

FEMININE GUIDANCE: AN AUGUSTINIAN READING OF JOYCE'S
STEPHEN DEDALUS

Jeffrey J. Russ

Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree
Master of Arts
in the Department of English,
Indiana University

December 2009

Accepted by the Faculty of Indiana University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Jason T. Eberl, Ph.D., Chair

Brian C. McDonald, M.A.

Master's Thesis
Committee

Kenneth W. Davis, Ph.D.

For my Mother and Father

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks goes to Brian, Jason, and Ken for their guidance and wisdom.

FEMININE GUIDANCE: AN AUGUSTINIAN READING OF JOYCE'S STEPHEN DEDALUS

Wisdom is nothing other than the truth in which the highest good is discerned and acquired. (Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will* 47)

Her eyes had called him and his soul had leaped at the call. To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life! (James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 150)

At the end of Book Nine of *Confessions*, Aurelius Augustine asks a favor from those he has served throughout his working life: please pray for my mother. At the age of forty-three, Augustine asks his friends to remember Monica “so that what my mother at her end asked of me may be fulfilled more richly in the prayers of so many gained for her by my Confessions than by my prayers alone” (9.13.36). More than a postscript to his influential autobiography, Augustine’s request signifies a crucial point in *Confessions*. No longer tied to the chain of lust (3.1.1), Augustine has fulfilled his mother’s wish by becoming baptized into the Catholic faith. His sin of desiring the lesser things of God’s creation through an inordinate desire to stimulate his senses has been replaced by a desire to praise God by searching for Truth and Wisdom. As an eventual bishop of Hippo and a successful writer/orator, Augustine’s life is an example for those looking to escape the bonds of inordinate desires for a freer life, a truer vocation. What is striking in Augustine’s wish for others to pray for Monica is that Augustine fails to mention other people that were instrumental in his voyage from inordinate desire.¹ The guidance from

¹ Patricius is also mentioned as someone to pray for, although only in relation to Monica (9.13.36).

the male figures in his life—his mentor Ambrose, the pious Simplicianus, Victorinus, and his named (Alypius) and “unnamed” friends—remain an afterthought to the faith and wisdom he acquired from his mother (8.2.3, 4.8.13, 8.12.28). Instead, Augustine thanks Monica. For it is Monica who initiated him into the Catholic Church as an infant; it is Monica who inspired his writing of *Confessions* as an adult; and it is Monica who pointed the way to God and subsequently the path away from sin. For as *Confessions* tells us so poignantly, Augustine in his youth was “a wretched sheep...infected with a foul disease” (3.2.4) enjoying only “the body of the person who loved [him]” (3.1.1). As we will see, Augustine’s *Confessions* is the story of how choosing to indulge in inordinate desires for the lesser things of God’s creation can make a reasoning, wisdom-seeking human being into an animal, hunting, lustful, and preying on others for its own bodily satisfaction. Truly then, *Confessions* is a call to those in sin and a prayer book for those seeking redemption.

Confessions is also, as this paper will demonstrate, an influential work for those writing about protagonists battling inordinate desires. One author in particular whose works exhibit Augustinian themes is James Joyce. Similar to the Augustine presented in *Confessions*, Joyce’s semi-autobiographical character, Stephen Dedalus, attempts to find and fulfill his own vocation, all while in the throes of inordinate desire. Like the Augustine of *Confessions*, Stephen Dedalus of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* is a talented young man brought up in the Catholic tradition. Although Stephen attempts to “fly by those nets” of the establishment, his path to vocation is

strikingly familiar to readers of Augustine (179). One of the most remarkable similarities between Augustine and Stephen is their relationship to women. For the Augustine of *Confessions* and Stephen Dedalus of Dublin, it is feminine guidance that leads to a clearer vocation.

Not entirely a commentary on the origin of “sin,” *Confessions* and *Portrait/Ulysses* are more about the experience of inordinate desire and the path to ultimate grace. A careful look at Augustine’s doctrine of sin in another one of his major works further elucidates Augustine and Stephen’s experience of inordinate desires. Perhaps a surprising assertion to readers of Joyce who see Stephen’s sexual life as liberation from religious mores (and an asset to his becoming a writer free from “nationality, language, religion” (*Portrait* 179)), Augustine’s discussion of the origin of “sin” in *On Free Choice of the Will* further strengthens the position that Stephen’s life follows Augustine’s. In this shorter work, Augustine discusses with Evodius the origin, experience, and resolution of sin. In Book Two, Augustine explains how the transference of stimuli, including information used as knowledge, begins with “the material” (37). As conveyed to the five senses, the material is the starting point for experience. From the material, the five senses send messages to the “inner sense” which interprets them as much as it is capable of and then sends them along to reason. At the place of reason, one can attain knowledge (wisdom) by commenting on all stations of the material-wisdom continuum (34-35). Augustine believes that humans possess an “inner sense,” the faculty that instructs animals and humans to “either avoid

or pursue” “pleasure” or “pain” (35). Nevertheless, for Augustine, what is required for knowledge is a complete transcendence of stimuli beyond the inner sense and into the realm of reason. Augustine’s sense-continuum stipulates that the entities to the left of the linear continuum (material objects) are less valuable to the human experience of grace than those on the right (reason). In other words, the objects on the left of the series act as sparks to our five senses, but if they are not taken up by reason they will only act as stimuli for indulgence of our animalistic natures. Moreover, animals, for Augustine, have the so-called “inner sense,” but are unable to comment on it. Only humans who have the ability to evaluate and discuss the inner sense (i.e. the ability to reason) can avoid sins of flesh. He states, “We perceive color by means of the sense of the eyes, but we do not perceive that sense by means of itself. For the sense that you use to see color is not the same sense that you use to see seeing itself” (35-6). In this statement, Augustine is describing the power of the inner sense to distinguish when the body is lacking in nourishment. When senses are not nourished, i.e. when an animal does not see its prey, the inner sense can notify the animal that it needs to seek out food by looking through its eyes. What animals lack, however, is the ability to evaluate, say, the effectiveness of the inner sense; commentary on the inner sense is in the realm of reason, an ability held only by humans. In *On Free Choice of the Will*, Augustine instructs Evodius that “None of the five senses can perceive itself, although all of them can perceive material objects” (37). Moreover, for Augustine, only reason “can delimit the things that are perceived,” “grasp itself by...itself,” and offer the things of the world

to “knowledge” (36-7). For Augustine, sin occurs when one chooses the satisfaction received from desires over guidance received from reason. When one’s desires are no longer in accordance with reason, they become inordinate and lead to sin. In other words, Augustine believes that if one wants to avoid sins of the flesh he or she must seek wisdom and choose to align their natural, “animalistic urges” with what would be considered reasonable.

A major theme of *Confessions*, the importance of seeking wisdom over bodily satisfaction is also at the heart of *Portrait/Ulysses*. Understanding the sense-knowledge continuum not only gives one an idea as to where sin comes from, but also how sinful characters like Augustine and Stephen can be reformed. The beautiful woman one sees with one’s eyes may stimulate the sense of sight, but the final attainment of Truth can only be gained when what one sees is brought to reason; stimuli that reach the realm of reason can be acted upon only after reason confirms the action. In those with an ordered reason, the sight of a beautiful woman may create desire, but the longing will be tempered by knowledge of, say, the woman’s status as a married person; on the other hand, when Augustine of *Confessions* and Stephen of *Portrait/Ulysses* view women with a lustful eye, their reason can be seen as disordered because they continue to desire the woman even though they are aware of her marital status. Ignoring moral codes, those with inordinate desires, look to others as objects to satisfy the second position of the continuum: the senses. The stimuli has gone beyond the inner sense and reached reason; however, they have decided to align their volition only with what will

satisfy their senses. According to Augustine, instead of desiring Wisdom that can lead one to God, those with inordinate desire lust after the lesser things of God's creation, in this case the woman's body. The woman's body, with its warmth, sensation, and smell, is not a negative entity for Augustine. What is harmful, instead, is the inordinate desire for the woman's body and the malnourishment it provides. When one desires the sustenance offered by women over and above all else, progress towards vocation is stifled because the search for wisdom and creativity is not sought.

In fact, when one continuously partakes in the lesser, more material things only for the sake of stimulating the five senses, the lucidity of one's mind is affected. Augustine discusses the danger of only living to stimulate the senses: "My one delight was to love [the body] and be loved. But in this I did not keep the measure of mind to mind...; but from the muddy concupiscence of the flesh and the hot imagination of puberty mists steamed up to becloud and darken my heart so that I could not distinguish the white light of love from the fog of lust" (*Confessions*, 2.2.2). Augustine's continued sin prevents him from discovering his vocation because without stimulation, his mind begins to lose its ability to reason. As he continuously heeds to inordinate desires, reason becomes deprived and lacks the ability and *desire* to judge. Joyce too writes of Stephen's apathetic reason: "He burned to appease the fierce longings of his heart before which everything else was idle and alien. He cared little that he was in mortal sin, that his life had grown to be a tissue of subterfuges and falsehoods" (*Portrait* 86). Lacking apt judgment, Augustine and Stephen no longer care to seek wisdom.

Thus, they are unable to distinguish between normal (ordinate) desires and those that are extreme. Once immersed in sin, Augustine and Stephen are less likely to see a difference between the material objects that only spark their senses and the ones that lead to reason and ultimately Wisdom. Without “totally will[ing]” to remove oneself from inordinate desires (*Confessions* 8.9.21), humans become animalistic in their reliance on the inner sense to guide them. Satisfied with indulging the senses in the lesser things of the world; they do not seek wisdom because their actions are devoted to seeking pleasure for the senses. Like animals, humans in sensual sin choose to “pursue or flee from something” solely based on the “material” (*On Free Choice of the Will* 37). When this happens, the voice of reason and the pursuit of wisdom about one’s vocation are ignored.

The discussion of reason by Augustine in *On Free Choice of the Will* is also crucial to an analysis of Augustine and Stephen because the distinction between animals and humans plays a large part in the two protagonists’ journeys toward vocation. In his description of sin in *Confessions*, Augustine often describes himself as feeling like an animal, “dwelling externally in the eye of [his] flesh” (3.6.11). Bound by choices to satisfy his hungry senses, Augustine in sin becomes more animal-like than human. His decisions to indulge in the senses create a habit in which he no longer wills to be released. Augustine writes, “I had no desire for incorruptible food. [] On such emptiness did I feed and was not fed” (3.1.1, 3.6.10).

Just as Augustine describes in *Confessions*, Stephen's own experience with inordinate desire causes him to become animal-like. Stephen's decision to follow his inner sense creates a "fog of mind" and an animal-like desire to stimulate the senses above all else (*Portrait* 97, 98). His soul is "fatten[ed] and congeal[ed] into a gross grease" (98) and he even desires to worship an animal-like god (98). As we will see, Stephen's regression into an animal-like existence and his subsequent attempt at flight are forecasted by the characters Joyce has created. In Joyce's world, characters display their animalistic tendencies on their sleeves.² Instead of avoiding animalistic urges, the characters in *Portrait/Ulysses* embrace them. Stephen meets women with "cowled heads" (emphasis mine), rat-like priests, a "bird-girl," and authority "directing their flocks" (60, 18, 150, 26, 64). In essence, Joyce has magnified humanity's animalistic tendencies as a way to tell a story about a protagonist who, like Augustine, becomes engrossed in sin. Joyce's writing reflects Augustine's notion that those in sin are more animalistic in their desires. *Portrait/Ulysses* use of animal characters is also a way to show how Stephen must become less like the animals and more like rational human beings if he wants to fulfill his vocation. In fact, Stephen's journey to vocation is essentially his coming to realize that he cannot be like the animals, but must instead seek wisdom and reason. Nevertheless, the way he comes to his awareness of vocation is through embracing the guidance and nourishment provided by the feminine animals and avoiding the mockery and degradation offered by the males. As we will see, Joyce's

² The changing of characters into animals is significant both in Homer's *Odyssey* and Joyce's "Circe" chapter in *Ulysses* (Blamires 159).

placement of animal-characters in Stephen's vocational path gives clues to the reader as to which vocation Stephen will ultimately choose. It also strengthens the connection between his works and those of Augustine on the topics of sin, feminine grace, and wisdom as vocation.

An evaluation of Augustine's and Stephen's lives must start with their experience as infants because that is where they both first experience a desire for the material *and* a desire for the feminine. *Confessions* and *Portrait/Ulysses* are chronological as they track the two protagonists through what Augustine labels the stages of man: infancy, boyhood, adolescence, youth, young manhood, and old age. Although *Ulysses* ends with Stephen meeting Bloom in the stage of young manhood, these stages are adhered to quite closely in the three primary works we will be discussing.

Augustine's first experience with feminine nourishment is in infancy. Early on in *Confessions* he muses on what it was like to be a child: "Thus for my sustenance and delight I had woman's milk...[but I could not] make my wants known to those who might satisfy them" (1.7.7, 1.7.8). As an infant who lacks language skills, Augustine's reliance on females is much more heightened while in infancy. His only means of communicating his desires is to cry out, arms flailing (1.6.8). Unable to communicate his desires for other types of food and care, Augustine is nourished by his mother and nurses according to their own kindness. As Augustine learns to use language, he can verbally ask for nourishment, but as he quickly finds out, he is still under the "beck and call of [his] elders" (1.8.13). Moreover, just as Augustine is learning to speak, he is sent

away to school, away from reliable feminine support. Feminine guidance for Augustine in infancy comes from the “milk” of females who care for him. In addition, Augustine makes it clear in *Confessions* that the “milk” from females comes not *from* them but *through* them by God (1.6.7, 9.8.17). He writes of the source of the nourishment: “yet it was not my mother or my nurses who stored their breasts for me: it was Yourself, using them to give me the food of my infancy, according to Your ordinance and the riches set by You at every level of creation” (1.6.7). More than a starting point to his chronological autobiography, Augustine’s infancy is an appropriate beginning place because it signifies the ultimate goal for his life, consistent nourishment from God. His life as related in *Confessions* is an odyssey away from home and then a returning to home once a vocation has been fulfilled. Augustine’s journey is a return to grace because he associates the care he received as an infant from Monica as care from God. Moreover, he returns to grace as a young man because it is Monica who he is with when he is baptized (9.4.8, 9.6.14). For those seeking vocation, God’s care “at every level of creation” begins and ends with a state of guidance and nourishment from the feminine (1.6.7). Although he bows to inordinate desire in boyhood and youth, Augustine’s infancy and young manhood are the two stages of his life where he receives the most nourishment because it is during these times that he has and accepts the grace of God through the feminine. Culminating in his baptism in Book Nine of *Confessions*, Augustine finally accepts his mother’s life-long wish for him to be baptized into the Catholic Church. Before this decision, however, Augustine is a slave to inordinate

desires. In boyhood and in youth, he is far from God and far from being nourished. As Augustine's odyssey will reveal, he says "yes" to his vocation only when he agrees to honor his mother by being baptized into the faith she holds dear. Augustine's distinct vocation is the fulfillment of the desire to be in accordance with God and his son, the Truth (10.40.65).

Stephen Dedalus' vocational path also follows Augustine's because, although he claims to be secular and independent from the rules of his organized religion (*Portrait* 211), Stephen's ultimate vocation relies on a proper acceptance of feminine nourishment. Like Augustine, when Stephen is in sin, he tarnishes the feminine, using "sordid" acts as a way to satisfy his own pleasures (101). And even though Stephen claims not to believe in the Catholic faith supported by his mother (211), it is only after he hears Father Arnall's speech while on "retreat" that his mind and reason begin to be loosened from inordinate desire (96). Joyce writes of the effect religious doctrine has on young Stephen: "Every word of it was for him. Against his sin, foul and secret, the whole wrath of God was aimed. The preacher's knife had probed deep into his diseased conscience and he felt now that his soul was festering in sin" (101). Truly then, Stephen's journey to a vocation of wisdom is aided by his acceptance, however brief, of Catholic doctrine. Avoiding the calls of "jeweled harlots...squeaking like mice" (101) and confessing his sins in the sacrament of penance (125-126), Stephen immerses himself into the Catholic faith (128-131). Although Stephen's devotion to the Catholic Church is short-lived, his experience liberates him from inordinate desire because later

in chapter four of *Portrait* he is able to gaze upon the feminine with ordered desire. In the paramount scene, Stephen finally embraces feminine nourishment and guidance by looking at a female not through the eyes of lust, but as an appreciation of her beauty (150).³ Avoiding inordinate sexual experiences with women for the rest of *Portrait*,⁴ Stephen embraces wisdom and intellectual growth crucial to his vocation.⁵

Therefore, Stephen is most aided on his journey towards wisdom once he accepts the guidance of women. Like the Augustine of *Confessions*, who had talents in commenting on the world around him through spoken words, Stephen's gift of observation can only be fostered if he strives to be free from inordinate desire. When in sin, Augustine and Stephen lack the lucidity to see the signposts pointing to their destination as bishop and writer. They use women as a means to satisfy their bodily depravity. Augustine's and Stephen's ultimate decision to willfully deny their lust for the feminine and instead embrace feminine nourishment is a testament to the potential for feminine healing. For as *Confessions* and *Portrait/Ulysses* so aptly display, the feminine can be seen as both initiating sinful desires and also bringing them under control through their guidance towards wisdom. For as Augustine states, God "ha[s] left

³ According to critic, Stephen Sacari, Stephen's ultimate acceptance of feminine grace occurs in *Ulysses* when by way of Leopold Bloom he is introduced to Molly's "light" (184). One of the three main characters of *Ulysses*, Molly Bloom can also be seen as directing Stephen to his vocation as he turns from Molly's light to encounter the world (*Ulysses* 576).

⁴ Stephen returns to his inordinate desires in *Ulysses*, describing how he "spent" his money in "Georgina Johnson's bed" (155) and returning to the brothel district with Lynch in "Circe" (354).

⁵ His new knowledge is displayed by his discussing with others his views on philosophy and literature (*Portrait*, 179-189; *Ulysses* Ch. 9).

man to learn these things about himself from others, to accept much that touches him so closely on the word of his womanfolk" (1.7.10). Augustine's and Stephen's life journeys are testaments to the possibility of turning from sin and embracing the true gifts of the feminine.

Similar to *Confessions*, the subject of motherly nourishment is revealed early in *Portrait*. Joyce's writings about Stephen Dedalus begin with a nursery rhyme told by Stephen's father, Simon, about the moocow that comes down the lane (5). Joyce begins his theme of people as distinct animals early in *Portrait* so that the connection of females and cows throughout the novel cannot be ignored, or dismissed by his readers. In this example, the moocow is a provider because it is located on the road where Betty Byrne lived, a woman who offers "lemon platt" to Stephen (5). Stephen is described as "baby tuckoo" who meets the moocow on the lane. Like Augustine in infancy, Stephen as a child is nourished by women who offer "milk" (1.6.7). For Stephen, feminine "milk" comes in various forms. Whether it is candy, warmth, a nice smell, or simply words of guidance, women as providers are described by Joyce in both *Portrait* and *Ulysses*. More than any other time in the two novels, Stephen is content at the beginning of *Portrait* because he is well nourished; he is at home before his journey to vocation begins. His mother plays for him "his" song, while he sings and dances (5). Dante Riordan, a live-in friend of the family, gives him a piece of candy "every time he [brings] her a piece of tissue paper" (5). While Brigid, the female maidservant, brings in warm tea for Stephen to drink (9). At this early stage in his life, Stephen's "very good time" (5)

results from the easy nourishment offered in the safety of his own home, in close proximity to females.

Stephen is, however, warned at the end of the first section of *Portrait* of an impending doom. Like Monica does for Augustine, Stephen receives verbal guidance from females about his treacherous vocational path, a path that will unfortunately include mortal sin (86). Stephen's sin is connected to Augustine's because his inordinate desire for women leads to lust. Stephen also relates to Augustine, because at an early age he is told by his mother to confess his sins (6). Augustine frequently returns to his childhood faith, because it was imbued to him by his devout mother. With Monica's praise of the tenets of Catholicism and her persistent callings on the "outskirts" of "Babylon" (2.5.8), Augustine is ultimately able to turn from sin. As with the "milk" offered by females, verbal warnings are not solely from the feminine, but rather from God. Augustine asks rhetorically in Book Two of *Confessions*: "Whose but Yours were the words You dinned into my ears through the voice of my mother, Your faithful servant" (2.3.7)? Up until his baptism at the age of thirty-three and her death that same year, Monica instructs Augustine on the ways of Catholicism, warning him against sin. Whether he realized it or not, Augustine's close proximity to Monica in his youth benefits him. He writes, "I still remember her anxiety and how earnestly she urged upon me not to sin with women, above all not with any man's wife" (2.3.7).⁶ In *Portrait*, Mary Dedalus (and Dante) also forecast Stephen's vocational path (and sin) by warning

⁶ Similar to Monica's warning of sins with "married women" (2.3.7), the priest hearing Stephen's confession asks him if he had premarital sex with "married women" (125).

him of the “eagles” who will “pull out his eyes” (6). When Stephen finally makes his confession at the end of chapter three of *Portrait*, it is a female who directs him to the “Church Street Chapel” where he will make his confession (123). Therefore, Stephen’s sin of the flesh, eventual confession, and perilous path to becoming a writer are all anticipated by the two females in his life. Although Stephen’s exact transgression in the first part of *Portrait* is never reported, Mary and Dante warn him that he must “apologise” or else he will become blind (6). Discussed later in this paper, sight will be one of the five senses affected first by Stephen’s removal from feminine guidance and later by his decision to sin. Here it is significant to note that it is females who warn Stephen of his eventual battle with sin.

In addition, Joyce’s association of people with animals, first seen with the moocow, continues with the “eagle” warning; this time the animal is something to be avoided rather than embraced. Here, the eagle is seen as an enemy to those who desire to see. If Stephen’s goal as a writer is to adequately observe the world, the eagles who blunt his sense of sight can only be thought of as threats to his vocation. Mary and Dante are warning Stephen that only through confession will he be able to fly safe and correctly see his vocational path.⁷

Feminine guidance in Augustine’s and Joyce’s works is further underscored by the contrast with what the male figures offer to both Augustine and Stephen. In

⁷ It is important to note that the females’ warnings also imply a strong Greek mythological connotation of Stephen as Icarus, Dedalus’ son, who falls from the sky after flying too close to the sun. As the reader will see, Stephen’s attempt to flee his “nationality, language, [and] religion” (*Portrait* 179) will fail as he returns to home to Dublin and to his mother’s deathbed as signified in the first chapter of *Ulysses* (7).

Confessions, Augustine's father, Patricius is lauded by his peers because he can provide Augustine with money for school. A pagan whose only reason for religious involvement is to appease Monica, Patricius' main concern in *Confessions* is that Augustine succeeds in the art of persuasion. Augustine comments rather negatively of Patricius: "Yet this same father never bothered about how I was growing towards You or how chaste or unchaste I might be, so long as I grew in eloquence" (2.3.5). In addition, Patricius fails to warn Augustine about sin, particularly the sin of lust. Instead, Patricius is primarily concerned with how capable Augustine is in siring grandchildren. Augustine writes, "my father saw me one day in the public baths, now obviously growing towards manhood and showing the turbulent signs of adolescence. The effect on him was that he already began to look forward to grandchildren, and went home in happy excitement to tell my mother" (2.3.6). Patricius, a father who Augustine compares to a drunkard "intoxicated" by the lesser things God's creation, offers a stark contrast to the "chaste, god-fearing and sober" Monica (2.3.6, 3.11.20).

Similarly, Simon Dedalus in *Portrait* and *Ulysses* is negatively described as a blow-hard who spends most of his time bragging to his cronies about the good old days (80). A hobnobbing reminiscer whose only nourishment of Stephen comes in the form of money for school and trite statements of "wisdom" (7), Simon's true character is revealed in one particularly telling scene in *Portrait*. Although religious in the most minimal sense (Simon calls on God in off-hand remarks) (57); Simon's true loyalties are revealed while Stephen is home for Christmas vacation. A backer of the disgraced

government leader, Charles Parnell—a pariah accused of adultery with one Kitty O’Shea—Simon Dedalus’ primary activity during Christmas dinner is to mock others and support his fallen leader above all else, even religion. Ignorant of the pleas of his wife, Mary Dedalus, to restore order around the table, Simon uses language which indirectly and directly degrades the church and Stephen’s growth towards vocation. In front of young Stephen, Simon starts the scene’s dialogue by imitating a supposed friend, the hotel keeper Christopher. Calling him “Christy,” Simon’s impersonation of Christopher is a veiled mockery of Christ: “He inclined his head, closed his eyes, and, licking his lips profusely, began to speak with the voice of the hotel keeper” (24). Drinking and carrying on with one equally vociferous and crass friend, Mr. Carey, Simon later attacks church leaders in front of his son. In a heated argument with the pious Dante, Simon calls the priests who abandoned support for Parnell “sons of bitches,” “rats in a sewer,” and “Lowlived dogs” (29). Degrading women as well as priests, Simon’s and Mr. Casey’s language about dogs and rats is not lost to the ever impressionable Stephen: “Stephen felt the glow rise to his own cheek as the spoken words thrilled him” (33). Like Augustine who was prompted by Patricius to learn the art of rhetoric in school, Stephen has gotten a firsthand lesson in degrading speech from his own father and his malcontent friend, Mr. Casey.

For Joyce, Stephen’s potential as a writer greatly depends on his ability to “fly by” the mockers he encounters (179). In Joyce’s world of character-animals, Simon is a prime example of someone who will impede Stephen’s vocational progression. Simon,

with his jests and emulation of others is seen as a threat to Stephen's growth because he attempts to keep Stephen in a dependent state. By acting as an animal and attempting to keep Stephen one as well, Simon actually brings Stephen closer to a reliance on the sense of taste. Simon's animalistic nature is revealed when he is mocking Michael Logue, the archbishop of Armagh and primate of all Ireland, calling him a "tub of guts" (28): "Tub of guts, said Mr. Dedalus coarsely ... You should see that fellow lapping up his bacon and cabbage of a cold winter's day ... He [Simon] twisted his features into a grimace of heavy bestiality and made a lapping noise with his lips" (29). Simon's mockery of one who overindulges in food is ironic because it is Simon who constantly placates Stephen with food. When he sees Stephen laughing at his impersonation of "Christy," he calls Stephen a "little puppy" (24-25).⁸ Set to get the scraps from the adult table, Stephen's dependent state as a young dog is furthered by Simon offering him food. When Mr. Dedalus is instructed by Uncle Charles to watch his "language" around the boy, Simon's way to distract Stephen is to offer him food: "I was thinking about that bad language of the railway porter. Well now, that's all right. Here Stephen, show me your plate, old chap. Eat away now. Here" (28). In fact, as another sign of his lack of piety, Simon offers the family "the pope's nose" ("the rump of the turkey") as a way to distract them from his piercing language (28). Simon also uses food to persuade Stephen to rejoin the Jesuits after being away from Clongowes. He states how the order was "Fed up, by God, like gamecocks" while push[ing] his plate over to

⁸ The theme of Stephen as a "puppy" is also supported by his hiding under the table as he is being scolded at the beginning of the novel (6).

Stephen...bad[ing] him to finish what was on it" (62). Even with his mockery of the priesthood, Simon still thinks his "puppy" of a son has the best chance at success learning under a priestly order.

Simon's desire for Stephen to return to the Jesuit order, this time at Belvedere, does not negate the negative connotation Joyce places on priests. Joyce's rhetoric of priests as filthy, wet animals (29) continues *Portrait's* theme of character-animals acting as either catalysts or inhibitors to Stephen's vocational progression. Like the moocow that represents feminine nourishment and the eagle that signifies danger and potential blindness, wet rats represent those who call Stephen to become a priest. Stephen's interactions with the rats of *Portrait/Ulysses* signify his ultimate rejection of the priesthood (141). Early in *Portrait*, the reader learns that Stephen has been shoved into a ditch filled with "cold slimy water" (8). Joyce writes, "And how cold and slimy the water had been! And a fellow had once seen a big rat jump plop into the scum" (8). Occurring while at Clongowes, an all male Jesuit boarding school; Stephen's turn in the bog keeps him wet and cold throughout his time among priests. Certainly, the motif of priests as rats is strongest while Stephen is at Clongowes because there he is surrounded by priests. When he is in the infirmary, the motif is continued when Stephen describes the prefect's "cold damp hand," that felt like a "rat" upon his forehead (18). Moreover, when Stephen visits Father Conmee to notify him that he has been wrongly beaten by Father Dolan, Stephen similarly comments on the rector's "cool moist palm" (50). Away from Clongowes, priests, and those who support their

institution, are also seen as immersed in water. In a scene at the end of chapter four of *Portrait*, Stephen is urged by his Clongowes peers to go swimming in the Liffey: “Come along, Dedalus! Bous Stephanoumenos! Bous Stephaneforos (147)! Still chilled from his earlier time in the bog, Stephen has no intentions of joining those who mock his name: “The mere sight of that medley of wet nakedness chilled him to the bone” (147). In *Ulysses*, Buck Mulligan (another representation of the priesthood, albeit one who mocks the profession) goes for a swim, “crossing himself piously” before plunging into the water (19). Moreover, just as Mulligan is about to jump into the water, a priest exits (19). Stephen, seeing the connection of the priesthood and water, decides at the end of chapter one of *Ulysses* that he cannot stay at Martello tower with Buck Mulligan. Truly, Stephen, who has no desire to be like the rats that are wet, slimy and cold, is often without a home during *Portrait* and *Ulysses*.

The concept of homelessness is paramount to understanding the experiences of Augustine and Stephen Dedalus. In infancy and boyhood, home is a place where feminine nourishment is easy and reliable. Monica and Mary Dedalus offer the two protagonists sensual nourishment by their milk. Unfortunately, for Augustine and Stephen, home is a place that they must rediscover in order to fulfill their vocations. In essence, *Confessions* and *Portrait/Ulysses* are stories of how two characters must redefine their previous concepts of home; they cannot excel at their vocations while in total dependence to their mothers. Home is difficult to sustain for the two protagonists, however, because it is ever fleeting, never permanent. In *Confessions*, young Augustine

is constantly moving. He is born in Thagaste, sent to school in Madaura, returns home to Thagaste when money for school runs out, and finally leaves to study in Carthage as a sixteen year old (2.3.5, 3.1.1). Similarly, Stephen's early life also contains a transient home. He is born in Blackrock (south of Dublin), leaves for school at Clongowes, returns to home to Blackrock when money for school runs out, moves to a new home in Dublin with his family, and finally returns to school at Belvedere as a teenager (52, 7, 57, 62). Stephen's first writings show his concern with his identity and his relationship to home:

He turned to the flyleaf of the geography and read what he had written there: himself, his name and where he was.

Stephen Dedalus
Class of Elements
Clongowes Wood College
Sallins
County Kildare
Ireland
Europe
The World
The Universe

It pained him...that he did not know where the universe ended. He felt small and weak. (13-14)

Stephen's yearning for home and feminine nourishment is also underscored by his comments while at Clongowes: "He longed to be at home and lay his head on his mother's lap" (11). Clearly, Stephen's desire to be at home includes a yearning to be close to his mother and the care she and other females provide him. When he is at home for Christmas vacation, he is close to the "great fire" and the comfort provided by females (9). Stephen remarks, "It would be so nice to be at home. Mother was sitting at the fire with Dante waiting for Brigid to bring in the tea. She had her feet on the fender

and her jewelly slippers were so hot and they had such a lovely warm smell" (9)!

Removed from his home at Blackrock, Stephen's vocational path, like Augustine's, is to find nourishment elsewhere.

Stephen's depravity begins at Clongowes because it is there that he first feels a lack of feminine nourishment. Involuntarily, Stephen is dropped off into a dismal environment unbecoming to his senses. At the all-male Clongowes, Stephen is in a veritable ice age where all is cold and dark. Longing to return to his mother's care and warmth, Stephen hurries through the day's activities, marking time until he returns home: "After supper in the studyhall he would change the number pasted up inside his desk from seventyseven to seventysix" (8). In the first two sections of chapter one alone, Joyce uses the word "cold" or some variation a total of 39 times. Words like "shivered" and "trembled" are continuously used to describe Stephen's condition at a place that lacks women's nourishment. Joyce writes how Stephen's hands are "bluish with cold", "he had cold slimy water next his skin", "the air in the corridor chilled him", "the cold air of the ditch covered his whole body", and "the sea was cold day and night" (1:69-70, 122, 164, 271, 371). Even the "sunlight" at Clongowes is "cold" (20).

Stephen's coldness while away from the feminine is foreboding when the reader looks at it through an Augustinian lens. In Book Ten of *Confessions*, Augustine remarks how "men darkened and frozen" are more likely to be persuaded by the devil to join him "in the north" (10.26.58). Stephen, frozen from the lack of easy nourishment he once received from his mother, will look to other means for comfort and warmth.

In addition to a sense of coldness, Stephen's sense of touch is also degraded by the physical punishment he experiences at Clongowes. Not only is Clongowes cold, it is a dangerous place where male authority wields canes and insults to miscreant youth. The only escape from physical punishment at Clongowes is for the students to be successful at competitions and abide by the rules. Stephen, weak and timid without his mother's support, remains on the fringe of physical competition throughout chapter one of *Portrait*: "He felt his body small and weak amid the throng of players and his eyes were weak and watery. Rody Kickham was not like that: he would be captain of the third line all the fellows said" (6, 7). In addition to his lack of physical prowess, Stephen feels threatened by his classmates' jests about his family: "And one day he [Nasty Roche] had asked: What is your name? / Stephen had answered: / Stephen Dedalus. / Then Nasty Roche had said: / What kind of a name is that? / And when Stephen had not been able to answer Nasty Roche had asked: / What is your father?" (6, 7). Stephen's difficulty in sports and answering questions about his family's class show Stephen's precarious state while at Clongowes. His lack of a true identity is only slightly buffered by his success at intellectual matches. Although he often wins first or second place in the classroom quizzes, he is still punished by Father Dolan for being a "lazy idle loafer" (10, 45, 43). In fact, Stephen's wearing of a white rose, a symbol for femininity we will discuss later, links him to The House of York—losers of England's War of the Roses (10). Stephen, weak and timid, is more concerned with musing on the potential color of roses than his physical or mental prowess. His indifference to winning at Clongowes is seen when

Joyce writes: “He could not get out the answer for the sum but it did not matter. White roses and red roses: those were beautiful colours to think of” (10). For young Stephen Dedalus, what is important is not chasing after “the greasy leather orb [that] flew like a heavy bird” (6) or attaining praise from Father Arnall for winning at quizzes (10), but rather musing on the meanings of words and the beauty of colors. A sign of a blossoming, creative mind, Stephen believes that a rose could certainly be green (10).

Stephen’s experience of competition and punishment while at Clongowes follows Augustine’s experience while at school. Augustine also attended a private school where competition was emphasized and corporal punishment was the norm: “There was the promise of glory if I won, the fear of ignominy, and a flogging as well, if I lost” (1.17.27). Like Stephen, moreover, Augustine was beaten by his schoolmasters for being “idle in learning” (1.9.14). Augustine’s reaction to his beatings and failures while at school also hint at his eventual vocation. Augustine, malnourished and alone at school, seeks solace in prayer: “and in those prayers I broke the strings of my tongue—praying to You, small as I was but with no small energy, that I might not be beaten at school (1.9.14). Like Stephen’s musing on words, Augustine’s initial involvement in prayer is a sign of his eventual vocation. Trying to escape the corporal punishment from an all male hierarchy, Augustine’s act of resorting to prayer is a sensual response to a lack of nourishment (notice the unwinding of his tongue). It is also, unfortunately at this stage of his life, a futile attempt at self-creating nourishment. Like Stephen, he is still beaten and forced to participate in “task[s] which [he] did not like but had to do”

(1.17.27). Unlike Stephen, Augustine eventually thrives at these “tasks” set before him, even desiring and spending the majority of his effort at winning them. Nonetheless, without feminine guidance, Augustine is unable to sustain his own attempts at nourishment. As a result even if Augustine and Stephen identified their vocations early in their lives they would be unable to act on them without feminine assistance, male guidance as we have seen thus far is inadequate. Without nourishment, Augustine becomes engrossed with attaining praise at any cost (1.19.30), while Stephen becomes even more separated from his peers spending time in the infirmary (21). Augustine’s attempt at fostering his prayer life and Stephen’s act of recording what he sees in the world are both futile. Cold and away from feminine nourishment, they abandon any pursuit of vocation and instead act out in anger and jealousy.

In Book One of *Confessions*, Augustine describes anger and jealousy as two distinct reactions of those who are unable to receive proper nourishment. In his discussion of infancy, Augustine relates to the reader that an infant is at the mercy of its elders because it lacks proper communication skills (1.6.8). Moreover, the infant, who God has “supplied...with senses,” relies exclusively on its five senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch) for proper nourishment (1.7.12). Nonetheless, infants are not simply animals hunting for stimuli. As stated in *On Free Choice of the Will*, humans have the ability to reason which places them above the simply material (i.e. rocks) and the animals of the world (14, 35). Moreover, humans’ ability to reason gives them the ability to control their animalistic impulses. Augustine writes that an “ordered”

individual is one whose “impulses...are ruled by reason” (14). Infants, however, are at a disadvantage in this endeavor because their communication skills are “not very apt” (*Confessions*, 1.6.8). Thus, infants are more likely to let their desires for nourishment dictate their actions because of their lack of communication skills. Augustine writes how in infancy he

scream[ed] for things that would have been thoroughly bad...he [flew] into a hot rage because older persons—and free, not slaves—were not obedient...and [he struck] out as hard as [he] could, with sheer will to hurt, at my parents and other sensible folk for not yielding to demands which could only have been granted at my peril. (1.7.11)

In fact, Augustine reports that if he behaved as he did as an infant in adulthood he would have been “properly condemned” (1.7.11). With the weakness of their bodies, infants are more likely, therefore, to have inordinate desire for the things that stimulate their senses: “I have myself seen a small baby jealous; it was too young to speak, but it was livid with anger as it watched another at the breast” (1.7.11). Infants and those who rely exclusively on others for nourishment are more primed for sin because they lack the necessary means to achieve adequate nourishment. Desperate to fulfill their needs at any cost, they choose to follow inordinate desires.

Nevertheless, the two protagonists in *Confessions* and *Portrait/Ulysses* are different than infants in their ability to communicate. Augustine and Stephen are able to speak their desires, but they are unsuccessful at receiving feminine nourishment and guidance that will lead them to their vocation because of their harsh environment. As we have seen, Augustine and Stephen have difficulty in school because the all-male

hierarchy offers only punishment and praise. Instead of the comfort and guidance seen with the feminine, the schoolmasters provide rewards to those that follow the rules. Feeding the fires of competition, the schoolmasters' rewards pit classmates against one another. Moreover, the school environment itself leaves Augustine and Stephen cold, blind, and virtually alone. Surrounded by classmates who mock them and masters who flog them, Stephen and the Augustine of *Confessions* natural response is to act out. Like infants "at the breast" (1.7.11), Augustine and Stephen will "strike out" in their own ways.

Augustine's initial response to his lack of feminine nourishment is to immerse himself in his school's competitions. He writes, "I loved the vanity of victory and I loved too to have my ears tickled with the fictions of the theatre which set them to itching ever more burningly" (1.10.16). An early sign of Augustine's animal-like state while in sin, Augustine's search for the glory of victory leads to other inordinate actions. As Augustine chooses to be further engrossed in inordinate desires, the "itching" and "burning" he experiences becomes worse. This is because his initial love of victory becomes a gateway to other inordinate desires. He writes how he "told endless lies," "stole," "cheated" and was "indignant and argued furiously when [he] caught others" doing the same (1.19.30). Indeed Augustine's inordinate desire to win causes him to

partake in other sins, sins that eventually lead to his choosing to “make the mind a companion of cupidity” (*On Free Choice of the Will*, 17).⁹

In contrast to Augustine’s *Confessions*, Stephen’s inordinate desires are gradually revealed in Joyce’s *Portrait*. Where Augustine’s “vain desire for first place” (1.19.30) quickly leads to other sins, Stephen’s desire to keep to himself “on the fringe” of competition leads only to jealous thoughts and internal anger about the success of his classmates. In fact, Stephen’s introduction to the concept of sin comes from stories he hears about others: “Stephen stood among them, afraid to speak, listening. A faint sickness of awe made him feel weak. How could they have done that” (35)? Stephen’s initial “sickness” to hearing about sins of stealing cash, drinking altar wine, and “smuggling” represents his displeasure at disobedience. Nevertheless, Stephen’s deep contemplation of the motives and repercussions of sin foreshadows his pondering of his own sins later in the book. At this point, Stephen is simply being introduced to the variations of inordinate desires.¹⁰ His own misappropriated desires, anger and jealousy, come only from his internal thoughts. For example, Stephen’s jealousy of the success of his classmates is revealed when he disparagingly remarks how Rody Kickham “would be captain of the third line” and Nasty Roche “had big hands” (6). His anger is revealed as he resorts to name calling, labeling Nasty Roche “a stink” (6) and stating how he

⁹ Augustine also connects anger and jealousy to the sin of lust when in Book Three of *Confessions* he states, “I wore my chains [of lust] with bliss but with torment too, for I was scourged with the red hot rods of jealousy, with suspicions and fears and tempers and quarrels” (3.1.1).

¹⁰ It is interesting to note Joyce’s choice to reveal to the reader Stephen’s lack of vision during a time when he is hearing about different types of sin (36). As we will see later, both Augustine and Stephen experience a lack of clear vision when they are immersed in sin.

“doesn’t like Wells’s face” (12). Wells, as the reader knows, is the source of Stephen’s jealousy and anger because he is successful at receiving praise with his ownership of a “seasoned hacking chestnut, the conqueror of forty” (8). Wells is also more physical than Stephen, throwing him into the bog after Stephen denies a trade (12). Stephen’s anger at being away from his mother is also palpable as he directs his feelings towards the one who nourished him in the past. As he is being left at Clongowes for the first time, Stephen remarks how his mother “was not so nice when she cried” (7). Although Stephen’s initial anger towards his mother is ephemeral, it is significant in forecasting Stephen’s later resentment and scorn for his mother in both *Portrait* and *Ulysses*. Although more gradual than Augustine’s, the foundation for Stephen’s eventual indulgence in lust has been set when he is removed from feminine care while at school.¹¹

Cold, beaten, and partaking in initial signs of inordinate desire, Augustine and Stephen’s school experience is also coupled with a veritable darkness. Following Augustine’s discussion of the importance of the five senses to transmit stimuli to human reason; darkness is such a hindrance to one’s vocation because it leads to diminished sense of sight (*On Free Choice of the Will* 37). Along with a removal from warmth (a

¹¹ Augustine and Stephen are also forced to look for feminine nourishment while at school because the very source of their nourishment, their mothers, side with school authority. Augustine writes, “my elders and even my parents, who certainly wished me no harm, treated my stripes as a huge joke, which they were very far from being to me” (1.9.14). Augustine’s parents in fact believe his beatings were necessary to his maturation as student (1.9.14). Likewise, Stephen’s beating by Father Dolan is mocked by his father who imitates the “provincial’s voice” laughing about the incident (63). Meanwhile, Stephen’s mother’s only concern is whether Father Dolan was “annoyed” with Stephen’s actions (63). Augustine and Stephen, far away from the care of their mothers are also under the impression that their mothers no longer care about their wellbeing.

state that leads to a malnourished sense of touch), Augustine and Stephen experience a world without adequate light while away from the feminine. As descriptors for how Augustine felt while in sin, “darkness” and “blindness” signify both malnourished senses and a turning away from God towards the lesser things of his creation (*Confessions* 10.36.58, 2.3.7). While not yet choosing to partake in inordinate desires—aside from his anger and jealousy at his classmates—Stephen at Clongowes experiences a sin-like state. Like the infant Augustine, Stephen is unsuccessful at communicating and receiving proper nourishment. Although Stephen’s experience of coldness and blindness while at Clongowes is no fault of his own, Joyce places Stephen in such a malnourished state as a way to present an example of one who is removed from the feminine. Like the author who created him, Stephen has difficulty seeing. Stephen’s sense of sight is inhibited early in *Portrait* after his glasses are broken on the “ciderpath” (36).¹² His lack of vision also causes him to be beaten by Father Dolan (44). Away from his mother, Stephen becomes “sick in his heart” after being thrown in the bog (11). Moreover, Stephen’s blindness and homesickness can be seen as inhibitors to his vocation. While at Clongowes his writing is regulated to short lists (13) and undelivered letters to his mother: “Dear Mother, I am sick. I want to come home. Please come and take me home. I am in the infirmary. Your fond son, Stephen” (20). At Clongowes, a

¹² Joyce’s use of a bicyclist as a blinding force to Stephen’s vision is a subtle reference to the vocation of priesthood; in Chapter 4 of *Portrait*, the director mentions how Dominican and Franciscan priests “cycled in all types of weather” (135). Therefore, in this example, the vocation of priesthood can be seen as another barrier to Stephen’s potential as a writer.

place surrounded by darkness (15), Stephen's ambitions as a writer lack appropriate nourishment.

Malnourished and directionless, Augustine and Stephen are in a precarious situation. Their efforts at receiving feminine nourishment at school proven unsuccessful, Stephen and Augustine resort back to infantile actions of searching for sensual nourishment above all else. Starved for the comfort of feminine "milk," Augustine and Stephen seek feminine contact in the streets of Babylon and the brothels of Dublin (2.3.8, 88). Heeding to the pull of inordinate desires, what the two protagonists encounter is not feminine nourishment (the Woman of Wisdom), but feminine malnourishment (the Woman of Folly). Seen in the Old Testament Book of Proverbs, the Woman of Wisdom and the Woman of Folly are two archetypes representing purity/knowledge and inordinate desire/falsehood, respectively (9:1-18). Both the Woman of Wisdom and the Woman of Folly call out to those who pass their doors. Both offer banquets of nourishment to those weak and weary travelers. The biggest difference, however, between the Woman of Wisdom and the Woman of Folly is in the food they offer. The Woman of Wisdom offers "knowledge," "understanding," and "multiplied" years (Prov. 9: 6, 10, 11), while the Woman of Folly offers "Stolen water [that] is sweet" and "bread gotten secretly" (Prov. 9:17). The Woman of Folly also offers the traveler a place "in the depths of the nether world" (Prov. 9:18). Choosing between the Woman of Wisdom and the Woman of Folly is of ultimate importance for those

looking for a clear and safe vocational path. For Augustine and Stephen, embracing the Woman of Folly will impede their progression towards knowledge and wisdom.

Augustine writes of the Woman of Folly's attractiveness: "But I had come upon the woman of Solomon's parable, the shameless woman, knowing nothing, who sits on a seat at the door of her house...She seduced me because she found me dwelling externally in the eye of my flesh, and ruminating within myself upon such food as, through the body's eye, the mind had swallowed" (3.6.11). The connection between "the body's eye" and "the mind" in the aforementioned sense-knowledge continuum is underscored in Augustine's description of his relationship with the Woman of Folly. The food that the Woman of Folly offers to Augustine—corrupted, fleeting, a food of lust—negatively affects his ability to reason because by looking upon the Woman of Folly, Augustine's mind, his human judgment, is taking on characteristics of the senses. In other words, to "dwell externally in the eye" (3.6.11) is to willfully choose to make the mind "a slave to inordinate desire" (*On Free Choice of the Will* 17). Once this occurs, only stimuli which feed the senses is sought; the mind, and therefore reason, has become like the "inner sense, "avoid[ing] or pursu[ing]" that which stimulates their five senses (*On Free Choice of the Will* 35). The satisfaction of lust offered by the Woman of Folly is so difficult to reject because the mind's capacity to reason has been diminished.

Stephen's first introduction to the Woman of Folly begins indirectly while he is at Clongowes. In chapter one of *Portrait*, Stephen comments how a friend had told him of the town of Clane where "there were little cottages...[and] he had seen a woman

standing at the half-door of a cottage with a child in her arms as the cars had come past from Sallins" (15). Stephen, his senses malnourished in the "cold night" (15), immediately associates the woman at the half-door with comfort. He remarks how "it would be lovely to sleep for one night in that cottage before the fire of smoking turf, in the dark lit by the fire...breathing the smell of the peasants" (15). In this youthful reverie, Stephen is simply associating the Woman of Folly with warmth and comfort, not necessarily the fulfillment of his sense of touch. His thoughts to join her are simply to enjoy the warmth and smell of her home. Stephen's ambitions to join her are quickly dashed, however, as he recalls the darkness he must enter to get there: "But, O, the road there between the trees was dark! You would be lost in the dark. It made him afraid to think of how it was" (15). In the boyhood stage of his life, young Stephen is not willing to enter the darkness which surrounds the Woman of Folly.

Stephen becomes closer to active participation in the banquet of the Woman of Folly when he returns home from Clongowes. Like Augustine whose "studies were interrupted" so that money could be collected for a new school (2.3.5), Stephen is left idle at home while Simon tries gather money. The Dedalus' financial woes affect Stephen's relationship to the feminine because the house he relied on for warmth and feminine care is no longer sustainable. Joyce writes of Stephen's discontent: "For some time he had felt the slight changes in his house; and these changes in what he had deemed unchangeable were so many slight shocks to his boyish conception of the world" (56). Stephen's reaction to the "dismantle[ing]" of his childhood home in

Blackrock is to seek nourishment elsewhere. His mother's care no longer adequate or reliable, Stephen's maturation along with the tenuous state of his home causes him to seek feminine guidance outside of his home.

Stephen's first attempt to recreate feminine nourishment is through reverie. Left alone to do what he pleases, Stephen chooses to spend his time reading *The Count of Monte Cristo* (54). Stephen's penchant for the fictive mirrors that of Augustine who admits in Book One of *Confessions* that he enjoyed reading about the journey's of Aeneas. Augustine also admits, however, that his love of fiction was unhealthy because the stories he read affected his ability to see real life and his need for repentance: "Nothing could be more pitiful than a pitiable creature who does not see to pity himself, and weeps for the death that Dido suffered through love of Aeneas and not the death he suffers himself through not loving You, O God, Light of my heart, Bread of my soul, Power wedded to my mind and the depths of my thought" (1.13.21). In fact, one of the ways Augustine is brought out of inordinate desires for the things of the world is by facing himself and the state he is in (8.7.16). Instead of examining his thoughts and deeds, Augustine's reliance on the fantasy world increases: "I developed a passion for stage plays with the mirror they held up to my own miseries and the fuel they poured on my flame" (3.2.2). Augustine, focused on what the outside world, forgets to monitor his own digression into a reliance on the activity of others. In other words, by viewing others in sin, he can easily forget his own sordid state.

Augustine's escapist love for the fictive world also brings him closer to a dependence on lust because his senses are stimulated to a greater degree when he views others. He writes how he could only enjoy the stage shows if he was made to "grieve" and "moved to tears" (3.2.2). Moreover, Augustine loved to watch "lovers...sinfully enjoy[ing] each other...and when they lost each other [he] was sad for them" (3.2.3). Perhaps thought of as an innocuous enjoyment of performance, Augustine becomes attached to the way the actors make him feel. The actions on stage are so poignant to Augustine because they reflect his own malnourished state: "For the more a man feels such sufferings in himself, the more he is moved by the sight of them on stage" (3.2.2). As Augustine's viewing of stage shows becomes habitual, his reason becomes even more deprived of nutrition by the excess of his sensual "eating." His describes how his "heart" was full of "sores with pus flowing" and uses the words "inflammation," "swelling," and "scratching" to describe his state while in observation of those on stage (3.2.4). With a growing desire for fictional stage shows, Augustine is less concerned with his own real life vocation.

Similar to Augustine's relationship to the fictive world, Stephen's initial, ostensibly innocent readings of *The Count of Monte Cristo* are detrimental to his vocational progress because they create inordinate desire for a character that is unattainable. Like Augustine who will eventually partake in the same sin of lust he witnesses on stage, after reading *The Count of Monte Cristo*, Stephen sees himself as Edmond Dantes, searching for his lost Mercedes. Rather than learning and applying the

words of Dumas to his vocation as a writer, Stephen takes on the persona of the “dark avenger” who was “strange and terrible” (54). Stephen’s attempt to be Edmond is significant for readers of *Portrait* because “strange” and/or “terrible” are often associated with those persons and places where sin occurs (35, 41, 58). Joyce writes of Stephen’s continued feelings of the “strange” and “terrible”: “He [Stephen] returned to Mercedes and, as he brooded upon her image, a strange unrest crept into his blood. Sometimes a fever gathered within him and led him to rove alone in the evening along the quiet avenues” (56). Like Augustine whose love of stage shows causes a feeling of “inflammation” and “swelling” (3.2.4), Stephen’s adoption of the persona of Edmond causes “unrest” and “fever” (56).

Stephen, who once yearned only to be in the comfort of his own home, now desires to search for the Woman of Folly in the streets of Dublin. Left idle at home for summer vacation, Stephen’s wanderings remain unchecked. During this time, he befriends Aubrey Mills (55). With Aubrey, Stephen forms a “gang of adventurers” who “make forays into the gardens of old maids” (55). Perhaps only seen by the reader as boyish trifles, Stephen’s friendship with Aubrey is significant because it leads him closer to a meeting with the Woman of Folly. For Augustine, friendship is dangerous because it can lead to sin. In his description of his sin of stealing pears in Book Two of *Confessions*, Augustine partially blames his friends for his sinful actions: “I would not have done it [stolen pears] alone. O friendship unfriendly, unanalysable attraction for the mind, greediness to do damage for the mere sport and jest of it” (2.9.17). Augustine

also broadens his definition of friendship in Book Two of *Confessions* to include “fornication” (2.6.14). Augustine’s use of the word fornication to describe all “immoderate inclination[s] to “the beauty of all lesser things” of God’s creation. Augustine admits that “the bond of human friendship is admirable, holding many souls as one. Yet in the enjoyment of all such things we commit sin if...things higher and better are forgotten” (2.5.10). For Augustine, the things “higher and better” are God’s wisdom and eternal laws. Augustine places all sins under the umbrella of “fornication” because to him, sin is “a perverse and vicious imitation” of God’s power (2.6.14). Instead of looking to God, one searches for God in the things He created. Augustine writes, “Thus the soul is guilty of fornication when she turns from You and seeks from any other source what she will nowhere find pure and without taint unless she returns to You” (2.6.14). Therefore, Augustine’s sin of stealing, carried out under the influence of friends, warns of the dangers of friendship and also forecasts his later sin of lust: “and all around me in my fornication echoed applauding cries, *Well done! Well done! For the friendship of this world is fornication against Thee*” (1.13.21).¹³

With Aubrey as a cohort, Stephen views, and subsequently seeks out, the woman at the half-door. As mentioned before, “milk” and “cows” are used by Joyce to signify feminine nourishment (5). Malnourished, Stephen yearns to be closer to the

¹³ In *Portrait*, Joyce also comments on the interrelationship of sins. Stephen, completely engrossed in the sin of lust, states how “The sentence of saint James which says that he who offends against one commandment becomes guilty of all had seemed at first to him a swollen phrase until he had begun to grope in the darkness of his own state. From the evil seed of lust all other deadly sins had sprung forth” (92-93). Like Augustine’s placement of other sins under the definition of fornication, Stephen’s sins of the flesh lead to other sins.

“milk” of cows and thus begins to travel with the milkman on his deliveries.

Nonetheless, what can be thought of as simply another adventure with his friend, becomes a closer, physical viewing of the Woman of Folly: “Whenever the car drew up before a house he [Stephen] waited to catch a glimpse of a well scrubbed kitchen or of a softly lighted hall and to see how the servant would hold the jug and how she would close the door” (55). Stephen’s actions as a traveler to the homes of the woman at the half-door offer his sense of sight a stimulus. No longer simply a desire to escape from the cold of Clongowes, the woman at the half-door has become a way to satisfy his sense of vision. Therefore, just as Augustine’s viewing of stage shows become habitual, Stephen’s activities with Aubrey have led him to a desire for frequent viewing of the woman at the half-door. Stephen even dreams of becoming a milkman “driving along the roads every evening to deliver milk” (56). An initial sign of Stephen’s penchant for repeated activities of lust, Stephen’s interactions with Aubrey lead him closer the Woman of Folly.¹⁴

Stephen also decides to search out the Woman of Folly after experiencing a number of failed relationships with women. As a child, Stephen is warned by Dante not to pursue Eileen Vance because of her Protestant background (30). For someone who

¹⁴ Stephen’s riding of “mares” with Aubrey can also be seen as an attempt to be closer to the feminine (55). Latin for “sea”, “mare” as both the sea and a horse both have feminine connotations (41). In *Ulysses*, the word mare is connected to the feminine when Buck Mulligan defines the sea as “a great sweet mother” (4). Buck Mulligan is a false representation of the feminine because although his face is “equine in length” his friendship with Stephen is based solely on mockery and the gain of money (3, 9, 19). Brother Michael from *Portrait*, on the other hand, can be seen as a true representation of the feminine because with his “long back like the long back of a tramhorse,” he cares for Stephen in the infirmary (20).

he vows to “marry” Eileen at the beginning of the novel (6), Dante’s prohibition affects the way Stephen views women. Shy and pensive around women, Stephen spends his time questioning Dante’s statement of how “protestants used to make fun of the litany of the Blessed Virgin. *Tower of Ivory*, they used to say, *House of Gold*” (30)! Instead of acting on his impulse to embrace females, Stephen spends his time brooding over what his senses tell him. After Eileen places her hands over his eyes, Stephen comments on how her “long,” “white,” “thin,” “cold” and “soft” hands are like a *Tower of Ivory* (31). Later in the chapter, Stephen ponders how Eileen’s hair represented a *House of Gold* because it “had streamed out behind her like gold in the sun” (37). Eileen is Stephen’s first introduction to the Woman of Wisdom because, instead of stalling his vocational progression, she causes Stephen to think about the meaning of words: “She had said that pockets were funny things to have...*Tower of Ivory. House of Gold*. By thinking about things you could understand them” (37). Her association with the Virgin Mary also foreshadows Stephen’s confession of his sins in chapter three of *Portrait*.

Nonetheless, Stephen’s attendance at Clongowes replaces any possibility of furthering his relationship with Eileen Vance. Not until Stephen attends “a children’s party at Harold’s Cross” will he have another chance at nourishment (60). While at the party, Stephen remains on the outskirts of the activities: “He felt himself a gloomy figure amid the gay cocked hats and sunbonnets” (60). Not until after the party is Stephen presented with an encounter with another female, this time Emma Cleary. As she and

Stephen stand on the steps to the tram, Emma moving “up to his step many times” and “down to hers again” (60), Stephen remembers his experience with Eileen. Joyce writes:

And he remembered the day when he and Eileen had stood looking into the hotel grounds...and how, all of a sudden, she had broken out into a peal of laughter and had run down the sloping curve of the path. Now, as then, he stood listlessly in his place, seemingly a tranquil watcher of the scene before him. ‘She too wants me to catch hold of her’, he thought.
(60-61)

As with Eileen, however, Stephen hesitates to embrace Emma. Perhaps afraid of the feminine power to nourish or a repeat of females’ subtle mockery (59, 61), Stephen once again avoids physical contact with females. What results for Stephen is not a furthering of his vocation, but instead, jealousy and anger: “But he did neither [hold nor kiss her]: and, when he was sitting alone in the deserted tram, he tore his ticket into shreds and started at the corrugated footboard” (61). Stephen’s anger affects his subsequent writing because he can only focus on the missed kiss.¹⁵ Trying to write to Emma, he forgets details of the scene and can only write about an “undefined sorrow...hidden in the hearts of the protagonists” and “the kiss, which had been withheld by one, was given by both” (62). Clearly, Stephen’s failed attempts at feminine nourishment and his subsequent anger only lead to listless writing.¹⁶

Like Augustine who laments that there was no one there to “bring relief to the wretchedness of my state, and turn to account the fleeting beauties of these new

¹⁵ Joyce also mentions how anger affected another one of Stephen’s attempts at writing (61). After Stephen is “thrilled” by the anger in Mr. Casey’s speech (33), he attempts to write a poem about Parnell only to “cover the page with names of certain of his classmates” (61). Once again, Stephen’s anger has affected his vocation.

¹⁶ See also *Portrait* page 58 concerning the sin of anger’s negative effect on Stephen’s “vision”.

temptations and bring within bounds their attractions for me" (2.2.3), Stephen's inability to develop any lasting relationships with females places him in a precarious situation. Alone, cold, malnourished, and angry, Stephen sets out looking for feminine comfort in the streets of Dublin. Initially, Stephen wanders the city as a way to sate his curiosity. As he goes further and further away from home, however, his wanderings become much more calculated:

In the beginning he contented himself with circling timidly round the neighbouring square or, at most, going half way down one of the side streets: but when he had made a skeleton map of the city in his mind he followed boldly one of its central lines. (57-58)

As Stephen's "unrest" (58) grows, he takes risks in the places he will explore.

Eventually, his roving leads him to Dublin's red light district: "He had wandered into a maze of narrow and dirty streets. From the foul laneways he heard bursts of hoarse riot and wrangling and the drawling of drunken singers...Before the doors and in the lighted halls groups were gathered, arrayed as for some rite. He was in another world: he had awakened from a slumber of centuries" (88). Stephen's arrival to Dublin's red light district gives him a feeling of awakening. Blind, cold, and homeless, Stephen is given a false sense of satisfaction as he enters the district. His sense of touch, sight and smell are heightened by the "yellow gasflames," the "women and girls dressed in long vivid gowns," and their "perfumed" flesh (88). Stephen's desperate search for feminine nourishment seems to be over for him. He has found his Mercedes: "Weakness and timidity and inexperience would [now] fall from him in that magic moment" of "transfiguration" (56).

Unfortunately for Stephen, his meeting with the Woman of Folly only furthers his malnourished state. Instead of finally being able to embrace the feminine, Stephen, like with Eileen and Emma, remains paralyzed. Joyce writes, “his lips parted though they would not speak ... ‘Give me a kiss,’ she said. His lips would not bend to kiss her ... In her arms he felt that he had suddenly become strong and fearless and sure of himself. But his lips would not bend to kiss her” (88). Stephen has not been transformed from his weak state. Instead, the Woman of Folly coaxes him into joining her banquet: “With a sudden movement she bowed his head and joined her lips to his” (88). Stephen in a state of hysteria, finally gives in to the Woman of Folly “surrendering himself to her, body and mind, conscious of nothing in the world but the dark pressure of her softly parting lips” (88-89). What follows Stephen’s decision to accept the calls of the Woman of Folly is an ignorance of the world he must observe as a writer. His “eyes grow dim” and he experiences something “darker than the swoon of sin, softer than sound or odour” (89). Instead of strengthening his senses, Stephen’s encounter with the Woman of Folly has left him in a regressed, dependent state. No closer to the feminine guidance he needs to fulfill his vocation, Stephen’s lust has dislocated his senses and his mind from reality.

Like Augustine who became engrossed in seeking “some object to love, since [he] was...in love with loving” (3.1.1), Stephen’s encounter with the Woman of Folly leads to addiction. Augustine describes his condition as being connected to a chain: “Because my will was perverse it changed to lust, and lust yielded to become habit, and

habit not resisted became necessity" (8.5.10). Augustine goes on to further explain how his will became aligned with his "carnal" desires and how this led to an indifference to his sordid state: "For within I was hungry, all for want of that spiritual food which is Thyself, my God; yet [though I was hungry for want of it] I did not hunger for it: I had no desire whatever for the incorruptible food, not because I was in abundance but the emptier I was, the more I hated the thought of it" (3.1.1). His spiritual desires bowing to carnal ones, Augustine becomes a veritable beast with "sores, whose itch [he] agonized to scratch with the rub of carnal things" (3.1.1).

Stephen's will is also affected by his initial encounter with the Woman of Folly. Joyce describes how her lips "pressed upon his brain...as though they were the vehicle of a vague speech" (89). Like an infant learning a new language, Stephen's will has become attuned to the calls of the Woman of Folly. No longer satisfied with the common words around him, Stephen uses words that reflect his inordinate desires. Even before he consents to the Woman of Folly, Stephen's use of her language becomes more frequent as he draws near: "The verses passed from his lips and the inarticulate cries and the unspoken brutal words rushed forth from his brain to force a passage. His blood was in revolt. He wandered up and down the dark and slimy streets peering into the gloom of lanes and doorways, listening eagerly for any sound. He moaned to himself like some baffled prowling beast" (87). Like Augustine's heeding to his carnal desires, Stephen's inordinate desire for lust shapes him into a beast: "He wanted to sin with

another of his kind, to force another being to sin with him and to exult with her in sin” (87).

Stephen, beastly and removed from his vocational path, is further removed from reality after his encounter with the Woman of Folly. Like Augustine who experienced “a mist that hung between his eyes and the brightness of [God’s] truth” (2.3.8), Stephen has become blind to his vocation. Stephen’s inordinate desire makes his “brain” “sick” so that he had to “close his eyes and walk in darkness” (80). Joyce writes how Stephen’s “very brain was...powerless” and how he “could scarcely interpret the letters of the signboards of the shops” (81). Fattened by his uncontrollable lust, yet empty in his ambitions, Stephen experiences “a cold indifferent knowledge of himself” after heeding to the Woman of Folly (90). He is no longer interested in the beauty of words, but instead, is a “slave to inordinate desires” (Augustine, *On the Free Choice of the Will*, 17).

In fact, Stephen’s removal from reality and, subsequently, his vocation, is forecasted on his visit to Cork. After seeing the word “*Foetus*” scratched into a desk, Stephen experiences a catatonic state when he gives in to the word’s affect on his mind: “His recent monstrous reveries came thronging into his memory. They too had sprung up before him, suddenly and furiously, out of mere words. He had soon given into them and allowed them to sweep across and abase his intellect” (79).¹⁷ Stephen’s willingness

¹⁷ The word “foetus” not only brings to mind Stephen’s inordinate desires, but also reminds him of his inability to attain feminine nourishment: “The letters cut in the stained wood of the desk stared upon him, mocking his bodily weakness and futile enthusiasms and making him loath himself” (79-80). Instead of giving him inspiration and knowledge, the word stalls his writing because it reminds him of his great

to let the language of the Woman of Folly enter into his realm of reason further removes him from reality: “Nothing moved him or spoke to him from the real world unless he heard in it an echo of the infuriated cries within him. [] He could scarcely recognize his own thoughts, and repeated slowly to himself: I am Stephen Dedalus. I am walking beside my father whose name is Simon Dedalus. We are in Cork, in Ireland...” (81). Stephen, shaken by his lack of identity, is resorting back to an earlier activity of positioning himself in the world. Like his childhood exercise of listing his class, school, county, and country, Stephen is attempting to define himself (13). Unfortunately, Stephen’s efforts are futile as the memory of his childhood quickly fades. His identity lost, Stephen is called by a new name when he finally heeds to the Woman of Folly (88). As “Willie dear,” Stephen is “indifferent” towards his sin and enjoys the “dark peace” lust creates between his body and soul (90). His stomach, every craving the food of sin, demands to be filled (89) and he returns to a state of coldness (90). “By day and by night he moved among distorted images of the outer world” (86).

Rather than bringing him closer to the world, Stephen’s lust has dislocated him from humanity. “Sunk to the state of a beast that licks his chaps after meat” (97), Stephen has become one of Joyce’s character-animals. Roaming the world, Stephen is like the eagles (mockers), rats (priests), and dogs (infants), he has encountered throughout his life. Called a “sly dog” by Vincent Heron, one with “a bird’s face as well as a bird’s name” (67), Stephen is indifferent to his status. As an example of just how far

dependence on the woman at the half-door. Like an infant who desires spoiled milk, Stephen has regressed back to a reliance seen only in childhood.

Stephen has strayed from his vocation, instead of seeking feminine nourishment he now seeks only a “bovine god to stare upon” (98). “Gazing out of darkened eyes” his “body...listless and dishonoured” (98), Stephen is reluctant to break from his inordinate, carnal desires.

The necessary spark that brings Stephen out of his contented paralysis ultimately comes from a quiet encounter with one of Joyce’s animal-characters. Analogous to Augustine’s viewing of Lady Contenance and his hearing of a child’s voice in Book 8 of *Confessions* (8.11.26, 8.12.28), Stephen’s witnessing of the unnamed bird-girl sends him reeling back to his vocational path. Just as Augustine enters into a garden and lies under a “fig tree” (8.12.28), Stephen’s acceptance of Lady Wisdom is signified by his proximity to naturalistic representations of the feminine. Early in *Portrait*, Stephen sings a song about “the wild rose blossoms / On the little green place” (5). Throughout *Portrait*, Stephen attempts to fulfill “his song” by returning to the “green place” with the “wild rose blossoms” (5). He wears the “white rose” while in completion at Clongowes, he ponders the different colors of roses, and he searches for Mercedes’ “whitewashed house in the garden of which grew many rosebushes” (10, 54). In fact, after confessing his sins, Stephen’s vocational path leads him to an “altar...of white flowers” (127).¹⁸ Not until Stephen reaches the bird-girl, however, does his search end. Discovery of “the wild rose blossoms” and the “green place” is so key for Stephen’s vocational path because it represents a release from the Woman of Folly and an embrace of the Woman of

¹⁸ Joyce also connects flowers to the Virgin Mary by discussing “her emblems, the lateflowering plant and lateblossoming tree” (91).

Wisdom. Just as Augustine escapes the “plucking” and “murmuring” of his “one-time mistresses” by gazing upon Lady Contenance and her virgin followers (8.11.26), Stephen finds true feminine nourishment after witnessing the bird-girl. Up until he encounters the bird-girl, Stephen’s search for his Mercedes “from garden to garden” is unfruitful, leaving him malnourished and impotent as a writer. Afraid of water and unable to embrace the feminine nourishment offered by Eileen and Emma, Stephen continuously returns to the room of the Woman of Folly (88). In close proximity to the bird-girl, however, Stephen willfully decides to enter into the waters of the Liffey and wholly receives the guidance offered by the bird-girl. Rather than being thrown into the water like at Clongowes (12) or heeding to his peers’ calls to submerge himself entirely into water (147), Stephen voluntarily enters the Liffey, “wad[ing] slowly up its course” (149). Just as Augustine who is enthralled with his viewing of Lady Contenance and his hearing of the child’s instructions to ““Take and read, take and read”” (8.11.27, 8.12.28-9), when Stephen finally gazes upon the bird-girl, he is propelled joyfully back to his vocation. Instead of heeding to inordinate desires for the girl, Stephen embraces the guidance offered by the bird-girl, finally discovering the “little green place” (150). Joyce writes, “A wild angel had appeared to him, the angel of mortal youth and beauty, an envoy from the fair courts of life, to throw open before him in an instant of ecstasy the gates of all the ways of error and glory. On and on and on and on” (150)! With the help of the bird-girl, Stephen receives the energy he needs to fully embrace the feminine. Joyce writes of Stephen’s ultimate experience of feminine grace:

and the earth beneath him, the earth that had borne him, had taken him to her breast. He closed his eyes in the languor of sleep. [] Glimmering and trembling, trembling and unfolding, a breaking light, an opening flower, it spread in endless succession to itself, breaking in full crimson and unfolding and fading to palest rose, leaf by leaf and wave of light by wave of light, flooding all the heavens with its soft flushes, every flush deeper than other. (151)

Truly then, Stephen's acceptance of the gifts of the bird-girl has led him to the "green" with the "wild rose blossoms" a place where he fully notices the colors and words he will impart into his vocational desire.

Thus, what ultimately connects the Augustine of *Confessions* and Stephen Dedalus of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* is their willful acceptance of the grace of feminine guidance. No longer tied to inordinate desires, Augustine is inspired to a chaste life after gazing upon Lady Contenance and her followers "of every age" (8.11.26). Similarly, after viewing the bird-girl, Stephen's reason is free to acknowledge the beauties of the world. For as Augustine states in *On Free Choice of the Will*, "it is only in the wise that the mind has control" (16). Free to gaze upon the wonders of God's creation, or in the case of Augustine, to praise God Himself, the two protagonists are set to fulfill their vocations. With sharp minds, they encounter the world, avoiding the mockers and calls for participation in inordinate desire. Through an acceptance of Monica's grace, Augustine is free to serve God. Through the guidance of the bird-girl, Stephen can begin his journey as a keen observer and recorder of the world. Energized by the bird-girl in all her glory, Stephen can now fly to Paris to become a writer. But first he must learn how to pack his bags (224).

WORKS CITED

- Augustine. *Confessions*. 397. Trans. F.J. Sheed. 2nd Ed. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2006. Print.
- Augustine. *On Free Choice of the Will*. 388. Trans. T. Williams. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993. Print.
- Blamires, Harry. *The New Bloomsday Book*. New York: Routledge, 1996. Print.
- Joyce, James. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. 1916. New York: W.W. Norton, 2007. Print.
- Joyce, James. *Ulysses*. 1922. New York: Random House, 1986. Print.
- The New American Bible*. New York: Catholic Book, 1970. Print.
- Sicari, Stephen. *Joyce's Modernist Allegory*. Columbia, SC: U of South Carolina Press, 2001. Print.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Jeffrey J. Russ

Education:

MA in English, Indiana University at IUPUI, December 2009

Doctorate in Physical Therapy, University of Indianapolis, May 2006

BA in Sociology, BBA in Accountancy, University of Notre Dame, May 2001

Current Positions:

Adjunct Faculty-Writing Instructor, IUPUI

Adjunct Faculty-Writing Lab, University of Indianapolis