erotic appeal (57). Stohl's appearance in *Playboy* not only reveals that a disabled woman *is* a sexual being; it also forces onto an audience steeped in ableist assumptions the fact of their desire for a paraplegic woman.

When Gerty rises from the rock and limps, she similarly reveals that Bloom has desired a cripple all along, collapsing—or at the very least problematizing—the presumed binary between cripple and normate. This scene of revelation parallels the recognition that occurs when a presumably heterosexual man realizes the desire he has felt for a woman was really desire for a man. Indeed, this kind of misrecognition can lead to a version of what Eve Sedgwick has termed "homosexual panic," in which the heteronormative subject, filled with fear and rage at the threat of homosexual contact, can become murderous.[18] Although we might expect Bloom to experience a kind of "disability panic" at the moment of Gerty's revelation, the text, in fact, suggests deep ambivalence on his part toward Gerty's disability—an ambivalence that does not foreclose, but instead amplifies, Bloom's erotic attraction to Gerty.

The scene in which Gerty reveals her disability occurs shortly after Bloom's orgasm and her own, a climax in her once stilted language becomes lyrical in the moment of sexual release, famously punctuated by exclamatory "O!":

> And then a rocket sprang and bang shot blind blank and O! then the Roman candle burst and it was like a sigh of O! and everyone cried O! O! in raptures and it gushed out of a stream of rain gold hair threads and they shed and ah! They were all greeny dewy stars falling with golden, O so lovely, O, soft, sweet, soft! (13.735–40)

"O" clearly serves to express pleasure in this passage, mimicking the orgasmic vocalization itself. The orgasmic status of "O!" in this passage makes Bloom's thought when Gerty stands to walk—a thought visually set off on its own line—significant: "Tight boots? No, she's lame! O!" (13.771). Although his next thought is one of pity—"Poor girl!"—his initial reaction contains the same exclamation of pleasure that Joyce uses throughout the orgasm scene on the previous page, suggesting that Gerty's disability in fact evokes some degree of immediate, almost automatic, sexual pleasure (13.772).

Admittedly, Bloom soon muses, "Glad I didn't know it when she was on show" (13.775), and many critics have read this sentiment as one of relief that knowledge of her disability did not detract from his sexual attraction. Garry Leonard even euphemistically implies that seeing Gerty's limp might have rendered Bloom momentarily "limp" himself: "had he known about it beforehand, he could not have 'consumed' her display."[19] Jules Law similarly reads Bloom's "Glad I didn't know it" remark as indicative of "disgust."[20] Tellingly, however, on the very same page, both critics also note that Bloom's desire seems amplified after he learns of Gerty's disability. In replaying his voyeuristic experience, he finds that the awareness of Gerty's limp reignites his desire in a different way. Bloom now evaluates the sexual encounter as quite satisfying, even relative to other options, such as masturbating to Martha Clifford's letter: "I got the best of that. Damned glad that I didn't do it in the bathtub this morning over her silly I will punish you letter" (13.786–7). Even immediately following the revelation of Gerty's limp, Bloom observes: "Hot little devil all the same . . . *Curiosity like a nun or a negress or a girl with glasses*" (13.776–7, emphasis mine).

What I believe Bloom responds to so viscerally after realizing Gerty is "lame" is the eroticism of stigma. The conflation of "nun, negress, girl with glasses" succinctly reveals that Bloom feels aroused by the prospect of sexual contact with many women who, for a variety of reasons, and to a range of degrees, are declared sexually "off-limits" for him. We might be tempted to read Bloom's sexual desire for stigmatized women as a sort of objectifying fetish, in which a privileged, able-bodied man is aroused at the idea of sexually using a disempowered, disabled woman. The first problem with such a reading, however, is that, although Bloom is able-bodied, he is by no means normative. Aside from his desire for stigmatized women, Bloom is a sexual deviant himself. He has been repeatedly termed a masochist by Joyce critics, beginning with his correspondence with Martha Clifford, under pseudonym, Henry Flower, in which he begs to be sexually punished.[21] Further, as a Jew, Bloom remains ethnically stigmatized within Irish Christian society. Andre Cormier explicitly links Bloom's ethnic marginalization to the treatment of disabled characters within *Ulysses*: "Marginal marginals like the blind stripling (and Bloom) fill out Joyce's text with a volume of "freaks" that make up a significant critique of Irish intolerance."[22]

Cormier contends that marginalized characters reveal the moral myopia of a Dublin that hypocritically defines Irish identity through the exclusion

of marginal individuals, even while vigorously protesting colonial marginalization through the Home Rule movement. Bloom's stigmatized status is nowhere more obvious than in "Cyclops," where his Irishness is called into question, his thoughts on God are ridiculed, and a biscuit tin is violently heaved at his car as he leaves the pub. The fact that Bloom clearly represents a non-normative presence within *Ulysses* lends a different valence to his sexual attraction to stigmatized women because, in large measure, the affiliative properties of stigma that bind nuns, negresses, and Gerty also extend to Leopold Bloom.

At the same time, however, Bloom's own stigma does not completely exclude the possibility of sexual exploitation on his part, and ultimately it is difficult to rule out claims that Bloom merely objectifies Gerty as a disabled woman. Certainly, Bloom's designation of Gerty as a "curiosity," on its face, does little to persuade us that he views stigmatized women with anything but an objectifying gaze. In the context of disability, the word "curiosity" evokes the freak show[23]—a venue that has not generally enjoyed a reputation for the empowerment of those with non-normative bodies. As Rachel Adams argues in her book about the history of freak shows in the United States, many have come to think of the freak show largely as an exploitive cultural practice that has, thankfully, been mostly eradicated during the late twentieth century.[24] But Adams wants to problematize this unequivocal condemnation of the freak show by insisting on the agency exhibited by freaks, who sometimes achieved financial independence through their work.

Adams' reading complicates the freak show by showing how it blurs the boundary between *spectacle* and *carnival*—that is, between a passively gazed-upon "exhibit" and an interactive agent. Drawing on the work of Susan Stewart, Adams sets up this dichotomy, then collapses it:

> The spectacle functions to avoid contamination: "Stand back ladies and gentlemen, what you are about to see will shock and amaze you." This is a convincing description of the sideshow's intended effect: the customer is expected dutifully to absorb the spieler's monologue while gazing at the prodigious body in awestruck wonder, then making a docile exit. However, historical evidence reveals how rarely this theory was realized in practice, for sideshows are hardly places of restraint or decorum, and things seldom go as planned: freaks talk back, the experts lose their authority, the audience refuses to take

> their seats [. . .]freaks and spectators break the rules by making physical or verbal contact across the velvet rope. (13)

Indeed, the erotic encounter between Gerty and Bloom in many respects reaches across a kind of velvet rope, as Gerty not only returns Bloom's gaze but also wonders about him, in much the same way that we imagine a freak show attendee might contemplate the non-normative persons on display:

> She could see at once by his dark eyes and his pale intellectual face that he was a foreigner . . . but she could not see whether he had an aquiline nose or a slightly *rétroussé* from where he was sitting. He was in deep mourning, she could see that, and the story of a haunting sorrow was written on his face. (13.415–21)

Here, Gerty carefully studies Bloom, attempting to author an account of him, much as carnival operators such as P. T. Barnum provided biographical brochures to the public about the freaks who peopled their exhibits (Bogdan 31). But while the brochures distributed by Barnum were notoriously fictionalized, Gerty's account of Bloom's life situation is more or less correct: As an Irish Jew, he is a foreigner; as a father who lost his son, he is a man forever in mourning; as a husband who knows his wife is having an affair on that very day, he is haunted. As Henke notes, Gerty "intuits more about his mental state than even he will acknowledge" (139). Bloom's observations about Gerty, on the other hand, mostly miss the mark. Assuming that she will "[g]o home to nicey bread and milk and say night prayers with the kiddies" (13.854), Bloom fails to "intuit" Gerty's drunk, abusive father, or the fact that she fervently dislikes children. Gerty's imaginative inquiry into Bloom proves far more accurate, underscoring that, despite the style of sentimental of romance in "Nausicaa," Gerty nevertheless remains a shrewd reader of Bloom.

This reversal of gazer and gazed-upon is, therefore, no mere matter of looking; in many ways Gerty makes Bloom an object of her own curiosity and imagination, which prove to be investigative tools of astonishing power and accuracy. Indeed, by *having* curiosity, instead of merely *being* one, Gerty asserts her agency in a crucial way. As Barbara Benedict observes in writing about the phenomenon of curiosity during the early modern period: "Curiosity betrays the desire to move beyond one's

assigned place, through information, art, fraud, transformation, or rebellion.''[25] Benedict explains that curious women were often transformed ''from the curious to the curios,'' thereby blunting the transgressive potential of female intellectual curiosity by turning women into objects of male investigation and collection (156–7). Gerty effectively performs the opposite of this maneuver during ''Nausicaa,'' for she negotiates being the object of male desire while remaining an intellectually curious, insightful, desiring subject.

By violating the conventions that would require a disabled ''spectacle'' not to gaze back at her audience, as well as by making Bloom an object of her own curiosity, Gerty reverses the terms of objectification in which she might otherwise have become ensnared. She blurs the boundary between spectacle and carnival, between object and agent, not just as a woman, but as a disabled woman; and we should note that she finds some degree of empowerment and pleasure in her non-normative status. Therefore, Gerty's gender transgression is clearly and inextricably interwoven with her transgression of the rules of crippled engagement with society.

CONSIDERING GENDER ALONGSIDE DISABILITY: GERTY'S LABOR OF SELF-CARE

If Sicker's analysis of ''Nausicaa'' sets aside Gerty's disability while attending to gender subversiveness, Andre Cormier's work on the blind stripling largely overlooks gender nuances in its myopic focus on disabled identity. This oversight demonstrates the flipside of Schriempf's claim that the identity of *disabled woman* is not usually adequately considered in contemplating the situations of women—real or fictional—with disabilities. Although Cormier attends to the particularities of disability and stigma, he ignores gender as a relevant category of analysis, which results in a reading of Gerty as essentially stigmaphobic and conformist.

In his brief commentary on Gerty, Cormier suggests that her beautification practices merely work to ''normalize'' her appearance and reify what he terms ''hegemonic ideals'' (210). By implying that Gerty attempts to ''pass'' as able-bodied, Cormier suggests a desire on her part to conform to mainstream society. Cormier contrasts this stigmaphobic behavior with what he reads as the blind stripling's socially transformative work within the novel. Ultimately, for Cormier, the stripling's textual presence embodies incisive social critique:

> Joyce appears to be "[d]one" with Ireland's mistreatment of its marginal citizens, its Jews and its disabled. Modernists used time as a means to pressure those complacent liberals responsible for the Great War to awaken the cultural cataclysm . . . Joyce makes a unique clock out of the blind stripling. This gesture gives him a significant place in *Ulysses* not only as a disabled character capable of transcending colonial identity, but also as a ticking clock that pressures movement toward a continental identity for Ireland. (222)

In this view, the stripling—with the taptaptapping of his cane—asserts the indignity of the mistreatment of marginalized figures, thereby subtly critiquing compulsory normativity. Gerty compares most unfavorably: "the stripling does not normalize himself, yet he finds innovative ways of transforming normal activities; this method of transgression distinguishes him from, say, Gerty MacDowell . . ." (210). Cormier insists simultaneously that what the stripling does is transformative, but that it is also normal. Essentially, Cormier essentially posits masculine work as "normal" in his reading of the stripling, overlooking the feminine work that I will call Gerty's *labor of self-care*.

Indeed, much of Cormier's argument about the blind stripling's social critique hinges on the character's role in the "Sirens" episode, where we learn that he works as a piano tuner:

> The stripling's profession confirms yet complicates Joyce's comprehension of how society traditionally perceives a person with a disability. As a piano tuner, the stripling is dedicated to making something useless, such as an out-of-tune piano, regain its worth; but the listener retains the power to decide what sounds "right." Similarly, society controls the abnormal through public definitions of normalcy. Nonetheless, the striplin[g] . . . reflects Joyce's hope that stagnant Ireland would move beyond liberalism and embrace modernity. (216)

Here, Cormier has a vested interest in demonstrating the social worth of the stripling's professional life, arguing that the ultimate worthiness of his work challenges the "traditiona[l]" perception of disabled persons as useless and unproductive. However, the stripling's ability to travel across Dublin tuning pianos is crucially linked with his mobility, a trait not typically associated with the disabled body, but with the normate:

> [The stripling] shares with the lame Gerty MacDowell of "Nausicaa" an obligatory aspiration to normalize as demanded by society. What separates the stripling from Gerty's unfortunate position, thus permitting his transcendence, is the way he sidesteps normalization (*with his unique mobility*), which goes beyond her desperate efforts to compensate for a limp. (223, emphasis mine)

The most striking point about Cormier's reading of the stripling is the way it fetishizes mobility. Although Cormier claims that "[his] thinking about Joyce's concern with disability grows out of an initial interest in how [Joyce] introduces immobility into a text centrally concerned with an ostensibly able-bodied wanderer" (204), he focuses not on immobility, but on physical mobility, as the feature that activates social critique within the novel. This implied message leaves us to question how a relatively "immobile" character like Gerty could embody modernist social critique.

Unlike the stripling, who passes through several episodes, Gerty's presence is mostly a local phenomenon, peculiar to "Nausicaa." Although she debuts briefly in "Wandering Rocks" and resurfaces phantasmagorically in "Circe," she is "largely sealed off from the epidemic of disappearances and appearances that touches every major character in the novel."[26] Thomas Karr Richards further emphasizes Gerty's unique treatment in the novel: "A line of explicit *integrity* divides Gerty MacDowell from these myriad forms of Stephen and Bloom" (755, emphasis mine). The use of the word "integrity" here seems telling; a virtual *cordon sanitaire* is drawn between Gerty and the male protagonists. Acknowledging only in a footnote that "Gerty limps into Bloom's consciousness in 'Circe'" (775), Richards reveals the extent of his critical desire to quarantine Gerty. Richards' analysis also lucidly reveals that the mobility/immobility binary maps not only onto the designations normate and cripple, but evinces an equally important male/female dichotomy as well. Bloom and Stephen circulate widely throughout *Ulysses*, demonstrating that the stripling's mobility is not actually "unique," but in fact remains a characteristic common to many of the male figures in Joyce's novel. However, Gerty—and indeed, Molly Bloom, reprising the role of Homer's Penelope—remain relatively fixed in location.

While Molly's fixed location is obviously domestic, Gerty's appearance on Sandymount Strand seems a public one. Yet even outside the house, Gerty is placed inside an exaggeratedly domestic scene, among female caretakers of young children—significantly, young boys. The narrative

voice makes repeated ironic comments on the stereotypically "masculine" nature of the boys, for example emphasizing their competitiveness and their tempers: "But if Master Tommy was headstrong Master Jacky was selfwilled too and, true to the maxim that every little Irishman's house is his castle, he fell upon his hated rival . . ." (13.45–7). Later, we are told, "The temper of him! O, he was a man already was little Tommy Caffrey . . ." (13.249–50). Comically emphasizing the servitude of women to men, Gerty portrays the infant as a patriarchal tyrant: "Of course his infant majesty was most obstreperous at such toilet formalities and he let everyone know it" (13.405–6). These passages underscore that Gerty and her female companions' presence on Sandymount Strand does not constitute an autonomous public appearance; they are entrapped by their domestic duties. Gerty's description suggests that these duties range from child caretaking to sexual subjugation because when Cissy Caffrey reappears in "Circe" it is as a "shilling whore"; the twin boys in her charge have transformed into two lusty soldiers.[27] The titular parallel between Gerty and Princess Nausicaa from the Odyssey further shores up the domestic setting of "Nausicaa." Homer's Nausicaa, after all, encounters Odysseus when she and her maids "come to the river to do the palace laundry."[28] Both Gerty and the Princess Nausicaa, then, find erotic possibility in the midst of domestic drudgery, underscoring the fact that we are meant to read Gerty's position in "Nausicaa" as more domestic than public.

By contrast, the stripling's "mobility" is essentially code for his free circulation in the public sphere. That Cormier takes this public circulation as tantamount to a modern sensibility is not at all surprising. After all, the quintessential "modern" figure of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century urban life is, of course, the *flâneur*, whose hyper-mobile meanderings across the cosmopolitan landscape typify the subjective experience of literary modernity. Janet Wolff has famously asserted that "[the] heroes of modernity thus share the possibility and the prospect of lone travel, of voluntary up-rooting, and of anonymous arrival at a new place. They are, of course, all men."[29] Pointing out that women's access to the public sphere was grossly limited, Wolff goes on to claim that women's public appearances in *fin de siècle* and modernist literature only arise "via their illegitimate or eccentric routes into this male arena" (44). Clearly, the way in which Gerty makes her way into the quasi-public realm in "Nausicaa" is via an illegitimate sexual liaison. The only other time we

see Gerty publicly is in "Wandering Rocks," where she appears, at the behest of the patriarch, on an errand for her ailing father.

Therefore, when Cormier valorizes the stripling's "mobility," he risks naming a decidedly masculine privilege as *necessary* for socially meaningful change to occur. While recuperating the blind stripling's complex "work" as that of a modern subject, Cormier insists on the conventionality of Gerty's preoccupation with grooming practices. Cormier is not alone in this characterization; there is a long history within Joyce scholarship of trivializing Gerty's self-care habits. Many critics gloss her obsessive beautification rituals as an unfortunate result of her disability, suggesting that Gerty "compensates for bodily deformity by heightened pride in physical attractiveness" (Henke 134). In any case, Gerty's absorption within the world of appearances is almost universally read as superficial; she is considered merely a "field for advertisements" (Richards 768) and a "preconditioned receptacle of false needs" (773). This dismissal of the seriousness of Gerty's labor of self-care can be explained by lack of simultaneous attunement to disability and gender concerns.

Cormier shows his bias toward disability issues at the expense of gender considerations most clearly when he writes about the 1917 Paul Strand photograph, *Blind Woman.* Quoting Nicholas Mirzoeff, Cormier claims that "Strand's photograph of the blind woman functions as an abstract, moral discourse on perception. The weapon of blindness belonged not to the blind woman but to the photographer" (211). Cormier likens this "politicized" use of blindness to Joyce's casting of the stripling, focusing on the way in which the figures' shared disability is marshaled toward a critical end (211). However, this reading completely overlooks the gender implications of photographically depicting, for the viewer's gaze, a woman who *cannot* gaze back—and whose own disability becomes the intellectual property of the photographer. Clearly, this claim that the Blind Woman's body is effectively not her own does a kind of violence to her agency, a violence made all the more significant by the long history of a gendered agent/object dichotomy that art critic John Berger sums up: "*men act* and *women appear.*"[30] In other words, Cormier's failure to recognize Strand's *Blind Woman* not just as a poignant instance of modernist disability representation, but also as an example of female objectification, reveals his lack of interest in the gendered nature of disability.

By contrast, disability studies scholar David Serlin analyzes the Strand photograph in a way that subtly captures the complex intersections

between disabled and female identities. Discussing the political implications of *Blind Woman* and insisting on the extreme social isolation of the blind during the early twentieth century, Serlin writes:

> Indeed, if there is a common thread within disability history in the 19th and early 20th centuries, it is not that people with physical and cognitive impairments went traipsing down the Champs-Elysees but instead that they were deliberately segregated from their fellow citizens, occupying domestic or rehabilitative or institutional spaces where they might be cared for (if they were cared for at all), and routinely excluded and often prohibited from public spaces.[31]

Here, Serlin reveals the oppression of blind people in strikingly similar terms to those in which I have characterized the political situation of women: both groups were largely relegated to the domestic sphere, thereby excluded from the picture of modern, public citizenship. Although Strand's *Blind Woman* no doubt circulated widely as an image, as a person, this figure was twice barred from the public sphere.

That said, a reading of Gerty's beautification practices as frivolous is understandable. We learn early on, for example, that her "chief care" in the world is "undies" (13.171). She also, apparently, spent the better part of Tuesday afternoon coordinating her underwear with the chenille of her hat brim (13.158–9). She takes considerable pride in achieving "that haunting expression to the eyes" through the use of Madame Vera Verity's "eyebrowleine" (13.111–13). That Gerty grants her feminine appearance superlative importance is not in question; however, as Garry Leonard astutely notes, this emphasis on appearance does not necessarily indicate frivolity because such fanatical concern over her appearance would likely have been economically necessary in Dublin's bleak marriage market.[32]

The material social conditions of 1904, which underlie Leonard's assertion that "Gerty's appearance is her career" (Leonard 29) are outlined by Florence Walzl:

> . . . for over a century following 1841, Ireland had the lowest marriage and birth rates in the civilized world. As a natural concomitant, it also had the highest rate of unmarried men and women in the world. During Joyce's youth and young manhood, the marriage rate underwent its greatest decline. From 1881 to 1891, it was at its all-time low

> of 4 percent per 1,000 population. Even by 1908 . . . it had not yet risen to 5 percent.[33]

Given the dire prospects for Irish women in the summer of 1904, Gerty has every reason to consider what she can do to secure a mate because the possibilities for unmarried women are frighteningly scant. Michael O. Jauchen comments on the paucity of Gerty's options, noting that "Gerty's socio-economic background and working-class upbringing strongly suggest a status as a potential prostitute" (89). Jauchen further suggests that Gerty's disability "is precisely the type of difference that forced young women into prostitution in turn-of-the-century Dublin" (90). Given these economic exigencies—made all the more urgent by her disability—we cannot be surprised at Gerty's attention to even the smallest detail of her appearance: the eyebrowleine, the blue "undies," the fashionable shoes all become tools of her vocation rather than avocational accoutrements. To put the matter plainly, beautification is as much a professional undertaking for Gerty as piano tuning is for the blind stripling—a fact that only becomes apparent when we consider her gender alongside her disabled status.

While asserting that Gerty's concern over her appearance is legitimate, even Leonard argues that such a complete absorption into the world of commodities means that she cannot participate in any form of meaningful social critique. Claiming that Gerty effectively substitutes consumption for critical thought, he implies that her presence finally only shores up the status quo.[34] However, several passages in "Nausicaa" reveal Gerty's inclination toward critical thought. When we first encounter her, seated on her rock, we are told that she is "lost in thought, gazing far away into the distance . . ." (13.80). While we don't know the subject of her contemplation, this solitary thoughtfulness is ironically juxtaposed with her friend Cissy Caffrey's "motherwit"—her consistent motherly attunement with her toddler brothers (13.75). By contrast, Gerty itches to escape the "squalling baby" and "the little brats of twins" (13.404), and when she contemplates her ideal marriage, we see that children are conspicuously absent: ". . . every morning they would both have brekky, simple but perfectly served, *for their own two selves* . . ." (13.241–2, emphasis mine). Gerty entertains other thoughts that challenge traditional Irish conceptions of marriage: "if there was one thing of all things that Gerty knew it was that the man who lifts his hand to a woman save in the way of kindness, deserves to be branded as the lowest of the low" (13.300–2).

She pronounces this harsh judgment on domestic violence, despite the fact that such acts would have been a regular occurrence in her time and place; in fact, Joyce himself witnessed such episodes regularly as a child (Shelton 90). More startlingly, Gerty also considers that "there ought to be women priests" (13.710). All of these thoughts run against the grain of her milieu; specifically, they reveal a sustained critical engagement with status quo notions of gender. Therefore, we can plainly see that Gerty's career as a consumer does not prevent her from enacting thoughtful social critique of gender normativity.

Further, Gerty's presence embodies an implicit but nonetheless powerful critique of able-bodied normativity. Although Leonard claims that commodity logic implies that "all the flaws and lacks of physical appearance . . . can be corrected given products enough and time," (Leonard 14) Gerty's body offers an opposing viewpoint. To be sure, a vast array of products marketed for women's physical health and appearance did exist in turn-of-the-century Dublin. For example, in the June 16, 1904, edition of the *Irish Times*, Gerty could have seen advertisements for Beecham's pills, intended to treat premenstrual symptoms; Carter's Liver Pills, which help cure biliousness and indigestion; and Mother Siegel's Syrup, which cryptically promises "relief from any troubling symptom" (Henke 135). While these products promise to correct various "defects" in bodily appearance and functioning, we see in Gerty's limp a resounding, unequivocal refutation of the axiom that "any troubling symptom" can be cured by consumption. After all, none of these products promises to address what Gerty calls "that one shortcoming." Gerty's limp is the crucial sticking point at which the ideology of bodily perfectibility—so central to the eugenic project—exposes its ultimate impossibility. By revealing the baselessness of bodily perfectibility, Gerty, as an embodied presence, not only strikes a blow for the disabled but for women more generally because bodily perfectibility ultimately proves to be a "toxic construct to both people with and without recognized disabilities."[35]

Therefore, both through her critical thoughts about gender, and through her body's intractable physical difference, Gerty offers a compelling critique of compulsory normativity. Her ability to shed light on the limitations of consumerism, even while actively participating in it, ultimately stems from her unique position as a disabled woman. Like the non-disabled Irish woman of her time, Gerty engages in the "career" of self-beautification, in the hopes of securing a mate—a preoccupation that leads Henke, justifiably, to conclude that Gerty is "male-identified" (135).

But unlike her able-bodied counterparts, Gerty maintains some distance from the project of normative femininity, illustrating that disabled women do not become wholly ensnared in the trap of patriarchy (Schriempf 67). We see Gerty's fundamental apartness quite clearly in her interactions with normate companions Edy Boardman and Cissy Caffrey:

> Miss puny little Edy's countenance fell to no slight extent and Gerty could see by her looking as black as thunder that she was simply in a towering rage though she hid it, the little kinnatt, because that shaft had struck home for her petty jealousy *and they both knew that she was something aloof, apart, in another sphere, that she was not of them and never would be and there was somebody else too that knew it and saw it so they could put that in their pipe and smoke it.* (13.598–605, emphasis mine)

Despite Jauchen's claim that "lurking behind the optimistic façade . . . is the hard fact that . . . [Gerty's] lameness relegates her to the position of social pariah" (90), what we see here is not the attitude of a social pariah in obstinate denial, but rather the critical mind of a disabled woman deeply suspicious of normativity. Although Gerty clearly envies Cissy's athleticism, she also distrusts and mocks her friend's able-bodied display. Her harsh criticisms of her companions stem not only from the fact that they unthinkingly conform to society's expectations about female caretaking, but also that they are deeply wed to their identities as normates: ". . . and [Cissy] was a forward piece whenever she thought she had a good opportunity to show off and just because she was a good runner she ran like that so that [Bloom] could see all the end of her petticoat running and her skinny shanks up as far as possible" (.481–4). Here, Cissy enlists her able-bodiedness in an attempt to attract sexual attention; but as we have seen, it is the swinging motion of Gerty's disabled legs that arouses Bloom. This outcome is foreshadowed early on in "Nausicaa" when we are told that "Edy Boardman prided herself that she was very petite but *she never had a foot like Gerty MacDowell* . . . and never would ash, oak, or elm" (13.165–6, emphasis mine).

Not only is able-bodiedness (in the form of running) characterized as an interruption to the erotic scene, it is also repeatedly linked with domestic encumbrance: "Cissy came up along the strand with the two twins and their ball with her hat anyhow on her to one side after her run and she did look a streel tugging the two kids along with the flimsy blouse . . .

like a rag on her back and a bit of her petticoat hanging like a caricature'' (13.505–509). While Cissy comically struggles to manage her physical appearance and care for her charges at the same time, Gerty coolly remains on her rock, ''settle[s]'' her hair, and adjusts her hat brim (.509). Later, Edy and Cissy both run toward the fireworks, once again juggling the young boys: ''And they all ran down the strand to see over the houses and the church, helterskelter, Edy with the pushcar with baby Boardman in it and Cissy holding Tommy and Jacky by the hand so they wouldn't fall running'' (13.683–5). This image of two young women beleaguered by children emblematizes the near-complete patriarchal entrapment of the normate woman. Gerty's choice to remain physically ''confined'' to her rock—a choice *en*abled by her disability—ironically affords her relative freedom from the chains of domesticity: ''But Gerty was adamant. *She had no intention of being at their beck and call*. If they could run like rossies she could sit so she said she could see from where she was'' (13.687–9, emphasis mine). Here, Gerty interprets Cissy's request that she move as a demand for self-enslavement. Not only does Gerty refuse to take orders from her able-bodied friends, she also eschews the conventional role of caretaker. Further insisting that her position in the group remains equal or even superior to the rest—''she could see from where she was''—she makes no effort to change her bodily configuration. Gerty's adoption of immobility—which might seem, at first glance, disempowering—ironically elevates her to the status of a (comparatively) autonomous woman and allows her sexual encounter with Bloom. Indeed, although Cissy plays at a kind of sexual flirtation with Bloom in the episode by revealing her ''skinny shanks'' (13.698)—an exhibitionism that foreshadows Gerty's later ''performance''—she is ultimately too distracted by her caretaking duties to sustain an engagement with him (Shelton 93). And despite Cissy's provocative claim, after threatening to spank her brother, that she would ''[g]ive it to [Bloom] too on the same place as quick as I'd look at him'' (13.269), it is Gerty who perseveres in her sexual ''disciplining'' of Bloom, managing his sexual experience up to the point of their mutual satisfaction.

In Gerty we find not a conformist, stigmaphobic character but a profound study in self-fashioning. First, in her self-conscious attempt to make herself into a kind of ''tableau'' for Bloom, Gerty reveals fastidious attention to her appearance in a way that is not only economically shrewd but aesthetically aware. In shirking domestic obligations, Gerty aspires to autonomy beyond what is available to other women of her class, and

through this comparative autonomy she achieves erotic pleasure. These instances of self-determination reveal the paradoxical status of the identity of disabled woman, a status that in some respects amplifies female oppression, yet simultaneously works to extricate its subject from the bonds of patriarchal confinement. Through her position as a disabled woman, Gerty begins to achieve a kind of transgressive agency, most obvious in her sexual pleasure and connection with Bloom.

THE END OF "NAUSICAA": AN ETHICS OF BODILY PARTICULARITY

Gerty's self-determination does not make Bloom merely an object of her control; on the contrary, their sexual encounter establishes a sense of mutualism, evident in Bloom's observation after their sexual encounter: "Still it was a kind of language between us" (13.944). Nevertheless, reading the final exchange of gazes between Bloom and Gerty as one in which she reveals shame about her disability, Sicker claims that Gerty's "inter-subjective hopes" collapse under the weight of her awareness that Bloom will not accept her physical difference (126). Much about Gerty and Bloom's parting, however, seems to counter the notion that Gerty is ashamed. As she rises to walk down the strand, the narrator muses:

> She drew herself up to her full height. Their souls met in a last lingering glance and the eyes that that reached her heart, *full of a strange shining*, hung enraptured on her sweet flowerlike face. She half smiled at him wanly, a sweet forgiving smile, a smile that verged on tears, and then they parted. (13.762–5, emphasis mine)

Here, we are told she "drew herself up to her full height," suggesting a refusal to hide or conceal her body, a kind of pride. She does not try to leave inconspicuously; on the contrary, she draws attention to herself, removing a handkerchief from her pocket and waving it toward Bloom (13.758–9). And although Sicker reads Gerty's "smile that verged on tears" as evidence of deep shame over her disability, her tears may instead signal relief at its impending revelation. Significantly, we are told Bloom's eyes are "full of a strange shining," suggesting the presence of tears. This shared physical response to the end of their sexual encounter reveals connectedness. Grammatical ambiguity further heightens the inter-subjectivity at play here because both Bloom's eyes and Gerty's heart can be read as "shining." Indeed, Bloom's thoughts corroborate the tenderness implied

elsewhere. He laments, "Didn't look back when she was going down the strand. Wouldn't give that satisfaction" (13.905–6), and he finally muses: "We'll never meet again. But it was lovely. Goodbye, dear. Thanks. Made me feel so young" (13.1272–3).

Bloom's thoughts about Gerty not only point to mutual emotional response, but also suggest that the pair's bond is rooted in shared stigma. Before finally admitting to himself that he and Gerty will not meet again, Bloom considers coming back to the Strand to find her: "Wait for her somewhere for ever. Must come back. Murderers do. Will I?" (13.1254–5). Referencing the notion that murderers always return to the scene of their crimes, Bloom here compares himself to a murderer, suggesting both the illicitness of his sexual contact with Gerty and the overtones of criminality inherent in any form of deviance.[36]

As Bloom's thoughts spiral out from the encounter with Gerty to reflect on his relationship with Molly, his memories emphasize physical difference. He recalls a conversation between himself and Molly about why she loves him: "Why me? Because you were so foreign from the others" (13.1209–10). The recollection of this short exchange poignantly foregrounds the role that physical particularity plays within *Ulysses*. Just as Bloom desires stigmatized women, Gerty and Molly share an appreciation for his difference. The text also suggests that Molly experiences desire for other physically particular men, including a one-armed man whom Bloom spots when he and Molly are out together on Cuffe Street (13.915). Here, as in Bloom's encounter with Gerty, he initially reads the sexually attractive body before him as normative; it is Molly who "twig[s] at once he had a false arm" (13.915). However, once Bloom knows about the disability, he continues to take for granted that Molly might desire the "goodlooking" man (13.915).

Taken together, these passages begin to articulate an *erotics of particularity*, a distinct sexual appreciation for non-normative bodies. Garland Thomson has argued that "an intellectual tolerance . . . [that] espouses the partial, the provisional, the particular" lies at the heart of disabled experience.[37] I argue that, within the context of modernism, this ethics of particularity works to challenge eugenic ideologies of bodily perfectibility and standardization so prevalent during the early twentieth century. Although much has been written about the ways in which Gerty and Bloom express sexual desire for normative ideals—in the case of Gerty, matinee idols; in the case of Bloom, "those lovely seaside girls"[38]—neither party's erotic life remains circumscribed by such ideals. Through their

encounter, Gerty and Bloom not only transcend compulsory normativity by desiring a non-standard other, but to a large degree they organize their desire around that very non-standardness.

Here, we should recall Michael Warner's formulation of the "stigmaphile space," in which he says that the stigmatized "learn to value the very things the rest of the world despises—not just because the world despises them, but because the world's pseudo-morality is a phobic and inauthentic way of life" (43). In other words, Gerty's and Bloom's complex sexual responses to physical difference not only reveal alternative sexual values but also enact a critique of the very kind of "pseudo-morality" that allows Ireland unthinkingly to exclude from its national identity those whom Cormier calls "marginal marginals."

At the end of "Nausicaa," Bloom files away the memory of Gerty MacDowell alongside a reflection on his own marginalized status as a Jew and a masochist: "Long day I've had. Martha, the bath, funeral, house of Keyes, museum with those goddesses, Dedalus's song. Then that bawler in Barney Kiernan's" (13.1214–15). The text uses Gerty to gather up Bloom's own less visible deviations from the norm and vividly illustrate them, exemplifying Garland Thomson's claim that "the cultural function of the disabled figure is to act as a synecdoche for all forms that culture deems non-normative" (4). The articulation of Bloom's own identity as a stigmatized figure occurs most poignantly in his writing on the beach at the end of "Nausicaa."

Bloom intends the writing on the beach—which reads "I AM A"—as a message for Gerty, even while he doubts that the message would last: "Useless. Washed away. Tide comes here" (13.1259–61). Reminiscent of his claim that there was "a kind of language" between him and Gerty, the writing in the sand affirms their mutual bond. After remembering the tide pools he saw near Gerty's foot, Bloom imaginatively places his face there: "Bend, see my face there, dark mirror, breathe on it, stirs. All these rocks with lines and scars and letters" (13.1260–1). Here, we can read the "dark mirror" not only as the tide pool in which Bloom's face is reflected, but also as Gerty's disability, which—perhaps itself imaged in the pool in Bloom's imagination—metaphorically reflects Bloom's own marginal status. Further, the conflation of "lines and scars and letters" suggests that the "language" between Gerty and Bloom is really made out of wounds—stigma. Bloom's decision to erase the message reveals pessimism about his belief that an enduring connection can exist between himself and Gerty: "Let it go" (13.1265). However, in its very effacement of connection, the

passage reveals a link with Gerty. Just before Bloom becomes aware of her disability, he notes that she walks slowly—perhaps, he reasons, because of "tight boots." And here, the text points out his own "slow boot": "Mr Bloom effaced the letters with his slow boot" (13.1266).

This passage illustrates that the source of Gerty's stigma is also the source of her link with Bloom, a socially marginalized "foreigner" and pervert. The sexual nature of their mutual bond reinforces Gayle Rubin's claim that, "Sex is a vector of oppression. . . . A rich, white male pervert will generally be less affected than a poor, black, female pervert. But even the most privileged are not immune to sexual oppression."[39] As a poor disabled woman, Gerty is precariously perched on the outermost fringes of society. Her sexual pleasure defies not only gender norms, but norms about how disabled persons are supposed to express sexuality. Bloom, as a middle-class Jew and a sexual deviant, clearly stands as an example of the comparatively "rich white male pervert" from Rubin's formulation. Yet their bond reveals the mutuality of shared stigma, carving out a critical space within *Ulysses* where critiques of compulsory normativity can, and must, be lodged in the face of ideologies of bodily perfectibility.

NOTES

My most sincere thanks to the editors of *JSA f*or their insightful feedback on this essay, and to Michael Levenson, Christopher Krentz, and Victoria Olwell for their steady guidance through its many revisions.

1. Lennard J. Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body* (New York: Verso, 1995), 26. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

2. For a particularly cogent discussion of this issue, see Betsy L. Nies, *Eugenic Fantasies: Racial Ideology in the Literature and Popular Culture of the 1920s* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

3. Many historians have explicitly linked *Buck vs. Bell* to Nazi Germany's program of "Rassenhygiene" (racial hygiene). See Paul A. Lombardo's discussion in *Three Generations, No Imbeciles: Eugenics, the Supreme Court, and Buck v. Bell* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

4. See a discussion of this issue in John Macnicol, "Eugenics and the Campaign for Voluntary Sterilization in Britain Between the Wars," *Social History of Medicine* 2:2 (1989): 147–69.

5. Donald J. Childs, *Modernism and Eugenics: Woolf, Eliot, Yeats, and the Culture of Degeneration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 13. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

6. Quoted in Alexa Schriempf, "Re-fusing the Amputated Body: An Interactionist Bridge for Feminism and Disability," *Hypatia* 16:4 (2001): 54. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

7. Michael Warner, *The Trouble With Normal*: *Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life (*New York: Free Press, 1999), 43. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

8. Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity* (Austin, TX: Touchstone, 1986), 31. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

9. Suzette Henke, "Gerty MacDowell: Joyce's Sentimental Heroine." ed. Henke and Unkeless, *Women in Joyce* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 137. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

10. Patrick McGee, "Joyce's Nausea: Style and Representation in 'Nausicaa,'" *James Joyce Quarterly* 24.3 (1987): 306.

11. Kimberly Devlin, "The Romance Heroine Exposed: "Nausicaa" and *The Lamplighter," James Joyce Quarterly*. 22.4 (1985): 383–96.

12. Philip Sicker, "Unveiling Desire: Pleasure, Power and Masquerade in Joyce's 'Nausicaa' Episode," *Joyce Studies Annual* 14 (2003): 92–131. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

13. Michael O. Jauchen, "Prostitution, Incest, and Venereal Disease in *Ulysses*' 'Nausicaa,'" *New Hibernia Review* 12.4 (2008): 85. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

14. Tobin Siebers, "Disability as Masquerade," *Literature and Medicine* 23:1 (2004): 5. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

15. See Rosemarie Garland Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Disability in American Culture and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 8 for a detailed discussion of the term "normate." Further *Extraordinary Bodies* references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

16. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge Press, 1999), 175.

17. See Abby Wilkerson's discussion of disability "erotophobia" and the exclusion of disabled bodies from the realm of desiring and desirable subjects, in her essay "Disability, Sex Radicalism, and Political Agency," *NWSA* (14:3) 2002: 33–57.

18. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 19.

19. Garry Leonard, "Women on the Market: Commodity Culture, 'Femininity,' and 'Those Lovely Seaside Girls' in Joyce's *Ulysses*," *Joyce Studies Annual* (1991): 29.

20. Jules Law, "'Pity They Can't See Themselves:' Assessing the 'Subject' of Pornography in 'Nausicaa,'" *James Joyce Quarterly* 27.2 (1990): 232.

21. David Cotter, *James Joyce and the Perverse Ideal* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 3.

22. Andre Cormier, "'Our Eyes Demand Their Turn. Let Them Be Seen!': The Transcendental Blind Stripling in *Ulysses," Joyce Studies Annual* 2008: 213. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

23. Robert Bogdan, *Freak Show: Presenting Human Oddities for Amusement and Profit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 6. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

24. Rachel Adams, *Sideshow U.S.A.: Freaks and the American Cultural Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 15. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

25. Barbara Benedict, *Curiosity: A Cultural History of Early Modern Inquiry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 245. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

26. Thomas Karr Richards, "Gerty MacDowell and the Irish Common Reader," *ELH* 52:3(1985): 755. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

27. Jen Shelton, "Bad Girls: Gerty, Cissy, and the Erotics of Unruly Speech," *James Joyce Quarterly* 34.1–2 (Fall 1996–Winter 1997): 91. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

28. Don Gifford, *Ulysses Annotated: Notes for James Joyce's Ulysses* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 384.

29. Janet Wolff, "The Invisible *Flâneuse*. Women and the Literature of Modernity," *Theory, Culture & Society* 2:3 (1985): 43. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text. It is worth noting that, although the stripling possesses the *fláneur's* mobility, he lacks this figure's other defining feature: acute vision. Gerty, on the other hand, lacks the *fláneur's* physical and gendered freedom to perambulate (unless one reads her shopping as a form of *flánerie*), but she possesses the figure's talent for detailed observation and character-reading. Put together, these two disabled counterparts form a compete *fláneur*.

30. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (New York: Penguin, 1990), 47.

31. David Serlin, "Disabling the Flâneur," *Journal of Visual Culture* 5:2 (August 2006): 146.

32. Garry M. Leonard, "Women on the Market," 29. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

33. Florence Walzl, "Dubliners: Women in Irish Society." ed. Henke and Unkeless, *Women in Joyce* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 34.

34. Garry M. Leonard, "The Virgin Mary and the Urge in Gerty: the Packaging of Desire in the 'Nausicaa' Chapter of *Ulysses*." *University of Hartford Studies in Literature* 23.1 (1991): 14.

35. Linda Kornasky, "'Incurably Biological': The Politics of Disability in Ellen Glasgow's *In This Our Life"* (paper, Angelo State University, 2008), 4.

36. See Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy*, 32.

37. Rosemarie Garland Thomson, "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory," *NWSA* 14:3 (2002): 28. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

38. See Garry Leonard's article "Women on the Market" for a detailed discussion of both characters' desire for cultural ideals.

39. Quoted in Abby Wilkerson, 38.

JJQ

A Cripped Erotic: Gender and Disability in James Joyce's "Nausicaa"

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Suzette S. Henke once referred to Gerty MacDowell as the second most important female character in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and, since she made this claim over thirty years ago, critical interest in the "Nausicaa" episode, where Gerty appears, has increased considerably.[1] While issues of gender and sexuality represent a major critical focus of Joyce scholars engaging with "Nausicaa," a discussion of disability as a key part of the episode's framework remains relatively absent from these conversations. Similarly, few scholars within disability studies have examined Joyce's Gerty.[2] Several aspects of the episode—when considered alongside other elements of the novel such as Joyce's use of the blind stripling in "Lestrygonians" and the book's emphasis on the olfactory—can be read as interventions in conceptions of gender, sexuality, and disability. The text constructs an alternative erotic sensibility, or a "cripped erotic," that focuses on pleasure, rather than on intercourse and reproduction, as well as on ways of experiencing and understanding attraction that extend beyond ocularcentrism. I use the term "cripped" here deliberately, in line with the work of many disability scholars and activists who have reclaimed the use of formerly derogatory language used against the disabled and used it to describe the practical and theoretical shifts that disability can offer. For me, a "cripped erotic" encompasses but expands beyond particular bodies or impairments, or a sense of disabled identity, to a way of understanding the mind, the body, desire, and the senses. In my reading, Gerty MacDowell rehabilitates disability and reveals "ability" as a central component of the way gender functions and subjectivity is formed. In addition to making a contribution to interpretations of "Nausicaa" within literary studies, I will demonstrate how a disability perspective applied to this important episode in *Ulysses* challenges fundamental assumptions about sexuality and gender such as the nature of sex and the role of objectification.

"Nausicaa" consists primarily of monologues by Gerty MacDowell and Leopold Bloom. The episode begins with the young woman sitting on the rocks, and the first section ends with her swinging her

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legs and posing suggestively for Bloom. He never approaches Gerty but does masturbate while watching her. More recently, critics have suggested that Gerty's activity of swinging her legs also has a sexual implication:

> [she was] trembling in every limb from being bent so far back that he had a full view high up above her knee where no-one ever not even on the swing or wading and she wasn't ashamed and he wasn't either to look in that immodest way like that because he couldn't resist the sight of the wondrous revealment. . . . She would fain have cried to him chokingly, held out her snowy slender arms to him to come, to feel his lips laid on her white brow, the cry of a young girl's love, a little strangled cry, wrung from her, that cry that has rung through the ages. (*U* 13. 727-36)

We must consider two significant points regarding the construction of this encounter that, as yet, have received virtually no critical attention. Bloom's unusual sexual relationship with his wife places him outside normative heterosexual masculinity and gives his ability to gain sexual pleasure in other ways more importance than it would otherwise have. Whether we use the term disabled to describe Bloom because of his condition is less important than recognizing the ways in which his erotic practices alter his experience of sexuality and perception of himself as a sexual being.

The other significant point is that the encounter shifts emphasis away from intercourse and towards the pleasure of each character. The text even suggests that their interaction might not have been enjoyable, or even possible, under other circumstances. In fact, the emotional and physical pleasure both Bloom and Gerty experience as a result of the encounter could only exist in this economy of the imaginary and the realm of fantasy, because Gerty is looking for a spouse and Bloom is already married.

Bloom's attraction to Gerty, while at first seeming to hinge on an understanding of her as not different from her female companions, ultimately expands to incorporate her limp as part of her appeal. How does Gerty's limp affect our understanding of her within the episode? How do questions that "Nausicaa" raises not only address the process of gendering but also the relationship that this process has to disability?

The critical trajectory of this encounter within Joyce studies has focused on ways in which Gerty is disempowered by it. Her limp is seen as an extension of her disempowerment within the text. Fritz Senn, for instance, characterizes her as "passively reactive" and also "lame and incomplete."[3] He further posits that the "awkwardness of the prose suggests the awkwardness of her limp" (291). Richard Ellmann suggests that Gerty's limp reveals the terrible ways in

which the body "fails imagination and hope."[4] Later, Henke reads Gerty as searching for a father figure who will remove her "limping inadequacy."[5] Marilyn French echoes this claim, stating that "Gerty's sentimental and romantic notions are an ironic comment on the bleak life she lives and her actual inadequacy, her moral and physical lameness."[6] In other recent interpretations, such as those by Barbara Leckie, John Bishop, Katherine Mullin, Kimberly Devlin, and Jen Shelton, Gerty has been recognized as having a more performative and active role in the encounter.[7] Although the episode has been reinterpreted by critics over the past twenty years, the limp has not received the same kind of reconsideration. In one notable exception, Leckie points out that Joyce may be utilizing the limp to play upon the myth that masturbation can cause deformity (80). Bishop also thinks the limp connects Gerty and Bloom as disabled subjects (191-92).

Much sociological and personal writing attests to the perception of people with disabilities as asexual and/or undesirable romantic or sexual partners.[8] Joyce's episode makes a point of disputing these perceptions as it foregrounds both Gerty's agency and her desirability. Bloom's recognition of Gerty as a sexual subject who is similar to his wife and his alignment of her with other women function as a way of critiquing the idea that she is unmarriageable because of her defect. Although Bloom expresses initial embarrassment and ambivalence about Gerty's limp, it ultimately does not curtail his interest in her.

We can see from the following passage how quickly this shift takes place. Of Gerty's limp, Bloom thinks, "Glad I didn't know it when she was on show. Hot little devil all the same. I wouldn't mind. Curiosity like a nun or a negress or a girl with glasses" (*U* 13.775-77). Here Joyce mobilizes two competing rhetorics around disability. One is more traditional, as demonstrated by Bloom's expression of guilt or embarrassment about viewing a disabled person as sexual: "Glad I didn't know it when she was on show." This contrition is also evoked by equating her with a nun. Bloom's comparison becomes more problematic when he thinks of her as a black woman, because of the exoticization and hypersexuality that this implies.[9]

Although on some level, Gerty represents an "other" for Bloom, he is also critiquing the idea of her exclusion and exceptionality by aligning her with "a girl with glasses" and, by extension, with a common impairment.[10] Bloom's oscillation quickly moves disability into a category that is not only acceptable but ordinary. The oscillation exemplifies some capacity for flexibility within the process of gendering, in that the gap between idealized female bodies and lived female bodies allows for the incorporation of disability within notions of femininity; it also helps to allow the space for Gerty MacDowell to exist as a sexual subject.

Another way the text destigmatizes Gerty is by framing the limp

in a way that minimizes the exceptionality of disability. This is done both by emphasizing the frequency with which disability occurs and emphasizing disability as a variation rather than an extraordinary uniqueness. I am struck by the parallelism between this critique of exceptionalism and the one discussed in critical literature about the episode with regard to youth. The idea that Gerty functions as a kind of double for Stephen has been repeatedly examined in much criticism of the episode.[11] Gerty, like Stephen, is unaware of her youthful hubris, and both have allowed their age to convince them that they are fundamentally unique. Inasmuch as this false sense of exceptionality felt by the young is accentuated in Gerty, the singularity of her disability is undermined. Thus, disability becomes an example of the exceptional becoming ordinary, much in the same way that youth offers a false sense of importance. I mean here that Gerty and Stephen share the feeling they are exceptionally talented and destined for great things by virtue of their youth. The mediocrity of Stephen's writing in *A Portrait* functions to undermine this point and highlight his self-delusions.

Similarly, Gerty's inflated sense of herself and her romantic future with Bloom is undermined through the novel's stylistic parody of Victorian romance novels. According to Bishop, "[h]er sense of singularity is paradoxically conveyed in a style that is imitative, conventional, and heavy with implications of mass production" (205). The ordinary, as Bishop acknowledges, is in no way a category that serves to demean or minimize (205). I would take his claim further and argue that, in relation to disability, it is a way of erasing the stigma. The commonness of Gerty's sense of exceptionality works to challenge misconceptions of disability as well as to redefine the value of the ordinary. Her sense of herself as not being like other women and being "aloof, apart, in another sphere" relates both to her age and to her disability (*U* 13.602). Exceptionalism is critiqued by the style of Gerty's narrative itself. One need only to look at how she is introduced in the text to find such an example:

> But who was Gerty?
>
> Gerty MacDowell who was seated near her companions, lost in thought, gazing far away into the distance was, in very truth, as fair a specimen of winsome Irish girlhood as one could wish to see. She was pronounced beautiful by all who knew her though, as folks often said, she was more a Giltrap than a MacDowell. Her figure was slight and graceful, inclining even to fragility but those iron jelloids she had been taking of late had done her a world of good much better than the Widow Welch's female pills and she was much better of those discharges she used to get and that tired feeling. The waxen pallor of her face was almost spiritual in its ivorylike purity though her rosebud mouth was a genuine Cupid's bow, Greekly perfect. (*U* 13.78-89)

The passage's humor is derived from its discursive juxtapositions and not from the way in which Gerty embodies femininity as a result of her limp, a potentially easy target for comic relief. Yet, given the extreme and pervasive nature of this stylistic choice, it is no surprise that critics like Patrick McGee raise the question of whether Gerty is meant to be seen as a character at all or whether she is meant to be a stylistic parody of the sentimentalized discourse constructed around romance.[12]

Such a reading, however, disregards Gerty's agency in the encounter and the pleasure she derives from it. After all, Bloom's objectification of Gerty is no more important than her agency in the process of her own objectification.[13] Gerty functions as a figure consciously in control and deciding to display herself:

> and she let him and she saw that he saw and then it went so high it went out of sight a moment and she was trembling in every limb from being bent so far back that he had a full view high up above her knee where no-one ever not even on the swing or wading and she wasn't ashamed and he wasn't either to look in that immodest way like that because he couldn't resist. (*U* 13.726-31)

Gerty experiences sexual pleasure from the encounter, even though, as Bishop argues, she does so less self-consciously than Bloom (194-95). "Whitehot passion was in that face, passion silent as the grave, and it had made her his. . . . His hands and face were working and a tremour went over her" (*U* 13.691-95). The orgasmic tone of these passages directly contradicts the assessment of several critics who see Gerty as disempowered, commodified, and a purely erotic object. Henke suggests, for instance, that Gerty's silence during the encounter is evidence of her entrapment in a masculine narrative ("Gerty MacDowell" 91-92). Jules David Law similarly argues that the mutual gaze of the text creates Bloom's projection of himself as a sexual object rather than subject, from which he emerges more fully than Gerty.[14] His overarching idea of Gerty as a sexual subject, however, remains submerged in a conceptualization of her as an enactment of patriarchal norms.

One of the more traditional ways the episode engages in constructing Gerty not only as a sexual object but also as a self is through its utilization of the mirror.[15] In a scene that reverberates with reminders of Lacanian psychoanalysis and also the fairy tale "Snow White," Gerty describes her reflection in a mirror and how it would respond if it could speak to her.[16] Through her use of this fantasy, she is able to reaffirm her ability to embody sentimentality in a way that is appropriately gendered and also to maintain her own sense of herself as "lovely": "Her very soul is in her eyes and she would give worlds

to be in the privacy of her own familiar chamber where, giving way to tears, she could have a good cry and relieve her pentup feelings though not too much because she knew how to cry nicely before the mirror. You are lovely, Gerty, it said" (*U* 13.189-93). Her uncomplicated relationship with the mirror privileges an understanding of feminine embodiment that depends upon the gaze and display. To the extent that Gerty embraces stereotypical embodiments of femininity, she can be seen not only as a woman but also as an adult, a status including, especially for women, the idea of being marriageable as well as sexual. This challenges Law's claim that Gerty does not see the mirror as elucidating the problematic relationship between the subjective and objective self (228); rather, her objectification is part of what enables her subjectification. The gendered difference produced and enacted by this self-objectification enables Gerty to be understood as a subject with greater agency. Understanding subjects as gendered is central to their legibility; although gendered norms can often be constraining, they are the lens through which one's agency becomes recognized. The use of the mirror also invokes the common perception that people with disabilities are narcissistic—a perception cogently explored by Tobin Siebers in his work on the subject.[17] He argues that "the accusation of narcissism is one of the strongest weapons used against people with disabilities" (43). Rather than understand Gerty as "narcissistic," we may instead see this preoccupation with self-objectification as a way of creating gendered agency.

This is not to suggest, however, that Gerty formulates her sense of an erotic self outside of potentially limiting constructions of female sexuality. In posing for Bloom, Gerty explicitly adopts the postures of pinup girls and alludes to poses found in pornography. It is precisely this citational practice that enables her to become an object of desire for Bloom. The fact that femininity becomes constrained within these commodified and popular visual constructions does not mean that the subject lacks either empowerment or choice. Gerty's character recognizes the ways in which female sexuality has been constructed, and she is determined to enter into that discourse, so as to contest the perception within the culture at large that she is naive and less desirable as a result of her limp. To understand Gerty's desire, one must also understand the extent to which disabled bodies are frequently de-eroticized and become subjects of the medical, rather than sexual, gaze.[18]

Gerty's frequent reliance upon sentimental novels and media constructions as a way of knowing both femininity and the conventions of romantic love reveal that gendered embodiment can only be a citational practice. Rather than expose the ways in which Gerty fails authentically to embody female subjectivity as a result of a patriarchal economy, "Nausicaa" alludes to the impossibility of a

fully authentic embodiment of gender.[19] We can, therefore, examine the ways in which disability interacts with the deferral of questions about authenticity as they inflect gender and sexual identity. More particularly, "Nausicaa" exposes the performativity of ability and its inextricability from the performativity of gender. In concealing her limp and trying to appear non-disabled, Gerty demonstrates the ways in which ability, like gender, is also a citational and performative practice.[20] While both processes are contingent upon one another, it is never possible fully to embody either one of them.

Gerty's limp makes evident the ways in which her citation of gender must always appear incomplete: "the years were slipping by for her, one by one, and but for that one shortcoming she knew she need fear no competition and that was an accident coming down Dalkey hill and she always tried to conceal it" (*U* 13.649-51). If no subject fits perfectly within idealized norms of gender—since gender itself is citational and a process of selective display and concealment—then Gerty must perform even more than a nondisabled subject in order to display femininity. Her concealment becomes a greater challenge and ultimately reveals the fact that notions of gender are intertwined and predicated upon notions of an able body. This is not to say that disabled subjects cannot be understood in gendered terms but rather that their access to the economy of gendered expression is constrained. This is precisely because that economy is built upon an idealized able body to which they do not have access and through which they can never fully perform.[21]

Gerty represents the contingent and unstable nature of these norms of embodiment as well as their ability to allow for partial conformity. This partial conformity both reinstitutes the norms and calls them into question.[22] Gerty can be seen as a commentary on the process of beautification itself: in that process, gender becomes an always deferred symbol that remains, to borrow a phrase from McGee's reading, "empty until we inform it with desire" (311).[23] This does not place gender outside of already articulated ideologies, which are both constructed as the embodiments of our desire and as a result of our attempts to approximate these embodiments. The inevitable gap between the attempt and the sought-after ideal is not evidence that we can or should abandon iterations of gendered embodiment. It is precisely such attempts that allow Gerty to formulate herself as a gendered subject.

A salient example in which she reframes her subjectivity and body in relation to other women occurs when she compares herself to certain cyclists. When reflecting on her relationship with Reggy Wylie, Gerty claims she is "not like other flighty girls unfeminine he had known, those cyclists showing off what they hadn't got" (*U* 13.436-37). Here we see Gerty setting herself apart from other girls

through focusing on her bodily differences as an enhancement of her femininity. The reference to cyclists is particularly important because they have athleticized, able bodies that exist in stark contrast to the limping but shapely Gerty. In her comparison, she has the advantage, because the lack of cycling ability associated with her limp is also a part of what makes her more feminine and a more desirable candidate for Bloom. Thus, when the women are "showing off what they hadn't got," Gerty constructs a narrative, privileging her disabled body as not only desirable but preferable. The passage then demonstrates her desire to be loved "for herself alone," as she both connects her body to her self-identity and suggests that she wants to be desired for more than her embodiment of femininity.

Another way in which the text maintains its focus on Gerty's desirability and disability is through repeated mentions of her footwear and attractive legs: "Her wellturned ankle displayed its perfect proportions beneath her skirt and just the proper amount and no more of her shapely limbs encased in finespun hose with highspliced heels and wide garter tops" (*U* 13.168-71). Bloom also comments on her "wellfilled hose" in his section (*U* 13.793). Gerty makes allowances for her differences in mobility but shows that she feels the need to compete with other women; while it is not necessary for her to move exactly as they do, "Gerty was adamant. She had no intention of being at their beck and call. If they could run like rossies she could sit so she said she could see from where she was" (*U* 13.687-89). The act of sitting also permits her to continue her erotic scene with Bloom and obtain pleasure from it.

This is not to suggest that Gerty only conceptualizes her body and herself in positive terms. We view her expressing jealousy when she sees her companion Cissy Caffrey run:

> [T]here was a lot of the tomboy about Cissy Caffrey and she was a forward piece whenever she thought she had a good opportunity to show off and just because she was a good runner she ran like that so that he could see all the end of her petticoat running and her skinny shanks up as far as possible. It would have served her just right if she had tripped up over something accidentally on purpose with her high crooked French heels on her to make her look tall and got a fine tumble. (*U* 13.480-86)

Here, Gerty's jealousy is located specifically in Cissy's status as an effective runner. This mobility is part of what makes her literally more "forward" than Gerty as she approaches the men. It is also significant that Gerty comments on her shoes, given that French heels would probably be difficult for Gerty to wear. Once again, we see her characterizing athleticism as masculine to highlight her femininity. Gerty's

oscillations about her own desirability reveal that she views her disability neither as entirely abject nor entirely appropriable. Instead, these movements show that she shifts back and forth, negotiating between idealized gender norms and her own lived embodiment of them.

Similarly, while Gerty's romantic narrative clearly establishes her desire for a traditional marriage and children, her distaste for the children who accompany her friends subtly undercuts this narrative. In describing Cissy with the little boys, Gerty observes: "Cissy came up along the strand with the two twins and their ball with her hat anyhow on her to one side after her run and she did look a streel tugging the two kids along with the flimsy blouse she bought only a fortnight before like a rag on her back and a bit of her petticoat hanging like a caricature" (*U* 13.505-09). Given how important appearance is to Gerty, it is difficult to see her yearning to be in the same position. In this passage, Cissy seems disheveled and weighed down with responsibility in a way Gerty cannot imagine. She wishes "to goodness they'd take the snottynosed twins and their babby home" (*U* 13.529-30). For her, the fantasy of the security and recognition marriage would provide is more appealing than its reality. If we read Gerty as also gaining sexual pleasure from her encounter with Bloom, it is her freedom from the restraints of marriage and children that allows her to stay after her friends have gone and, therefore, to reach a climax with him.[24]

Thus Gerty is further outside the sexual-market economy than critics like Henke and Garry M. Leonard suggest—Leonard, for example, claims that Gerty is merely trying to increase her market value.[25] Similarly, Henke argues that Gerty sells herself cheaply as a sexual commodity ("Heroine" 91), but it is not that she undervalues herself. In fact, she sells herself freely and comes at no cost to Bloom, as he observes: "Cheap too. Yours for the asking. Because they want it themselves. Their natural craving" (*U* 13.790-91). Gerty's own pleasure in the encounter raises the value of the exchange considerably, especially when we consider its role in reaffirming her sense of herself as a desirable sexual subject. It is impossible to commodify the value of one's own subject formation.

The issue of commodification becomes further complicated by the inclusion of Gerty's disability. Her failure to become a commodity, both in terms of employment and marriage, reflects the broader cultural failure to commodify disabled subjects. Because people with disabilities deviate from normative ideas of bodily and cognitive function (or even the appearance of such deviation), it is increasingly difficult to be recuperated into capitalistic frameworks of profit.[26] Disability problematizes the process of commodification because it emphasizes the body's particularity and idiosyncrasy; this, in turn,

works against capitalist values of reproduction and exchangeability. Disability thus alters one's relationship to capitalistic frameworks and commodification. Because disability is often reduced to the idiosyncratic, it fails to be absorbed into market systems and is often dismissed as a coherent and significant category of difference, identity, and human experience.

The episode's constructions of gender and sexuality, however, extend beyond Gerty's character representation. "Nausicaa" employs a visually repressive economy that locates the erotic not only in the seen or the said but also in the unseen and the unsaid.[27] In doing so, it challenges the privileging of the visual in relation to the erotic. Leckie astutely points out that Gerty's language creates its erotic charge through its censorship and that the language of the passages calls upon readers to fill in the gaps (76), as when "[s]he felt the warm flush, a danger signal always with Gerty MacDowell, surging and flaming into her cheeks. Till then they had only exchanged glances of the most casual" (*U* 13.365-67).[28] The blush's meaning is left for the reader to discern. Its suggestion of eroticism or embarrassment allows not only for two discrete readings but a blurring of the boundary between the two.

It is no wonder then that representations of female sexuality were seen as dangerous in the English sensational-novel debate of the 1860s and in subsequent censorship regulations. The novel's insistence that the reader fill in the gaps allowed critics anxious about female sexuality to target the novel rather than a patriarchal culture. As Leckie argues, not only did this allow the "problem" of female sexuality to be reframed as an issue of censorship, but it also created a class of readers that needed to be policed (66). One imagines that these pressures would be far greater for disabled women and other women whose reproduction could be seen as undesirable or even dangerous. Imagination emerges as what needs to be constrained, in terms of sexuality. What we can imagine as sexual and desirable becomes just as dangerous as the sexual act itself. Around the time that "Nausicaa" was written, clinical work such as Havelock Ellis's was already engaging with what it meant to desire disability.

Joyce's conceptualization of the erotic in "Nausicaa" was influenced by Ellis's writing. We know Joyce was aware of Ellis's work, and Ellis cites, in *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, a case of a man attracted to "lame women" in Richard Von Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*.[29] The original case involved a man who had his first sexual feelings after seeing a lame woman and thereafter could only be excited by other women who limped. He was advised by Krafft-Ebing that it was impossible for medical science to undo such a long-standing fetish and that his best hope for happiness was to find a limping woman to love.[30] In "Nausicaa," while the limp does not lessen the

attraction, it is not its sole source. This version moves the encounter from pathology and places it less conspicuously on a spectrum of desire.

It is not just Gerty's embodiment that challenges conventional notions of disability and desirability but Joyce's ability to create an alternative structure of desire that moves away from ocularcentrism. For instance, in discussing a blind man, Bloom critiques stereotypes of blindness and puts forth alternative sensory schemas as a possible way of understanding the world: "Or we are surprised they have any brains. Why we think a deformed person or a hunchback clever if he says something we might say. Of course the other senses are more" (*U* 8.1116-18). Once again, the text raises challenges about how people with disabilities are perceived, such as others thinking the disabled are exceptional for demonstrating intelligence or having similar language abilities. The statement "[o]f course the other senses are more" opens a space for compensation and even for an alternative sensibility that is just as valuable. The presentation of this alternative sensory schema could be misread as a claim that the blind have a kind of second sight or exceptional or even superhuman senses in other ways; but I believe the text suggests—as Joyce knew firsthand because of his own visual impairment—that vision is only one source of sensory information from which a person can understand his or her surroundings.

The scene in "Lestrygonians" where Bloom contemplates the blind man connects such alternative sensory schemas to the subject position of blindness and disability directly. As Bloom describes the blind man, he imagines how difficult the situation of blindness must be in relation to women: "Must be strange not to see her. Kind of a form in his mind's eye. The voice, temperatures: when he touches her with fingers must almost see the lines, the curves. His hands on her hair, for instance. Say it was black, for instance. Good. We call it black. Then passing over her white skin. Different feel perhaps. Feeling of white" (*U* 8.1127-31). Yet his contemplation of the inherent difficulties quickly gives way to considering how the blind man differentiates a woman's voice from others. His ability almost to see "the lines, the curves" uses touch to approximate vision. The different colors of her skin and her hair can be felt through texture, whose differentiations allow the blind man to recognize the woman's experience, as well as to "see" colors in a way that Bloom cannot. The statement "[w]e call it black" acknowledges the separation of naming from the thing named. This use of the signifier-signified relationship calls into question the idea of one collective reality and of one uniform way of understanding color specifically and the material world more generally.

The privileging of sight is challenged by more than just this brief contemplation of a blind figure. It is also done through expanding

the significance of the olfactory in relation to the erotic. Hugh Davis discusses the ways in which olfactory representation has been largely ignored in discussions of *Ulysses*.[31] To the extent that it has been mentioned, its importance is frequently minimized, despite the fact that earlier work by Richard Brown points out Ellis's influence on *Ulysses*.[32] Davis's work, however, reveals not only the importance of scent in relation to Joyce's treatment of sexuality (424) but also the associations that scent evokes as opposed to images, and he invokes Ellis's *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*: "Personal odors do not, as vision does, give us information that is very largely intellectual; they make an appeal that is mainly of an intimate, emotional, imaginative character" (1:82). Davis calls attention to the way Ellis's emphasis on smell resonates in *Ulysses* and in Joyce's writing about his own erotic sensibility to his wife, Nora (425). Joyce's sexual proclivities have been recorded in their 1909 correspondence, in which he repeatedly discusses his desire for the smell of her perfume and specific parts of her body (*SL* 157-96). Building upon Davis's claims, I argue that Joyce's expansion of the erotic beyond the visual reframes not just the role of the olfactory but also how eroticism functions and what it encompasses. This creates a more expansive notion of what the erotic is and who can access it.

In Joyce's writing, unusual sexual attractions and proclivities are not consistently treated as deviant or disgusting behaviors needing medical intervention; instead they are part of the stream of consciousness through which we get to know the novel's characters. In his writing on the olfactory, Ellis specifically and repeatedly links imagination to smell. He writes, "[O]lfactory experiences are of no practical significance. They are nonetheless of considerable emotional significance" (1:55). This particular emotional association then leads "various writers to describe the sense of smell as above all others the sense of imagination," Ellis notes (1:55). What he later describes as the potential plasticity of the force of imagination takes on particular relevance when applied to human sexuality. Like the polymorphous force of imagination, sexual expression takes on a multifarious quality in "Nausicaa," and, in the novel more generally. Ellis asserts, "[M]anifestations of sexual psychology are most specifically human" because of their involvement with the human imagination (2:113-14).[33]

Ellis does not describe the relationship between sight and smell as one of dominance but one in which smell is associated more with the emotional and the unconscious, rather than the intellectual and the known. We see how these ideas influence the way sexuality is constructed in "Nausicaa." For example, Gerty is careful to keep a piece of scented cotton wool with her at all times, and even after she leaves, Bloom recognizes the scent of her perfume: "That's her perfume. Why she waved her hand. I leave you this to think of me

when I'm far away on the pillow" (*U* 13.1007-08). He ruminates on smell for several paragraphs and smells himself in order to determine what odor women get from men (*U* 13.1007-43). All of these instances point to smell as part of the episode's broader considerations of the erotic. This formulation, in turn, constructs an eroticism applicable to a wider variety of bodies and desires. The novel's interventions into categories of ability—or rather what constitutes ability in and of itself—occur not just through the use of character but also through positing alternate sensory schemas that acknowledge other ways of expressing desire. The absence of sight opens the imaginative field and gives license to a more expanded erotic imagination.

A reconsideration of the significance of Gerty's limp forces us to examine the complex ways that ideologies of ability and gender are informed by one another. When we draw out other elements in the text, such as the blind man and the role of the olfactory, it is clear that *Ulysses* incorporates the challenges a disabled subjectivity poses to more familiar categories of gender and sexuality. A re-examination of Gerty as both the subject and a site of exploration of gender and disability reveals that her episode interrogates predominant assumptions about how sexuality works and what it signifies. Underscoring the multiplicity of ways that we experience pleasure has implications extending far beyond the textual concerns of Joyce scholars. Theorizing a more relational and shifting understanding of gender and disability allows not only for a nuanced and complex understanding of the relationship between ability and gender but a more accurate understanding of how ideologies of gender and ability actually function. A more complex understanding of disability, gender, and desire reveals a space for disabled subjectivity—a subjectivity that, although it is never entirely unmediated, nevertheless exerts power.

NOTES

[1] Suzette S. Henke, "Gerty MacDowell: Joyce's Sentimental Heroine," *Women in Joyce*, ed. Henke and Elaine Unkeless (Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1982), p. 132. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text as "Heroine."

[2] After this article was accepted for publication, I learned of Angela Lea Nemecek's essay "Reading the Disabled Woman: Gerty MacDowell and the Stigmaphilic Space of 'Nausicaa,'" *Joyce Studies Annual*, ed. Moshe Gold and Philip Sicker (New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 2010), 173-202, in which she discusses Bloom and Gerty's mutual desire as a critique of eugenics and in relation to Erving Goffman's concept of stigma—see Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity* (Austin: Touchstone Press, 1986), p. 31. My essay focuses more heavily on how gender and ability norms construct subjectivity and how Joyce's work shows a nuanced under-

standing of disability and desirability, as well as how the sensory schema of the text expands or "crips" our understanding of the erotic.

[3] Fritz Senn, "Nausicaa in James Joyce's *Ulysses*," *James Joyce's "Ulysses": Critical Essays*, ed. Clive Hart and David Hayman (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1974), p. 283. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

[4] Richard Ellmann, *Ulysses on the Liffey* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972), p. 133.

[5] Henke, "Joyce's Naughty Nausicaa: Gerty MacDowell Refashioned," *Papers On Joyce*, 10-11 (2004-2005), 89. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text as "Gerty MacDowell."

[6] Marilyn French, *The Book as World: James Joyce's "Ulysses"* (Boston: Harvard Univ. Press, 1976), p. 168. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

[7] See Barbara Leckie, "Reading Bodies, Reading Nerves: 'Nausicaa' and the Discourse of Censorship," *JJQ*, 34 (Fall-Winter 1996-1997), 65-85; John Bishop, "Metaphysics of Coitus in 'Nausicaa,'" *"Ulysses"—En-gendered Perspectives*, ed. Kimberly J. Devlin and Marilyn Reizbaum (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1999), pp. 185-209; Katherine Mullin, *James Joyce, Sexuality, and Social Purity* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2003); Devlin, "The Romance Heroine Exposed: 'Nausicaa' and *The Lamplighter*," *JJQ*, 22 (Summer 1985), 383-96; and Jen Shelton, "Bad Girls: Gerty, Cissy, and the Erotics of Unruly Speech," *JJQ*, 34 (Fall-Winter 1996-1997), 87-102. Further references to the Leckie and Bishop works will be cited parenthetically in the text.

[8] For examples, see Adrienne Asch and Michelle Fine, *Women With Disabilities* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1988); Beth Hutchison and Bonnie G. Smith, eds., *Gendering Disability* (New Jersey: Rutgers Univ. Press, 2004); Bob Guter and John R. Killacky, *Queer Crips: Disabled Gay Men and Their Stories* (Binghamton, N.Y.: Haworth Press, 2004); Shelley Tremain, ed., *Pushing the Limits: Disabled Dykes Produce Culture* (Ontario: Women's Press, 1996); Victoria A. Brownworth and Susan Raffo, *Restricted Access* (Seattle: Seal Press, 1999); Eli Clare, *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation* (Cambridge: Southend Press, 1999); John Hockenberry, *Moving Violations: War Zones, Wheelchairs, and Declarations of Independence* (New York: Hyperion Press, 1996); Carol Thomas, *Female Forms: Experiencing and Understanding Disability* (Philadelphia: Open Univ. Press, 1999); and Tom Shakespeare, *The Sexual Politics of Disability: Untold Desire* (New York: Cassell Publishers, 1996). Virtually every book dealing with issues of disability and sexuality from any perspective confirms the existence of this stereotype and refutes it in some way.

[9] In *Joyce's Web: The Social Unraveling of Modernism* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1992), p. 176, Margot Norris sees these three figures as ciphers for the episode's three female characters: the alabaster and virginal Gerty is like a "nun" (especially because of her resemblance to the Blessed Virgin); Cissy Caffrey, "the dark one with the mop head and the nigger mouth" (*U* 13.898), is like an African woman; and Edy Boardman wears glasses.

[10] Although there is a negative cultural association between women who wear glasses and sexual desirability, as in the old adage "[m]en seldom make passes/[a]t girls who wear glasses," the comparison still minimizes the stigma associated with Gerty's limp—see Dorothy Parker, "News Item," *Complete Poems: Dorothy Parker* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), p. 71.

[11] Ellmann (pp. 131-32) and Bishop (p. 204) both comment on the ways in which Gerty can be read as a double for Stephen Dedalus, especially, as Bishop points out, in relation to Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (p. 205). Her heightened romanticization regarding sexuality and men in general can be seen as another way of demonstrating and perhaps mocking a false sense of exceptionality often associated with youth.

[12] Patrick McGee, "Joyce's Nausea: Style and Representation in 'Nausicaa,'" *JJQ*, 24 (Spring 1987), 306. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

[13] Bloom's objectification of Gerty has been commented on by most critics who have written about the episode. See Henke's and Bishop's essays, and see Sicker, "Unveiling Desire: Pleasure, Power and Masquerade in Joyce's 'Nausicaa' Episode," *Joyce Studies Annual*, ed. Thomas Staley, 14 (2003), 92-131.

[14] Jules David Law, "'Pity They Can't See Themselves': Assessing the 'Subject' of Pornography in 'Nausicaa,'" *JJQ*, 27 (Winter 1990), 226. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

[15] Bishop makes a similar point in his essay (p. 188).

[16] Here I refer to the "mirror stage" in Lacanian psychoanalysis and the mirror's central role in the formation of subjectivity and the ego—see Jacques Lacan, "The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious," *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Routledge Publishers, 1977), pp. 293-325.

[17] Tobin Siebers, "Tender Organs, Narcissism, and Identity Politics," *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities*, ed. Sharon L. Snyder, Brenda Jo Brueggemann, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2002), pp. 40-55. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

[18] Discussions of how disability emerges as a way of critiquing traditional feminist arguments about objectification emerge elsewhere within disability studies. For example, in writing about Ellen Stohl, a disabled model who posed for *Playboy*, Clare writes:

> When non-disabled feminists started criticizing Ellen and the disability activists who supported her, I wanted to rant. . . . [Their] analysis has led to much powerful feminist activism in the past 25 years against rape and child abuse, against pornography and other media portrayals of women. But when taken to its extreme—sometimes in the form of legislation—it has also led to pro-censorship stands, bizarre agreements with the right wing, and narrow, dogmatic views about sex and sexual imagery. It succeeded in bringing to the foreground what is degrading, humiliating, and dangerous about sexual objectification but failed to understand the complicated relationship between the self as subject and the self as object. It spoke eloquently about the damage that can be caused by pornographic sexual representation but failed to embrace the need for pleasure. It named certain sexual behaviors as oppressive but failed to take into account the multi-layered reality of erotic power. (pp. 114-15)

[19] This is not to say that practices of gendering do not strengthen patriarchal norms but only that I do not want to read them as the primary way in which Gerty's femininity functions, reduces, and dismisses a greater, more complex, critique of the way in which gender works.

[20] Judith Butler's work, in *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge Publishers, 1993), on the performativity of gender and materiality as a citational practice was used within disability studies by Shelley Tremain to argue that ability, like gender, is performative—see Tremain, "On the Subject of Impairment," *Disability/Postmodernity: Embodying Disability Theory*, ed. Mairian Corker and Shakespeare (New York: Continuum Press, 2002), pp. 32-47.

[21] This is also true for other groups such as people of color, people who are overweight, and people of advanced age. It is conversely true that all of these populations, including people with disabilities, have been fetishized and eroticized within specific subcultures, but, as I discussed earlier, the general perception of asexuality amongst people with disabilities is still the primary cultural narrative through which disability and sexuality are considered in relation to each other.

[22] That gender is a citational practice means it will always function with this kind of contradiction, both exposing and partially attaining the norms it reproduces. Because of the way disability alters and interferes with these norms, it further exposes the weakness of their construction and the reliance of gendered norms upon ableized ones.

[23] On these issues, see Thomas Karr Richards's outstanding discussion of "Nausicaa" in "Those Lovely Seaside Girls," *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851–1914* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1990), pp. 205-48. Richards points out that magazines like *Cosmopolitan* begin with a photograph of a beautiful model on the cover, but then, as the reader moves through the magazine to its back pages, he or she finds increasing numbers of ads for wart- and cellulite-removal, weight loss, and breast enlargement—the kinds of products that might be needed in order to resemble the images on the first pages.

[24] Though Gerty's friends are unmarried, it is their assumption of the maternal role and Gerty's freedom from it that is relevant here.

[25] Garry M. Leonard, *Advertising and Commodity Culture in Joyce* (Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 1998), p. 56.

[26] For a further discussion of disability and capitalism, see Martha Russell, *Beyond Ramps: Disability at the End of the Social Contract* (Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1998), and Michael Oliver, *The Politics of Disablement: A Sociological Approach* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990).

[27] I do not suggest that the episode does not employ the gaze or visuality but only that visual markers signifying the erotic are often either euphemized or implied rather than explicitly stated.

[28] While the gaze is referred to in this passage, both what is seen and the way it differs from previous glances are indeterminate.

[29] See Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* (Philadelphia: F. A. Davis, 1921), 5:105, and see Richard Von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis, with Especial Reference to the Antipathic Sexual Instinct*, trans. Franklin S. Klaf (New York: Stein and Day, 1965), pp. 155-56. Further references to Ellis's book will be cited parenthetically in the text by volume and page number.

[30] Krafft-Ebing also cites several other similar cases: a man partial to cross-eyed women, a man attracted only to amputees, and sado-masochist impulses prompted by white skin. What is notable about his interpretations of these fetishes, however problematic their associations might be, is his belief that one must work within them to obtain sexual and romantic happiness rather than overcome them.

[31] Hugh Davis, "'How Do You Sniff?': Havelock Ellis and Olfactory Representation in 'Nausicaa,'" *JJQ*, 41 (Spring 2004), 421-40. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

[32] Richard Brown, *Joyce and Sexuality* (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985), pp. 83-84.

[33] This statement relates to Sigmund Freud's idea of the polymorphously perverse—see "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey et al. (London: Hogarth Press, 1953), 7:191.