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**Advertising and Dublin's Consumer Culture in James Joyce's *Ulysses***

**Matthew Hayward**

**Thesis submitted to the Department of English Studies, University of Durham,  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**July 2012**

## Abstract

This thesis reconsiders James Joyce's representation of advertising and Dublin's consumer culture in *Ulysses*. Against earlier, generalising accounts, it applies a carefully historicising methodology to demonstrate the cultural specificity of Joyce's engagement. It does so in three ways. To begin with, it establishes that Irish consumerism did not simply follow British advances, but developed in a distinct and inflected fashion. Chapters 2 and 3 show that while Joyce incorporates all of the material characteristics of Dublin's relatively advanced consumer culture, he downplays its advertising industry, making it appear less developed in 1904 than was historically the case.

Secondly, it analyses the distortions introduced by Joyce's own historical remove from the consumer culture he depicts. Chapter 4 identifies for the first time the sources of Joyce's "Advertising" notes from his so-called "Notes on Business and Commerce," and establishes that his representation of Bloom's advertising consciousness reflects advances in advertising theory that only got seriously underway in the decade between 1904, when the novel is set, and 1914, when Joyce began to write it.

Finally, having analysed the material and compositional background to Joyce's portrayal of early-twentieth-century consumerism, this thesis analyses Joyce's engagement with two of its dominant ideologies. Chapter 5 concentrates on the 'Lestrygonians' and 'Ithaca' episodes to argue that Joyce lays bare the overdetermined nature of colonial consumption, depicting the naturalisation of British commodities on the Irish market, and contesting the spurious claim to disinterestedness presented by imperial consumerist discourses. Chapter 6 develops intertextual readings of the 'Nausicaa' chapter to show that Joyce's narrative is even more fully comprised of the language of female-oriented advertising than has been recognised. It argues that the chapter responds to a particular ideological complex, in which consumerist imperatives struggled with more conservative patriarchal interests.

Overall, this thesis brings together historical, genetic and intertextual critical approaches to uncover the stylistic and chronological manipulations involved in Joyce's fictionalisation of early-twentieth-century Irish consumerism. It argues that *Ulysses* stands as both a reflection of this crucial period of socio-economic change, and a politicised response to its dominant ideological coercions.

## **Acknowledgements**

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## List of Abbreviations

Page and line numbers without prefix refer to *Ulysses*, a Critical and Synoptic Edition, ed. Hans Walter Gabler with Wolfhard Steppe and Claus Melchior (1921; New York; London: Garland, 1984). In addition, the following abbreviations have been cited parenthetically in the text.

- CW* James Joyce, *The Critical Writings of James Joyce*, ed. Ellsworth Mason and Richard Ellmann (London: Faber, 1959).
- D* James Joyce, *Dubliners*, the corrected text with an explanatory note by Robert Scholes (1914; London: Jonathan Cape, 1967).
- FW* James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake* (1939; London: Faber, 1968). Cited by page and line number.
- JJA* James Joyce, *The James Joyce Archive*, ed. Michael Groden et al., 63 vols. (New York; London: Garland, 1977-79). Cited by volume and page number.
- JJ* Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (New York: Oxford UP, 1959).
- JJI* Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce: New and Revised Edition* (New York: Oxford UP, 1982).
- LI* James Joyce, *Letters of James Joyce*, vol. 1, ed. Stuart Gilbert (London: Faber, 1957).
- LII* James Joyce, *Letters of James Joyce*, vol. 2, ed. Richard Ellmann (London: Faber, 1966).
- P* James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the definitive text corrected from Dublin Holograph by Chester G. Anderson and ed. Richard Ellmann (1916; New York: Viking Press, 1964).
- SH* James Joyce, *Stephen Hero*, ed. with introduction by Theodore Spencer; rev. ed. with additional material and a foreword by John J. Slocum and Herbert Cahoon (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956).
- Thom's* *Thom's Official Directory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland* (Dublin: Thom's, 1904).

## Introduction

As Bloom walks along Grafton Street in the ‘Lestrygonians’ episode of *Ulysses*, we are given a vivid impression of the commodities on display in 1904 Dublin: “He passed, dallying, the windows of Brown Thomas, silk mercers. Cascades of ribbons. Flimsy China silks. A tilted urn poured from its mouth a flood of bloodhued poplin: lustrous blood” (8.620-22). As Bloom lingers, his thoughts run through a series of related ideas, from the history of the Irish poplin industry (8.622), to purchases made and planned (8.625, 8.628), to products and advertisements seen (8.631, 8.635-6). At every point these commodities are associated with his wife, and the silk stockings in particular trigger a flush of anxiety about Molly’s infidelity: “Gleaming silks, petticoats on slim brass rails, rays of flat silk stockings. Useless to go back. [. . .] Sunwarm silk. Jingling harnesses. All for a woman, home and houses, silkwebs, silver, rich fruits spicy from Jaffa” (8.631-36). Despite his preoccupations, the language used to describe this chain of association is bright and elemental. Nouns are alive and in motion: “cascades,” “mouth,” “flood,” “rays.” Adjectives promise life and health: “bloodhued,” “lustrous,” “gleaming,” “sunwarm.” Opulence is explicit: “brass,” “silver,” “rich,” “wealth of the world.” And finally, the sexual arousal implied by the sensuous language springs out in the famous pair of sentences that was the fruit, according to Frank Budgen, of a whole day of Joyce’s labour: “A warm human plumpness settled down on his brain. His brain yielded. Perfume of embraces all him assailed. With hungered flesh obscurely, he mutely craved to adore” (8.637-9).<sup>1</sup> Bloom’s indulgence in the spectacle of these lustrous commodities opens to hunger and desire, the need to consume and consummate.

A direct counterpart to this scene comes in ‘Wandering Rocks,’ as Stephen stands before Russell the gem-cutter’s on Fleet Street:

Stephen Dedalus watched through the webbed window the lapidary’s fingers prove a timedulled chain. Dust webbed the window and the showtrays. Dust darkened the toiling fingers with their vulture nails. Dust slept on dull coils of bronze and silver, lozenges of cinnabar, on rubies, leprous and winedark stones. (10.800-804)

The word that recurs in Bloom’s passage is “silk”—“silk mercers,” “China silks,” “[g]leaming silks,” “rays of flat silk,” “[s]unwarm silk,” “silkwebs”—the soft, lustrous fibre

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<sup>1</sup> Frank Budgen, *James Joyce and the Making of “Ulysses,” and Other Writings* (London: Oxford UP, 1972) 20.

of the living silkworm, produced in its metamorphosis to airborne moth. The word that recurs with Stephen is “dust”—“[d]ust webbed,” “[d]ust darkened,” “[d]ust slept”—dead skin cells mixed with the dried faeces and desiccated corpses of dust mites. With Bloom we see the attraction of the commodity, its bright, exotic, intoxicating appeal. With Stephen, by contrast, the commodity appears dead, futile, ignoble and unattractive. As Stephen’s passage continues, the sense of darkness and degeneracy is intensified as he reflects upon the jewels: “Born all in the dark wormy earth, cold specks of fire, evil. [. . .] Muddy swinesnouts, hands, root and root, gripe and wrest them” (10.805-807). Where Bloom’s passage is all sun and colour, the imagery in Stephen’s passage is of death and decay (“webbed,” “timedulled,” “leprous,” “wormy”) and of scavenging (“vulture nails,” “swinesnouts,” “stolen hoard”). Whereas Bloom’s train of thought, for all of its diversions, never leaves the commodity behind, working up rather to a state in which the consumption of the commodity will answer sexual and gustatory needs, Stephen’s careers instantly away from the commodity through a Miltonic process of mythification that sees the gemstones as fallen archangels, and the merchant as the degraded “[g]randfather ape gloating on a stolen hoard” (10.813-15). For Stephen, the commodity—like the monetary “lump in his pocket” in ‘Nestor’ (2.227)—is a dead shell, concealing the “evil” of its past and the ignominy of the human actions associated with it: “hollow shells [. . .] symbols soiled by greed and misery” (2.226-8). With Bloom we see life in the commodity, renewal and metamorphosis. With Stephen we see death, dust and decay.

Between these antithetical responses, Joyce presents Dublin’s consumer culture in all of its ambiguity. From one perspective, it is the means to modernisation and renewal, a desperately needed relief from the immense suffering and deprivation of the nineteenth century. From another perspective, it is the realisation of Irish colonial dependence, the triumph of British “[m]aterial domination” over Dublin’s “liege subjects” (7.557, 7.565). In this thesis, I consider Joyce’s representation of the consumer culture that allows these opposite effects. My fundamental contention is that although the subject has been treated with considerable theoretical sophistication, the particularity of Joyce’s representation of consumerism has not been adequately appreciated. In the first place, the extent to which historical 1904 Dublin can be described as a consumer culture at all—at least in the sense that would make theories of advanced consumerism applicable—has not been established. Secondly, the specifically Irish context of the consumer culture Joyce represents, such as it is, has rarely been acknowledged. And finally, the complications brought about by Joyce’s own temporal and geographic remove from this consumer culture have been in almost every

instance suppressed. Ultimately, this thesis is an attempt to move past these critical limitations, and present a historically and materially grounded analysis of Joyce's complex engagement.

The critical boom in studies of Joyce and consumerism in the 1980s and 1990s helped to undermine the traditional wall between high modernism and so-called mass or popular culture. As I will argue at length in chapter 1, it was not so effective in facilitating an understanding of the specificity of Joyce's representation of the practice. Almost all of these studies are based upon an undefined and amalgamated history of twentieth-century British and American consumer culture. Against such a generalising standpoint, this thesis participates in the more carefully historicising approach to Joyce's work that has emerged in recent years, an approach that Andrew Gibson and Len Platt provisionally describe as the "London method." They define the approach in the following terms:

It relies on a process of historical concretion: particulars take precedence over abstractions. It also relies on a practice of historical saturation: that is, a specifically Joycean historical materialism seeks to support and/or complicate its case by introducing as much historical information as is relevant and practicable. This information has priority over everything else except the texts.<sup>2</sup>

Although this approach has notable antecedents, the most systematic example of a "specifically Joycean historical materialism" is Gibson's own *Joyce's Revenge* (2002), in which he applies what he describes as "methodological 'particularism'" in his study of *Ulysses*.<sup>3</sup> Gibson borrows the term from the historian David Fitzpatrick, who had used it in a very specific context to distinguish particularly Irish "trends in demographic and family strategies which [. . .] were often at odds with those elsewhere in Europe."<sup>4</sup> Fitzpatrick defines these trends against a generalised notion of "modernisation," pointing out that although this broad historical development may be taken to have followed the same rough trajectory in Ireland as elsewhere, it played out in its particulars in distinct and often contradictory ways. Whereas generalised accounts empty the historical situation of its essential content, Fitzpatrick's "exercise in particularism" focuses upon its nuances and inflections. As Gibson puts it, "the particularist works to uncover what is specifically Irish in

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<sup>2</sup> Andrew Gibson and Len Platt, introduction, *Joyce, Ireland, Britain*, ed. Andrew Gibson and Len Platt (Gainesville: UP of Florida, 2006) 18.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Gibson, *Joyce's Revenge: History, Politics, and Aesthetics in "Ulysses"* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002) 139.

<sup>4</sup> David Fitzpatrick, "The Modernisation of the Irish Female," *Rural Ireland 1600-1900: Modernisation and Change*, ed. Patrick O'Flanagan, Paul Ferguson, and Kevin Whelan (Cork: Cork UP, 1987) 162-3.

a historical process.”<sup>5</sup> This focus, I argue, is what has been lacking in earlier studies of Joyce and consumerism. Although Ireland’s consumer culture undoubtedly shared broad similarities with that of other European countries, especially Britain, given the bind of the Union, it also developed in a uniquely local and inflected manner. Only a particularist methodology can be suitably attentive to the specificities of Ireland’s consumer culture in the early-twentieth century, and only against this specific background can Joyce’s representation of this consumer culture be properly gauged and understood.

A particularist approach allows for three major reconfigurations of the subject, which I will describe as the contextual, the ideological, and the compositional. The contextual reconfiguration requires the articulation of a specifically *Irish* consumer culture, as it existed in and around the first decade of the twentieth century. It is with this articulation that the first part of this thesis is concerned. The ideological configuration, which is perhaps really an extension of the contextual, entails the recognition that Irish consumerism was an ideology determined and mediated within the material practices of specifically Irish institutions. Consumerism is neither some kind of spiritual *a priori*, nor simply the material consumption of goods. It is, most precisely, an ideology rooted in practice. For much of the twentieth century, in much of Ireland as in much of Europe and America, consumerism was the ideological interface between the individual and the social collective, determining both the way in which the state figured or situated the individual within the social fiction, and the way in which the individual perceived him- or herself within the state. Yet this determining ideology was not just there in the air, waiting to be breathed in and adopted by the individual; ideology does not exist in itself, in an ideal or spiritual form, awaiting material participation from individual subjects. Rather, as Louis Althusser insists in his seminal essay “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” ideology exists only in and through material practices. It is maintained through “material rituals” which are disseminated or taught through particular material apparatuses or institutions.<sup>6</sup> In the final part of this thesis, I consider some of the dominant ideological strains of Irish consumerism, but a fuller study of Joyce’s representation of Dublin’s consumer culture will need to account for the way in which such ideologies were manifested and disseminated through such ostensibly discrete institutions as the Roman Catholic Church, Trinity and University Colleges, The Irish Parliamentary Party,

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<sup>5</sup> Gibson, *Joyce’s Revenge*, 139.

<sup>6</sup> Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation),” *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: NLB, 1971) 158.

the *Irish Times* and the *Freeman's Journal*, the Abbey Theatre, and the Gaelic Athletic Association.

The third respect in which a particularist approach can be brought to bear upon Joyce's representation of the consumer culture of 1904 Dublin is perhaps even more complicated, but it is crucial. The compositional reconfiguration of the subject allows us to identify the perspectival distortions brought about by Joyce's own temporal and geographical remove from the practice he depicted. Joyce wrote *Ulysses* across a number of years, situated in a number of different consumer cultures, each in various states of advance; he completed and revised the novel in Paris, one of the most advanced consumer cultures in the world, some seventeen years after the novel is set. In Ireland, as in the rest of Western Europe and America, consumerism progressed massively in this time. To take one significant example, the advertising industry, so instrumental to the expansion of consumerism, was increasingly professionalised and codified in the first decades of the twentieth century. As I will demonstrate in chapters 3 and 4, it developed from the speculative and opportunistic pursuit of a number of advertising houses, to a multinational practice based upon new techniques of market research and the new science of psychology. It is quite reasonable to suspect that the sometimes quite sophisticated advertisements that Joyce sets in 1904 reflect his experience of the altogether more sophisticated advertisements of the late 1910s and early 1920s. It must also be assumed that the Dublin advertising industry and the advertisements it produced were different to those of Trieste or Zürich, not to mention Paris and London—and however strong Joyce's memory, and however many Irish newspapers he was able to obtain while writing *Ulysses*, it is with the advertisements of these other European cities that he would have been most thoroughly immersed on a daily basis while composing his novel. A properly particularist analysis, then, would finally need to consider the ways in which Joyce's temporal and geographic situation conditioned his experience of consumerism, and thus informed and distorted his representation of the consumer culture of 1904 Dublin.

This thesis participates in all three of these particularist revisions—the contextual, the ideological and the compositional. However, it is impossible within the confines of the doctoral thesis to be comprehensive on each of these counts. A full account of the constitution of a consumerist ideology through particular cultural institutions is a study in itself. Likewise, a full and specific analysis of the effects of Joyce's experience of other, later consumer cultures upon his representation would be a major undertaking, better suited to the professional monograph than the doctoral thesis—not least because it would require extensive archival research overseas. This thesis, then, sets out in the first place to establish a

plausible contextual basis for such research, with the contention that a materially grounded sense of the history of Irish consumerism is prerequisite to the analysis of Joyce's representation. Up to now, critics have assumed from *Ulysses* that 1904 Dublin was a developed consumer culture, essentially familiar to us from the perspective of the consumer cultures of the late-twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries. This assumption has never been justified in any consistent way, and it is the lack of any rigorously established sense of historical context that has allowed critics of Joyce and consumerism to stray so frequently into anachronism, generalisation and error. In the chapters that follow, I avoid such distortions by maintaining a particularist focus.

In chapter 1, I chart the critical history of the subject, identifying its major advances and wrong turns. I find that while earlier critics have successfully challenged the conventional exclusion of commercial material from the study of Joyce's work, and drawn attention to many of the symbolic and political aspects of Joyce's representation of consumerism, they have failed to recognise the cultural specificity of the consumer culture Joyce represents. Chapters 2 and 3 justify the subject in historical terms. In chapter 2, I examine the material conditions of Dublin's consumer culture, showing that it was not simply derivative of British imperatives or advances, and was indeed relatively advanced. In chapter 3, I offer the first historical analysis of Bloom's employment as an advertising canvasser. Drawing upon a range of material, including advertising histories, *Thom's Dublin Directory*, and contemporary advertisements, I show that Dublin's own advertising industry in 1904 was more extensive than has been allowed. Reading *Ulysses* against this material background, I establish that Joyce himself downplays the state of Dublin's advertising industry, allowing it to seem less advanced than it in fact seems to have been. In chapter 4, the centrepiece of this thesis, I locate for the first time the sources of Joyce's "Advertising" notes in his so-called "Notes on Business and Commerce." I use these sources to revise the established dating of the notebooks, retrieving them from their current critical relegation to a non-literary chapter of Joyce's biography. With this revision made, I find that the advertising theories upon which Joyce drew only really developed after 1904. Reading *Ulysses* in terms of Joyce's research into later advertising theories, I show that the advertisements and advertising ideas he gives to Bloom reflect later developments in the practice, thus causing Bloom to appear as a progressively minded advertiser in a backwards advertising industry.

Having established the material and theoretical background to Joyce's representation, chapters 5 and 6 turn to Joyce's engagement with early-twentieth-century ideologies of consumerism. In chapter 5, I consider the imperial implications in Ireland's consumer culture.

Firstly, focusing on Bloom's reflections as he window-shops in 'Lestrygonians,' I draw attention to Joyce's representation of the overdetermined nature of Irish consumption. I show that Joyce includes traces of a British anti-German discourse in Bloom's consciousness, and I argue that, through Bloom, Joyce shows British commodities to be naturalised on the Irish market—to appear neutral, or “just there.” Turning to the 'Ithaca' chapter, I show that Joyce's distortion and even suppression of the Britishness of the commodities in the Blooms' home belies the “objective” scientific style of that chapter. Drawing on recent political and postcolonial interpretations of the chapter, I argue that Joyce connects the consumerist pretext—that commodities improve the quality of life—with the British imperial ideology of universal improvement and the broadcasting of civilisation. I conclude by arguing that the ostensible disinterestedness of this manoeuvre overwrites, but does not conceal, the brute fact of economic exploitation. Finally, in chapter, 6, I turn to Joyce's engagement with the ideology of female consumption in the 'Nausicaa' chapter. I argue that the traditional naturalistic interpretation of Gerty MacDowell, as a “real” young woman who has been shaped and controlled by her adherence to a restrictive culture industry, fails to take proper cognisance of the chapter's intertextual imperative. Tracing the language of the chapter back to the deliberately “feminised” language of female-oriented advertising, I show that Gerty's narrative is even more fully constituted by the language of advertising than has been recognised. I read her character as Joyce's distorted reflection of the “female consumer,” a stock figure in contemporary women's magazines, and argue that his representation both reflects and subverts the conventional patriarchal containment of the liberatory potential offered to women in the consumerist reconfiguration of gender roles.

Since one of the premises of this thesis is that late-twentieth-century theories of consumerism have been applied to Joyce's work without consideration of their suitability to early-twentieth-century Ireland, I consciously avoid rehearsing here theoretical discussions of the effects of consumerism upon the individual—which are already well articulated in earlier studies of the subject.<sup>7</sup> I will refer to these theoretical concepts where appropriate in the chapters that follow, particularly when I come to discuss the ideologies of consumerism in the final section of this thesis. It will be clear that my methodology draws upon historicist, genetic, and intertextual approaches to Joyce's work. However, I attempt at every stage to remember that *Ulysses* is a work of literary art, and rely from the start upon the close-reading techniques that have continued to underpin the study of Joyce's writing, even as incongruous

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Garry Leonard, “Joyce and Advertising: Advertising and Commodity Culture in Joyce's Fiction,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 30:4-31:1 (1993): 574-5.



critical and theoretical imperatives—symbolism and materialism, post-structuralism and historicism—have clashed and competed.

## Chapter 1

### Joyce, Advertising and Consumerism: A Critical History

Although Joyce's earlier writings occasionally point towards the experience of consumerism, it is in *Ulysses* that this socio-economic mode is brought out fully as a practice central to modern life. *Ulysses* is stocked with an unusually rich array of commodities and advertisements, and these have received critical comment almost from the start; in this sense, the artefacts of consumerism were the subject of Joyce criticism even before a vocabulary was developed through which his engagement with the practice could be theorised. Nevertheless, critical interest in the relationship between Joyce's writing and the consumer cultures within which he lived and worked is relatively recent. Before the flourish of interest in Joyce and consumerism that got seriously underway in the 1980s, commentary remained incidental and critically orthodox; such seeming ephemera as Plumtree's Potted Meat appeared to be, as Fredric Jameson has put it, "recuperable for literature only at the price of being transformed into symbols."<sup>1</sup> Robert Adams's 1962 study *Surface and Symbol*, for all its careful and elucidating commentary, is the great exemplar of the critical pay-off that Jameson describes. With the contention that "the choice between surface and symbol is the most important one a reader of Joyce must make," Adams dwells at considerable length upon such details as the real-life advertising company behind Boylan's billsticking business, the difference between the historical Dublin pantomimes and the references made to these in *Ulysses*, and the historical avatars of Bloom's hatter, Plasto, and tailor, Mesias.<sup>2</sup> Yet while Adams gives these elements of *Ulysses* far more attention than they had hitherto received, he does so with the ultimate aim of finding a symbolic meaning in objects, characters and names that would otherwise appear to be merely arbitrary, and thus disturbingly meaningless. Adams does not himself find the unifying "special fact" that would bring together "all the disparate details, now hanging in suspension," but this does not quash his utopian desire for a hermetically sealed aesthetic space: "It is always conceivable a new way of looking at *Ulysses* will be found, which at a stroke will reduce to miraculous harmony all the book's

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<sup>1</sup> Fredric Jameson, "Ulysses in History," *James Joyce and Modern Literature*, ed. W. J. McCormack and Alistair Stead (London: Routledge; Kegan Paul, 1982) 136.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Martin Adams, *Surface and Symbol: The Consistency of James Joyce's "Ulysses"* (New York: Oxford UP, 1962) 83.

symbols, all its references to external reality.”<sup>3</sup> In lieu of this harmonising revelation, Adams contents himself with filtering the symbolically significant from the “crude stuff of history.”<sup>4</sup>

It may be a general condition of symbolic interpretation, but the plausibility of such valuations would seem to depend more upon the ingenuity and consistency of the critic than upon any inherent property of the commodity or advertisement discussed, as Marilyn French has acknowledged:

The appearance of the HELY’S sandwichmen [. . .] has no significance that I can descry. [. . .] One could spin a web, as Joyceans love to do, and point to the relation of HELY’S to *helios*, to the debasement of light in Dublin and so on, but in fact that does not add much to our comprehension of the novel; such spinings seem weavings of wind, useless if entertaining exercises in ingenuity. There are hundreds of such details, and they are mixed thoroughly with more significant ones.<sup>5</sup>

Yet while French here recognises the arbitrariness of symbolic interpretation, her conclusion that the Hely’s sandwichboard advertisement is merely “concrete detail,” and therefore “has no significance,” is no less arbitrary. In the thirty-five years since French’s study was published, the validation of consumerism as both an important cultural context for *Ulysses*, and one of its central themes, has helped us to see that essential distinctions between the novel’s meaningful and meaningless objects are practically and theoretically untenable. Even were Joyce nothing more than “Dublin’s incomparable archivist,” as he is mischievously described in Flann O’Brien’s *The Dalkey Archive*,<sup>6</sup> then the material that he inscribed into his literature has its own historical value—as is suggested by the number of historians who augment their accounts of early-twentieth-century Irish life with quotations from Joyce’s work.<sup>7</sup> And if Joyce is taken to be the first major novelist to depict a modern consciousness essentially constituted by the experience of consumer capitalism, there is no justification for excluding as insignificant any part of the material that makes up this socio-economic mode. Joyce meticulously fixed his characters in an extremely specific milieu, as articulated in the earliest examples of Stephen Dedalus’s self-awareness:

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<sup>3</sup> Adams, *Surface and Symbol*, 191.

<sup>4</sup> Adams, *Surface and Symbol*, 8.

<sup>5</sup> Marilyn French, *The Book as World: James Joyce’s “Ulysses”* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard UP, 1976) 28.

<sup>6</sup> Flann O’Brien, *The Dalkey Archive* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1964) 132.

<sup>7</sup> Contributors to the historical journal *History Ireland*, for example, frequently quote from *Ulysses* as a quasi-historical document. To pick examples in the context of consumer culture, see Felix M. Larkin, “‘A Great Daily Organ’: The *Freeman’s Journal*, 1763-1924,” *History Ireland* 14:3 (2006): 49; Daniel Mulhall, “Ireland at the Turn of the Century,” *History Ireland* 7:4 (1999): 33; Bernard Share, “In Our Own Image: The Branding of Industrial Ireland,” *History Ireland* 6:4 (1998): 33.

*Stephen Dedalus*  
*Class of Elements*  
*Clongowes Wood College*  
*Sallins*  
*County Kildare*  
*Ireland*  
*Europe*  
*The World*  
*The Universe. (P 15)*

Even for the reader who, like French, ultimately seeks universals—“the significance contained in a mass of trivia, the godliness shining in a handful of slime”<sup>8</sup>—Joyce does not allow the detachment of the character from this “class of elements,” nor the privileging of any of its levels. And character, for Joyce, is shown to consist as much as anything else in the matter of consumer culture. In this chapter, I map the critical history of the subject, outlining my approach in relation to the major landmarks in the study of Joyce’s representation of advertising and consumerism.

### **Politicising Joyce**

The recognition of the relevance of consumerism to Joyce’s work is comparatively recent, but critical interest in this subject has followed roughly the same trajectory as the somewhat older critical history of Joyce’s politics. Briefly, both began with the shared assumption that Joyce, with a typically modernist disdain for a degraded world, rejected both its politics and the detritus of its commodity culture. From this perspective, his foregrounding of politics and commodities in *Ulysses* was simply a part of his satirical portrait of modernity. Gradually, Joyce was repositioned as a writer who carefully engaged with politics and, to a lesser extent, with the burgeoning consumer culture of early-twentieth-century Ireland. And most recently, Joyce has been championed as both the arch-political writer, intensely engaged with the contest between the forces of British colonialism and Irish nationalism, and as the recorder and even celebrator of Ireland’s early consumer culture. These interpretive shifts are probably both related to the erosion of Romantic critical assumptions of the inherent superiority of literature to the worldly pursuits of politics and commerce. The analysis of this broader ontological transformation—an explanation of the critical shift itself—is beyond the scope of this thesis. One of my central contentions, however, is that Joyce himself carefully connects

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<sup>8</sup> French, *The Book as World*, 268.

these two seemingly separate cultural activities in his work, particularly in *Ulysses*. In this respect, Joyce himself, recognising the inherently political nature of consumerism, and articulating the process by which a consumerist ideology was extended far beyond the concrete activity of consumption (the purchase of material goods), pre-empted the theories of consumer culture that came to dominate leftist critical thinking in the latter half of the twentieth century, particularly with the work of the Frankfurt School, French semiologists and post-structuralists such as Roland Barthes and Jean Baudrillard, and British cultural materialists such as Raymond Williams. So while I do not here attempt to rehearse the collapse of liberal humanist or Neoplatonic hierarchies of spirit and matter, of art and ephemera, I suggest that on a more local level, the interconnection between politics and consumerism in Joyce's work may help to explain the structural similarity of the critical shifts in the study of these subjects.

For much of the twentieth century, the received interpretation of Joyce's politics was that he had none—that he was basically an apolitical writer, finding solace in art from the socio-political turmoil of the Ireland of his youth and the Europe of his adulthood. A letter written by W. B. Yeats in 1915 sets the precedent for this view:

He had never anything to do with Irish politics, extreme or otherwise, and I think disliked politics. He always seemed to me to have only literary and philosophic sympathies. To such men the Irish atmosphere brings isolation, not anti-English feeling. He is probably trying at this moment to become absorbed in some piece of work till the evil hour is passed. (*LII* 362)

It is true that the context of this letter probably influenced Yeats's sentiments; he was writing to Edmund Gosse in an attempt to secure financial aid for Joyce from the British Royal Literary Fund, which required assurance that Joyce was not politically hostile to the Allies. But its main point—that Joyce had no “anti-English feeling”—would be popularised by Joyce's commentators, particularly his friend Frank Budgen and, later, his biographer Richard Ellmann. Both men, sharing a biographical focus and a tendency towards humanist generalisation, present *Ulysses* as an apolitical, even anti-political work. For Budgen, Joyce's two protagonists are radically free from partisanship: “Stephen's attitude towards politics is a clear and consistent negative. As an artist he must keep his mind and body free for his artist's purposes”; “Bloom [. . .] is political and belongs to a party, but there is only one in it—himself. He throws the whole weight of his party into the scale on the side of reason and

justice.”<sup>9</sup> Artistic freedom, reason, justice: these humanist values are defined in opposition to the Irish political scene. Joyce’s own politics, Budgen suggests, were to be situated somewhere between those of his two fictional avatars, concerned with personal liberty, not national liberation, and he goes on to report Joyce’s description of *Ulysses* as “the work of a sceptic” on matters of Irish nationalism.<sup>10</sup> Scepticism is not in itself apolitical, least of all in Ireland; to be “above politics” in early-twentieth-century Dublin was a very political thing indeed, as F. S. L. Lyons has argued: “it is entirely characteristic of the way in which politics and culture were intertwined in the Dublin of his [Joyce’s] day that his very declaration of aesthetic independence had to have in it unmistakably political overtones.”<sup>11</sup> Yet Budgen qualifies Joyce’s declaration with a properly conservative definition, which removes any political aspect: “Sceptic, however, is a misleading term for a purely contemplative artist. Such an artist sees the world as standing still, not as advancing or retreating.”<sup>12</sup>

Joyce’s letters from Rome to his brother Stanislaus in 1906 testify to his early support for the politics of the Irish nationalist Arthur Griffith (*LII* 167, 187); Richard Ellmann, who drew heavily upon these letters for his 1959 biography *James Joyce*, could not but acknowledge Joyce’s early political interest, and even his apparent “continual sympathy for socialism” (*JIII* 238). Nevertheless, despite his later acknowledgement of the complexity of Joyce’s attitude towards British rule (e.g. *JIII* 399), Ellmann gives the impression that Joyce’s early political interest was little more than a youthful experimentation of thought, and that by the time he came to write *Ulysses*, Joyce had reached a more clear-eyed political abnegation. Political activity is equated with narrow-mindedness, and it is against this—not colonial subjugation or economic inequality—that Joyce writes: “Joyce is quite earnest about this. He has shown Bloom throughout as the decent man who, in his pacific way, combats narrowmindedness, the product of fear and cruelty, which Stephen combatted in *A Portrait* and still combats” (*JIII* 368). Again, as with Budgen, it is not exactly the case that Ellmann asserts Joyce’s absolute refusal of politics. Rather, through his perorations on Joyce’s liberal humanism—“that literature embodies the eternal affirmation of the spirit of man is not a crotchet of Stephen but a principle of Joyce, maintained by all his books” (*JIII* 372-3)—he presents Joyce as a writer for whom the question of politics, nationalist or otherwise, is altogether too limited. The authorised version established by Budgen and Ellmann, then, was that Joyce was above partisan Irish nationalist politics, and thus quietly tolerant of British

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<sup>9</sup> Budgen, *James Joyce*, 152.

<sup>10</sup> Budgen, *James Joyce*, 156.

<sup>11</sup> F. S. L. Lyons, “James Joyce’s Dublin,” *20th Century Studies* 4 (1970): 19.

<sup>12</sup> Budgen, *James Joyce*, 156.

imperial rule. “Ireland is what she is,” Budgen reports Joyce saying, “and therefore I am what I am because of the relations that have existed between England and Ireland. Tell me why you think I ought to wish to change the conditions that gave Ireland and me a shape and a destiny?”<sup>13</sup> This famous comment could be read simply as a materialist recognition that historical circumstances constitute identity, personal and national, and that the wish to reverse that constitution is nostalgic and utopian. Yet such a materialist standpoint would conceive identity as contingent; by contrast, the reference here to a predetermined “destiny” suggests something essentially fixed, and this apparent conservatism—“Tell me why you think I ought to wish to change the conditions”—was the generally approved (if barely defined) version of Joyce’s politics, prevailing for the first two or three decades after the author’s death in 1941.<sup>14</sup>

The rejection of nationalist activism can be interpreted in a number of ways, but in figuring Joyce’s self-distancing from Irish nationalism as an artistic triumph over petty local politics, Ireland itself is left to bear responsibility for the social, political and economic restrictions that contributed to this rejection. Yet Joyce’s writing insistently locates these restrictions in the context of Ireland’s colonial relationship with Britain. From the 1980s, critics began to read *Ulysses* as an exposure of, and counter to, the damage done to Irish life by British imperialism, and as literary critical interest continued to turn towards the exploration of colonial legacies and postcolonial resistances in the 1990s, a number of attempts were made to position Joyce’s work within a postcolonial theoretical framework.<sup>15</sup> One of the most influential of these was Vincent J. Cheng’s *Joyce, Race, and Empire* (1995), which, with a typically postcolonial rejection of ideological absolutes, argued for Joyce’s dual critique of the opposing but structurally similar claims of British imperialism and a racially essentialising Irish nationalism. In a certain sense, Cheng is not far from the position of Budgen and Ellmann, arguing unequivocally that Joyce rises above the polar extremes of imperial and nationalist partisanship. Yet where the earlier critics had described Joyce’s rejection of these partisan positions as his rejection of narrowmindedness, Cheng firmly

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<sup>13</sup> Budgen, *James Joyce*, 155.

<sup>14</sup> In Joseph Brooker’s account of the main trajectories of early Joyce studies, he offsets Ellmann’s humanism against the “counter-humanist” position of Hugh Kenner, drawing attention to the latter’s “enigmatically political” interpretation of *Ulysses* in his 1956 book *Dublin’s Joyce*. As Brooker points out, however, this is a politics of rejection: *Dublin’s Joyce* is a “jeremiad against urban life, mass culture, and technology.” If Kenner countered Ellmann’s humanist or universalist thrust, Brooker argues, he nevertheless did so “as part of a familiar conservative tradition.” See Joseph Brooker, *Joyce’s Critics: Transitions in Reading and Culture* (Madison, WI: U of Wisconsin P, 2004) 119, 121, 122.

<sup>15</sup> As Gibson notes, this new turn was significantly initiated by critics writing in Ireland in the 1980s; see Gibson, *Joyce’s Revenge*, 3n.16, for an exemplary list, which includes early essays by Seamus Deane and Declan Kiberd.

locates this rejection in the context of Anglo-Irish colonial relations. Acknowledging Joyce's "very strong Nationalist sympathies," Cheng argues that Joyce "nevertheless undertook a systematic critique of the repressiveness of both English imperialism and certain forms of Irish Nationalist consciousness." This was no longer an apolitical writer, but one "steeped [. . .] in the very hues and textures of the complex political fabrics of a racialized and colonized Irish state."<sup>16</sup> In the same year, Emer Nolan argued in *James Joyce and Nationalism* that even Joyce's resistance to the politics of Irish nationalism had been overstated. Identifying continuities between Joyce's occasional lectures and articles on Ireland, written mainly in Trieste in 1907 and 1912, and Joyce's later fiction, Nolan figured Joyce's portrayal of nationalist Irish politics as an integral part of his broader literary and political concerns.

After Cheng and Nolan, several critics published explicitly political full-length exegeses of Joyce's work, and in 2002, Gibson brought a new trenchancy to this approach with *Joyce's Revenge*. Gibson's assertion of Joyce's political intent—*Ulysses* works towards "a liberation from the colonial power and its culture," translating "a ferocious political struggle into the literary arena"—was reinforced with a set of detailed, historicised explications of Joyce's engagement with a number of imperial British discourses and configurations.<sup>17</sup> And so, in the space of some twenty or thirty years, Joyce has come from being the arch-aesthete, unconcerned with trivial politics, to a thoroughly political and anti-colonial writer, absolutely and unapologetically engaged in the politics of his time.

### ***Ulysses* and the Politics of Consumerism: Early Recognition**

The critical history of Joyce's engagement with consumerism has moved in a comparable way, perhaps as part of the same tectonic shift. Joyce's early commentators took for granted his critical or ironic distance from the consumerist matter in which *Ulysses* is steeped. In 1922, Ezra Pound wrote that "Ireland is presented under the British yoke, the world under the yoke of measureless usury," and that Joyce "has presented the whole occident under the

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<sup>16</sup> Vincent J. Cheng, *Joyce, Race, and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995) 289.

<sup>17</sup> Gibson, *Joyce's Revenge*, 13, 15. For overtly (though less minutely detailed) political readings of Joyce's work, see Trevor L. Williams, *Reading Joyce Politically* (Gainesville: UP of Florida, 1997), and M. Keith Booker, "Ulysses," *Capitalism, and Colonialism: Reading Joyce after the Cold War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2000).



domination of capital.”<sup>18</sup> The following year, T. S. Eliot passed a similarly negative judgement in his famous description of Joyce’s treatment of “the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history.”<sup>19</sup> Pound and Eliot were notoriously divided in their interpretations of *Ulysses*, particular in relation to Joyce’s use of Homer’s *Odyssey* as a structuring framework, but they were united in their assumption that Joyce’s representation of modernity was not one of approval. Consumerism, the ascendant socio-economic mode across Europe and America in the early-twentieth century, must be seen as a significant part of the “measureless usury” or “domination of capital” found in *Ulysses* by Pound, and the “futility” of the cultural milieu described by Eliot.

With this assumption of Joyce’s opposition, it was some time before his representation of Dublin’s consumer culture was examined in any detail. Despite Edwin Muir’s recognition in 1925 that *Ulysses* brought into literature “things banished from it, as we now see more clearly, on moral and conventional rather than essential grounds,”<sup>20</sup> such newly ratified “things” as advertisements and commodities attracted only incidental attention in the decades that followed.<sup>21</sup> In 1937, Alick West criticised Joyce’s depiction of social reality in *Ulysses*, arguing that Joyce dwells upon “numberless acts of consuming, spending, enjoying of things,” while eliding the exploitative conditions of the means of production that allowed this activity.<sup>22</sup> Forty years later, Franco Moretti published an essay in the Italian journal *Studi Inglesi* that extended and refined West’s recognition, finding *Ulysses* to be a wholesale critique of the “crisis” of liberal capitalism.<sup>23</sup> But in English, it was Fredric Jameson’s 1982 essay “*Ulysses* in History” that really began to answer Muir’s claim for Joyce’s recuperation of “things banished” from the rarefied literary sphere. In “*Ulysses* in History,” Jameson sets out to break from the hegemony of “the mythical, the psychoanalytical, and the ethical readings” that make up the critical history of *Ulysses*. First of all, Jameson describes these approaches as unsuitable for our own time. In “the depthlessness of consumer society,” Eliot’s mythical approach, for instance, which shores up the apparent meaninglessness of the present with the “depth integration” of the mythical past, “no longer presents itself as a

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<sup>18</sup> Ezra Pound, “James Joyce et Pécuchet,” *James Joyce: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Robert H. Deming, vol. 1 (London: Routledge; Kegan Paul, 1970) 266; Ezra Pound, “Paris Letter,” *Pound/Joyce: The Letters of Ezra Pound to James Joyce, with Pound’s Essays on Joyce*, ed. Forrest Read (London: Faber, 1967) 200.

<sup>19</sup> T. S. Eliot, “*Ulysses*, Order and Myth,” *James Joyce: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Robert H. Deming, vol. 1 (London: Routledge; Kegan Paul, 1970) 269-70.

<sup>20</sup> Edwin Muir, “James Joyce: The Meaning of *Ulysses*,” *James Joyce: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Robert H. Deming, vol. 1 (London: Routledge; Kegan Paul, 1970) 331.

<sup>21</sup> For a brief survey of the early “nonevaluative approach to popular culture in Joyce,” see R. B. Kershner, introduction, *Joyce and Popular Culture*, ed. R. B. Kershner (Gainesville: UP of Florida, 1996) 8.

<sup>22</sup> Alick West, *Crisis and Criticism* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1937) 169.

<sup>23</sup> Franco Moretti, “Il lungo addio. *Ulysses* e la fine del capitalismo liberale,” *Studi Inglesi* 3-4 (1976-7).

possible or workable solution.”<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, Jameson argues, such interpretations fail to appreciate the historical specificity of Joyce’s own work—which is itself a response to the individual’s experience of alienation under capitalism. In this mode, human production, embodied in the life of the city, comes to be felt as meaningless, “absurd,” and “contingent.” In place of interpretations that try to inject “meaning” back into Joyce’s narrative, Jameson proposes a reading that takes cognisance of this “meaninglessness.” For Jameson, the ‘Ithaca’ chapter is the climax of a book that reflects “the increasing separation, under capitalism, between the subject and the object.” In this episode, commodities are no longer the detritus or incidental matter of social life, for “here, in reality, commodities are dreaming about themselves through us.”<sup>25</sup> For the first time, *Ulysses* was argued to be “about” commodities within a consumer society.

A year later, in 1983, Moretti’s essay was published in English as “The Long Goodbye: *Ulysses* and the End of Liberal Capitalism.”<sup>26</sup> Aiming to reconnect “socio-historical research and literary research,” Moretti argues that *Ulysses* responds to a particular socio-economic crisis.<sup>27</sup> This crisis, apparently inherent in liberal capitalism, entailed the recognition that the free market could not self-regulate “rationally,” giving way to “the seemingly paradoxical condition of the coexistence, on the one hand, of unsold goods, and on the other, of unsatisfied needs.”<sup>28</sup> Moretti suggests that Joyce felt this crisis so strongly that he wrote *Ulysses*, immersing himself in “the ‘arcane’ depths of capitalist society” and giving us ‘Circe,’ “still the unsurpassed literary representation of commodity fetishism.”<sup>29</sup> Jameson had read the formal innovation of *Ulysses* as an attempt to come to terms with the alienation resulting from capitalism. For Moretti, Joyce’s engagement is both broader and more specific. On the one hand, “as the poet of the crisis of classical capitalism in its classical area of development, Joyce offers us a monumental autopsy of an entire social formation.” On the other hand, he engages particularly with advertising—“the myth of the commodity”—which had, Moretti argues, been necessitated by the crisis of overproduction, and which facilitated consumerism as we now understand it.<sup>30</sup> As will be seen, Moretti pre-empts Jennifer Wicke’s

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<sup>24</sup> Jameson, “*Ulysses* in History,” 126, 127.

<sup>25</sup> Jameson, “*Ulysses* in History,” 130, 139.

<sup>26</sup> Franco Moretti, “The Long Goodbye: *Ulysses* and the End of Liberal Capitalism,” *Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms*, trans. Susan Fischer, David Forgacs, and David Miller (London: NLB, 1983).

<sup>27</sup> Moretti, “The Long Goodbye,” 182.

<sup>28</sup> Lucio Colletti and Claudio Napoleoni, *Il futuro del capitalismo: crollo o sviluppo?* qtd. Moretti, “The Long Goodbye,” 184.

<sup>29</sup> Moretti, “The Long Goodbye,” 185.

<sup>30</sup> Moretti, “The Long Goodbye,” 185, 195.

*Advertising Fictions* (1988) in his positing of an essential connection between the style of *Ulysses* and the form of advertising. In Moretti's conception, advertising "is not just one of *Ulysses*'s most original leitmotifs." Rather, Moretti argues, "Joyce himself relates it to the stream of consciousness technique"—and not just with Bloom, the character in *Ulysses* with a literal interest in the practice of advertising, but also with Molly, "unconditionally posited as the quintessential representative of consumerism," and even Stephen, who would seem to have a minimal interest in the consumer culture that surrounds him.<sup>31</sup>

If Jameson and Moretti demonstrated for the first time the seriousness of Joyce's depiction of consumer capitalism, they nevertheless followed Eliot and Pound's assumption that he opposed it. This assumption is particularly evident with Moretti. Although he allows that "Joyce's ideological position is structurally ambiguous—neither an 'apology' for nor a 'criticism' of classical competition"—he immediately turns this ambiguity into an even broader "criticism": Joyce raises consumer capitalism "to universal heights, but in this way renders the condemnation universal." This assumption of Joyce's universal condemnation is problematic in itself, but what is significant here is that both Jameson and Moretti identify consumer capitalism as the central characteristic of modernity. Both describe the shift into consumerism as part of a "crisis"—a serious break from the confident security of earlier modes of capitalism. Moretti denies the commonplace that the Great War constituted the crisis of modernity, arguing that the problem was fundamentally an economic one: "The secular stability of liberal practice and ideology and with [*sic*] the monopoly of the world market, the two great resources of nineteenth-century British capitalism, were now suffocating it."<sup>32</sup> He finds the shift into consumerism to be the socio-economic response to this crisis, and *Ulysses* the literary response to that response. Jameson, on the other hand, defines the crisis more generally as the result of the alienation and reification attendant upon capitalism, the "fragmentation of older organic or at least 'naturwüchsige' or traditional processes."<sup>33</sup> For Jameson, this fragmentation was everywhere manifest, from the segmentation of industrial production, to the compartmentalisation of the individual psyche, to the configuration of communities "into relations of equivalent individuals"—"free but equal' monads, isolated subjects equally free to sell their labour power, yet living side by side in a merely additive way within those great agglomerations which are the modern cities." And again, *Ulysses* is taken to be the major literary response to this crisis: it is by

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<sup>31</sup> Moretti, "The Long Goodbye," 196, 197.

<sup>32</sup> Moretti, "The Long Goodbye," 191, 186.

<sup>33</sup> Jameson, "*Ulysses* in History," 129.

understanding the “seemingly limitless power of its play of reification and dereification,” Jameson proposes, that we may “come to terms with Joyce’s modernism.”<sup>34</sup> Over the next few decades, his recommendation was to be taken up in several ways, though never quite in the terms he proposed.

### ***Ulysses* and Advertising: Defining Analyses**

Neither Jameson nor Moretti discuss Joyce’s representation of consumerism in any detail, but their accounts brought a newly politicised vindication of the seriousness of this representation. It was Cheryl Herr’s *Joyce’s Anatomy of Culture* (1986) that first began to consider this representation in a culturally contextualised way, although, despite her broadly Marxist standpoint, she is cautious in her interpretation of Joyce’s political intent, arguing that “Joyce wrote less what has recently been called the ‘literature of commitment’ than a literature of exposure. His anatomies of cultural constructions and operations enable rather than determine the reader’s political or socio-economic stances.”<sup>35</sup> Acknowledging Jameson’s influence, Herr meets his call for a new approach to *Ulysses*, arguing that “[i]f we take at all seriously the continuity of history and narrative, we must view each word and phrase as, among other things, the possible signifier of a socio-economic condition.”<sup>36</sup> What is particularly compelling about Herr’s approach is her consistent reading of this “socio-economic condition” only as manifest in particular Dublin social institutions—the “press,” “stage” and “pulpit.” Her positioning of Joyce’s work within these social institutions illuminates both text and context.

While Herr recognises that Dublin’s economic mode structured its cultural forms, her study is not primarily concerned with Joyce’s representation of consumerism. Within four years, however, two books were published that directly located consumerism as the most important context of *Ulysses*: Jennifer Wicke’s *Advertising Fictions* (1988) and Thomas Richards’s *Commodity Culture of Victorian England* (1990). Whereas Jameson and Moretti had provided only broad prospectuses of a critical approach that would recognise consumer capitalism as the basis of Joyce’s writing, Richards and Wicke analyse its effect on his composition with a detailed explication of the text. Richards’s analysis is particularly focused, tying in Joyce’s representation of Gerty MacDowell to a very specific moment in the

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<sup>34</sup> Jameson, “*Ulysses* in History,” 130-31, 136.

<sup>35</sup> Cheryl Herr, *Joyce’s Anatomy of Culture* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1986) 6.

<sup>36</sup> Herr, *Joyce’s Anatomy of Culture*, 282, 283.

development of consumer culture: the emergence of the advertising image of the “seaside girl.” He identifies the seaside girl as a crystallisation of major social changes in the second half of the nineteenth century, including the commodification of leisure time, and the establishment of the seaside resort as a staging ground both for Victorian sexual politics and for unbridled consumerism. He then describes the coercion of this image by advertisers in the 1880s and 1890s. Finally, Richards identifies the ideological details of this overdetermined image in Joyce’s construction of the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter: “the contradictions folded into the seaside girl are [. . .] virtually identical with those of the world disclosed in the narrative of Gerty MacDowell, a world constructed by and for commodity culture, a world in which language exists only to advertise.”<sup>37</sup>

Yet while his close analysis of contemporary English advertisements demonstrates Richards’s chronological precision in relation to English advertising, he pays very little attention to the specific context of Joyce’s representation. His concern is laid out in the title of his book (*The Commodity Culture of Victorian England*) and the fact that Dublin is not in England is generally ignored. Its distinct consumer culture, and the complications of Ireland’s colonial status—its lack of productive industry, its nationalist self-definition against England and even, at times, against commerce, and the greater influence of religion over a large number of the populace—are almost completely left out of the account. The closest Richards comes to acknowledging the cultural specificity of *Ulysses* is in his acknowledgement that Sandymount Strand was a less developed advertising site than the major English resorts, and in the glib assertion that “Dublin life remained much more provincial, much more old-fashioned, much less contemporary” than in other European consumer societies.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, while his interest in *Ulysses* precludes his recognition of its particularity, Richards’s methodology is convincing. He grounds a broad account of British consumer culture in his discussion of prominent advertising tropes and images, exemplified by particular representative advertisements; he then explores the relationship between the ideology of this culture, this network of advertising imagery, and the linguistic texture of a roughly contemporary literary production. The limitation of Richards’s account is in his application of this methodology, overlooking the specifically Irish context of Joyce’s work.

In *Advertising Fictions*, by contrast, Jennifer Wicke explicitly rejects the kind of detailed historical evidence that makes Richards’s approach so compelling, avoiding

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<sup>37</sup> Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851-1914* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1990) 234.

<sup>38</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 239.

“readings of individual advertisements” in favour of what she describes as “the archival investigation of advertising”—not, as might be supposed, the identification of recurrent or dominant advertising themes and techniques through archival research, but the “reshaping of cultural discourse as a whole by the massive presence of a huge archive of advertisement.”<sup>39</sup> Like Richards, Wicke turns to *Ulysses* to support a much larger argument: that advertising, having in its early days “borrowed its techniques from those of aesthetic representation,” came to usurp literature as the dominant signifying discourse of a generalised consumer culture.<sup>40</sup> In response to this usurpation, according to Wicke, modernist writers (for whom Joyce stands) drew upon the techniques of advertising in an attempt to redefine literature: “Advertising’s presence changes the scene: *Ulysses* absorbs it to get beyond it, leaving Joyce the final option of creating his own language or nothing. Voilá, *Finnegans Wake*.”<sup>41</sup> Wicke’s book participated in the critical revision of received notions of modernism, attempting to overcome what Andreas Huyssen famously describes as “the Great Divide”—“the kind of discourse which insists on the categorical distinction between high art and mass culture.”<sup>42</sup> Its importance in that respect should not be devalued. More specifically, although a number of critics had dwelt upon the advertisements of *Ulysses*, and although the idea that advertising seriously informed the style of Joyce’s novel had certainly been adumbrated by Moretti, Wicke was the first to make detailed claims about the relationship between Joyce’s novel and this modern cultural practice. Like Moretti, Wicke argues that the stylistic innovations of *Ulysses* should not be considered as isolated experiments or aberrations, but rather as symptoms of the novel’s situation within a particular social context. As Wicke puts it: “to dissect, analyze, valorize these formal achievements purely from within the novelistic tradition, or as a ‘high art’ phenomenon, is to be blind to the exhilarating *realism* of *Ulysses*.”<sup>43</sup> In this general contention too, Wicke is convincing.

However, one major problem with Wicke’s analysis is that, in place of the “novelistic tradition,” she herself valorises advertising, abstracting it from the consumer culture of which it forms only a part. Chapter 6 of this thesis, which continues to trace the language of ‘Nausicaa’ back to the female-oriented advertisements, editorials and fiction of early-twentieth-century women’s magazines, will confirm that I fundamentally agree with Wicke’s

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<sup>39</sup> Jennifer Wicke, *Advertising Fictions: Literature, Advertisement, and Social Reading* (New York: Columbia UP, 1988) 13.

<sup>40</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 120.

<sup>41</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 124.

<sup>42</sup> Andreas Huyssen, introduction, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1986) viii.

<sup>43</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 123.

argument that “the language of *Ulysses* is a material register of mass, modern culture’s inroads in language and thought”<sup>44</sup>; I put forward evidence to prove the contention. But while advertising is in many ways a dominant voice within that “mass, modern culture,” it is not its sole constituent. Moretti argued for a connection between advertising and the stream of consciousness technique in *Ulysses*, with the description of the psychological function of advertising in ‘Ithaca’ fitting “precisely the randomness, rapidity, discontinuity, uncontrollability and depth of the stream of consciousness.” But he does not leave the connection at that: the apparently shared parataxis of advertising and the stream of consciousness technique is explained as a symptom of social relations under consumerism: “the absence of internal order and of hierarchies indicates its reproduction of a form of consciousness which is subjugated to the principle of the *equivalence of commodities*.”<sup>45</sup> Richards makes a similar argument about the style of ‘Nausicaa,’ which he finds to be an “experimentation with a new syntax by which to convey a new order of *things* through an old order of words.” As Richards argues, “in this fluidity of relations among commodities in ‘Nausicaa’ we find a miniature version of a new interconnectedness of commodity with human culture.”<sup>46</sup> These arguments are detailed and coherent: “literary” language is adapted to reflect a new, determining social order, which has also produced and conditioned the language of advertising. When Wicke makes the same point, however, this determining socio-economic context is left out entirely: “The circuit of Bloom’s everyday life [. . .] depends on the flow of advertising experience he becomes aware of. Another name for this flow is ‘stream of consciousness,’ which is perhaps the writing technique most identified with *Ulysses*.”<sup>47</sup> The claim proceeds by syllogism, and goes no further: no explanation is given for the arguable identification between an undefined “advertising experience” and the stream of consciousness.

It is ironic that while Wicke claims that she had already finished her study when Jameson’s “*Ulysses* in History” and Moretti’s “The Long Goodbye” were published (some five or six years before *Advertising Fictions*), she nevertheless defines her position against their fuller perspectives.<sup>48</sup> Essentially, Wicke privileges the local or incidental claims of Jameson and Moretti—that advertising informs *Ulysses*—and ignores their broader explanation that this informing is an aspect of Joyce’s representation of, and response to,

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<sup>44</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 123.

<sup>45</sup> Moretti, *Signs Taken for Wonders*, 196-7.

<sup>46</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 217.

<sup>47</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 140.

<sup>48</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 122-3.

consumerism. She thus simultaneously understates the extent to which *Ulysses* is embedded within the consumer culture of its genesis, and overstates the part that advertising plays within its transmutation. To be sure, her specific concern is with the historical relationship between advertising and literature, and there is no reason that she should not concentrate on this relationship. And a degree of overstatement is understandable: Wicke is making a bold argument against received critical opinion, and it is natural that she should state it forcefully. But in failing to consider advertising within the broader parameters of the consumer culture of which it is absolutely and essentially a part—of which *Ulysses* is a part—she is forced to collapse other related discourses into advertising, a simplification that denies much of the complexity of Joyce's engagement.

One example of this simplification is Wicke's treatment of the press in her discussion of the "headlines" of the 'Aeolus' chapter. She argues that the chapter's "newspaper format, with its headlines that come from no locatable narrative 'voice,' has the power to squeeze authorial narration right off the page, substituting the anonymity, the ubiquity, of the advertising voice."<sup>49</sup> There is a conflation here of the techniques of the newspaper format and the "advertising voice." To follow the 'Aeolus' episode's obsession with rhetoric, we might say that Wicke commits a polysyllogistic fallacy. Her initial statement is logical: the newspaper format has an anonymous narrative voice; 'Aeolus' employs the newspaper format; therefore 'Aeolus' has an anonymous voice. But she has no interest in newspapers, and in order to interpose advertising into this relationship between 'Aeolus' and the newspaper format, Wicke makes an enthymemic substitution that invalidates her conclusion: 'Aeolus' has an anonymous voice; advertising has an anonymous voice; therefore 'Aeolus' is made up of the advertising voice. It may seem pedantic to concentrate on one article of her argument in this way, but Wicke's entire discussion of the 'Aeolus' chapter turns upon just this substitution of the advertisement for the newspaper headline. Exactly which part of the newspaper Joyce is taking on with these captions is a point of critical contention. They have variously been described as headlines, subheadings, and picture captions<sup>50</sup>; most of these identifications roughly fit the context of the chapter, and none take us much further than

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<sup>49</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 142.

<sup>50</sup> Such variations are usually unobtrusive, but M. J. C. Hodgart is bolder in his challenge to the common identification of the captions as "headlines," arguing that they are "rather captions under imaginary illustrations, probably photographs, added by an anonymous sub-editor" (M. J. C. Hodgart, "Aeolus," *James Joyce's "Ulysses": Critical Essays*, ed. Clive Hart and David Hayman [Berkeley: U of California P, 1974] 129). John McCourt finds them to "resemble film titles explaining each new picture" (John McCourt, *The Years of Bloom: James Joyce in Trieste 1904-1920* [Dublin: Lilliput, 2000] 147). For a list of other variations, see Cordell D. K. Lee, *The Word According to James Joyce: Reconstructing Representation* (London: Associated UP, 1997) 141.



Stuart Gilbert's original description of "caption[s] composed in the journalistic manner."<sup>51</sup> Of course, it need hardly be said that the history of advertising is closely related to the history of the newspaper; in chapter 3 of this thesis I will rehearse these interrelated histories in a specifically Irish context, and in chapter 6 I will consider some of the ways in which *Ulysses* registers the bleed between editorials, advertising, and fiction in contemporary magazines. But not one of the captions of 'Aeolus' bear any characteristic that is particular to the advertisement, and Wicke's description of these captions as "advertising-cum-newsprint"<sup>52</sup> betrays an elision between two distinct discourses. "Advertising" and "newsprint" often went together, but even with such advertising techniques as the "puff" and the "blind ad" that I discuss in chapter 6—techniques that demonstrate advertising's logical and chronological contingency upon the higher authority of the newspaper—they should not be compounded. In bringing to 'Aeolus' an agenda that does not directly speak to its form, her analysis suffers from its predisposition towards an untenable conclusion:

the parable of the plums makes way on the page for the newspaper headline, expanded to full narrative length, a complete *translation* of the literary/historical into advertising prose: DIMINISHED DIGITS PROVE TOO TITILLATING FOR FRISKY FRUMPS. ANNE WIMBLES, FLO WANGLES—YET CAN YOU BLAME THEM?<sup>53</sup>

Whatever this caption of Joyce's may be, it is not "advertising prose."

### **Determining Dublin's Advertising Culture**

Wicke's analysis suffers from her failure to locate advertising within the consumer culture that the practice supports, and from her tendency to collapse other related practices within that economic mode back into advertising. These are flaws of generalisation: a particular element of this socio-economic mode is valorised, and other elements of that mode subsumed within the valorised element. But, as with Richards's *Commodity Culture*, Wicke's account also suffers from flaws of specification—contextual failures, both geographic and chronological. It will be clear from my discussion in chapter 3 that it is not easy to make a contextualised study of Joyce's engagement with Irish advertising, for the simple reason that we do not at present have an adequate history of Irish advertising. But it is certainly possible

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<sup>51</sup> Stuart Gilbert, *James Joyce's "Ulysses": A Study* (1930; London: Faber, 1952) 178.

<sup>52</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 142.

<sup>53</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 145.

to identify key factors that are likely to have contributed towards a specifically Irish advertising culture.

It is fair to assume that, as with Ireland's economy at large, the most powerful determinants of this inflected advertising culture arose from Ireland's peculiar colonial situation. The most obvious considerations in this respect include the stronghold of British commodities in the Irish market and the relatively small scale of productive Irish industry; the relative lack of capital of the Irish advertisers and advertising agencies compared to their better-established rivals in England; the gradual shift in cultural influence from the Anglo-Irish establishment to an ascendant Catholic middle class; and the rise of a renewed nationalist press, with its promotion of domestically produced commodities in the "Buy Irish" movement, and with the concomitant vogue for advertisements featuring literally stereotyped "Irish" language and imagery. All of these factors turn upon a contest—crudely put, between British imperial and Irish national interests—which is central to Ireland's commodity culture at every stage of the production, distribution, and consumption of goods. As I will go on to demonstrate, this contest should be seen as the fundamental context for Joyce's representation of Irish consumerism; I analyse these and related factors in detail in chapters 2, 3 and 5.

There is another factor, however, that I do not discuss at length, but that had a powerful influence on Ireland's negotiation of consumer capitalism: the discourse of anti-consumerism. Although anti-consumerist discourses can most likely be found in every emergent consumerist society, this Irish strain was unique in its identification of the ideology of consumerism with a degenerate British influence, licentious and materialistic, which threatened to corrupt Irish ideals. It is a line that can be traced back at least as far as the Young Ireland "opposition to an 'English' ideology of commerce" in the 1840s, but it intensified and mutated towards the end of the century, and was manifested in various literary, religious, socialist, and nationalist discourses.<sup>54</sup> It is with this latter form that Joyce was most demonstrably familiar, particularly in his close attention to the Irish nationalist

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<sup>54</sup> David Dwan, *The Great Community: Culture and Nationalism in Ireland* (Dublin: Field Day, 2008) 51. On the reaction of 1890s Irish Revival writers against Young Ireland ideologies of improvement and modernisation, see Helen O'Connell, *Ireland and the Fiction of Improvement* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006) 165-99. For a discussion of an Irish literary tradition that was opposed to—or at least suspicious of—the premises and promises of consumer capitalism, and Joyce's place within this tradition, see Emer Nolan, *Catholic Emancipations: Irish Fiction from Thomas Moore to James Joyce* (Syracuse: Syracuse UP: 2007). On Catholic, socialist and nationalist attitudes to modernisation, including the consumption of luxury goods, see Mary E. Daly, "The Economic Ideals of Irish Nationalism: Frugal Comfort or Lavish Austerity?" *Éire/Ireland* 29:4 (1994).

press. Newspapers such as D. P. Moran's *Leader*, and Arthur Griffith's *United Irishman* and then *Sinn Féin*, frequently ran articles and editorials castigating the influx of immoral advertisements, commodities and entertainments from Britain into Ireland, and generally associating Britain with a crass consumerism. Indeed, in a *Sinn Féin* article read by Joyce and sent on with (very) critical commentary to his brother Stanislaus (*LII* 164-5), Oliver St. John Gogarty characterised the British precisely in terms of their consumption—"Satisfaction is the note of their lives"—referring to the "cult" of patent medicines:

These are the English middle-class, the common men than whom the world cannot show more ugly or more animal human beings. [. . .] The class whose only gospel is the news of dinner and whose only cult that of Beecham, Carter or the fruit-salt seller, Eno: the over-fed, aperient people. For them pills and the seaside provide appetites, and in the eatinghouses, which are now so numerous around the coasts, they are sated. For them the meadows all through the country are made hideous with advertisements of patent ways of recovering from engorgement.<sup>55</sup>

Despite the prevalence of such editorials as these in their newspapers, neither Moran nor Griffith could be described as anti-consumerist, as such. As I point out in chapter 3, Moran exhorted Irish businessmen to modernise their methods and take cognisance of the potential of advertising, and while Griffith's position was more ambiguous—he could be nostalgically agrarian, and explicitly opposed to the materialism of British industry<sup>56</sup>—he was also a crucial figure in the "Buy Irish" movement, promoting Irish commercial activity in various ways. Yet the anti-English agendas of their newspapers regularly participated in a rhetoric which equated a consumerist ideology with English materialist decadence, and this rhetoric was to play a significant part in the determination of Irish economic practice in the decades that followed. To take only the most famous example, Éamon de Valera's 1943 St. Patrick's Day speech envisaged an "ideal Ireland" as "the home of a people who valued material wealth only as a basis for right living, of a people who were satisfied with frugal comfort and devoted their leisure to the things of the spirit."<sup>57</sup> This ideal is the culmination of a long tradition of Irish anti-consumerism, which stands as just one of the factors that contributed to

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<sup>55</sup> *Sinn Féin* 15 Sep. 1906: 3. Katherine Mullin has discussed Joyce's complex engagement with this moralistic anti-English discourse, although she does not focus on advertisements or consumerism in particular. See Katherine Mullin, "English Vice and Irish Vigilance: The Nationality of Obscenity in *Ulysses*," *Joyce, Ireland, Britain*, ed. Andrew Gibson and Len Platt (Gainesville: UP of Florida, 2006).

<sup>56</sup> Griffith's "deep hostility" to British materialism and industrialisation is discussed by Daly, "The Economic Ideals of Irish Nationalism," 88-89.

<sup>57</sup> Éamon De Valera, *Speeches and Statements by Éamon de Valera, 1917-73*, ed. Maurice Moynihan (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1980) 466.

the determination of the particular form and direction of Ireland's consumer culture in the early-twentieth century.

These outlined complexities highlight the other major problem with Wicke's decontextualised account. For while it is true that she takes some of the factors relating to Ireland's colonial status as given, she does so without any clear methodology, and she does so with an assertive finality that is both unwarranted and misleading. One significant example is her claim of the national origin of the commodities on the Irish market: "Advertising figures prominently in Dublin's colonial underdevelopment. One index of this is that the litany of advertising tags and slogans so often encountered in the book are nearly without exception exhortations for British or American products."<sup>58</sup> This statement, though unsupported, seems plausible, and it would be easy to accept it at face value. Yet it is a misrepresentation. There are no advertisements for American products in the novel, and while British advertising slogans are undoubtedly often encountered, Irish advertisements are also quite prominent. As Bloom enters the city in 'Lotus Eaters,' the first advertisements we see are domestic: "Cantrell and Cochrane's Ginger Ale (Aromatic). Clery's Summer Sale" (5.193-4). These are not exceptions. To scan only the first few of Bloom's chapters, we see him register or recall advertisements for "Wheatley's Dublin hop bitters" (5.389), the Trinity College cycle race (5.550-551), "Thos. H. Dennany, monumental builder and sculptor" (6.462), "Alexander Keyes, tea, wine and spirit merchant" (7.143), "Graham Lemon's" (8.6), "Hely's Ltd" (8.142)—the list goes on. Now, although Wicke does not demonstrate anything of the kind, a case could perhaps be made that the "tags and slogans" of advertisements recalled by Bloom (as opposed to advertisements seen around the city) are more often British than Irish. From here, it might be suggested that Joyce represents British advertisers holding a greater purchase over the consciousness of Irish consumers, perhaps through utilising more effective advertising techniques, maintaining a stronghold over the advertising pages of the Irish press, and otherwise exploiting a more developed British advertising industry in order to dominate the Irish market. Yet this is the kind of claim that requires extensive research to verify, as it is by no means a given: in the *Freeman's Journal* for 16 June 1904, out of the seventy-five advertisements contained within its eight pages, fifty-three are for Irish companies, and only fifteen are for English companies.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 129.

<sup>59</sup> The *Irish Independent* for the same day has a similar distribution, with 66 Irish advertisements, and 13 English. Of course, these figures are nothing more than suggestive. A fuller study of the historical context of Joyce's representation would need to take a far wider sample of Irish newspapers, and combine such quantitative analysis of advertisements with various qualitative measures, including the types of commodities

In fact, the complexity of Joyce's representation of commodities and advertisements in *Ulysses* can only be fully appreciated by opening the novel up to the kind of historical data that Wicke explicitly refuses. Only thus, for example, can we recognise that Joyce muddles the productive origin of certain advertisements and goods, apparently deliberately, causing them to appear Irish when they were actually British (see chapter 5). Only thus can we prove that Joyce actively draws upon a very specific set of advertising theories, allowing us to identify with some precision which details Joyce picks up from the advertising scene he would have experienced in Dublin up to and around 1904, and which details he gained from his later experience and research (see chapters 3 and 4). The significance of these major points will be explained in detail in the following chapters. For now, I would like to emphasise that Wicke's generalised claims, however intuitive they seem, overlook and even elide the complexity of Joyce's representation. It is not enough to simply state that "Bloom's position as an advertising canvasser is somewhat anachronistic by the professional and institutional standards of advertising even in 1904."<sup>60</sup> Even if this is true, it must be demonstrated with more than a vague reference to "the various histories of advertising" that have informed Wicke's argument—none of which, contrary to her implication, make any more than the most passing anecdotal reference to Ireland.<sup>61</sup> In order to trace back some of the missteps made in the study of Joyce and advertising, it should be noted that for all its innovative qualities, Wicke's early account, lacking even the impressionistic support of incidental reference to contemporary advertisements, stumbles regularly into anachronism—not least, as will be seen, in her detection of anachronism within *Ulysses*.

### ***Ulysses* and Advertising: Subsequent Analyses**

By 1993, the subject tackled by Richards and Wicke had garnered enough interest to warrant a special "Joyce and Advertising" double issue of the *James Joyce Quarterly*, guest-edited by Garry Leonard and by Wicke herself. Michael Patrick Gillespie has referred to the volume as "the source that most of us would think of as the last word on the subject,"<sup>62</sup> but it would be

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being advertised, and the techniques used to advertise them. For instance, the fact that three of the five pictorial advertisements in this issue of the *Independent* were English might suggest that English advertisers were willing to spend more on individual advertisements, perhaps thereby attaining a greater proportional sway over Irish consumers.

<sup>60</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 126.

<sup>61</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 182. See chapter 3 of this thesis for a survey of the various histories upon which Wicke draws.

<sup>62</sup> Michael Patrick Gillespie, rev. of *The Economy of "Ulysses,"* by Mark Osteen, *James Joyce Quarterly* 35:2-3 (1998): 480.

better described as an introduction. The collection is presented with the “primary assertion that advertising—and consumer discourse in general—constitutes a dynamic force every bit as influential on Joyce as, say, the works of Thomas Aquinas, Dante, Shakespeare, or Giordano Bruno,”<sup>63</sup> and it goes some way towards validating the relevance of advertising to Joyce’s work. The volume is theoretically rich, with Leonard and his contributors making use of Althusser, Baudrillard, de Certeau, Deleuze, Foucault, Jameson, and others, to outline some of the key contemporary theories of the function of advertising in a consumer culture. There is an emphasis upon the effects of advertising on human consciousness, with discussions turning at times to questions of identity, politics, imperialism, and the relationship between advertising and literature, but the dominant theme is the relationship between advertising and desire. Eight of the twelve articles centre in one way or another upon sexuality. Wicke argues that “modern sexuality [. . .] derives from the phantasmagoria of advertisement and mass cultural invention of sexual codes and forms.” Leonard reverses the derivation, suggesting that “[w]ere human sexuality not inherently pathological, [. . .] commodity culture, as we know it, would be impossible to imagine.” Mark Osteen draws out the already near-explicit sexual connotations of the advertisement in *Ulysses* for Plumtree’s Potted Meat, arguing that “the meat not only accompanies sex but replaces it, transforming sexual desire into the ‘need’ for consumer goods.” Michael Tratner gives a historically grounded account of the interrelation between advertising, sexuality and desire, referring to early-twentieth-century economic and sexological theories to argue that advertising works not only to sublimate sexual desire towards the purchase of commodities, but also to create consumer demand by stimulating new, “infinitely varied desires”—thereby countering the crisis of overproduction.<sup>64</sup> Between these definitions, the “Joyce and Advertising” issue shows that sexuality has long been a cornerstone of advertising practice, and demonstrates convincingly, if partially, that Joyce articulated this connection in his writing.

As a whole, the collection offers some useful theoretical and conceptual tools, some interesting speculations, some promising points of departure, and a number of dead-ends. However, like Wicke’s *Advertising Fictions*, these essays also do very little to root Joyce’s representation in its specific historical context. In a letter written in response to the collection,

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<sup>63</sup> Leonard, “Joyce and Advertising,” 574.

<sup>64</sup> Jennifer Wicke, “Modernity Must Advertise: Aura, Desire and Decolonization in Joyce,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 30:4-31:1 (1993): 606; Garry Leonard, “Power, Pornography, and the Problem of Pleasure: The Semerotics of Desire and Commodity Culture in Joyce,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 30:4-31:1 (1993): 665; Mark Osteen, “Seeking Renewal: Bloom, Advertising, and the Domestic Economy,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 30:4-31:1 (1993): 721; Michael Tratner, “Sex and Credit: Consumer Capitalism in *Ulysses*,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 30:4-31:1 (1993): 704, 715.

Patrick J. Ledden rightly complains that “what is consistently missing” from these articles is “some true sense of turn-of-the-century Dublin.”<sup>65</sup> In particular, as Ledden points out, there is the unquestioned assumption in these essays that Joyce’s Dublin can be described without further comment as a “late capitalist” or consumerist society, and while I ultimately disagree with Ledden’s provisional counter-argument that Joyce shows advertising and consumerism to be all but redundant in the lives of his characters, subsequent studies of the subject have not addressed the flaws Ledden finds with the principle assumptions of the “Joyce and Advertising” special edition.

In 1995, Mark Osteen published *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* a monograph that included an expanded version of his essay from the *James Joyce Quarterly* special on Joyce and advertising. He considers “economy” in its broadest possible range of meanings, from the pecuniary to the linguistic, the domestic to the emotional to the erotic, and between these senses Osteen reads *Ulysses* as a precarious resolution of Joyce’s apparently conflicting psychological drives. He finds there to be a contradiction between Joyce’s “financial extravagance” and his “verbal reserve”—between his “excessive spending and consequent financial insolvency, and his recurring vindictiveness and emotional and verbal stinginess”—and argues that this “internal division” is externalised by Joyce into the characters of Stephen and Bloom.<sup>66</sup> It is questionable whether or not financial profligacy and verbal reserve constitute a true opposition, but this aspect of his argument is irrelevant to my argument. *The Economy of “Ulysses”* has been critically praised as an exhaustive study of the apparently narrow subject of economics in Joyce’s work, but in fact only a relatively small part of Osteen’s large book treats “economy” in any material sense.<sup>67</sup> He begins with a brief summary of the economic hardship of early-twentieth-century Ireland, drawing mainly upon Joseph V. O’Brien’s *Dear Dirty Dublin”: A City in Distress, 1899-1916* (1982) and L. M. Cullen’s *An Economic History of Ireland Since 1660* (1987). Consumer capitalism, the most significant economic shift in modern Irish history, is considered only in the chapter “Bloom and the Economies of Advertising.” In this chapter, Osteen places Bloom’s advertisements within the politicised context of Ireland’s consumer culture. For instance, he picks up the “innuendo of home rule” in the House of Key(e)s advertisement and, like Wicke, argues that “the ad offers on the ideological level its own spurious fulfillment of Ireland’s ‘longfelt

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<sup>65</sup> Patrick J. Ledden, letter, *James Joyce Quarterly* 31:4 (1994): 613.

<sup>66</sup> Mark Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses”: Making Both Ends Meet* (Syracuse: Syracuse UP, 1995) 1, 2.

<sup>67</sup> Gillespie, rev. of *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 479.

want’—political and economic home rule.”<sup>68</sup> Osteen also follows Wicke in assuming the British origin of the commodities and advertisements that drove Irish consumerism, and such inaccuracies can compromise his interesting political readings: as I have suggested, it is simply not the case that British products were “virtually the only ones on the Irish market,” in or outside of the novel.<sup>69</sup> It is true that Osteen is generally more interested in the symbolic and aesthetic qualities of the advertisements in *Ulysses*, and in their psychological relevance to Bloom; it might be said, therefore, that his account stands less in need of historical grounding than, say, Wicke’s, which uses the novel to make a broadly historical argument about the relationship between advertising and literature. Yet Osteen constructs his argument around historical claims, and their lack of concrete justification is not mitigated by such hedges as this: “if *Ulysses* is reliable evidence.”<sup>70</sup> Such a manoeuvre, turning back in towards the text, is ultimately tautological: *Ulysses* itself is substituted for the material evidence needed to make historical or contextual claims about *Ulysses*.

There is one respect, however, in which Osteen grounds his discussion of Joyce’s representation of advertising, and it is a very important one. That is in his reference to Joyce’s “Advertising” notes in the “Notes on Business and Commerce” (*JJA* 3:474-617). Whereas Moretti had drawn thematic and stylistic parallels between advertising and Joyce’s narrative technique, whereas Richards had traced linguistic and semiotic similarities, and whereas Wicke had relied upon analogies of repetition and variation, Osteen is the first critic to point towards this concrete evidence of Joyce’s research into the practice of advertising. Joyce’s “Advertising” section, although one of the shortest in the “Notes on Business and Commerce,” nevertheless contains quite detailed notes on advertising theory, techniques, production, organisation, and industry, and thus proves that at a certain point in his career, Joyce had definitely and deliberately studied the practice. In fact, even Osteen undervalues the significance of these notes, relying as he does upon the received account of the notebook’s composition. Osteen follows Robert Scholes, Hans Walter Gabler, and Franco Onorati, among others, in the assumption that Joyce took these notes to assist his short-lived career as a clerk at the private Nast-Kolb and Schumacher bank in Rome, between August 1906 and March 1907. So even when Osteen makes connections between Joyce’s advertising notes and his representation of the practice in *Ulysses*, he does so incidentally, with the

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<sup>68</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 148. Wicke argued similarly that “[n]o one will be mobilized to agitate for British removal after seeing the Keyes ad, [. . .] because the home rule pun is placed in suspension, eviscerated as the premise, as the rhetoric, of the ad” (Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 147).

<sup>69</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 117.

<sup>70</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 137.



fundamental proviso that the notes were taken only in an attempt to “succeed” in the banking business, at a time when Joyce did “little creative work” and was “[d]enied outlets for linguistic expenditure.”<sup>71</sup> However, as I demonstrate in this thesis for the first time, the attribution of Joyce’s “Notes on Business and Commerce” to his fleeting banking career in 1906-7 is incorrect. My identification of the sources of Joyce’s notes proves that they could not have been taken before the summer of 1910, when *Dubliners* was complete and when Joyce had already written at least the first three chapters of *Portrait*, and were possibly taken as late as 1915, when *Ulysses* was proceeding apace. Furthermore, Joyce’s source for the “Advertising” notes allows us not only in some parts to understand Joyce’s laconic and ambiguous annotation for the first time, but to identify exactly what theories Joyce draws upon in the composition of *Ulysses*. Lacking this resource, Osteen refers to the notes only in passing, and can be led astray in his interpretation, as will be seen in my full discussion of these notes in chapter 4. Nevertheless, it is important here to acknowledge Osteen’s priority in identifying their relevance; as he argues, the advertising section indicates Joyce’s “recognition of advertising’s key role in the social and economic life of Dublin and turn-of-the-century Europe.”<sup>72</sup>

On the one hand, then, focusing as he does upon advertising and other “economic” practices, and referring to the “Notes on Business and Commerce,” Osteen promises to expand the literary discussion of *Ulysses* still further, to include other traditionally non-literary aspects of Joyce’s work. On the other hand, in contrast to Jameson, who proposed that we read the commodities of *Ulysses* primarily as commodities—contingent and essentially meaningless—Osteen draws in these elements only with the usual literary manipulations of symbolic, analogical, and psychological interpretation. His argument may be appreciated for its conceptual range, approaching the “economy” of *Ulysses* with biographical, metaphorical, philosophical, and theoretical inventiveness. But even granting that Osteen is not primarily concerned with the history of Ireland’s consumer culture, the absence of any real justificatory historical research is notable in a study of the economy in general, and advertising in particular. One of the primary contentions of this thesis is that the study of practices as material as consumption and advertising, in a novel as materially rooted as *Ulysses*, requires a fundamentally materialist methodology. This is not necessarily to deny the validity of the freer approach that Osteen typifies, or the interest of the conclusions reached in this way. It is, however, to assert that carefully established historical foundations

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<sup>71</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 13.

<sup>72</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 111.

would allow the more imaginative interpretations of Joyce's work to stand more convincingly. With this contention, I argue that many of the conclusions that have been reached on Joyce's representation of advertising should be considered provisional until this historical groundwork has been laid, and more careful justifications of the premises of the study have been made.

### **“When? Now?” History and Theories of Consumerism**

Garry Leonard's *Advertising and Commodity Culture in Joyce* (1998) has been described as “a companion volume to Osteen's study,”<sup>73</sup> and while Leonard is stylistically closer to Wicke, there are similarities between these two books. They both treat what would seem to be quite specific, well-defined themes with considerable conceptual freedom, and although the content of their analyses is very different—we have already seen that Osteen does not consider consumer culture at any length in his discussion of the economy, and Leonard is no more concerned with the economics of consumerism—they share an extravagant theoretical range characteristic of much American Joyce criticism of the 1990s. While Leonard claims to adhere to Jameson's dictum “always historicize,” his historicisation tends to consist of references to “the time” or, at best, “the early-twentieth century.”<sup>74</sup> Such designations are too loose for the careful contextualising that I have argued to be prerequisite to the analysis of Joyce's representation of Ireland's consumer culture. They synchronise a diachronic subject, failing to make the elementary distinction between 1904, when the novel is set, and 1914-21, the period of Joyce's composition. As I argued above, and as I will demonstrate in chapters 3 and 4, this distinction is crucial. The theory and the practice of advertising, and the modes of consumerism within which it functioned, developed with astonishing rapidity in this period.

A related problem is Leonard's unreflective application of late-twentieth-century theories of consumerism to Joyce's novel. In the space of one page, Leonard slides easily from an analysis of Molly's use of cosmetics, to a discussion of “lifestyle” in a recent number of the *Sunday New York Times*, to the commodified sentiments of Hallmark cards, to Lacan's idea of the Real, to Baudrillard's concept of the delimitation of “needs [. . .] in relation to finite objects,” and back to Molly and greeting cards: “She might send Bloom the one that begins, ‘I Need to Feel Appreciated,’ and he could respond with the one titled ‘Please Give

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<sup>73</sup> Michael Patrick Gillespie and Paula F. Gillespie, *Recent Criticism of James Joyce's “Ulysses”*: An Analytical Review (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2000) 103.

<sup>74</sup> Garry Leonard, *Advertising and Commodity Culture in Joyce* (Gainesville: UP of Florida, 1998) 16. For chronological inexactness, see e.g. 16, 20, 85, 117.

Me Another Chance.”<sup>75</sup> Leonard is primarily interested in the constitution of individual identity within consumer culture, and certainly the theories of Lacan—augmented by the ideas of Baudrillard, Irigaray, de Certeau, and others—provide a complex and refined approach to this theoretical problem. But it should not be assumed that Dublin participated in and constituted a consumer culture in the way that we now understand it. Leonard justifies his free range with the fundamental contention that “Joyce underwrote the experience of modernity in the twentieth century.”<sup>76</sup> What must be emphasised is that this modernity would have been constituted and experienced very differently in 1904 Ireland than 1960s France, not to mention late-1990s America. Leonard may be right that Joyce’s fiction “is always concerned with ‘now.’”<sup>77</sup> But again, it must be remembered that Joyce’s “now” is not our own. The ease with which this distinction is forgotten may itself be characteristic of our own historical moment. Guy Debord famously defines the key condition of late-twentieth-century consumer culture as “spectacle,” the “stage at which the commodity has succeeded in totally colonizing social life.” In this stage, he suggests, “[c]ommodification is not only visible, we no longer see anything else.”<sup>78</sup> Debord develops this argument further in his *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*, arguing that although the social conditions he describes are in fact relatively recent, the contingency and historicity of this stage have been obfuscated, with the spectacle of consumerism having come to seem all that there has ever been: “the spectacle’s domination has succeeded in raising a whole generation molded to its laws.”<sup>79</sup> In other words, accustomed as we are to the experience of consumerism, and the worldview it engenders, we struggle to conceive of social intercourse in any other terms. With Debord’s analysis in mind, it is clear that we should be especially cautious not to project our experience back on to Joyce. We must not assume an essential or homogeneous continuity between the consumer culture of *Ulysses* and the later consumer cultures within which we now read the novel. Of course, it would be too much to say that the theories applied by Leonard are irrelevant to Joyce’s work. The consumer cultures respectively articulated by Joyce and Baudrillard undoubtedly share similarities and continuities, and they may be plotted as separate points within a historical arc that extends from perhaps as far back as the seventeenth century, through to our present.<sup>80</sup> But there are also significant disparities, and

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<sup>75</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 172-3.

<sup>76</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 34.

<sup>77</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 34.

<sup>78</sup> Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Ken Knabb (London: Aldgate, 2006) 21.

<sup>79</sup> Guy Debord, *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Malcolm Imrie (London: Verso, 1998) 7.

<sup>80</sup> On the early stages of British and Irish consumerism, see chapter 2 below, pp. 46-7.

such late theories as Baudrillard's do not necessarily facilitate an appreciation of the specificity of the cultural moment that Joyce goes to such pains to represent.

Leonard is not unaware of the difficulty of historicising consciousness and experience. In his opening chapter he sets up what he calls “‘the history of now’—the unrecorded yet quintessential fact of everyday lived experience” against the received “‘official’ discourse” of history, with its “monologic perspective.”<sup>81</sup> This is a fair distinction; as Richards remarks, it is a difficult thing to trace or reconstruct the experience of actual historical consumers, and this must especially be the case with those of a society that has historically been marginalised and underrepresented.<sup>82</sup> The corollary of Leonard's argument, that “popular culture in general, and advertisements in particular” present the “only mass-produced chronicle” of this otherwise unrecorded experience, is arguable: why advertisements in particular? And can these really be said to chronicle the experience of the consumers at whom they were targeted, when consumers themselves had no direct input into the composition or dissemination of these advertisements? Nevertheless, his acknowledgement of the blind spots of traditional historicism is appropriate and timely, following a swell of interest in Joyce's literary engagement with historicism and historiography in the early 1990s, as critics such as James Fairhall and Robert Spoo demonstrated that Joyce's writing is everywhere concerned with the problematics of historical representation.<sup>83</sup> It is quite possible that Joyce's sensitivity to the failings of historicism reflects his own experience of Ireland's colonial exclusion from the “official discourse of history.” Walter Benjamin famously asked “with whom the adherents of historicism actually empathize,” and found that “[t]he answer is inevitable: with the victor.”<sup>84</sup> The relevance of this insight to Joyce's representation of colonial Ireland should be clear: imperial history has inevitably been concerned with the legitimisation of empire, and is thus at odds with the experience of the subaltern and the marginalised. Joyce's fiction presents a challenge to the dominant historical voice, presenting an alternative repository of colonial experience, as Leonard argues.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 1, 21.

<sup>82</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 207.

<sup>83</sup> James Fairhall, *James Joyce and the Question of History* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1993); Robert Spoo, *James Joyce and the Language of History: Dedalus's Nightmare* (New York: Oxford UP, 1994).

<sup>84</sup> Walter Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (London: Cape, 1970) 258.

<sup>85</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 21.

As Benjamin also suggests, it is not just the perspective of history that is skewed in favour of “the victor,” but also the method.<sup>86</sup> One of the challenges of the recent turn to historicism in Joyce criticism, a turn in which this thesis participates, will be to account for the limitations and biases of the positivist ideals of the traditional historical method. Yet the acknowledgement of such limitations does not relieve the critic of the responsibility to avoid positive anachronism. Leonard’s assertion that “[w]e need a history of commodity culture in order to historicize it as a specifically modern phenomenon” appears tautological,<sup>87</sup> but he is at least right to point out that commodity culture is underhistoricised—particularly in relation to the role played by advertising, and most especially in the specific case of Ireland. The critical response to underhistoricisation should be one of redress rather than circumvention. If, as Leonard argues, “Joyce’s epic treatment of the trivial is [. . .] one of the central reasons his work continues to grow in importance as we struggle to understand our own time,”<sup>88</sup> and if *Ulysses* promotes a heightened sensitivity to the significance of the seeming ephemera of consumer culture, then that sensitivity should render the Joycean critic all the fitter to historicise that culture in a way that accepts its modernity without projecting back our own experience of a much later stage.

Leonard’s *Advertising and Commodity Culture in Joyce* is the only full-length study of the subject, but a number of other critics in the 1990s and 2000s published books that include some discussion of Joyce’s representation of consumer culture. Enda Duffy’s *The Subaltern “Ulysses”* (1994), Trevor L. Williams’s *Reading Joyce Politically* (1997), M. Keith Booker’s “*Ulysses*,” *Capitalism and Colonialism* (2000), Gibson’s *Joyce’s Revenge* (2002), and Emer Nolan’s *Catholic Emancipations* (2007), all refer to it in some respect, and these studies all work against one of the major faults that I have described by locating Joyce’s representation in the context of Ireland’s colonial relationship with Britain. Since they are not primarily concerned with advertising or consumerism, discussing the practices only as part of their broader arguments, I will not prolong this chapter with a detailed analysis of each of their studies; I refer to them where relevant in the chapters that follow. I will end this chapter by acknowledging the extent to which this thesis draws upon the critical body that I have outlined. The first wave of critics approaching advertising and consumer culture in Joyce’s work had to demonstrate, against received critical opinion, that Joyce’s interest in the subject was not merely incidental or frivolous, but central to his political and aesthetic agenda. In this

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<sup>86</sup> Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” 258.

<sup>87</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 21.

<sup>88</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 11.

respect, they must be considered successful. In the early 1980s, Jameson and Moretti made some of the strongest political arguments for the subject, locating Joyce's representation of advertisements and commodities in the context of his experience of the biggest socio-economic shift in modern history. Yet while their political approach enabled them to emphasise the broader social significance of these items, their particular stances preserved another critical dogma, assuming that Joyce drew the relics of consumer culture into his work as part of his condemnation of late capitalism. Wicke's *Advertising Fictions* (1988) went some way towards balancing this position, arguing that Joyce's interest was primarily discursive—the attempt of “literature” to reckon the newly dominant discourse of advertising. Wicke thus established Joyce as much as an admirer of advertising as an opponent, and this somewhat more celebratory position was to be taken up by later critics of the subject, particularly Osteen and Leonard. With the publication of Richards's *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England* in 1990, advertising and consumerism were convincingly validated as important themes in Joyce's work. Richards went some way towards establishing a methodology suited to the analysis of this newly ratified subject, demonstrating with attention to linguistic and historical detail the correspondence between a particular section of *Ulysses* and a particular nexus of advertising imagery. As I have argued, the errors in Richards's account stemmed less from his methodology than from the partiality of his interest in the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter: the peculiarly Irish inflection of the consumer culture it represents were not pertinent to his argument. However, where Joyce's critics could have gone on to establish a more comprehensive context for the study of the subject, subsequent accounts—the *James Joyce Quarterly* “Joyce and Advertising” special in 1993, Osteen's *The Economy of “Ulysses”* in 1995, Leonard's *Advertising and Commodity Culture in Joyce* in 1998—for the most part failed to adopt or adapt this historically oriented approach.

Whatever shortcomings I have described, it will be clear that this thesis draws much from these important landmarks in the study of Joyce and consumerism. I take from Moretti the recognition that advertising and consumption must always be seen as part of a broader political and ideological whole. I take from Jameson his eschewal of the symbolic reading of the advertisements and commodities in *Ulysses*, recognising that while Joyce undoubtedly drew some of these details into complex symbolic networks, the identification of symbolic value does not exhaust a commodity's signifiatory potential: Plumtree's Potted Meat turns out to be just as suggestive as a pot of meat as it does a symbol of sexual intercourse. I take from Wicke an ideological openness to Joyce's representation of consumerism, refusing to assume authorial condemnation where it is not obvious in the text. Osteen must be given

credit for drawing attention to Joyce's "Notes on Business and Commerce," for these have proved crucial in historicising Joyce's representation of advertising in a biographically and genetically satisfying way. And from Richards I adapt a model that roots contextual claims in concrete historical sources. Ultimately, in the five chapters that follow, I argue that while the study of Joyce's writing can give us a historical insight into the experience of Irish consumerism, historical research can also bring out some of the unique aesthetic and political qualities of Joyce's work.

## Chapter 2

### Defining Dublin's Consumer Culture

In the 'Lestrygonians' chapter, Joyce takes a page to describe Bloom's reflections in a shop window: "He crossed at Nassau street corner and stood before the window of Yeates and Son, pricing the field glasses" (8.551-2). A photograph that has survived of Yeates & Son from around the turn of the century makes Joyce's recollection of the shop, and the extended notice of it that he gives to Bloom, quite understandable (see fig. 1). The large windows are stocked with goods, and lined with posters to advertise them. The shop's sign, on adjacent sides of the corner, spells its name in large letters against a black background. The name of the shop is again displayed on the door, beneath a small image of a pair of glasses. And fixed above the door, on the corner of Grafton Street, is a huge model of a pair of glasses, apparently some ten to fifteen feet across.



Fig. 1. Yeates & Son, Grafton Street, around the turn of the century, © National Library of Ireland; rpt. in David Pierce, *James Joyce's Ireland* (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 1992) 52.



The photograph of Yeates & Son gives a particularly vivid example of the decidedly modern visuality of shops and advertisements in early-twentieth-century Dublin, and the narrative of *Ulysses* is full of minor scenes depicting the arrest of Bloom's attention by such visually prominent advertisements, shops, and hoardings. Returning home from Dlugacz the butcher's in 'Calypso,' he notes the advertisements for letting agents in the window of a vacant house: "Towers, Battersby, North, MacArthur: parlour windows plastered with bills" (4.236-7). Emerging again in 'Lotus Eaters,' he is stopped again: "In Westland row he halted before the window of the Belfast and Oriental Tea Company and read the legends of leadpapered packets: choice blend, finest quality, family tea. [. . .] [C]hoice blend, made of the finest Ceylon brands" (5.17-19, 5.28-9). As he reaches the corner of Great Brunswick Street, he pauses again at the hoardings: "Mr Bloom stood at the corner, his eyes wandering over the multicoloured hoardings. Cantrell and Cochrane's Ginger Ale (Aromatic). Clery's Summer Sale. [. . .] Leah tonight. Mrs Bandmann Palmer" (5.192-5). Passing Trinity College, he is engaged by a poster for the college races: "College sports today I see. He eyed the horseshoe poster over the gate of college park: cyclist doubled up like a cod in a pot" (5.550-52). And again in the coach to Glasnevin cemetery: "Hoardings: Eugene Stratton, Mrs Bandmann Palmer. [. . .] Wet bright bills for next week" (6.184-7). Established from the start, Bloom's attentiveness to advertisements and the display of commodities is sustained throughout the novel and into 'Ithaca,' where they are brought home in the extensive inventories of that chapter: "On the middle shelf [. . .] an empty pot of Plumtree's potted meat, [. . .] a halfempty bottle of William Gilbey and Co's white invalid port, [. . .] a packet of Epps's soluble cocoa, five ounces of Anne Lynch's choice tea at 2/- per lb in a crinkled leadpaper bag" (17.302-8).

The details of Bloom's perception are carefully recorded in the earlier passages, from the material appearance of the advertisements or products displayed ("leadpapered packets," "multicoloured hoardings," "horseshoe poster," "bright bills"), to their exact wording ("choice blend, finest quality, family tea," "(Aromatic)," parentheses included), and even the process of apperception ("his eyes wandering," "he eyed"). In part, this attention to detail can be explained as Joyce's characterisation of his protagonist: Bloom has a special interest in advertisements and commodities, since they constitute his livelihood. Yet Joyce describes even the least interested characters being halted in a similar fashion, particularly in the vignettes of 'Wandering Rocks.' There is Miss Dunne: "she stared at the large poster of Marie Kendall, charming soubrette. [. . .] Mustard hair and dauby cheeks. She's not nicelooking, is she?" (10.380-82). There is Cashel Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdall

Farrell: “At the corner of Wilde’s house he halted, frowned at Elijah’s name announced on the Metropolitan Hall” (10.1109-10). And there is Master Dignam:

After Wicklow lane the window of Madame Doyle, court dress milliner, stopped him. He stood looking in at the two puckers stripped to their pelts and putting up their props. [. . .] Myler Keogh, Dublin’s pet lamb, will meet sergeantmajor Bennett, the Portobello bruiser, for a purse of fifty sovereigns. [. . .] Two bar entrance, soldiers half price. (10.1130-37)

This last example is perhaps the most telling of them all. The window display is the subject of the first sentence, Master Dignam the object: “the window [. . .] stopped him.” Even Stephen—who might seem the least consumerly of Joyce’s characters, and whose involvement with the commodity culture that depends upon such ostentatious visibility is rarely explicit—is figured in a similar fashion, halted by the image on display: “In Clohissey’s window a faded 1860 print of Heenan boxing Sayers held his eye” (10.831-2).

These images and advertisements all seem to fulfil Bloom’s advertising maxim: they “arrest involuntary attention” (17.583-4). They thus contribute to the impression Joyce gives in *Ulysses* that Dublin in 1904 was already a developed consumer society, its inhabitants already halted—or “interpellated,” to coin the Althusserian term that has often been used to describe the ideological effect of advertising upon the individual<sup>1</sup>—as consuming subjects. However, as I have suggested, if we are to define Joyce’s Dublin as a modern consumer culture, the criteria for this definition must be made explicit. In his letter written to the *James Joyce Quarterly* following its “Joyce and Advertising” special, Ledden complains that although the contributors use the term “late capitalism” in describing the Dublin of *Ulysses*, “how that term applies to Joyce’s world is not clear.”<sup>2</sup> Late capitalism—a term used more or less interchangeably in the “Joyce and Advertising” special with “consumer capitalism,” “consumerist culture,” “consumerism” and “commodity culture”—describes a mode of capitalism which prioritises the consumption of commodities. This system is distinct from the nineteenth-century world of industrial mass production analysed by Marx, inasmuch as consumption itself is promoted as the “way of life”—literally, through advertising, and ideologically, as the dominant cultural norm—with all of the naturalness that the word “life” implies.

Thomas Richards takes the Great Exhibition of 1851 to be the watershed of a true commodity culture in Britain. In fact, historians have found characteristics of what we

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. Leonard, “Joyce and Advertising,” 574.

<sup>2</sup> Ledden, letter, 613.

describe as consumerism in eighteenth- and even late-seventeenth-century Britain and Ireland, with the great increase in consumer goods, the development of suitable media for their publicity and marketing, and the establishment of accessible forums for their sale all emerging in that period.<sup>3</sup> However, as Peter N. Stearns points out, if these elements existed prior to the nineteenth century, there is no real way of us “knowing how many people really could join in the full consumerist parade” at this stage, “or even wanted to.”<sup>4</sup> With the proviso that crucial characteristics of consumerism existed in varying degrees in Britain and Ireland long before 1851, the Great Exhibition at least stands as a particularly symbolic turning point. As Richards puts it, “the Exhibition fashioned a phenomenology and a psychology for a new kind of being, the consumer, and a new strain of ideology, consumerism.”<sup>5</sup>

It is yet to be shown that Joyce’s Dublin participated in this social shift in the way that has been assumed in critical accounts of Joyce and consumerism. A number of critics—Richards himself in his chapter on “Nausicaa”; some of the contributors to the *James Joyce Quarterly* “Joyce and Advertising” special; Garry Leonard in *Advertising and Commodity Culture in Joyce*—have elaborated upon some of the ways in which this “new phenomenology and [. . .] psychology” can be traced in the consciousness of Joyce’s characters. Less has been written about his representation of the material characteristics of Dublin’s consumer culture. This may in part be because Joyce establishes these characteristics quite carefully within the novel. Yet even if it is granted that *Ulysses* portrays 1904 Dublin as exhibiting what we may consider late capitalist features—prominent advertising, mass-produced commodities, consumerism as a dominant social norm—it should not be assumed that Joyce’s portrait is neutral. It is quite possible that Joyce’s representation of Dublin’s consumer culture was coloured by the distorting influences of his time in Trieste, his later trips to Dublin in 1909-10 and 1912, his wartime residence in metropolitan Zürich,

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<sup>3</sup> See Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford, eds., *Consumers and Luxury: Consumer Culture in Europe 1650-1850* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1999); John Brewer and Roy Porter, eds., *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London: Routledge, 1993); Neil McKendrick, Colin Brewer, and J. A. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-century England* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1982); Martyn J. Powell, *The Politics of Consumption in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behavior and Material Culture in Britain, 1660-1760* (New York: Routledge, 1988).

<sup>4</sup> Peter N. Stearns, *Consumerism in World History: The Global Transformation of Desire* (London: Routledge, 2001) 23. The question of who “wanted to” participate in the burgeoning consumer culture is relevant to the Irish context, as is indicated by the anti-consumerist (and often anti-English) discourse that accompanied Ireland’s shift into consumerism; see chapter 1 above, pp. 30-31.

<sup>5</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 5.

and his time in Paris from 1920 onwards.<sup>6</sup> In this chapter, I justify the subject of this thesis, establishing the extent to which 1904 Dublin can be considered a site of modern consumerism, and examining some of the ways in which *Ulysses* registers this modern social configuration.

### **Dublin Labour and the Dublin Poor: Street-sellers and Advertising in *Ulysses***

The shop displays and hoardings that arrest the attention of Joyce's characters give the impression of a well-established visual consumer culture, but there are signs too within the novel of an older, pre-consumerist sales method: street-selling. The street-sellers of *Ulysses* have received almost no critical attention, which is a surprising fact given the continued disagreement over Joyce's representation of Dublin's poor. The industrial working class are, as Marxist critics have long noted, more or less absent from Joyce's representation. One of the reasons that Ireland suffered such poverty in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries is that, with the exception of Ulster, it lacked the industrial foundation enjoyed by major British cities, suggesting that Joyce is not entirely to blame if his pages do not brim with an industrial workforce. Still, the old Marxist complaint, that *Ulysses* contains "no industrial workers, no sign of productive activity, and generally no concern with [. . .] the relations of production," is not without justification.<sup>7</sup> The "men of the lower class," whose "flat accents," "interest in sport," and "brutal and low" minds were to "threaten" Stanislaus Joyce on 2 October 1904, are, it is true, generally absent from his brother's work.<sup>8</sup> Wyndham Lewis's pronouncement that Joyce's "world is the small middle-class one" is not inaccurate, despite its class snobbery.<sup>9</sup> The characters in *Ulysses* who are endowed with interior monologue—that mimetic indication of subjectivity—are all, with the exception of the very reverend John Conmee S. J., of the lower-middle class; characters above and below this class level are described from the outside. Above are William Humble, earl of Dudley and Lady Dudley, and, closer, John Howard Parnell and George Russell. Below are the "drowning" Dedalus household (10.875), the "wandering crone" who brings the milk in 'Telemachus' (1.404), and, at the very bottom, the abject poor.

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<sup>6</sup> Paris and Zürich were well-known for their advanced consumer cultures; John McCourt has emphasised the advanced commercial status of the Trieste experienced by Joyce (Mccourt, *The Years of Bloom*, 29-30).

<sup>7</sup> Jeremy Hawthorn, "Ulysses, Modernism and Marxist Criticism," *James Joyce and Modern Literature*, eds. W. J. McCormack and Alistair Stead (London: Routledge; Kegan Paul, 1982) 266.

<sup>8</sup> Stanislaus Joyce, *The Complete Dublin Diary*, ed. George H. Healey (1962; Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1971) 107.

<sup>9</sup> Wyndham Lewis, *Time and Western Man* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1927) 93.

Yet if Gibson is right to say that “*Ulysses* shows little overt awareness of Dublin’s urban poor,”<sup>10</sup> his comment should be distinguished from Booker’s similar-sounding claim that the “urban poor” are “essentially absent from Joyce’s work.”<sup>11</sup> For the novel does show some covert awareness—and this is an important qualification. As Herr has argued, some of the “absences” in Joyce’s texts “are misnamed so,” with “things like poverty being nonexistent in Joyce’s texts only if we choose to regard certain silences as actual omissions.”<sup>12</sup> Prostitutes, street-sellers and beggars are the human indications of poverty in any city, and this is no less the case in Joyce’s Dublin. In *Ulysses*, however, they are hard to discern, because they are seen from the bourgeois perspective of the characters whose perceptions Joyce tracks. They are unnamed, undifferentiated—in fact, like Stephen’s God, rarely more than “a shout in the street” (2.386). And in the case of the street-sellers, it is a shout that has rarely been acknowledged.

In his discussion of the development of British commodity culture, Richards draws on a number of contemporary accounts to distinguish between the first half of the nineteenth century, when the London streets were apparently the domain of the costermongers and street-sellers, and the “spectacle” inaugurated by the Great Exhibition in 1851, from which time the street-sellers were pressed in a losing struggle “to eke out a living” against the new shopkeepers and advertisers.<sup>13</sup> The locus classicus for any discussion of London’s street-sellers is Henry Mayhew’s *London Labour and the London Poor*, serialised in the 1840s and published collectively in the year of the Great Exhibition. Richards quotes a passage in which Mayhew draws a direct connection between the street-sellers and the more genteel shopkeepers who were beginning to recognise the efficacy of advertising: “The street-seller cries his goods aloud at the head of his barrow; the enterprising tradesman distributes bills at the door of his shop. The one appeals to the ear, the other to the eye.”<sup>14</sup> Like Mayhew, Richards finds there to be more contiguity than divergence in the two practices at this time, arguing that “[m]ost mid-Victorian advertising was not a replacement but an extension of traditional streetselling, for it took place on the streets and depended on human intermediaries to spread the word.” Ultimately, Richards suggests, the visible presence of a human agent between the consumer and the commodity prevents the development of consumerism proper;

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<sup>10</sup> Gibson, *Joyce’s Revenge*, 88.

<sup>11</sup> Booker, “*Ulysses*,” *Capitalism, and Colonialism*, 6.

<sup>12</sup> Herr, *Joyce’s Anatomy of Culture*, 21.

<sup>13</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 42.

<sup>14</sup> Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor; A Cyclopaedia of the Condition and Earnings of Those That Will Work, Those That Cannot Work, and Those That Will Not Work*, vol. 1 (London, 1861) 9; qtd. Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 45.

it is only when the commodity was abstracted in the “antiseptic ambience” of the Great Exhibition that a full consumer culture could bloom.<sup>15</sup>

Some support for Richards’s contention could be found within *Ulysses*. The advertisements in the novel which visibly hinge upon human agency are just those which are shown to be unsuccessful, from the literal example of Hely’s sandwichmen—“doesn’t bring in any business either” (8.130-31)—to Alexander J. Dowie’s throwaway, which is promptly thrown away (8.57). Yet if there were continuities between the practices of the street-sellers and the early street advertisers, Mayhew’s important distinction between the aural appeals of the former and the increasingly visual appeals of the latter should not be undervalued. Indeed, in the passage from which Richards quotes, Mayhew does not limit the tradesman’s activity to handing out “bills at the door of his shops,” but refers explicitly to the new direction of printed advertising, and it is only through selectiveness that Richards avoids a comparison that would trouble his point about the early dependence of advertising upon “human intermediaries”: “The cutting costermonger has a drum and two boys to excite attention to his stock; the spirited shopkeeper has a column of advertisements in the morning newspapers.”<sup>16</sup> Mayhew closes the comparison with the point that “[t]hey are but different means of attaining the same end,” but the very difference of these means—one aural, the other visual—should be recognised as the crucial pivot in the growth of a consumer culture which is based upon the primacy of visual advertising as an affective practice. And in *Ulysses*, Joyce uses great technical skill to depict the sensory distinction Mayhew makes between the aural and the visual sales method.

The action that opens ‘Lestrygonians,’ Bloom walking past a sweetshop on O’Connell Street, is announced by his reading of the shop’s advertisements: “Pineapple rock, lemon platt, butter scotch. [. . .] Lozenge and comfit manufacturer to His Majesty the King” (8.1-4). As he continues over O’Connell Bridge, the narrative is interrupted by a cry: “Two apples a penny! Two for a penny!” (8.69). This is a disembodied voice, and if the lack of an evident speaker were merely supposed to depict mimetically a voice that has surprised the protagonist, the description that we expect to follow as his eyes catch up with his ears does not come; only indirectly do we glean even the speaker’s gender: “His gaze passed over the glazed apples serried on her stand” (8.70). The details that would conventionally follow in the bourgeois realist novel—the dress and appearance of the person behind the stand; “her” expression; all of the coded information that we use as readers, almost automatically, to

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<sup>15</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 45.

<sup>16</sup> Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*, 9.

locate a character within a social grid—are suppressed. Bloom’s sensitivity to the distressed state of others has been emphasised just a few lines earlier—“that poor child’s dress is in flitters” (8.41)—and he even hesitates in compunction for the sea-gulls that fly around him: “Wait. Those poor birds” (8.73). Yet it is only when he stops to feed the birds that the street-seller’s voice is given a body: “He halted again and bought from the old applewoman two Banbury cakes for a penny” (8.74-5).

We are given far more information about the items on the applewoman’s stand than about the applewoman herself—“His gaze passed over the glazed apples serried on her stand. Australians they must be this time of year” (8.70-71)—and it is tempting to invoke Marx’s famous account of commodity fetishism, in which the human relations upon which commodity exchange depend are elided, allowing commodities to appear independent of human agency.<sup>17</sup> It is certainly the case that the human being here defined by the objects of her trade (*applewoman*) is occluded behind the exchange. Even when the narrative seems to give her a direct part in the action—“He halted again and bought from the old applewoman two Banbury cakes for a penny” (8.74-5)—we are in fact only given a repetition of the woman’s speech, the one salient feature that the reader has been allowed: “two for a penny.” And elsewhere, the voice of the street-seller is never embodied at all, interrupting the dialogue for one line only: “Eight plums a penny! Eight for a penny” (6.294). Whereas visual advertisements for all kinds of things are perceived, registered and recalled by Bloom—some of which are of personal interest, but many not in the least—we do not see the street-sellers at all, unless Bloom is interested in what they are hawking. In this respect, Joyce’s presentation is identical to the reconstruction that Thomas Richards bases upon Henry Mayhew’s account: “unless you were interested in buying what they were selling, you might never see them at all.”<sup>18</sup>

In the ‘Hades’ chapter, there are three similar intrusions of street-sellers upon Bloom’s narrative: the “dullgarbed old man” selling bootlaces (6.229), the phantasmagoric plum-seller we hear but do not see (6.294), and the hawker with “his barrow of cakes and fruit” (6.500). Of these, only the first is given a kinetic physical action to accompany his voice: “Oot: a dullgarbed old man from the curbstone tendered his wares, his mouth opening: oot” (6.229-30). The dehumanising grunt, “oot,” is filled out only when its utterer is granted his pennyworth of speech: “Four *bootlaces* for a penny” (6.231; emphasis added). And if the

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<sup>17</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (Harmondsworth: Penguin; London: New Left Review, 1976) 163-5.

<sup>18</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 45.

“dullgarbed old man,” with his compound adjective, is given an excess of description compared to his fellow street-sellers, it is only because he is a special case: Bloom knows the man, both his former profession (a solicitor now “struck off the rolls”) and his former address (6.232-4).<sup>19</sup> Street-sellers in *Ulysses* are heard rather than seen. If they are granted any visual description at all, it is only in proportion to the perceiver’s interest in what they are selling.

The comparison of advertising with street-selling may have been suggested to Joyce by Howard Bridgewater’s *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known*, which Joyce read and annotated after 1910, and drew upon in writing *Ulysses* (see chapter 4 below, pp. 102-10). Bridgewater illustrates the importance of the imagination in advertising by recounting a story of two bootblacks, or “shoeblocks,” as they are called in ‘Aeolus’ (7.15), competing for trade. Bridgewater’s account proceeds with the comment that “[w]e can hardly go lower in the business scale,” but the comparison with advertising is nevertheless explicit, as Joyce noted (*JJA* 3:607).<sup>20</sup> In any case, the connection of aural street-selling and visual advertising is established by the sequence of Joyce’s narrative. The cry of the old applemoan enters the narrative just after Bloom has read the Graham Lemon advertisement of royal patronage, and been handed the “Blood of the Lamb” throwaway (8.9). Likewise, the three street-sellers included in ‘Hades’ are preceded in each case by Bloom’s perception of printed advertisements. The cries of the dullgarbed old man and the disembodied plum-seller follow Bloom’s passing and apprehension of the “[w]et bright bills for next week” (6.184), and the voice of the cake and fruit hawker enters the narrative directly following Bloom’s reading of the advertisement for the gravestone cutter: “In white silence: appealing. The best obtainable. Thos. H. Dennany, monumental builder and sculptor” (6.461-2). Indeed, the description of the Dennany advertisement explicitly emphasises the visual (“white”) over the aural (“silence”), and “appealing” makes as much sense as an active verb as it does an adjective: the advertisement appeals to the visual sense. What enables Joyce to make such a strong distinction between the aural and the visual sales appeal, here as elsewhere, is his centring of the narrative upon the perceptions of his protagonist. The apprehension that follows sensory perception is sharply distinguished according to the sense that has perceived, and as the street-sellers are barely perceived at all, so their cries are not retained. As the visual advertisements are strongly perceived, so their claims and commodities return to the thoughts

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<sup>19</sup> The struck-off solicitor is not, as Osteen supposes, called Tweedy (Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 159); rather, as Bloom reflects, he once had offices in the “[s]ame house as Molly’s namesake” (6.233).

<sup>20</sup> Howard Bridgewater, *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known: A Simple Exposition of the Principles of Advertising* (London: Pitman, n.d.) 41.



of Joyce's characters again and again, and so the internal monologues of Bloom ring with advertising slogans throughout the novel.

The street-sellers in *Ulysses*, then, are all but imperceptible, and represented in decline. When Thackeray visited Limerick in the early 1840s, he was struck by the great number of apple-women: "legions of ladies were employed through the town upon that traffic; there were really thousands of them, clustering upon the bridges, squatting down in doorways and vacant sheds for temporary markets, marching and crying their sour goods in all the crowded lanes of the city."<sup>21</sup> It is true that Thackeray's account is based on a poorer part of Ireland, and during the decade of the Famine at that. As Cormac Ó Gráda points out, Thackeray's description of Limerick "bears quite a resemblance to that of Third World countries today"<sup>22</sup>; the number of people forced to cry "sour goods" in order to survive is therefore likely to be particularly high. Nevertheless, in the Dublin of *Ulysses*, these "legions" are reduced to a handful of solitary street-sellers, although they are hardly more carefully differentiated. If the two modes of sale—aural street-selling and visual advertising—can be said to co-exist in Joyce's Dublin at all, there can be no doubt which mode is dominant: the commodities that retain any foothold in the consciousness of the city's inhabitants are those that are heralded by the visual advertisement. In this respect, it may be described as consumerist. Mayhew's account of 1840s London sometimes gives the sense that the shops are drawing away their custom, but the street-sellers are still ubiquitous. Half a century later, this was no longer the case, as W. Hamish Fraser establishes: "only in the very poorest areas" of the British Isles "were hawkers of meat and stale bread to be found."<sup>23</sup> That Dublin was one of the "poorest areas" of the Union of which it was then a part seems likely, but in Joyce's account, the similarly depleted street trade gives the sense that the city's movement into consumer culture proper was roughly consistent with other large British cities.

Although Richards does not discuss Ireland in his section on the street-sellers and the shopkeepers, in his chapter on *Ulysses* he claims that Ireland was a latecomer to consumerist practices: "billboards had not yet invaded every available wall" in 1904 Dublin, and "its shopping centers operated on a scale comparable to those of a suburb of contemporary London."<sup>24</sup> While Richards is elsewhere careful in his attention to the historical context of

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<sup>21</sup> W. M. Thackeray, *The Irish Sketch Book: And Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo* (London, 1869) 139.

<sup>22</sup> Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland: A New Economic History 1780-1939* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994) 265.

<sup>23</sup> W. Hamish Fraser, *The Coming of the Mass Market, 1850-1914* (London: Macmillan, 1981) 100.

<sup>24</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 239.

British imperialism, his discussion of colonial Ireland is very limited. In particular, his justification for the contention that “Irish writers took so long to discover the commodity” is insufficient, stating only that Dublin life was “provincial” and “old-fashioned”<sup>25</sup> As will be seen, there is much evidence to suggest that Richards’s suggestion of a belated Dublin consumer culture is itself inaccurate. At the very least, it is oversimplified: it takes no account of the specific political and economic conditions—colonial conditions—within which Dublin’s consumer culture was mediated. In 1851 England had the capital to build the Crystal Palace for the Great Exhibition and to fill it with commodities from all over the world, from tools to gadgets, to jewels and “priceless” works of art. In the same year in Ireland, the potato crop once again failed, the population continued to fall, and farmers and merchants continued to ship much-needed corn and livestock to England. These events are not unrelated; they are mutually dependent, even inversely proportionate. By 1904, however, the disparity was less absolute. As will be demonstrated in more detail in chapter 5, the British domination of trade was under threat from other powers, and its imperial dominion, at least over Ireland, was already slipping.

### **“The Heart of the Hibernian Metropolis”: The Material Conditions of Dublin’s Consumer Culture**

Fraser points out that “the displacement of hawkers, fairs and street markets by the fixed shop” was central to the so-called “retail revolution,”<sup>26</sup> but this new mode of retailing was just one of the material characteristics of the emerging consumer culture across Britain and Ireland. In very general terms, we might say that there are four material aspects crucial to consumerism: an expendable income among consumers; the production of disposable, mass-produced commodities; a concentration of retail outlets; and a developed transport system. To these may be added a number of other characteristics—the privatisation of public services, the political organisation of consumers, the commercialisation of sports and leisure, an increase in available credit facilities<sup>27</sup>—but I would argue that these are adjunctive factors, developments from, rather than preconditions for, a consumerist culture. Advertising certainly plays a far more central role, mediating as it does between consumer and commodity. However, while on one level advertising has a material function—advertising the

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<sup>25</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 239.

<sup>26</sup> Fraser, *The Coming of the Mass Market*, 94.

<sup>27</sup> See Celia Lury, *Consumer Culture* (Cambridge: Polity, 1996) 29-36, for a list of more general characteristics of consumerism; Stearns, *Consumerism*, provides a more discursive account.

public of the availability of certain goods—it is equally important in its collective ideological function of promoting consumerism itself. Indeed, some commentators have taken this to be its main purpose; Raymond Williams, for instance, has argued that “modern advertising is primarily important as a functional obscuring” of alternative systems to consumer capitalism.<sup>28</sup> Since the ideological and material functions of advertising are so difficult to separate, I will treat this characteristic of consumerism separately in the chapters that follow, especially chapters 3 and 4. For the remainder of this chapter, I concentrate on the material conditions of Dublin’s consumer culture, and while the four key elements that I have identified—expendable income, mass-produced commodities, concentrated retail outlets, and an efficient transport system—inevitably operate on an ideological level, they also serve clear and determinable material functions.

The first material prerequisite for consumerism is a population with the means to consume, and many of Dublin’s residents, particularly in the lower-middle classes, indeed saw an increase in income in the decades leading up to 1904. L. M. Cullen has apparently suggested that the Irish *per capita* income rose even more quickly than the English equivalent in the years that followed the Great Famine.<sup>29</sup> Cormac Ó Gráda shows this to be the overstatement it seems, but he too agrees that “there was a substantial growth in income per capita,” and suggests that “average incomes in Ireland almost trebled between 1845 and 1914.”<sup>30</sup> While the housing conditions of the poor remained deplorable in comparison with London and Belfast, wages rose considerably, largely as a result of the population decline that followed the Famine and mass emigration in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>31</sup> There is disagreement over the extent to which the statistical economic growth in Ireland would have improved the living standards of its inhabitants. Joseph V. O’Brien gives a grim account of the poverty felt by the majority of the working class in Dublin in the first decade of the twentieth century, suggesting that only a small proportion could afford enough food to maintain “merely physical efficiency.”<sup>32</sup> Giblin, Kennedy and McHugh argue that since the massive decline in population between 1841 and 1911 was “concentrated in the poorer half of the population, a significant increase in overall average income *per capita* would emerge even if the better-off half of the population had experienced no improvement in income *per*

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<sup>28</sup> Raymond Williams, “Advertising: The Magic System,” *Problems in Materialism and Culture: Selected Essays* (London: Verso; NLB, 1980) 186.

<sup>29</sup> Qtd. Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 236.

<sup>30</sup> Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 242.

<sup>31</sup> Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 241, 236.

<sup>32</sup> Joseph V. O’Brien, *Dear Dirty Dublin: A City in Distress, 1899-1916* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1982) 166.

*capita*,” but they accept that this “statistical quirk” could only account for a portion of the increase in “real income.”<sup>33</sup> The 1911 census classified some 63% of Dublin’s population as working class,<sup>34</sup> and while it remains likely that the poor in Dublin remained relatively poor, estimations of “a rise of 60 to 80 per cent in the money wages of Dublin building craftsmen’s labourers between the 1850s and 1890s, when the cost of living in the city was probably declining,”<sup>35</sup> suggest that incomes increased even in some sections of the working class. In short, by the turn of the century, despite enduring poverty and inequality, more Dubliners had more money to spend on more things.

Self-evidently, consumption presupposes the existence of commodities. Ireland, as a substantial quarter of the British market, was as full of British commodities as any other part of the British Isles, and was furthermore developing by the turn of the century its own national industry. *Ulysses* was one of the first novels to seriously extend the realist register to include a proliferation of branded commodities within its textual world, and it did so in response to a massive shift in the way in which commodities were produced. Moretti has argued that as “the unsurpassed literary representation of commodity fetishism,” *Ulysses* is unique in its observation of the “crisis of *overproduction*.”<sup>36</sup> Moretti, taking the term from Lucio Colletti and Claudio Napoleoni, explains this crisis as the result of the technological developments of the Industrial Revolution and an economic policy of free trade. These factors allowed widespread mass production in Britain, giving rise to a surplus of commodities for which a sufficient consumer demand needed to be created—hence the development of advertising. Others reverse this explanation, arguing that the increase in population and spending power in much of Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century brought a massive growth in demand which could only be met through a new exploitation of the potential of mass production. Fraser puts forward this view: “[c]onsumers were discontented with the lack of choice and the poor quality of goods generally available in the existing shops, but it took time for the necessary adjustments in distribution to be accomplished.”<sup>37</sup> These are two sides of the same historical process, each dependent on the other, and in either account, consumerism fundamentally depends upon the mass production of commodities.

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<sup>33</sup> Kieran A. Kennedy, Thomas Giblin, and Deirdre McHugh, *The Economic Development of Ireland in the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 1988) 20, 21.

<sup>34</sup> Eugene A. Coyle, “Larkinism and the 1913 County Dublin Farm Labourer’s Dispute,” *Dublin Historical Record* 58:2 (2005): 176.

<sup>35</sup> Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 238-9.

<sup>36</sup> Moretti, “The Long Goodbye,” 185, 184.

<sup>37</sup> Fraser, preface, *The Coming of the Mass Market*, ix.

The complication in Ireland was that British policy effectively precluded Irish industrialisation, forcing Ireland—with the possible exception of Ulster and, in a very limited fashion, Dublin—into the position of an agrarian producer. This economic manipulation was the culmination of a number of complementary measures. The promotion of the protectionist Corn Laws produced what Ó Gráda describes as “hothouse conditions for corn cultivation in Ireland,” and was one major encouragement of an Irish dependence upon agrarian trade.<sup>38</sup> The eighteenth-century exclusion of Irish linen and glass from the British market were also clear impediments to Irish industrialisation, and the abolition of tariffs following the Act of Union was an even greater one, since the fledgling Irish industries had no protection against cheaper mass-made British manufacture.<sup>39</sup> This dearth of industry goes some way to explaining why in *Ulysses*, Joyce’s “selection of the social relations to be described is that of the consumer,” as Alick West famously complained, although in chapter 5 of this thesis I will argue against Osteen’s exaggeration that British products were “virtually the only ones on the Irish market.”<sup>40</sup> For now it is enough to note that, in the availability of mass-produced commodities, Dublin was in agreement with other parts of the British Isles. Food and clothing, items which would traditionally have been made locally, were increasingly produced in factories, as Ó Gráda points out: “the artisan-traders and meal-mongers of pre-Famine Ireland [. . .] gave way before a flood of factory-produced clothes, shoes, and bread.”<sup>41</sup> The Dubliners of *Ulysses* are shown to be very well accustomed to pre-packaged and factory-produced food, from the Irish Jacob’s biscuits (12.495) to the British “Epps’s massproduct, the creature cocoa” (17.369-70), both of which were very heavily advertised in the Irish press from at least 1880. These foodstuffs were branded and distinctively packaged—another marked characteristic of commodities in a consumer culture. Joyce registers this branding and packaging in detail in *Ulysses*—in Bloom’s acquiescence to “the directions for use printed on the label” of Epps’s cocoa (17.356-7), for instance—and exploits it in his comic description of the Jacob’s tin in terms usually reserved for pre-commodified and individual productions: “tastefully executed in the style of ancient Celtic ornament, a work which reflects every credit on the makers, Messrs Jacob *agus* Jacob” (17.1823-5). The shift from bespoke or tailored clothing to mass-made items is less evident in *Ulysses*, but the growing appeal of the mass-produced clothing can be seen in the advertisement approved by

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<sup>38</sup> Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 120.

<sup>39</sup> For a general summary of these issues, see D. B. Grigg, *Population Growth and Agrarian Change: An Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980) 128-9. For a more detailed analysis of the economic effects of the Union, see Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 44-6.

<sup>40</sup> West, *Crisis and Criticism*, 120-21; Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 117.

<sup>41</sup> Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 266.

Bloom for “*Kino’s 11/- Trousers*” (8.90-92)—eleven shillings being exactly the price charged by “George Mesias, merchant tailor and outfitter” (17.2171) for the mere “alteration” of a pair of trousers (15.1911).

For these many commodities to be easily available to consumers, there must be shops. *Ulysses* does something to convey the extensiveness of the retail outlets operating in Dublin at the turn of the twentieth century, although it does not come close to being exhaustive: *Thom’s* for 1904 lists close to 500 retailers under “grocers” alone. Of course, there were plenty of shops in Ireland long before 1904, but the number of innkeepers, publicans, grocers, shopkeepers and dealers rose sharply between 1871 and 1911, particularly in the urban centres.<sup>42</sup> However, it was the emergence of the department store that really signalled the centrality of consumption to modern life. The department stores quite literally centralised consumption. They did so materially, in the sense that they were established in city centres through the consolidation and expansion of one or more smaller retailers (usually drapers), offering consumers the widest possible range of commodities in the space of one large building. Stearns suggests that the department store can be seen as the consumerist counterpart to mass production, “the retail version of a factory.”<sup>43</sup> As indicated by the name, they regimented commodities into departments, and it is perhaps here that the affinities of the department stores of London and Paris to the British Great Exhibition of 1851 and the French Grand Exposition of 1855 are most striking.<sup>44</sup> Geoffrey Crossick and Serge Jaumain point out that the individual elements brought together by the department store—the reinvestment of capital, a diverse range of commodities, an impersonal sales method—had each existed in some earlier retail outlets, but it was in bringing these elements together that the department store “constituted a major stage in the evolution of European retailing.”<sup>45</sup>

A significant part of this stage of evolution was the establishment of the department store as a social space, and in this respect the department stores also centralised consumerism ideally, in their direct and indirect promotion of shopping as a leisure activity in itself. A 1901 advertisement for Fenwick’s in Newcastle upon Tyne was explicit in its invitation to

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<sup>42</sup> Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 266.

<sup>43</sup> Stearns, *Consumerism*, 45.

<sup>44</sup> The connection between department stores and the national exhibitions has been drawn so often to be practically a truism, but Bill Lancaster makes the qualification that the Great Exhibition, while directly significant in the development of department stores, should nevertheless be seen only “as the beginning of a process that was to take about two decades to bring about noticeable change to retailing” (Bill Lancaster, *The Department Store: A Social History* [London: Leicester UP, 1995] 16).

<sup>45</sup> Geoffrey Crossick and Serge Jaumain, “The World of the Department Store: Distribution, Culture and Social Change,” *Cathedrals of Consumption: The European Department Store, 1850-1939*, ed. Geoffrey Crossick and Serge Jaumain (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999): 9.

consumers to treat the department store as a place of leisure: “A welcome to customers to walk around the store. Assistants are not allowed to speak to visitors. Walk around today, don’t buy. There is time for that another day.”<sup>46</sup> This advertisement also indicates the role of the department store in opening up consumerism to a new mass of consumers, and this is probably the most important difference between the proto-consumerist configurations of the eighteenth century and the mass-consumerist culture of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The advertisement’s promise of a license for customers to browse without the pressure of personal contact with the staff was a big part of the appeal for poorer consumers, and the fixed and visible prices had a similar effect, as Bill Lancaster suggests: “they took the fear out of shopping for the new lower middle class and better-off working-class housewife. Clearly marked prices facilitated budgeting and also took away the dread of showing your moderate circumstances [ . . . ] that was ever present in the specialist shop.” While the reassurance of class prestige was inevitably maintained—the “better-off could be seen being better off by the things they purchased,” as Lancaster puts it—the “fantasy” of such conspicuous consumption was opened to those who were previously excluded: “they could see it and even touch it and expect its glamour to rub off on their own small purchases.”<sup>47</sup> And it is here that the ideological significance of the department stores really stands out. Crossick and Jaumain point out that while the commodity on sale in the department stores would generally have been mass-produced, “the culture being sold with it was one of luxury, indulgence and good taste. It was less the products which created the sense of elegance and good living than the department store setting in which they were sold.”<sup>48</sup> Department stores existed, then, as consecrating spaces within which commodities took on the super-materiality so characteristic of consumer culture. They were also important in the ideological reconfiguration that established shopping as a feminine activity, providing a socially acceptable space within which women could shop alone, meet friends, eat, or rest.<sup>49</sup> Within the department stores, consumerism was extended to groups traditionally excluded from shopping as a leisure activity, particularly women and the lower middle class. More banally, they also stood as centralised, accessible, regimented premises for the retail of these commodities—and Dublin had its share.

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<sup>46</sup> Qtd. Lancaster, *The Department Store*, 30.

<sup>47</sup> Lancaster, *The Department Store*, 13, 30-31.

<sup>48</sup> Crossick and Jaumain, “The World of the Department Store,” 27.

<sup>49</sup> William R. Leach, “Transformations in a Culture of Consumption: Women and Department Store, 1890-1925,” *Journal of American History* 71:2 (1984).

Department stores in Britain developed variously and unevenly in the nineteenth century, and there have been several claims for the first in Britain, depending on the definition used—including Bainbridge’s in Newcastle, and Kendal, Milne and Faulkner in Manchester. By any criteria, however, Dublin was reasonably advanced. The department store that became Clery’s—the store in which Joyce’s Gerty has consummated her afternoon shopping trip (13.158-9), an activity in itself representative of the new validation of shopping as a leisure activity for lone female shoppers—had opened in its central Sackville Street location (now O’Connell Street) in 1853, as the Palace Drapery Mart.<sup>50</sup> One of the partners of this store, Peter Paul McSwiney, was a distant relative of the Joyces: “my cousin,” Simon Dedalus calls him in ‘Hades’ (6.71). The store became Clery and Co. in 1883, and remains trading as Clery’s in that location today.<sup>51</sup> The store, or “monster mart,” as it was described in the press, was even more closely related to the national trade exhibition than were its counterparts in London and Paris. The builders were bound by contract to complete the new construction before the closing of the International Industrial Exhibition in Dublin at the end of October 1853, which they only achieved through extraordinary measures, attracting large crowds even before the store had opened: they were compelled to employ twenty-four-hour-a-day relays of labour, and on 23 March of that year they “commenced the night work, and six immense jets of gas blazed brilliantly over the works, illumining the street to great distance.”<sup>52</sup> In fact, this was only the most spectacular of the monster marts that had flourished in Dublin for some years. In 1851, one Edward McMahon could proclaim his “joyful news” in a *Freeman’s Journal* advertisement: “Numerous customers are daily returning to deal in my Shop for Hosiery, Gloves, Shirts, &c., whose familiar faces I have scarcely seen in it for years. They are at last convinced of the ruinous effects of dealing in Monster Shops.”<sup>53</sup> As loose as McMahon’s “years” may be, this comment suggests that the small trader had been losing custom to the monster marts for some time.

Ó Gráda says that these monster marts had opened in Dublin in the 1820s, and describes them as “half-way houses between the specialist and the department stores.”<sup>54</sup> If so, they were pretty fully developed by the end of the 1850s; Julius Rodenberg’s 1861 account of his “Pilgrimage through Ireland” suggests that Dublin’s department stores were as advanced as any in Britain: “[T]he monster shops, occupying half a street, [. . .] in their internal

<sup>50</sup> *Freeman’s Journal* 28 Sep. 1853: 3.

<sup>51</sup> Peter Costello and Tony Farnar, *The Very Heart of the City: The Story of Denis Guiney and Clerys* (Dublin: Clery & Co., 1992).

<sup>52</sup> *Freeman’s Journal* 24 Mar. 1853: 3.

<sup>53</sup> *Freeman’s Journal* 29 Apr. 1851: 2.

<sup>54</sup> Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 270.



arrangements have no parallel even in London.”<sup>55</sup> Rodenberg says that there were “some six of these monster shops in Dublin,” and his description gives a strong sense of the consumerism that apparently flourished in Dublin even in the second half of the nineteenth century, while demonstrating a prescient understanding of the mystique—and illusion—of the modern department store:

The first window makes you believe you are standing in front of an upholsterer’s. [. . .] The second window, however, leads you into other regions, for the whole art of shoe-making [. . .] is represented. [. . .] The following seven windows resemble the seven paradises of the old Irish myths, for all the latter promise the heroes, the former are prepared to bestow on the ladies: beauty, the magic of love, eternal youth, purity of mind and body, incessant delight and celestial peace.

Rodenberg ends with the observation that “the crowd [. . .] was so attractive and picturesque, that the character of Dublin street life seemed for a moment cheerful,” and while he claims that this crowd was “composed of all classes of society,” the fact that the semblance of cheerfulness was only momentary serves as a reminder that the great majority of Irish citizens in 1861 had little to hope for in the paradises promised by the monster mart windows.<sup>56</sup> By 1904, however, the department stores were firmly established as the centres of consumption in Dublin. Their importance as symbols of the new consumerism is reflected in their dominance of contemporary newspapers: on 16 June 1904, for instance, across all of the main titles, the only advertisements to break into multiple columns—at considerable cost to the advertisers—were for department stores: the Henry Street Warehouse Co., Kellet’s, Todd, Burns & Co., and Clery’s.<sup>57</sup>

The other key necessity for a consumer culture is a developed system of transport, both for the rapid distribution of goods, and for the easy conveyance of consumers from their homes to the shops. As with the department stores, Dublin’s development of a transport system was relatively advanced, particularly with the rail and tram networks. The massive increase in railway freight revenue (from £175,000 to £2.1m between 1849 and 1912<sup>58</sup>) reflects the quick exploitation of this resource by British and Irish merchants, and the Dublin tram system at the end of the nineteenth century was in some respects one of the most

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<sup>55</sup> Julius Rodenberg, *The Island of the Saints: A Pilgrimage through Ireland* (London, 1861) 26.

<sup>56</sup> Rodenberg, *The Island of the Saints*, 27.

<sup>57</sup> The Henry Street Warehouse Co. and Kellet’s in the *Freeman’s Journal* 16 June 1904: 2; Todd, Burns & Co and Clery’s in the *Daily Express* 16 June 1904: 2.

<sup>58</sup> Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 266.

progressive in the world.<sup>59</sup> The opening lines of ‘Aeolus’ give a sense of the extent to which the trams connected suburban consumers to “THE HEART OF THE HIBERNIAN METROPOLIS” (7.1-2), the Pillar on Sackville Street: “Before Nelson’s pillar trams slowed, shunted, changed trolley, started for Blackrock, Kingston and Dalkey, Clonskea, Rathgar and Terenure, Ringsend and Sandymount Tower, Harold’s Cross” (7.3-6). As early as the 1870s, shops on Sackville Street were encouraging suburban customers to travel in order to consume, with Hoyte’s chemists giving away free tramway vouchers to their customers.<sup>60</sup> Finally, the trams and railways promoted consumerism in their utilisation as prominent media for advertisements. It will be seen in the following chapter that Dublin’s advertising industry gathered steam with J. K. Johnson & Co.’s involvement in railway advertising, and photographs from the period show that the trams were covered in advertisements for both foreign and domestic goods (see fig.1). Even the tickets were utilised, with Prescott’s dyeworks—for whom Bloom is engaged as ad canvasser in *Ulysses* (8.1059)—monopolising the backs of tram tickets for their advertisements.<sup>61</sup>

By 1904, then, the material conditions necessary for a developed consumer culture were well established in Dublin, and *Ulysses* gives a relatively accurate reflection of its infrastructure. The direct connection between the department stores, transport, and media in the development of Ireland’s consumer culture is exemplified by the varied interests of “the Bantry jobber,” William Martin Murphy (12.237). He was the chairman of the Dublin United Tramways Co. (1896) Ltd., which operated almost all of the trams that brought consumers to and from Nelson’s Pillar.<sup>62</sup> He was from 1898 a major shareholder of Clery’s, located directly in front of the Pillar, where the tram passengers alighted.<sup>63</sup> And in addition to these implicated positions, amid various other interests including the Imperial Hotel, next door to Clery’s, Murphy was the owner of the *Irish Independent* from its relaunch in 1905—the success of which was, as will be seen in the following chapter, largely due to his progressive approaches to advertising. United in the interests of Murphy, we see both the advanced state of the infrastructure behind Dublin’s consumer culture—a highly developed transport system, well-established department stores, extensive and advanced advertising media—and the

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<sup>59</sup> A number of technical innovations that were later adopted in other countries were first made by Dublin engineers, and a number of the Dublin United Tramways fleet were manufactured in Dublin—an unusual example of domestic industrial activity. See Denis Johnston, “The Dublin Trams,” *Dublin Historical Record* 12:4 (1951): 101-2, 112; Francis J. Murphy, “Dublin Trams 1872-1959,” *Dublin Historical Record* 33:1 (1979): 7.

<sup>60</sup> Johnston, “The Dublin Trams,” 108.

<sup>61</sup> Johnston, “The Dublin Trams,” 101.

<sup>62</sup> Murphy, “Dublin Trams 1872-1959,” 4-5.

<sup>63</sup> Costello and Farmar, *The Very Heart of the City*, 38.

direct interconnection between each of its parts. This interconnectedness was not lost on Dubliners, at least not Conal O’Riordan, who draws it into a discussion in his 1920 novel *Adam of Dublin*: “‘tis the thrams and Clery’s and the papers altogether. Says the *Herald* ‘Go to Clery’s’ and the thrams are waiting there to take them to Clery’s, and so to Clery’s they go and spend all their money, and ‘tis Murphy has it bad luck to him.”<sup>64</sup>

If Murphy shows Irish domestic entrepreneurialism to be a formidable aspect of Dublin’s advanced consumer culture, British interest should not be undervalued. Enda Duffy has suggested that not only was Ireland in 1904 a consumerist society, but that it had in fact been so even before England:

It is a truism of Irish history that the British tried out systems of mass education with the national schools, intensive mapping through the Ordnance Survey, and mass policing with the Royal Irish Constabulary, in Ireland before they did so in England; I want to claim, more fundamentally, that they also tried out mass consumerism and its subject affects and effects in late-colonial Ireland before they did at home.<sup>65</sup>

This is hardly a plausible model: insupportable anachronism aside, the idea that “the British” could just “try out” mass consumerism depends upon a fantastic conflation of the various and often conflicting institutions and interests that made up the British Empire. Yet it is true that the British economy benefited deliberately and greatly from the growth of consumerism in Ireland, and that “the British”—government and businesses—had both agency and interest in many of the infrastructural developments that this chapter has described. Most directly, as we have seen, governmental policy effectively closed off industrialisation in the south of Ireland, thus limiting the potential for the development of a domestic production to meet the country’s expanding consumerism. So too in transport. Although Murphy undoubtedly played a large part in the expansion of the Dublin tram network, its early development was impelled by the aptly named Imperial Tramways of Bristol. In 1893, that company bought the Dublin Southern Districts Tramways Co. and Blackrock and Kingstown Tramways Co., and it was their English managing director, J. Clifton Robinson, who had the new power station and overhead electric wires built to introduce the electric tram; it was Robinson too who had the idea of reducing fares by half, thus opening the network up to a far broader consumer base, while of course channelling profits back to England.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Qtd. Costello and Farmar, *The Very Heart of the City*, 46.

<sup>65</sup> Enda Duffy, “Molly’s Throat,” *Joyce: Feminism/Post/Colonialism*, ed. Ellen Carol Jones, *European Joyce Studies* 8 (Amsterdam; Atlanta: Rodopi, 1996) 244.

<sup>66</sup> Murphy, “Dublin Trams 1872-1959,” 4-5.

But it is in the commodities themselves that we see British interest most clearly implicated in Irish consumerism. Osteen argues that British products were “designed to ‘afford a noiseless, inoffensive vent’ to Irish political activism by deflecting their explosive political frustrations into private consumerism.”<sup>67</sup> The causal link here is as skewed as Duffy’s: among fundamentally economic motivations, it is hard to imagine an instance in which a British manufacturer might have “designed” commodities expressly to defuse “Irish political activism.” Nevertheless, Osteen is right to point out that commodities do not, and cannot, function innocently—least of all in colonial Ireland. John Fiske has said that “a commodity is ideology made material.”<sup>68</sup> In chapter 5, I will argue that aside from the symbolic and thematic properties of the commodities in *Ulysses*, Joyce’s narrative works to uncover the ideologies coded in these material artefacts. As Osteen has also pointed out, one of the key ways in which commodities are coded ideologically is through advertising.<sup>69</sup> The next two chapters analyse the concrete process through which Joyce draws advertising into his fictional representation.

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<sup>67</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 117.

<sup>68</sup> John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture* (London: Routledge, 1989) 14.

<sup>69</sup> “Through advertising, the body (commodity) is loaded with spirit (meaning)” (Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 115).

## Chapter 3

### *Ulysses* and the History of Irish Advertising

Previous accounts of Joyce's representation of advertising have drawn out many of its aesthetic, symbolic, psychological and political qualities, but they have also at times introduced anachronisms and inconsistencies into the study of the subject. Jennifer Wicke states in *Advertising Fictions* that "Bloom's position as an advertising canvasser is somewhat anachronistic by the professional and institutional standards of advertising even in 1904."<sup>1</sup> Since she does not define the standards to which she refers, this claim is hard to assess, but in any case she goes on to read this anachronism as historical realism: "Bloom replicates the actual historical position of Ireland vis-à-vis England at this time," since "the secondary, colonized position of Ireland's general economy holds true for its control over the flow of advertising images and texts." This assumption of British control over Ireland's advertising "flow" is very generally plausible, and has been followed by Osteen and Duffy, although Wicke's claim that "the deluge of professional advertisements that is shown to cover Dublin is virtually all produced outside it" is not borne out by *Ulysses* itself; as I pointed out in chapter 1, domestic advertisements appear throughout the narrative, from Cantrell & Cochrane's (5.193-4) to Hely's (8.126).<sup>2</sup> Yet even if we accept the generalisation that overall Joyce depicts an Ireland swamped with foreign advertisements and products, the point immediately begs historical questions. Does Joyce, with historical omniscience, represent the Dublin advertising scene exactly as he found it in 1904? Does he emphasise certain characteristics of it in order to make a political point about the economic dependency of Ireland upon a hegemonic British Empire? And for his advertisements, does he simply take those advertisements and products which best fit his symbolic network and his depiction of a small-time businessman? Does he project back onto 1904 the more visual and affective advertising techniques of the late 1910s and early 1920s? These and like questions can only be considered with reference to the novel's historical context. In this chapter, I attempt to provide a more carefully defined historical "standard."

A historically accurate account of Irish advertising is not, however, easy to obtain. Richard W. Pollay has said with justification that "virtually all of the literature available on the history of advertising is either anecdotal, evangelical, trivial or rhetorical."<sup>3</sup> For the

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<sup>1</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 126.

<sup>2</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 126.

<sup>3</sup> Richard W. Pollay, *Information Sources in Advertising History* (Westport, CO: Greenwood, 1979) 10.

history of Irish advertising in particular, there is hardly even any literature available, with the enjoyable exception of Hugh Oram's *The Advertising Book* (1986) falling decidedly into the anecdotal category. Certainly the raw material, the advertisements themselves, are available to the patient and persistent—at least those advertisements which were printed in the Irish newspapers; pamphlets, posters, ticket advertisements, tram advertisements, and so on, are far harder to trace, and such advertisements as the “plastered boards” attached to rowboats by enterprising advertisers such as Kino's (8.90-92) are presumably irretrievable. But even if we rely upon the newspaper advertisements themselves, these will only help us to reconstruct a part of the history. Statistical analysis of these advertisements can tell us something about the advertisers, for instance: the types of products and services that they tried to sell, sometimes their nationality, and even perhaps, by “innuendo” (7.150), their political affiliation. But this is laborious work, and in any case can provide almost no direct information about the agents and agencies that conceived, constructed and placed these advertisements. It is therefore understandable that critical accounts of Joyce's representation of advertising remain quite unhistorical. Studies of Irish advertising are anecdotal and dispersed; accounts of British advertising rarely venture outside of London; and the painstaking trawling of agency records or even newspaper advertisements is beyond the remit of most literary studies. Yet an effort in this direction is crucial if Joyce's depiction is to be discussed in historical or political terms. In this chapter, then, I attempt first to provide an account of the state of the Irish advertising industry in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. I do so with a combination of anecdotal and archival analysis, augmenting the histories of Oram and other accounts of British and American advertising with a selective and provisional study of the advertisements that appeared in contemporary Irish newspapers.<sup>4</sup> With this material background established, I turn to *Ulysses* and consider some of the distortions and manipulations entailed in Joyce's fictionalisation of Dublin's advertising industry.

### **Advertising and the Newspaper Industry in Ireland and Britain**

The assumption central to Wicke's characterisation of the “secondary, colonized position” of

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<sup>4</sup> The use of anecdotal evidence is problematic. The anecdote is inherently subjective, and it would be a mistake to measure Joyce's representation by giving preference to another equally partial account. However, subjectivity does not necessarily imply unreliability, and anecdotal evidence has a value that archival records do not: a sense of the lived experience of history. Joyce's reverent and persistent chronicling of his father's numerous and often arcane anecdotes suggests that they may be accepted as central units in his conception of historicity. For an argument regarding the historical (or, rather, counterhistorical) merits of the anecdote, see Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000) 49-74.

Ireland's advertising industry is that it was the passive recipient of English impositions. From this perspective, the Irish advertising industry is colonised because the primary material—the advertisements and the products themselves—is produced outside of Ireland. It is secondary because, it is supposed, Irish advertisers derive their practice from English innovations, so Ireland produces an identical advertising model to the older and bigger one across the water. In the first part of this chapter, I evaluate these assumptions, and complicate the idea that the Irish advertising industry merely replicated its English counterpart. I consider the peculiarities of the Irish newspaper industry, which was central to the growth of advertising, and I argue that conditions singular to Ireland opened up to a distinct and idiosyncratic advertising industry. I pay particular attention to those aspects treated most fully by Joyce: the role of the canvasser and the production of local advertisements on one side, and the finished, displayed advertisements received by the consumer, on the other.

There is scarcely an account of the advertising industry that does not begin with the eighteenth-century coffee houses.<sup>5</sup> In the mid-nineteenth century, Thomas Babington Macaulay famously reported that for foreign visitors, it was the “coffee house [. . .] which especially distinguished London from all other cities.”<sup>6</sup> Yet while the coffee houses were no doubt concentrated in the capital, they were prevalent and extremely popular throughout Britain and Ireland; Aytoun Ellis, with reference to John Gilbert's *History of the City of Dublin* (1859) counts eighteen, all established between 1690 and 1765.<sup>7</sup> John Dunton's remarkable tract *The Dublin Scuffle* (1699) refers to at least three Dublin coffee houses by name, and Dunton reprints the advertisement that he had published for the book auction he was to hold in “Dick's Coffee-House” in Skinner's Row, as well as in coffee houses in Limerick, Cork, Kilkenny, Clonmel, Wexford, Galway, “and other Places.”<sup>8</sup> The coffee houses are significant as the ground from which the modern advertising industry grew, and they operated in Ireland in much the same way as they did in England, serving the same

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<sup>5</sup> See Blanche B. Elliott, *A History of English Advertising* (London: Business Publications, 1962) 139; John Gloag, *Advertising in Modern Life* (London: Heinemann, 1959) 30; Charles Frederick Higham, *Advertising: Its Use and Abuse* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1925) 34; Diana Hindley and Geoffrey Hindley, *Advertising in Victorian England 1837-1901* (London: Wayland, 1972) 19.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Babington Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1849) 362.

<sup>7</sup> Aytoun Ellis, *The Penny Universities: A History of the Coffee-houses* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1956) 200. Ellis suggests that the fashion was brought to Dublin by those “who had acquired the coffee-house habit in London or at the universities” (201).

<sup>8</sup> John Dunton, *The Dublin Scuffle, Being a Challenge Sent by John Dunton, Citizen of London, to Patrick Campbel, Bookseller in Dublin* [. . .] (London, 1699) 5.

function as loci for auctioneering, “intelligence,” and publishing.<sup>9</sup> The coffee houses were centres of information: they held extensive daily newspaper holdings, domestic, provincial and foreign; they announced trade news; they mediated in trade, particularly by hosting auctions of newly arrived goods; and they provided a venue for the quack medicine vendors. Very early on, the Dublin coffee houses would have helped to localise a reading, consuming public, respondent to the invitations of advertisements. In the nineteenth century, as newspapers left the coffee houses and entered the home, this receptivity to advertising remained. Oram begins his study with the claim that “[a]dvertising is a comparatively new phenomenon in Ireland,” getting underway “only since the establishment of the Irish Free State.”<sup>10</sup> The existence of the early coffee houses and their connection with advertising, as documented by Dunton, show this to be the exaggeration it seems, indicating that the phenomenon had already existed in Ireland for several hundred years by the turn of the twentieth century.

In the nineteenth century, however, a number of factors came together to give advertising a new social and economic importance. In many parts of Britain, an increasingly prosperous and rapidly expanding middle class enjoyed unprecedented disposable incomes, and even the working classes saw a significant increase in real wages.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, the massive growth in industrial productivity had brought a new surplus of mass-produced goods, and in order to find a corresponding rate of consumption, manufacturers and merchants attempted to attract custom through public advertisement.<sup>12</sup> Although advertising developed across several media, the history of British advertising is inextricably connected with the development of the newspaper industry. Stamp duty, which had long been the British government’s favoured method of controlling the free press, had meant that in the first half of the nineteenth century, newspaper cover prices were too high to attract the kind of mass readership necessary for advertising to really flourish; a heavy tax on each advertisement

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<sup>9</sup> Ellis does suggest one stereotypical difference between the Dublin and the London coffee houses: “That any of the Irish coffee-houses ever started as temperance houses seems most unlikely” (Ellis, *The Penny Universities*, 201).

<sup>10</sup> Hugh Oram, foreword, *The Advertising Book: The History of Advertising in Ireland* (Dublin: MO Books, 1986) N. pag.

<sup>11</sup> Roderick Floud and Donald McCloskey, eds., *The Economic History of Britain Since 1700*, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994) 270-77; Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004) 284-90.

<sup>12</sup> Advertising historians tend to privilege the production side of this equation—see, for example, William Leiss, Stephen Kline, and Sut Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising: Persons, Products, and Images of Well-being* (Toronto: Methuen, 1986) 77. Of the many accounts of advertising history considered in this chapter, only Fraser emphasises the importance of the consumer side, recognising that with the increased general income of the late-nineteenth century, “[t]he British people were able to concern themselves with more than mere subsistence” (Fraser, preface, *The Coming of the Mass Market*, ix). As argued in the previous chapter, the two sides fed into each other, and are essentially inseparable.



(3s. 6d. in 1803, 1s. 6d. by 1853) was a further disincentive to advertisers.<sup>13</sup> The lifting of stamp duty in 1853 was a watershed in the development of the newspaper and the advertising industries, and this was as true for Ireland as it was for the rest of Britain. But like the advertising industry that depended on it, the Irish newspaper industry developed in particular conditions and with distinctive inflections.<sup>14</sup> The 1870 Education Act was a major impetus in the creation of a mass reading public across Britain,<sup>15</sup> yet while literacy in the nineteenth century is often assumed to have been lower in Ireland than in England,<sup>16</sup> the 1870 act may have had a less dramatic impact here because the British government had been actively promoting literacy—in the English language, of course—since the establishment of a specific commission for that purpose in 1806.<sup>17</sup> It may be that reading aloud led to a greater effective circulation of newspapers and therefore advertisements; in any case, some editors claimed a more even distribution than in Britain: as early as 1823, the *Dublin Evening Mail* affirmed that a newspaper was an essential requirement in Ireland across all social strata, “instead of being, as in other countries, a luxury intended and reserved for the fastidious palate of the epicure.”<sup>18</sup>

The *Dublin Evening Mail*, though based in the capital, was a local newspaper at this time, and with Ireland less integrated than England through trade and communications in the nineteenth century, it is likely that regional newspapers would have had a more prominent role in advertising local services. In Ireland as elsewhere, local newspaper advertising formed an important bridge between the earliest stages of the practice in the coffee houses, and the national and even international advertising that we see in *Ulysses*. The fact that Bloom’s House of Key(e)s advertisement originated in the local *Kilkenny People* (7.155, 9.586-7) perhaps reflects the way in which local advertising cultures fed into national distribution.

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<sup>13</sup> It is not a coincidence that increases in stamp duty were imposed primarily in periods of social unrest. The hikes in 1789 and 1803 were a direct response to the Republican whisperings that followed the American and French Revolutions (Elliott, *A History of English Advertising*, 146), and the increase in 1806 is argued by Christopher Morash to be a response to the slippage of the British government’s control over its official Irish newspaper, the *Correspondent*. See Christopher Morash, *A History of the Media in Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010) 66.

<sup>14</sup> Morash, *A History of the Media in Ireland*, contains a carefully researched account of the development of the Irish newspaper industry. Hugh Oram, in *The Newspaper Book: A History of Newspapers in Ireland, 1649-1983* (Dublin: MO Books, 1983), provides a loose but readable account.

<sup>15</sup> Gloag, *Advertising in Modern Life*, 49-50.

<sup>16</sup> There are no flawless historical measures of literacy, least of all for international comparison, but Ó Gráda gives literacy figures for Ireland of 47% in 1841, 53% in 1851, and close to 90% in 1911 (Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 240). W. B. Stephens’s classic study of British literacy provides data that suggests 59% literacy for England and Wales in 1841, 61% in 1850, and 88% in 1885. See W. B. Stephens, appendix D, *Education, Literacy and Society, 1830-70: The Geography of Diversity in Provincial England* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1987) 322-3.

<sup>17</sup> Morash, *A History of the Media in Ireland*, 62.

<sup>18</sup> Qtd. Morash, *A History of the Media in Ireland*, 65.

Even in 1904, some local advertisers were forced to define themselves directly against national companies. A 1904 advertisement in the *Kilkenny People* puts it directly: “Why are you Spending Kilkenny Money on Dublin Stout? TRY SULLIVAN’S” (see fig. 2).

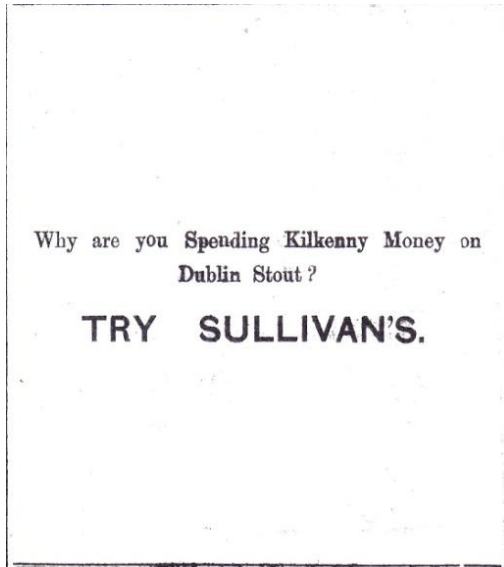


Fig. 2. Advertisement for Sullivan’s Stout, Kilkenny, promoting local trade, *Kilkenny People* 17 Feb. 1904: 1.

The Sullivan’s example suggests that local advertisers were under increasing pressure from national rivals by the turn of the century, as is also indicated by Bloom’s reflection that the *Irish Times* had “[g]ot the provinces now” (8.334). British public interest in the events of the Boer War and, later, in the First World War, greatly increased the general daily readership of national newspapers,<sup>19</sup> and this was no less the case in Ireland, albeit with a very different popular public interest. While in England it was the politically conservative newspapers, closing ranks with the British imperial cause, that tended to benefit from a greater wartime readership, in Ireland it was the anti-imperial nationalist newspapers that flourished.<sup>20</sup> National identity had always been an important part of the development of the newspaper industry in Ireland, where there were very early attempts at gaining a countrywide readership. As early as the eighteenth century, the *Northern Star* had openly stated its drive towards national unification through newspaper coverage, for which ambition it was suppressed by the British government. *The Nation*, launched in 1842, had a similar intent, and as

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<sup>19</sup> Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising*, 90-91.

<sup>20</sup> Herr draws attention to a survey of early-twentieth-century Irish newspapers which identifies “172 journals of Nationalist persuasion; 73 of Unionist persuasion; 27 of Labor persuasion; and 60 journals of an independent persuasion” (Herr, *Joyce’s Anatomy of Culture*, 51). Herr refers to Virginia E. Glandon, “Index of Irish Newspapers, 1900-1922 (Part I),” *Éire-Ireland* 11 (1976).

Christopher Morash reports, it was more successful in its aim—thanks to “the new communications networks that were, ironically, the product of the same imperial state to which they were opposed.”<sup>21</sup> As with the *Northern Star*, the national aspirations of *The Nation* drew prompt government attention, and in 1848 it was suppressed. Despite these reactions, the Irish press in the mid-nineteenth century, at least potentially, offered advertisers the opportunity for broad coverage with the placement of a single advertisement. On the other hand, underdeveloped industrial conditions meant that there were few Irish manufacturers able to rise to this potential. Advertisements in *The Nation* were in most cases placed not by manufacturers, but by local Dublin tradesmen and agents advertising their stock of particular commodities—especially tea and coffee, sodas, books, and fuel.<sup>22</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth century, however, national advertising was the lifeblood of the newspaper industry across Britain and Ireland. In 1896, the Irish-born Alfred Harmsworth established the *Daily Mail* as the first mass-circulation British newspaper. More than any previous major title, the *Daily Mail* relied upon advertising revenue to offset its low cover cost, which, along with its sensational visual layout and the conciliatory politics of its editorials, assured the newspaper’s popular appeal. In Ireland, William Martin Murphy imitated Harmsworth’s innovations exactly in 1905 with his newly renamed *Irish Independent*, capitalising on the massive recent growth in Irish newspaper readership.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Murphy took personal advice from the English lord, whom he entertained on one of Harmsworth’s returns to Dublin.<sup>24</sup> Joyce was familiar with Harmsworth’s nephew in Paris, and was apparently enthusiastic about Harmsworth’s Irish origins<sup>25</sup>; he went on to emphasise his “Homesworth” when he “martimorphysed” both press magnates in *Finnegans Wake* (FW 458.23, 434.32). Even without Harmsworth’s Irish origins, however, the relationship between England and Ireland in the establishment of the *Irish Independent* was not always derivative, or one-way.<sup>26</sup> In 1910, Murphy was the first to introduce the publication of audited net

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<sup>21</sup> Morash, *A History of the Media in Ireland*, 60, 82.

<sup>22</sup> Based on my survey of advertisements printed in *The Nation* throughout May and June 1847.

<sup>23</sup> See Larkin, “A Great Daily Organ,” 44-49. Larkin reports that the daily newspaper sales in Ireland rose from an estimated 75,000 copies per day in the 1880s to more than half a million per day in the 1920s. It was the *Irish Independent* that picked up the majority of this new readership: while the circulation of the *Freeman’s Journal* remained at around 30,000 copies per day, the *Irish Independent* was selling around 100,000 copies daily by 1915 (47). I am grateful to Felix M. Larkin for bringing this information to my attention.

<sup>24</sup> Oram, *The Newspaper Book*, 106.

<sup>25</sup> Dennis Harmsworth, “James Joyce: A Sketch,” *James Joyce: Interviews and Recollections*, ed. E. H. Mikhail (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990) 132-33.

<sup>26</sup> There were persistent rumours that Harmsworth had actually funded Murphy’s venture, but Patrick Maume maintains that the *Independent* was entirely financed by Murphy, who brought in state-of-the-art machinery from America, and hired no new English employees upon the takeover. Nevertheless, aside from the informal advice given by Harmsworth, the new *Independent* editor T. R. Harrington had been “sent to London to study

circulation figures in his newspaper, replacing the customary but less reliable gross figures, which had tended to overstate sales by including “the up to fifteen per cent of copies given out free, damaged or returned unsold.” This was an important step, guaranteeing a definite readership and thus making his title more attractive to advertisers, and it was an innovation that was soon taken up by newspapers in London.<sup>27</sup> Murphy’s progressive approach to maximising advertising revenue is indicated by his proleptic establishment of a dedicated advertisement sales department, and along with the “fancy borders and new typefaces” of the newspaper’s display advertisements, this move apparently ensured the *Independent*’s popularity with advertisers.<sup>28</sup>

Another major development in the practice of advertising came with the division of the newspaper into sections determined by particular interest or theme, allowing advertisers to begin to target particular consumer groups (or demographics, as they would later be termed).<sup>29</sup> This same consumer-targeting also attended the boom in specialised newspapers and magazines that sacrificed popular appeal for the favour of particular interest groups, and here again, Ireland can be seen as a special case. The fissuring of sectarianism and colonial politics had brought, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, a proliferation of specialised newspapers,<sup>30</sup> and the potential for consumer-targeting therefore opened particularly early in Ireland. That this potential did not go unrealised is most strikingly evinced in the radical nationalist press, whose readers were of course the likeliest to hold nationalist and “Buy Irish” sympathies. D. P. Moran refused most advertisements for English imports in *The Leader*, criticising those nationalist papers that did not follow his lead.<sup>31</sup> Arthur Griffith made an equally strong point of allowing only Irish products and services to be advertised in the *United Irishman*, going so far as to name in his editorials Irish firms compromised by their involvement with English manufacture. Such editorials appeared at least every few issues, but an example from 16 April 1904 is representative:

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the latest newspaper techniques” (Patrick Maume, “The *Irish Independent* and Empire, 1891-1919,” *Newspapers and Empire in Ireland and Britain: Reporting the British Empire, c. 1857-1921*, ed. Simon J. Potter [Dublin: Four Courts, 2004] 128).

<sup>27</sup> Oram, *The Newspaper Book*, 105-6.

<sup>28</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 107-8, 24, 382.

<sup>29</sup> Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising*, 90-91.

<sup>30</sup> Morash, *A History of the Media in Ireland*, 69-70; see also Felix M. Larkin, “The Dog in the Night-time: The *Freeman’s Journal*, the Irish Parliamentary Party and the Empire, 1875-1919,” *Newspapers and Empire in Ireland and Britain: Reporting the British Empire, c. 1857-1921*, ed. Simon J. Potter (Dublin: Four Courts, 2004). Larkin points out that “the divisions within Irish nationalism brought about by Parnell’s fall [. . .] were replicated in the newspaper market” (111-12).

<sup>31</sup> Patrick Maume, *D. P. Moran* (Dundalk: Historical Association of Ireland; Dundalgan, 1995) 13.

Messrs. Jacob are Irish manufacturers and do a great trade in biscuits in this country, and in Dublin itself; but while they are piously convinced that it is the duty of Irishmen to support Irish manufacture—so far as Jacob’s biscuits are concerned—they are not at all convinced that it is their duty to support in turn their brother Irish manufacturers and Irish traders.

The editorial goes on to reproduce an order that Jacob’s had sent to a Manchester firm requesting printed paper—“Very Urgent”—and concludes with a denunciation of the Irish company’s hypocrisy: “So Messrs W. and R. Jacob sent to England to get their printing done, while we have no doubt Messrs W. and R. Jacob would consider it highly unpatriotic if the Dublin printers sent to England for their biscuits.”<sup>32</sup> More striking even than these editorials is the outspoken political nature of some of the advertisements themselves. “POVERTY and EMIGRATION are the [*sic*] increase,” announced an advertisement for Emerald Gem Blacking in the *United Irishman* in December 1904. It goes on: “The Shops of the Nation-killers are the unheeded Plague-centres. The Remedy *Disinfection—or Isolation!*”<sup>33</sup> However genuine the patriotic zeal, advertisements such as these also stand as very early examples of consumer-targeting. This overtly political advertising had no equivalent in England.

### **The Irish Advertising Industry up to 1904**

The recognition that there were innovations and peculiarities in the Irish advertising industry should not overshadow the fact that it was heavily influenced by English practice, for this was true in every stage of its early development. In many instances, England provided a training ground for individual Irish agents. John H. Parker, who set up an agency in Dublin in 1888, had gained his experience in London with W. H. Smith; Thomas Grehan, the advertising manager of the *Irish Independent* from 1911 and the man behind the introduction of half-tone illustration to the Irish press, had trained in Liverpool with Lever Brothers and worked in London as an advertising agent before returning to Dublin.<sup>34</sup> On an institutional level, too, there were clear English influences. Dublin’s first advertising agency, J. K. Johnson & Co., was opened in 1819. After 31 years trading, mainly in railway advertising, Johnson’s went insolvent in 1850.<sup>35</sup> The company was bought out by the English agency W.

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<sup>32</sup> *United Irishman* 16 Apr. 1904: 5.

<sup>33</sup> *United Irishman* 31 Dec. 1904: 8.

<sup>34</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 24, 382.

<sup>35</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 12-13, 463. L. M. Cullen, *Eason & Son: A History* (n.p.: Eason & Son, 1989), contains much information about the history of Johnston & Co. The company had been established as a newspaper distribution agency by Capt. Johnston of the 25th regiment, the King’s Own Borderers, at 1 Eden

H. Smith, which had come to dominate the railway advertising industry across Britain.<sup>36</sup> In 1856, W. H. Smith sent an English agent named Charles Eason to be manager, and in 1886 Eason himself bought out the branch, renaming it after himself.<sup>37</sup> Eason's remained one of the most prominent advertising agencies in Dublin in the nineteenth century; indeed, Eason & Son today remains Ireland's largest distributor of books and magazines, and its advertising division, Eason Advertising, was the oldest advertising agency in Ireland until it ceased trading in August 2011.<sup>38</sup> It was established by an Englishman.

If English companies such as W. H. Smith, and individuals such as Charles Eason, had made early and successful forays into the Irish market, other English companies were less bold. T. B. Browne, one of the largest English agencies, had branches across England and Scotland, but apparently none in Ireland.<sup>39</sup> As late as the 1890s, the Irish advertising market was apparently still considered to be relatively fresh by English agencies, at least according to one agent: "The Irish gentry [. . .] still retain their simpleness of heart and a consequent belief in the goodness of mankind; hence they answer advertisements very easily."<sup>40</sup> This stereotyping advice was given by Thomas Smith in his house advertising manual. Most of the large London advertising agencies published a similar guide annually, and the format of Smith's is more or less representative, containing a press directory, extensive samples of available borders, copy, and type, and a good deal of self-advertisement in the guise of general advertising guidelines. Smith's directory includes a great number of Irish newspapers, Dublin and provincial, along with the circulation data, political leaning and cost of each: the *Freeman's Journal*, for instance, is listed as "Daily. Dublin. Home Rule.

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Quay; according to Cullen they "had the largest newspaper wholesaling business in Dublin" (16). They apparently moved into advertising in 1821, and their keeping of archive files of most British newspapers bespeaks a relatively progressive practice (13-18).

<sup>36</sup> G. R. Pocklington, *The Story of W. H. Smith & Son* (London: Private Printing, 1921) 10. W. H. Smith had a very strong presence in the early years of Dublin's newspaper distribution industry, and Cullen finds evidence to suggest that it was this company that had "initiated the proceedings which culminated in the bankruptcy of the [Johnson & Co] firm and Smith's acquisition of the business by the sale in the Bankruptcy Court" (Cullen, *Eason & Son*, 17).

<sup>37</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 12-13. Cullen suggests that Smith's sale of the business was politically motivated: "The association of the [Dublin] house with catholic prayerbook publishing had already led to a celebrated onslaught by Tim Healy on Smith in the House of Commons in 1884. Smith's short-lived term as [Conservative] Chief Secretary in January 1886, amid growing political excitement as British governments moved towards the introduction of home rule, brought the whole issue of the Dublin house to a head. Smith made his mind up quickly, and sold the Dublin house to Eason" (Cullen, *Eason & Son*, 11).

<sup>38</sup> "Eason Advertising Subsumed into Irish International BBDO," *Ad World*, Irish Marketing Journal, 31 Aug. 2011 <<http://www.adworld.ie/news/read/?id=8f61ac75-9851-4bca-97f9-ce8f3b65d63d>>. Advertising was only one part of the Easons business: like other early advertising agencies, it was also heavily involved with printing, railway bookstalls, subscription libraries, stationery, and newspaper distribution. For a long and detailed discussion of these various interests, see Cullen, *Eason & Son*.

<sup>39</sup> Hindley and Hindley, *Advertising in Victorian England*, 38.

<sup>40</sup> Qtd. Hindley and Hindley, *Advertising in Victorian England*, 109.

1d.”<sup>41</sup> The extensive range of these directories, which had proliferated since the establishment of the practice with Lewis & Lowe’s *Advertiser’s Guide to the Newspaper Press of the United Kingdom* (1844) and Charles Mitchell’s *Newspaper Press Directory* (1846), meant that English firms and agencies were able to place their advertisements in the Irish press without recourse to an Irish advertising agent. On the other hand, Smith’s carefully worded and constantly repeated proviso—that these claims were the “PUBLISHERS’ OWN STATEMENTS”—points to a weakness of the press directories. Earlier directories, such as Mitchell’s, had relied upon official tax stamp returns and had thus given reasonably precise circulation data, but after the abolition of stamp duty, circulation figures could only be gathered from the newspaper editors themselves—who, increasingly dependent upon advertising revenue, had obvious motives for wishing to inflate these figures.<sup>42</sup> It is quite conceivable, therefore, that English advertisers interested in the Irish market would have preferred to pay for the local knowledge of a Dublin agent than to chance the unreliable figures of an English press directory. Oram claims that the Irish agency Wilson Hartnell & Co. handled the Irish placement of major English accounts such as Nestlé and Mazawattee in the late-nineteenth century, and gives a colourful account of Henry Crawford Hartnell’s triannual trip to London in pursuit of new English placement orders.<sup>43</sup> On the other hand, an advertiser’s use of numerous agents would increase the administration costs of advertising, and it might just as reasonably be speculated that a large number of English advertisers continued to place through local agents, even in Irish newspapers.

Conversely, there were Irish advertisers who chose to employ English agencies to place their advertisements—even in the Irish press. Hindley and Hindley reprint a complaint letter written by an Irish advertiser to the English agent Louis Collins in the 1880s, which incidentally suggests that some Irish advertisers at this time wrote their own copy. “He thinks,” wrote the unnamed advertiser, “mind he *thinks*, that the wording and style of the advertisement you received *might, just possibly*, be *something* like what he and his partners required to be inserted.”<sup>44</sup> Yet if this Irish advertiser employed English agents, it is hard to believe that this was the general practice. Oram notes that the large English agency Mather Crowther had only one Irish account, Bushmills Whiskey, between 1884 and 1904.<sup>45</sup> The numerous agencies operating in Dublin by 1904—*Thom’s* lists at least twelve, including the

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<sup>41</sup> Thomas Smith and J. H. Osborne, *Successful Advertising: Its Secrets Explained*, 18th ed. (London, 1897) 337.

<sup>42</sup> Elliott, *A History of English Advertising*, 160.

<sup>43</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 6.

<sup>44</sup> Qtd. Hindley and Hindley, *Advertising in Victorian England*, 35. The name of the advertiser is not given.

<sup>45</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 13.

major companies Eason & Co. and Wilson, Hartnell & Co.—could hardly have continued to operate without domestic custom, and the fact that one agency was called Shamrock Advertising Co. suggests that the growing success of the “Buy Irish” movement, which very often entailed the branding of Irish businesses and commodities with conventionally Irish names and icons, extended also to the advertising industry. It seems inconceivable that many advertisers, in pedestrian Dublin of all places, would post their orders overseas and wait for the advertisements to be sent back to the Irish newspapers, when they could walk into one of these local agencies and conduct the business face to face.

Documentary evidence of the activities of advertising agents in the nineteenth and even early-twentieth centuries is hard to come by. The anecdotal accounts of nineteenth-century British advertising tend to give the impression that the growth of the agencies depended on a series of individual innovations and successes. Blanche Elliott says it plainly: “each step forward in Press publicity was invariably due to the initiative of some single individual who had the independence of mind to strike out a line of his own.”<sup>46</sup> Charles Higham’s “historical survey” reads at times as a list of striking individual endeavours,<sup>47</sup> and John Gloag’s study is peppered with aphorisms that reinforce this individualist conception, such as his comment that “no great man with an idea is ever discouraged.”<sup>48</sup> These explanations must be treated with suspicion. The advertising agencies developed in a massive network of industries, including the press, publishing, retail, stationery and railway transport, and while individuals such as the younger W. H. Smith and Charles Eason turned their small concerns into substantial trading empires, they did so only within this vast and crowded structure.

With that said, in the early years, the advertising agent’s role seems to have been a relatively solitary one. His activity was confined for the most part to the placement of his clients’ advertisements in the print media, with the advertiser preparing the design and copy. Higham says that “[i]n the days of degraded advertising, an agent was no more than a broker. He ‘jobbed’ newspaper space for clients, taking any rebates, discounts and allowances that the paper offered him, regardless of whether the space served the buyer’s best interests or not.”<sup>49</sup> The vagueness of Higham’s dating—“in the days of”—is typical of the popular advertising histories, whose chronologies of the professionalisation of the industry are varied

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<sup>46</sup> Elliott, *A History of English Advertising*, 74.

<sup>47</sup> Higham, *Advertising*, 26-42.

<sup>48</sup> Gloag, *Advertising in Modern Life*, 65.

<sup>49</sup> Higham, *Advertising*, 65. Higham’s belittling terminology is no doubt intended to distance his own 1920s practice from the perceived disrespectability of the industry’s origins, perhaps indicating British class anxiety on the part of the first advertising man to be awarded a knighthood.



and often inconsistent. Daniel Pope, in his study of the American advertising industry, would put the solitary advertising canvasser in the period that he calls the “Gilded Age,” which seems to run from the late 1860s to about 1890.<sup>50</sup> In this period, according to Pope, agents were “almost prototypically small businessmen, operating on the periphery of American industry.”<sup>51</sup> It was not until the so-called “Progressive Era,” which Pope dates between about 1890 and 1920, that the full service agency developed, with agents attending not only to the placement of advertisements, but to co-ordinated campaigns involving advertisement design and copy.<sup>52</sup> Gloag is even less precise in his dating of the English advertising industry. He suggests that the “pioneers” were the men who “called on advertisers, peddling the space they’d bought in bulk and making what they could out of their sales.”<sup>53</sup> This would seem to refer, very roughly, to the last thirty years or so of the nineteenth century, when newspapers began to consistently offer exclusive discounts on space sold to agents.<sup>54</sup> These discounts were not available to advertisers directly, and the newspapers thus saved on administration costs—firstly, because they could deal with a few agents rather than a great number of advertisers, and secondly, because the agents accepted financial responsibility for their clients’ payment. For Gloag, it was the Great War that really marked the demise of the “old-fashioned” advertising canvasser, the “loud, cheerful, high-powered salesman” who “was part of that robust, late Victorian world [. . .] which rumbled on boisterously until 1914.”<sup>55</sup>

Whether we date him as pre-1890, with Pope, or pre-War, with Gloag, the earlier activities of the advertising agent do not seem to have been especially lucrative. Profit was made by space brokerage (buying in bulk from the newspapers and reselling in portions to advertisers), and by receiving discount and commission for accepting mediating responsibility between the newspapers and the advertisers. The successes of advertising under such conditions were the result, as Higham puts it, of “an instinctive game of hit and miss.”<sup>56</sup> Such a picture of the individual advertising agent operating instinctively, opportunistically, and even informally, is attractive in its consistency with the activities of Leopold Bloom. But even if we accept such general impressions of the advertising agent from these anecdotal accounts, the shakiness of the dating of this earlier stage recommends caution against a hasty

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<sup>50</sup> Daniel Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising* (New York: Basic, 1983) 112-38.

<sup>51</sup> Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising*, 119.

<sup>52</sup> Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising*, 138-50.

<sup>53</sup> Gloag, *Advertising in Modern Life*, 55.

<sup>54</sup> Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising*, 104.

<sup>55</sup> Gloag, *Advertising in Modern Life*, 54. Some lag between British and advertising practice is to be expected, for reasons that I discuss below.

<sup>56</sup> Higham, *Advertising*, 43.

claim of historical consistency for Joyce's depiction of the advertisement canvasser in 1904 Dublin—and therefore caution against Wicke's claim of anachronism. There are other factors to be considered.

In the 1890s, British advertising agents began to look to American business models as they sought to restructure their agencies along more professional lines. The American influence was strong. Paul E. Derrick, a successful American agent, established a London agency in 1894,<sup>57</sup> and an American advertising school was opened in London.<sup>58</sup> In 1899, the British agency S. H. Benson organised the Niagara Hall Exhibition of Advertising in London, described by Hindley and Hindley as the first European advertising exhibition of any real importance.<sup>59</sup> In 1903, the British government itself requested reports from its consuls on American advertising and sales methods: a heightened awareness of the efficacy of market surveys, campaign planning, and copy and design services was the result.<sup>60</sup> In England and America, at least, the jobbing itinerant advertising canvasser had done his last rounds. William Leiss, et al., in *Social Communication in Advertising: Persons, Products, and Images of Well-being* (1986), synthesise the accounts of a number of earlier writers on advertising, and conclude broadly that it is between 1890 and 1925 that the full service industry developed. In this period, agencies moved away from placement as the principle service offered to advertisers, and began to concentrate on copywriting and design, especially for the national products that now dominated the market. It was in this period that agencies began to codify techniques in advertising practice, moving from product-based advertising, which extolled the benefits of a particular product, towards consumer-based advertising, which used affective techniques to influence the consumer.<sup>61</sup> The professionalisation of the industry was all but complete, and by 1925, a newspaper's advertising director was second only to the editor-in-chief.<sup>62</sup>

Wicke's unreferenced claim that “the system Bloom works in most nearly resembles the conditions obtaining before Mitchell founded the first advertising agency in England in the 1840s” is highly questionable. As a historical claim, which is the impression given to this statement by her comments about Ireland's “secondary, colonized position,” it is insupportable. We have seen that there was also an Irish agency in the 1840s, one that housed its own newspaper archive, advertised heavily, and was in close contact with the much larger

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<sup>57</sup> Frank Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising* (New York: Doubleday and Doran, 1929) 108.

<sup>58</sup> Fraser, *The Coming of the Mass Market*, 138.

<sup>59</sup> Hindley and Hindley, *Advertising in Victorian England*, 55.

<sup>60</sup> Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising*, 106.

<sup>61</sup> Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising*, 123-4.

<sup>62</sup> Higham, *Advertising*, 62.

London agency W. H. Smith. The railway and newspaper industries, upon which advertising depended, developed in Ireland at a similar rate and to a similar degree as in England, and a number of other advertising agencies grew up in Dublin as the nineteenth century progressed. In the first years of the twentieth century, particularly due the foresight of Murphy at the *Irish Independent*, advertising practices in Dublin were up-to-date and in some respects even progressive. This was not a backward or abortive industry; Oram's assertion that no considerable advances were made until after the establishment of the Irish Free State is an exaggeration belied by many of the examples that he himself provides.<sup>63</sup> The precise positioning of Dublin's advertising history within a broader account of the development of the industry is inherently problematic, since neither story is stable. In the period of upheaval between the 1916 Rising and the end of the Civil War around 1928, a great number of Irish advertising records were lost, and so it is practically impossible to locate hard data that might be compared against equivalent statistics of London's advertising accounts or revenue. And if the particular history of Irish advertising is necessarily laconic, general accounts of the chronology of English practice are also vague and contradictory.

Nevertheless, with these qualifications made, it would be preposterous to deny that Ireland's advertising industry was generally smaller and less advanced than that of the imperial metropolitan centre. If we accept 1890-1925 as the broad period within which Anglo-American advertising developed into a full service industry, with advertisement-design taking up a newly central position within the practice of the agencies, then Oram's account provides incidental evidence to suggest that some aspects of the Irish advertising industry were indeed relatively belated. Brian D. O'Kennedy, the general manager of Kenny's advertising agency, claimed that it was not until the 1920s that this Irish agency began "to start becoming a service rather than a placing agency."<sup>64</sup> Two of the most successful Dublin agencies of the nineteenth century, Wilson Hartnell & Co., and Eason's, operated solely through space brokering. None of the agencies had art studios.<sup>65</sup> In addition, many Irish businesses seem to have been rather slow to find their faith in the efficacy of advertising, although it would be futile to speculate whether this was more a cause or effect of the relatively basic service that the agencies seem in some cases to have provided. In a series of editorials in *The Leader* from around 1901, Moran chastised Irish manufacturers for failing to accept modern advertising as a crucial business practice, satirising them as "Dark

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<sup>63</sup> Oram, foreword, *The Advertising Book*, N. pag.

<sup>64</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 54.

<sup>65</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 9, 32.

Brothers” for their apparent reluctance to expose their products to the consuming public.<sup>66</sup> According to the report of Grehan, the man behind some of the major innovations in advertisement presentation at the *Irish Independent*, many Irish manufacturers had still failed to take Moran’s exhortations seriously even a decade later: when he gave a talk on advertising at the Dublin Chamber of Commerce in 1911, half of his addressees walked out, affronted at the intrusion of this undignified subject upon serious business.<sup>67</sup>

On the other hand, this resistance of Irish businesses to the methods of advertising was certainly not universal. Much of the *The Leader’s* success was due to advertising, both in the newspaper’s own self-advertisement—Moran hired Kevin Kenny, who founded what would become for a time Ireland’s largest advertising agency—and within its covers, which regularly contained a full eight pages of advertisements. As Moran’s biographer Maume puts it, “Moran saw the publicising of Irish goods as one of *The Leader’s* roles.”<sup>68</sup> Evidently, then, in Ireland as elsewhere, the advertising industry progressed unevenly. We must accept that advertising was less developed in the industrially underdeveloped colonial city Dublin, with a population of around four hundred thousand in 1900, than in London, the capital city of the “workshop of the world,” with a population of around six million. But Dublin was far from the advertising backwater implied by Wicke and others.

If it is difficult to place Ireland within a generalised chronological account of advertising, this difficulty is greatly multiplied when we attempt to synchronise this account with Joyce’s fictional depiction. What we can say is that Dublin’s advertising industry in 1904 was in a key transitional moment. Like the tram system and the retail industry discussed in the previous chapter, developments in advertising occurred as part of a broad process of modernisation in Dublin. And this was a process of which Joyce was very much aware. Dublin’s advertising industry was growing from its provincial roots into its professional future, and Joyce’s return to Ireland in 1909-10, when he was in charge of advertising the Volta cinema, would undoubtedly have given him a sense of the rate at which the city of his youth was changing. As Luke McKernan has established, in addition to the newspaper advertisements Joyce had printed in the *Dublin Evening Mail*, *Evening Telegraph*, *Freeman’s Journal* and *Sinn Féin*, he organised and/or managed the expenses for payment of the full

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<sup>66</sup> Maume, *D. P. Moran*, 13.

<sup>67</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 387.

<sup>68</sup> Maume, *D. P. Moran*, 13.

range of advertising services, including billposters, tram windowbills, sandwich-board men (V.O.L.T.A.?), and “boys, [ . . . ] presumably for giving out handbills in the street.”<sup>69</sup>

Joyce’s lists of Volta expenses in the Cornell James Joyce Collection also detail payments made to “Allen.”<sup>70</sup> This must refer to David Allen & Sons (listed in the 1913 *Thom’s* as billposting and advertising contractors, at 40 Great Brunswick Street), as is confirmed in a letter Joyce sent to Stanislaus during his last visit to Dublin in 1912: “I introduced Charlie to manager of David Allen’s Adv. Co. (with whom I left £50 of Volta money)” (LII 305). David Allen’s was one of the largest agencies in Ireland; established in 1857 with head offices in Belfast, by the end of the century it could be described as “the largest pictorial placard business in the United Kingdom.”<sup>71</sup> By 1907, the company held sixteen offices in Scotland, six in England, and some twenty-eight across Ireland.<sup>72</sup> Joyce’s acquaintance with the manager is presumably what has led Costello to locate Allen’s company as the original of “Blazes Boylan’s firm,” although the scale of this company makes this an unlikely identification.<sup>73</sup> Adams has identified the original for Boylan’s company as the Advertising Company Ltd., at 15 D’Olier Street, based mainly on his plausible equation of the Miss Dunn who is connected to D’Olier Street in ‘Circe’ (15.3030) with Boylan’s typist Miss Dunne (10.368-96). However, while the fact that the Advertising Company is also listed in *Thom’s* under “Typists” perhaps supports Adams’s identification, his comment that this is “the only advertising and bill-posting company in D’Olier street” is misleading.<sup>74</sup> *Thom’s* lists two other agencies on that road in 1904—Manico and Co. at 12 D’Olier street, and O’Keeffe’s next door at 10—and while it is true that these others are not specified as billposters, the designation of the specific roles of the advertising companies in *Thom’s* is inconsistent, to say the least. Whether Boylan’s firm was based upon David Allen’s, or the Advertising Company, or neither, the important point is that Joyce had experience of the workings of one of Dublin’s major advertising agencies. In the second half of this chapter, I turn to Joyce’s representation of Dublin’s advertising industry, and consider his representation against this historical backdrop, unstable as it may be. And as with received

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<sup>69</sup> Luke McKernan, “James Joyce and the Volta Programme,” *Roll Away the Reel World: James Joyce and Cinema*, ed. John McCourt (Cork: Cork UP, 2010) 21.

<sup>70</sup> Luke McKernan has drawn my attention to the list of Volta expenses for Dec. 1909, Jan. 1910 and Feb. 1910, in Joyce’s own hand, held in the James Joyce Collection, Cornell University Library, Box 3, Folder 14. I am grateful to him for describing the contents of the February list.

<sup>71</sup> *Freeman’s Journal* 18 Dec. 1897: 4

<sup>72</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 468.

<sup>73</sup> Peter Costello, *James Joyce: The Years of Growth 1882-1915* (1992; London: Papermac, 1994) 290.

<sup>74</sup> Adams, *Surface and Symbol*, 70.

impressions of Dublin's advertising industry, this too will require some revision of previous critical accounts.

### **“A cultured allroundman”: Bloom's CV**

Critics interested in Bloom as “the perfect advertising subject” have tended to ignore the fact that his employment as an advertisement canvasser is just the latest in a series of jobs, none other of which involve advertising.<sup>75</sup> We learn that Bloom has held positions with Hely's, the stationer and printer; with Cuffe's, the cattle dealer; and with Drimmie's, the insurance company. We are told too that Bloom worked door-to-door, selling goods for his father, and there is a faint suggestion that he worked for a time on “the mail order line for Kellett's,” a prominent Dublin drapers (15.2805)—although, since this last appears only amid the distortions of the ‘Circe’ chapter, it should be treated with caution.<sup>76</sup> If there is a note of uncertainty in the list of Bloom's jobs, the role he held for each employer is even more vague. As his earliest critics recognised, Joyce's characterisation of Bloom is never direct: the partial recollections of Bloom's interior monologue are set up alongside the equally partial comments of the Dubliners that surround him, providing a picture that shifts according to perspective.<sup>77</sup> In this section, I reconsider Joyce's representation of Bloom's earlier career. I argue that while Joyce's inclusion of these earlier roles in Bloom's fictional curriculum vitae on the one hand troubles oversimplified analyses of Bloom as adman, it also gives a rich and realistic sense of the network of trades from which the advertising industry emerged.

Bloom's lengthiest recollection of his time at Hely's occurs in ‘Lestrygonians,’ as he remembers his advertisement ideas that had been rejected by his employer (8.131-70). This passage has led Richards to suppose that Bloom's job with Hely's was an advertising role,<sup>78</sup> but the only positive duty that Bloom himself mentions is “collecting accounts of those convents” (8.143). Although the Carmel of the Nativity convent may perhaps have advertised for contributions, this would not easily explain the “hard [. . .] bargain” (8.146) that Bloom

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<sup>75</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 132.

<sup>76</sup> See John Henry Raleigh, appendix B, *The Chronicle of Leopold and Molly Bloom: “Ulysses” as Narrative* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1977) for a chronological list of Bloom's jobs. Raleigh's claim that Bloom once worked in politics “for Alderman John Hooper” (49) and his detection of “a suggestion that he worked for Valentine Dillon, an attorney and politician” (274) are unsubstantiated.

<sup>77</sup> “We see him as he appears to himself and as he exists in the minds of his wife, his friends and his fellow citizens. [. . .] There are innumerable changes of key and scale” (Budgen, *James Joyce*, 66).

<sup>78</sup> “Bloom [. . .] worked in advertising for Hely's on and off between 1888 and 1895” (Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 222).

also mentions.<sup>79</sup> Furthermore, Ned Lambert explicitly tells John Henry Menton that Bloom's role at Hely's was "[a] traveller for blotting paper" (6.700-703). The specification of "blotting paper" is no doubt a deliberate trivialisation, but there is no reason to doubt his general description of Bloom as a "traveller"—a travelling salesman—as false. As a traveller for stationery, Bloom would certainly have spent much of his time "collecting accounts,"<sup>80</sup> and this role is consistent with Bloom's still earlier employment as a door-to-door salesman, as described in 'Oxen of the Sun':

already on the road, a fullfledged traveller for the family firm, equipped with an orderbook, a scented handkerchief, [. . .] his case of bright trinketware [. . .] and a quiverful of compliant smiles for this or that halfwon housewife. [. . .] The scent, the smile, but, more than these, the dark eyes and oleaginous address, brought home at duskfall many a commission to the head of the firm. (14.1048-58)

Bloom had himself already obliquely conceived of his travelling sales role in terms of being a cultural outsider, by comparison with an Italian immigrant: "Nannetti's father hawked those things about, wheedling at doors as I" (11.186-7). In the 'Oxen' passage, this cultural exclusion is externalised in Joyce's deployment of stereotypes of the travelling Jew, prominent in the Irish nationalist press in the first decade of the twentieth century. In *Sinn Féin* for 4 August 1906, an unsigned article headed "The Jew" describes an encounter with a Jewish traveller in very similar terms: "He smiled an oily, cross-eyed, subtle smile of self-apology and insinuating humility as he met my glance."<sup>81</sup> The language here is more obviously pejorative, but it draws on the same stock as Joyce's description of Bloom applying "compliant smiles [. . .] dark eyes and oleaginous address" to bring home money to his father.

There are other correspondences between "The Jew" and Bloom, and since we know that Joyce read this particular number with some attention (*LII* 147), this is no coincidence. In the *Sinn Féin* piece, the narrator interrogates the Jewish traveller on his nationality:

"You are Irish, then?"

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<sup>79</sup> Some convents did indeed advertise at this time. On 16 June 1904, for example, the following advertisement appeared in the *Freeman's Journal*: "THE POOR CLARE COLETTINES, GALWAY, will feel most grateful for donations of Wax Candles: wanted for daily expositions of the Most Holy Sacrament. The Nuns will, in return, pray for the donors by day and night" (*Freeman's Journal* 16 June 1904: 3).

<sup>80</sup> Tim O'Neill has established that Hely's advertised their stationery specifically to convents in the *Irish Catholic Directory*, describing it as "ABSOLUTELY THE CHEAPEST in THE THREE KINGDOMS" (Tim O'Neill, "Calendars, Convents, and Clerical Habits: Joyce and the *Irish Catholic Directory*," *James Joyce Quarterly* 30:4-31:1 [1993]: 873).

<sup>81</sup> *United Irishman* 4 Aug. 1906: 4.

“Irish, yes, from Dublin.”  
“God help us! And were you born in Dublin?”  
“With der help of Gott, sar.”

The citizen, of course, puts a very similar question to Bloom in ‘Cyclops—“What is your nation if I may ask? says the citizen—and Bloom replies in similar terms: “Ireland, says Bloom. I was born here. Ireland” (12.1430-31). The *Sinn Féin* article goes on to describe another Jewish salesman in Forgný, and it includes some local responses to the salesman’s given name of O’Hara:

“He’s descended from Solomon, if you ask me,” said the first local personage.  
“I don’t agree with you,” said the other observer. “I don’t think this man can trace his descent back any further than the Impenitent thief.”  
The Jew joined heartily in the laugh, and said: “Thaz goot, begob; but keep it for them damn Jewmans when they come around. I’m Irish mineself.”

This account is similar to the cab scene in ‘Hades,’ when Martin Cunningham, Jack Power and Simon Dedalus recount the story of Reuben J. Dodd’s son’s attempted drowning with anti-Semitic relish. With references to “the tribe of Reuben” and “Barabbas,” Bloom is explicitly excluded from the conversation, even by the sympathetic Martin Cunningham:

—We have all been there, Martin Cunningham said broadly.  
His eyes met Mr Bloom’s eyes. He caressed his beard, adding:  
—Well, nearly all of us. (6.259-61)

And like O’Hara, who had “joined heartily in the laugh” and said “Thaz goot,” Bloom attempts to cover his exclusion with enthusiastic participation: “Isn’t it awfully good? Mr Bloom said eagerly” (6.289-90). Joyce’s specification of Bloom’s earlier career as a traveller is part of his portrayal of Bloom’s ostracised position in Dublin. Even aside from such anti-Semitic conditions, however, Wisdom Hely’s rejection of Bloom’s suggested advertisements is unsurprising when his proper role is understood. Bloom’s explanation—“wouldn’t have it of course because he didn’t think of it himself first” (8.136-7)—takes no account of the impropriety of his suggestion: in 1904, the owner of a large company might well object to a “Mister Knowall” (12.838) travelling salesman telling him how to improve his business, however innovative these ideas may have been.

Bloom’s role at Cuffe’s is laid out formally in the impersonal style of the ‘Ithaca’ chapter: “a clerk in the employment of Joseph Cuffe of 5 Smithfield for the superintendence of sales in the adjacent Dublin Cattle market on the North Circular road” (17.484-6). As



clerk, Bloom would have been responsible for keeping the accounts, recording the items sold in the market. It is in this capacity that Bloom would have been “[w]alking about with his book and pencil” in the “knacker’s yard” (12.835-6), and it was presumably through keeping the accounts that Bloom gained knowledge of Cuffe’s pricing: “Springers. Cuffe sold them about twentyseven quid each” (6.392-3). According to John Conroy, the proprietor of the adjoining City Arms Hotel in the late 1960s, the real-life Cuffe’s would “in that era [. . .] employ at least four book-keeping and tally clerks in their market office.”<sup>82</sup> If Conroy is correct—and there is some disagreement over his identification of John P. Cuffe as the likely model for Bloom’s employer<sup>83</sup>—then the “superintendence” mentioned in ‘Ithaca’ implies that Bloom held some kind of supervisory or senior role among the several clerks in Cuffe’s employment. Be that as it may, it is unlikely that this role would have entailed any actual salesmanship.

Bloom’s employments with Thom’s and Drimmie’s have the faintest presence in the narrative of *Ulysses*. We are given several references to Bloom’s time at Thom’s in his interior monologue (7.224-5, 8.157, 13.1125-6), and one of the mock-accounts of ‘Cyclops’ refers to him as “late of Messrs Alexander Thom’s, printers to His Majesty” (12.1816-7), but these do not point to any specific role. The only clue we get is Bloom’s reflection upon an apparent error that he made in “the valuation” (13.1125), and Gifford is possibly correct in surmising that this refers to a property valuation<sup>84</sup>: the *Thom’s* included in its list of street addresses a valuation of each property, and Bloom was perhaps responsible for collecting or verifying some of these details ready for publication. Bloom’s remembrance of his time at Drimmie’s is slighter still, with him only once recalling a day when he accidentally “went to Drimmie’s without a necktie” (13.844-5). We had already heard in the earlier exchange between Davy Byrne and Nosey Flynn that Bloom was once “in the insurance line” (though “[h]e’s out of that long ago”; 8.939-40), and Molly fills out the connection in ‘Penelope’

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<sup>82</sup> John Henry Raleigh, “Afoot in the Search of the Habitations of Some Shades,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 8:2 (1971): 137.

<sup>83</sup> Conroy says that it was not Joe Cuffe, but John P. Cuffe Ltd., who was involved with the Smithfield/North Circular cattle market (Raleigh, “Afoot,” 135). Hugh B. Staples gives some evidence from *Thom’s* to suggest that Raleigh’s informant was at least mistaken about the name. See Hugh B. Staples, “Our Exagmination Round His Perambulations in Exploration of Habitations,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 9:1 (1971): 158.

<sup>84</sup> Don Gifford with Robert J. Seidman, “*Ulysses*” *Annotated: Notes for James Joyce’s “Ulysses,”* 2nd ed. (Berkeley: U of California P, 1988) 401. Osteen interprets the role as the management of “sales accounts” (Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 91), but “valuation” is not the usual term for the simple reckoning of sales. It would be a nice Joycean touch to have made Bloom responsible for the kind of mistakes that Joyce himself brought in wholesale from *Thom’s* in the composition of *Ulysses*. For a detailed discussion of the types of error, volitional and otherwise, that arise from Joyce’s use of *Thom’s*, see Ian Gunn and Clive Hart with Harald Beck, *James Joyce’s Dublin: A Topographical Guide to the Dublin of James Joyce’s “Ulysses”* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004) 15-25.

when she remembers “something he did about insurance” for Michael Gunn while “in Drimmies” (18.1112-3). This is all of the information that we are given, and it is not much to go on, but it at least explains Bloom’s involvement with the late Paddy Dignam’s mortgaged insurance policy. It may be that Joyce again plays on anti-Semitic stereotypes; Hugh Kenner has argued that Bloom’s “benevolent chicanery” draws upon conventional images of the Jew as a “technician of hereditary skills.”<sup>85</sup> It also stands as an important plot device, placing Bloom in Barney Kiernan’s for his encounter with the citizen, and in the vicinity of Sandymount for his liaison with Gerty MacDowell. In any case, however “confused” he may be “mucking it up about mortgagor under the act” (12.770-71), it is clear that Bloom is supposed to have some knowledge of insurance policies. It is surely beyond all likelihood that Bloom was an underwriter at Drimmie’s: this was and is a professional role, and would not have been available to a man whose experience consisted of door-to-door sales. Bloom would perhaps have qualified for a low clerical or scrivenerly role, but this would not have afforded him the contact with clients that Molly’s comment shows Bloom to have had. The likeliest role for Bloom at Drimmie’s, therefore, would have been as an insurance canvasser—a job for which his experience as a traveller would fit him, a job which would give him the opportunity to do “something” for a potential customer, and a job which would give him at least a superficial knowledge of the intricacies of insurance policy.

While Bloom’s current job as an advertisement canvasser is clearly foregrounded in *Ulysses*, then, there lie in the background a number of other trades. Molly’s reflection in ‘Penelope’ suggests that Bloom’s career has not been especially successful, and that he has been regularly dismissed: “God here we are as bad as ever after 16 years [. . .] every time were just getting on right something happens or he puts his big foot in it Thoms and Helys and Mr Cuffes and Drimmies” (18.1215-24). Yet if his career has followed a haphazard path, there is a consistency between his previous roles and his later job with Freeman’s Journal Ltd. that has not been recognised in print. Advertising stands, both conceptually and historically, as a natural progression from door-to-door sales. In 1923, the influential advertising theorist Claude C. Hopkins drew the connection: “Many of the ablest men in advertising are graduate salesmen. The best we know have been house-to-house canvassers.”<sup>86</sup> The economic historian Roy Church has written more formally of the crossover between these sales practices in the late-nineteenth century: “decisions regarding branding and advertising were employed by partners or directors and managers with the

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<sup>85</sup> Hugh Kenner, “The Rhetoric of Silence,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 14:4 (1977): 389.

<sup>86</sup> Claude C. Hopkins, *Scientific Advertising* (1923; New York: Cosimo, 2007) 12.

intention of enhancing the salesman's effectiveness in promoting products."<sup>87</sup> Michael French draws the same conclusion, finding that "[a]dvertising agencies presented their services as complementing the traveller's role in understanding markets and stimulating orders."<sup>88</sup> And even in Joyce's early fiction, the two trades appear connected, appearing together in the long list of Mr M'Coy's employments in 'Grace' (*D* 178).

At a time when the advertising industry had not yet established conventions for recruitment or training, we see that Bloom was pretty well qualified for his job. He had experience in printing and stationery as a travelling salesman, and his role as an insurance canvasser marks an intermediate step from his job as a traveller at Hely's to his job as an advertisement canvasser. The cattle trade is a deviation, but since Bloom's job here was clerical and related to sales, it is not wildly incompatible.<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, Bloom's employments with Thom's and Hely's are not only consistent with his later career as an advertising canvasser, but eminently suitable preparations for the role. The advertising industry grew as a corollary of a number of other industries in the nineteenth century, particularly those of printing and stationery.<sup>90</sup> W. H. Smith & Son, which played a crucial part in the Dublin advertising scene in the mid-nineteenth century, is exemplary. The company started out as a newsvendor, and had moved into newsagency and stationery before becoming heavily involved with railway advertising.<sup>91</sup> Eason & Son, still described in *Thom's* as "late W. H. Smith and Son" in 1904, is there listed under "Agents, Commission," but also under "Booksellers and Publishers," "Circulating Libraries," "Merchants," "News Agents," and "Stationers." Bloom's employers, Thom's and Hely's, emerged from the same nexus of connected trades. Thom's is listed under "Agents, Commission," "Bookbinders," "Booksellers and Publishers," "Lithographers," "Printers (Letterpress)," and "Stationers"; Hely's is listed under "Bookbinders," "Engravers," "Lithographers," "Paper Merchants and Dealers," "Printers (Letterpress)," and "Stationers." In his construction of Bloom's CV, Joyce gives his protagonist a career path that has led naturally, if not inevitably, to a role in advertising.

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<sup>87</sup> Roy Church, "Salesmen and the Transformation of Selling in Britain and the US in the Nineteenth and Early-twentieth Centuries," *Economic History Review* 61:3 (2008): 703.

<sup>88</sup> Michael French, "Commercials, Careers, and Culture: Travelling Salesmen in Britain, 1890s-1930s," *Economic History Review* 63:2 (2005): 367.

<sup>89</sup> John Conroy told Raleigh that, "as local hearsay has it," Joyce himself had at one point worked for Cuffe (Raleigh, "Afoot," 134-7). As Raleigh surmises, if this rumour is not altogether false, it probably at least has the wrong Joyce: the "lip" (12.837) and "peevisish asperity" (14.926) mentioned in connection to Bloom's dismissal sound more Johannine than Jacobian, and while the chronology of James Joyce's time in Dublin more or less excludes the possibility for him, the dates in *Ulysses* would seem to fit with his father's more exertive years.

<sup>90</sup> Hindley and Hindley, *Advertising in Victorian England*, 16; Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising*, 119.

<sup>91</sup> Pocklington, *The Story of W. H. Smith & Son*, 10.

## “Bloom—cadges ads”: Joyce’s Incomplete Adman

If Bloom’s background helps to establish him as a suitably convincing advertisement canvasser, we should nevertheless be wary of treating the character as the apotheosis of advertising, or even its representative. It is true that Bloom spends a considerable part of the novel engaged in some way with advertisements—practically, as in his pursuit of the Keyes ad; theoretically, as in his consideration of the efficacy of the ads of Agendath Netaim, Plumtree’s Potted Meat, Kino’s, and so on; and hypothetically, as in his fantasy of “some one sole unique advertisement to cause passers to stop in wonder” (17.1770). Bloom perhaps takes his activities seriously, and it is easy as a contemporary reader, situated in a consumerist economy centred on advertising, to follow his lead: Wicke, for example, pictures Bloom “on a mission in support of the master-language of advertisement,” and Berger is more hyperbolic still: “the distance is very short from Eccles Street [. . .] to Madison Avenue.”<sup>92</sup> Yet Bloom’s lowly status within the advertising industry adds a significant degree of irony to Joyce’s portrayal. In some respects, Joyce’s representation of advertising thus follows the conventional literary treatment of the practice. Earlier writers to have taken it as a central theme—Anthony Trollope in *Brown, Jones and Robinson* (1862), or H. G. Wells in *Tono-Bungay* (1909)—had done so satirically, presenting advertising as a risible activity, comically overdignified by their protagonists. While *Ulysses* in some respects participates in this tradition, there is a fundamental difference. The irony in *Ulysses* is not obviously at the expense of the advertising profession, or the role of the advertiser *per se*: on the contrary, Bloom’s engaged awareness of the potency of advertising is contrasted ironically and pathetically with his own limited involvement with the practice. The dignified appellations for Bloom in the ‘Oxen’ chapter—“Mr Canvasser Bloom” (14.952), “that staid agent of publicity” (14.1042)—are amusing because of their incongruity with his actual menial role. Before “WE SEE THE CANVASSER AT WORK” (7.120), John Henry Menton’s supercilious question—“What is he?”—receives an indifferent reply from Ned Lambert, which figures his advertising job as more of a pastime than an occupation: “He does some canvassing for ads” (6.706). The conversation between Davy Byrne and Nosey Flynn runs along similar lines—“What is this he is? [. . .] He does canvassing for the *Freeman*” (8.939-40)—and his job is considered, probably correctly, not to be a lucrative one: “He doesn’t buy cream on the ads he picks up. You can make bacon of that” (8.955-6). Even Bloom’s wife

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<sup>92</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 146; Alfred Paul Berger, “James Joyce, Adman,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 3:1 (1965): 33.

shares this impression: “he ought to chuck that Freeman with the paltry few shillings he knocks out of it” (18.503-4). Like the men who discuss his trade, Molly’s impression of Bloom is not of a progressive proponent of a rapidly developing field, but of a man who is shirking hard work: “he prefers plotting about the house [. . .] or pretending to be mooching about for advertisements” (18.506-9).

Throughout the narrative, then, Bloom’s occupation is devalued by those who know him, from MacHugh’s mocking comment about his “gentle art of advertisement” (7.608) to Lenehan’s or Mulligan’s description at the end of ‘Oxen’: “Bloo? Cadges ads” (14.1535). Wicke suggests that *Ulysses* introduces Bloom as an embodiment of advertising: “Bloom starts his itinerary by donning this hat and simultaneously accepting himself as the subject of advertising, and in a larger sense, as a subject formed by advertising.”<sup>93</sup> Yet it is rare in these early chapters for Bloom to take advertising even as his object, for he is hardly an audacious proselyte of his “art.” Passing Larry O’Rourke’s, Bloom rules him out as a client—“No use canvassing him for an ad. Still he knows his own business best” (4.111-12)—and seems reluctant to approach even those he might consider potential clients, as with the butcher Dlugacz: “He withdrew his gaze after an instant. No: better not: another time” (4.186-7). In fact, we do not see Bloom attempt to solicit a single new advertisement in the novel, and this in a time where agents and canvassers lived by their ability to persuade businesses that advertising was worth the expense. Within the narrative, Bloom is anything but a proactive advertising canvasser. Similarly, Bloom shows a very limited awareness of the other advertising agents and agencies operating in Dublin at this time. In London, advertising canvassers had operated with some co-operation as early as the 1860s, with specific pubs designated for their fraternity.<sup>94</sup> It is hard to imagine that Dublin was any less sociable, and yet Bloom shows no awareness of anything of the kind. It is true that Corley mentions to Stephen that he has seen Bloom “a few times in the Bleeding Horse in Camden street with Boylan, the billsticker” (16.198-9). This is a questionable claim in itself,<sup>95</sup> but there is in any case no suggestion of professional interaction between Bloom and Boylan that does not involve Molly. Indeed, their related professions serve only to emphasise Bloom’s powerlessness: in stark contrast to Bloom’s limited role, Boylan apparently runs his own billsticking company (17.2206-7), making him a relatively large player in Dublin’s advertising scene. Boylan aside, the only reference Bloom makes to another advertising

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<sup>93</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 130.

<sup>94</sup> Hindley and Hindley, *Advertising in Victorian England*, 13.

<sup>95</sup> See Adams, *Surface and Symbol*, 205.

company comes when he sees the Hely's sandwichmen: "They are not Boyl: no, M'Glade's men" (8.130). M'Glade really was a small advertising agent, listed under "Bill Posters" in *Thom's* at 42 Middle Abbey Street, just along from the *Freeman's* office. Yet there were at least three agencies based in this area in 1904—Oram says that by the 1930s it had become "the 'Madison Avenue' of Irish advertising"<sup>96</sup>—including, intriguingly, one James Dignam at 71 Middle Abbey Street. These receive no notice at all. As Bloom walks along Dawson Street at the end of the 'Lestrygonians' episode, he comes within a few buildings of J. H. Parker's agency, "press and advertising contractors and general agents," as it is listed in *Thom's*, at number 43, and yet it goes unremarked. This disregard is indicative of Bloom's negligence of other agencies as he travels around the city. He is observant, and takes notice of many things—but never the buildings and signs to which he is, however peripherally, connected by trade.<sup>97</sup>

It fits Joyce's characterisation of Bloom the outsider to have him disconnected from others in the same trade, for it is apparent that Bloom is, at best, a small-time player within the Dublin advertising industry. There has been some confusion as to his actual role. Wicke supports her charge of anachronism with a comparison against London's industry:

In 1904, advertising agencies in London numbered in the hundreds, whereas newspapers had formed their own account managing departments specifically to sell advertising space. Advertising had become too complex and too integral a part of the economy to be left to the vagaries of the individual canvasser.<sup>98</sup>

Yet Bloom is not an "individual canvasser"—at least not in the sense meant by Wicke. He is not an advertising agent, as he has also been described.<sup>99</sup> Neither is he, as Wicke supposes, "a free-lance liaison between the newspaper and the company or manufacturer," on whom it was incumbent "to seek out a variety of newspapers" and "learn their circulation and styles."<sup>100</sup> These are freelance positions, intermediary between newspapers and advertisers and thus reliant upon both sides, but bound to none in particular. Bloom has no such autonomy. His proper position is an advertisement canvasser employed exclusively by *Freeman's Journal Ltd.* to solicit advertisements for their newspapers. He is in fact part of a rudimentary version

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<sup>96</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 31.

<sup>97</sup> Joyce's negligence of Easons, one of the largest agencies in Dublin, was to be repaid. In a debate over the censorship of "evil literature," Charles Eason junior, now the city's largest bookseller, wrote to George Russell ("AE") in 1929 that "[a]s to James Joyce, I need not tell you we have not got his 'Ulysses,' nor have we any other works of his" (qtd. Cullen, *Eason & Son*, 266-7).

<sup>98</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 127.

<sup>99</sup> E.g. Harry Blamires, *The New Bloomsday Book: A Guide through "Ulysses"*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 1996) 138.

<sup>100</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 126.

of the account managing departments against which Wicke contrasts his position—formed “specifically to sell advertising space.”

Since Bloom’s role has been so hazily understood, it is no wonder that there has been confusion over his responsibilities. He is certainly not involved with the design of advertisements. As we have seen, copywriting was a service that came relatively late even to the large advertising agencies. Leiss, et al., suggest that it was around “the early 1900s” that it “became standard practice” for British and American agencies “to hire writers as regular staff,”<sup>101</sup> although as Hindley and Hindley point out, many agencies before this “were aware of the special requirements of the art” and thus “contracted their copy out to freelance specialists.”<sup>102</sup> Visual design was another late addition to the agencies’ services, and if the early agencies were only irregularly involved with the creative design of advertisements, Bloom—a newspaper employee—has no involvement at all. This is true even with the Keyes advertisement in ‘*Aeolus*’: contrary to much critical interpretation, Bloom has not designed this advertisement himself.<sup>103</sup> Essentially, Bloom is involved only with a modified renewal of a previously printed advertisement: he must collect the various modifications, and have them included within the new advertisement. He collects the older, imageless copy of the advertisement from the *Freeman’s* archives, getting Red Murray to cut it out for him (7.25-7). He instructs Councillor Nannetti regarding its presentation: “But wait, Mr Bloom said. He wants it changed. [. . .] He wants two keys at the top” (7.126-7); “Two crossed keys here. A circle. Then here the name” (7.142); “Then round the top in leaded: the house of keys” (7.146).<sup>104</sup> Finally, he goes to the National Library to retrieve a copy of the crossed keys image, which had previously been printed in the *Kilkenny People* (9.595).

Fittingly, the crossed keys present a minor crux. Neil Tomkinson has questioned the realism of the ‘*Aeolus*’ chapter, finding there to be no purpose in Bloom’s trip to the National Library to find the original Keyes design, since “the “National Library won’t let him cut it

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<sup>101</sup> Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising*, 110.

<sup>102</sup> Hindley and Hindley, *Advertising in Victorian England*, 93-4.

<sup>103</sup> Critics such as Wicke and Joseph Heininger assume simply that Joyce has designed and proposed the advertisement himself; see Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 147; Joseph Heininger, “Molly Bloom’s Ad Language and Goods Behavior: Advertising as Social Communication in *Ulysses*,” *Molly Blooms: A Polylogue on ‘Penelope’ and Cultural Studies*, ed. Richard Pearce (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1994) 171-2. Osteen makes a more circumspect analysis, but relies on his premise that “Bloom is the primary author” (Osteen, *The Economy of ‘Ulysses*,” 144).

<sup>104</sup> The *OED* defines “leaded” as “having the lines separated by leads,” which are the thin strips of metal used in type-composition (“Leaded,” def. c, *OED Online*, The Oxford English Dictionary, 24 June 2012 <<http://oed.com>>). Neil Tomkinson quibbles the accuracy of Bloom’s usage, presuming it to be an error for “letter-spaced” (Neil Tomkinson, “Bloom’s Job,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 2:2 [1965]: 104). While Tomkinson is perhaps correct to take the error to reflect badly upon Joyce’s knowledge of the printing process, the mistake also contributes to the impression that Bloom is not the most professional advertising man.

out of their copy of the *Kilkenny People*.”<sup>105</sup> There is no way of Bloom copying the original advertisement except by sketch or trace, and while Budgen refers to Bloom having “copied the drawing of the crossed keys,”<sup>106</sup> it would be surprising for an advertisement to use an amateur sketch. Images were still not general in Irish daily newspaper advertisements in 1904: the historical *Evening Telegraph* for 16 June 1904, for instance, has only eight images across some fifty-four advertisements. As crude as these images may look to us today, however, they were not amateur. Even the historical analogue to the Keyes advertisement, printed nearly a decade before Bloom’s fictional involvement, demonstrates some artistic ability. John Wyse Jackson and Peter Costello have located what seems to be the original of the Keyes advertisement in the *Evening Telegraph* for 21 March 1896.<sup>107</sup> I have found that the advertisement ran with the same design for several weeks, between 14 March and 4 April; the image in this advertisement is large and relatively detailed, and appears to have been designed by somebody with some idea of shading and dimension (see fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Advertisement for James Cassidy, possible original for the “HOUSE OF KEY(E)S” advertisement (7.141), *Evening Telegraph* 14 Mar. 1896: 1.

<sup>105</sup> Tomkinson, “Bloom’s Job,” 104-5.

<sup>106</sup> Budgen, *James Joyce*, 133.

<sup>107</sup> John Wyse Jackson and Peter Costello, *John Stanislaus Joyce: The Voluminous Life and Genius of James Joyce’s Father* (London: Fourth Estate, 1997) 192.



This advertisement is actually not for Keyes at all (or Alex Keys, as his name is misspelt in the advertisement), but for his successor James Cassidy. With the pun on the name lost, the relevance of the image is minimal—hence the advertiser’s amusing explanation that he “SELLS NOTHING / LIKE HARDWARE, / BUT CHOICE SELECTIONS OF J J & S.” The tenuousness of the connection between the image and the advertisement indicates that the image has been printed from the blocks of an earlier design—a common practice in late-nineteenth-century advertising, with the effect that advertisements for different firms at times used identical images.<sup>108</sup> Cassidy presumably wanted an image because it “catches the eye,” as Bloom puts it (7.151), and borrowed this particular one from an earlier *Evening Telegraph* or *Freeman’s* advertisement because he could get it cheaply without having to pay for the cutting of new blocks. Like Joyce’s fictional advertisement, then, the Cassidy advertisement is adapted from an earlier version. The natural assumption is that the earlier advertisement had been designed for Keyes himself, although I have been unable to locate any such advertisement in the *Evening Telegraph* in the five years or so before Cassidy’s appeared, or around the time Keyes himself took over the property at some point in 1879-80<sup>109</sup>; it is also strange that Keyes did not reuse the image himself, since four days after Cassidy’s advertisement was printed, a plain advertisement appeared for Keyes’s new establishment in Ballsbridge.<sup>110</sup> Whether Joyce’s advertisement is based upon Cassidy’s, or upon a hypothetical earlier advertisement, it is not clear how the image came to Joyce’s attention. Costello follows Frank Delaney in affirming a biographical connection, claiming that Joyce’s father had worked as an advertising canvasser for the *Evening Telegraph* in 1896, and had himself designed and placed Cassidy’s advertisement.<sup>111</sup> This is a tantalising suggestion, and would explain Joyce’s recollection of the old advertisement some twenty years later, but the lack of any supporting evidence makes the claim hard to evaluate. If it is true that Joyce remembered the advertisement from his father’s activities, he would presumably have an idea of how the image had been designed and executed—apparently not by hand, as ‘Aeolus’

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<sup>108</sup> Hindley and Hindley, *Advertising in Victorian England*, 32.

<sup>109</sup> Keyes first appears at the Capel Street address in the 1880 *Thom’s*.

<sup>110</sup> The advertisement reads: “IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT. / CYCLISTS, / VISITORS TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY’S SHOWS (This Establishment being opposite to the Show Yard), / TRAVELLERS By the ELECTRIC TRAMWAY COMPANY, / AND OTHERS / ARE INFORMED THAT / ALEXANDER KEYES / (LATE 128 CAPEL STREET), / FAMILY GROCER, WINE, AND SPIRIT MERCHANT, / AND ITALIAN WAREHOUSEMAN, / WILL RE-OPEN IN A FEW DAYS / THE EXTENSIVE PREMISES, / 5 & 6 BALL’S BRIDGE [. . .] THE PROVISIONS OF THE BEST BRANDS” (*Evening Telegraph* 18 Mar. 1896: 4).

<sup>111</sup> Frank Delaney, *James Joyce’s Odyssey: A Guide to the Dublin of “Ulysses”* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1981) 75; Jackson and Costello, *John Stanislaus Joyce*, 190-93. Delaney makes the claim in passing; Jackson and Costello construct a long narrative account of Joyce’s father’s involvement. Neither account contains any direct supporting evidence.

would have it. Perhaps Bloom's consultation of the fictional original in the *Kilkenny People* is meant to indicate his diffidence in putting the advertisement forward for printing, suggesting inexperience or a lack of confidence, although this is not the impression that we get from his comments and interior monologue. Whatever the explanation, Bloom's decision to copy the original advertisement at least forms a useful plot device, bringing Bloom between Stephen and Mulligan in the National Library.

Even if Bloom is to sketch the Keyes ad—a shoddy service indeed—it is plain that his position within Dublin's growing advertising industry is extremely limited. He does not design the copy or the image of the Keyes advertisement; nor does he engage in the other activities crucial to the advertising industry in its earlier stages of development. We have seen that advertisement placement and space brokering were the main services offered by agencies in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, in Ireland as elsewhere, but since Bloom is employed by Freeman's Journal Ltd., he is necessarily excluded from even these activities. The advertisements he collects can only be placed in the publications of that company, and he is therefore unable to "farm" newspaper space, lacking the independence enjoyed by a space broker or agent. We have seen that there were some twelve agencies and agents in Dublin at this time, but Joyce's depiction of a sole canvasser should not necessarily be taken as historically unrealistic; Oram, for instance, gives an account of an individual newspaper canvasser who was employed directly by the *Dublin Evening Mail* from the 1890s through to the 1940s.<sup>112</sup> In 1904 Dublin, then, the two modes of operation—agencies and solitary newspaper canvassers—coexisted, and so Wicke's claim that "[a]dvertising canvassers harkened back to a previous stage before agencies had established their sway over advertising activity" is misleading.<sup>113</sup> We have seen that Joyce leaves out any reference to most of Dublin's extensive advertising industry in *Ulysses*, and in this respect we might call his representation anachronistic. It does not follow, however, that his depiction of Bloom's activities is similarly skewed: there were Dubliners plying Bloom's specific trade much later than 1904. All we can say is that Bloom's involvement in the advertising industry is seriously limited by his humble role.

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<sup>112</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 382.

<sup>113</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 126.

## “Just a little par”: The Role of the Advertisement Canvasser in Dublin’s Newspaper Industry

The larger part of Bloom’s role entails the negotiation of terms, and even in this limited function, it cannot be said that he is particularly successful. Keyes has instructed Bloom to place the advertisement for a month (“He wants it in for July”; 7.124), and he apparently wants a puff to accompany it; in exchange for the puff, Councillor Nannetti tells Bloom that Keyes must agree to a three-month renewal (7.160). It is this exchange that proves problematic, both for Bloom’s negotiations, and, for the reader, in the confused picture it gives of the workings of Freeman’s Journal Ltd. Since the management of the “short par” (7.989) is one of the few positive activities in which we see Bloom engaged in his capacity as an advertisement canvasser, it is worth considering in detail. The accompaniment of an advertisement with a “par,” or an editorial puff, was commonplace across Britain and Ireland in the early-twentieth century, although it was also sometimes controversial. Bloom is thus involved in negotiating a typical advertising service; yet while in Britain, at least, there were agents at this time whose sole activity was the placement of these “reading-notices,”<sup>114</sup> a significant complication for Bloom is that it is unclear whose responsibility it will be. Red Murray is the first to mention it in the *Freeman’s* office—“of course, if he wants a par, Red Murray said earnestly, [. . .] we can do him one” (7.34-5)—but, as with many of the newspaper staff in the ‘Aeolus’ chapter, Murray’s role is not defined. In Ellmann’s 1954 essay “The Backgrounds of *Ulysses*,” he established that the character was modelled on Joyce’s maternal uncle, John Murray, “who worked on the advertising staff of the *Freeman’s Journal* and is mentioned here in that capacity.”<sup>115</sup> But when Ellmann adapted the article for the publication of *James Joyce* five years later, he silently amended John Murray’s position from “the advertising staff” to “the accounts department” (JJ 18). The fictional Murray is seen only as the man who locates a Keyes advertisement in an older copy of the *Freeman’s Journal*, and cuts it out for Bloom (7.25-32); a man in the accounts department would have no reason to do this, and Ellmann’s earlier positioning of Murray in the advertising staff is thus recommended; but in that case, as Tomkinson asks, why does Bloom go on to request the puff from Nannetti, when “Red Murray has already assured him a few minutes before that

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<sup>114</sup> Terry Nevett, “Advertising and Editorial Integrity in the Nineteenth Century,” *The Press in English Society from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Centuries*, ed. Michael Harris and Alan Lee (Cranbury, NJ: Associated UP, 1986) 159, 161.

<sup>115</sup> Richard Ellmann, “The Backgrounds of *Ulysses*,” *The Kenyon Review* 16:3 (1954): 364.

they will do so”<sup>116</sup> I think that this question at least, unlike the keys crux, may be answered within the text. The enthusiasm of Murray’s unsolicited offer of a “par,” with Bloom’s cool response and his sardonic internal repetition of Murray’s “[w]e” (7.37), suggests that Red Murray is simply claiming a responsibility and seniority that Bloom knows him not to have.

Bloom then goes “through the printingworks” (7.33), which lay between the connected offices of the *Freeman’s Journal* and the *Evening Telegraph*, and it is here that he consults Nannetti, who demands an exchange of a three-month renewal of the advertisement for an editorial puff. These puffs were usually written by the advertiser or the agent themselves, but in Joyce’s newspaper office this does not seem to be the case, since Bloom appears to give Nannetti instructions for its composition: “You know the usual. Highclass licensed premises. Longfelt want. So on” (7.157-8). This act makes Nannetti’s proper role even harder to establish than Murray’s. Ellmann says that “Nannetti was foreman printer of the *Freeman’s Journal* in 1904; Joyce probably saw his son, who was foreman printer of the *Evening Telegraph* in 1909.”<sup>117</sup> Gifford rephrases this role as “master printer,”<sup>118</sup> and Neil Tomkinson complains that “Joyce does not make clear [. . .] what Nannetti is supposed to be—caseroom overseer or chief reader.”<sup>119</sup> Harry Blamires describes Nannetti as “the *Freeman’s* business manager,”<sup>120</sup> which would explain his involvement with the advertisement, but there is little justification for this solution: Nannetti is consistently and repeatedly described in the text as “the foreman” (from 7.85)—that is, the foreman printer—and he is definitely located in “the caseroom” (7.196), where printers make up the pages of a newspaper. We see him handing copy to a typesetter (7.108-9) and checking “a limp galley page” (7.160), all of which confirms Ellmann’s identification of Nannetti as foreman printer. As such, it is conceivable that Bloom would hand him the copy and design for the Keyes advertisement, but—as Tomkinson again points out—it is highly unlikely that Nannetti would be stipulating or negotiating the terms of an advertisement’s renewal, much

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<sup>116</sup> Tomkinson, “Bloom’s Job,” 105.

<sup>117</sup> Ellmann, “Backgrounds,” 364. The distinction between the two titles is probably unnecessary. The Redmond papers in the National Library of Ireland give a reconstructed staff list for Freeman’s Journal Ltd., which apparently operated with a common reporting and commercial staff across all of its titles, employing only separate editors and news editors. The Redmond papers are from 1916, but they probably indicate the structures already established in 1904, when *Ulysses* is set, and 1909, when Joyce was frequenting the offices. I am grateful to Felix Larkin for bringing this information to my attention. For a brief account of Joyce’s experience of the *Evening Telegraph* office, see Piaras Béaslaí, “Joyce among the Journalists,” *James Joyce: Interviews and Recollections*, ed. E. H. Mikhail (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990) 42.

<sup>118</sup> Gifford, “*Ulysses*” *Annotated*, 130.

<sup>119</sup> Neil Tomkinson, “A Reply to Bloom’s Job,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 3:1 (1965): 73.

<sup>120</sup> Blamires, *The New Bloomsday Book*, 46.

less arranging the writing of the puff.<sup>121</sup> We may draw one of two conclusions from this incongruity. Either Joyce includes Nannetti in the action of ‘Aeolus’ unrealistically, or the *Freeman’s Journal* and *Evening Telegraph* operated rather more informally than we would expect a successful newspaper to operate. As will be seen, neither of these explanations are difficult to believe.

Myles Crawford’s role is clear in comparison. Joyce uses “the editor” as a frequent epithet for Crawford throughout ‘Aeolus’ (starting at 7.350), and since the remainder of the chapter is set in the office of the *Evening Telegraph*, there can be no mistaking Crawford for anything but the editor of this title. Crawford is the third person that Bloom consults regarding the Keyes advertisement. To answer Nannetti’s stipulation, Bloom has attempted to persuade Keyes that the renewal of the advertisement will be to his advantage: “Rub in August: good idea: horseshow month. Ballsbridge. Tourists over for the show” (7.192-4).<sup>122</sup> Bloom’s suggestion of an August renewal has been accepted all too literally, and Keyes has agreed only a two-month renewal for July and August (7.973); so Bloom avoids Nannetti and attempts to have the reduced renewal approved by the editor instead. That Bloom is unable to secure the puff with Crawford on these terms is perhaps due, as Bloom thinks, to the editor’s “nervy” disposition (7.983), but it is just as much a sign of Bloom’s insignificance within Dublin’s advertising industry. Agencies had no difficulty at this time securing a puff from a publication as part of an advertising contract, as Nevett argues:

The control which agents exercised over the disposition of advertising campaigns meant that the fate of a large part of the British press was effectively in their hands. [. . .] The power which the agents commanded was wielded to such effect that arranging the publication of puffs became an integral part of the service they offered.<sup>123</sup>

Regarding Nannetti’s stipulated three-month renewal, Tomkinson assumes that “[e]ven in 1904 no newspaper could dictate terms to a potential advertiser in this way.”<sup>124</sup> This is not the case: newspapers have rarely been bound to individual advertisers. As Nevett’s comments suggest, it was the influence of the agencies that forced newspapers to yield to advertisers’ demands. If a newspaper were to upset a large agency over terms, it would jeopardise

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<sup>121</sup> Tomkinson, “Bloom’s Job,” 104-5.

<sup>122</sup> Joyce’s connection between advertising and the August horseshow perhaps originated with his own experience in Dublin in August 1912. Attempting to have his brother Charlie taken on by David Allen’s Advertising Company, he was told by the manager that “he might be able to put him on a job during Horse Show” (*LII* 305).

<sup>123</sup> Nevett, “Advertising and Editorial Integrity in the Nineteenth Century,” 161.

<sup>124</sup> Tomkinson, “Bloom’s Job,” 105.

accounts with a number of different advertisers. But Bloom represents just two accounts in *Ulysses*, Keyes and Prescott's, and so even if he were freelance, he would have very little to bargain with. But since he is employed directly by Freeman's Journal Ltd., Bloom has no choice but to submit to their terms. So while Bloom's client demands the puff—Nevett's "integral part of the service"—Bloom is shown to have none of the leverage of the advertising agent. It is probably true that newspaper editors were not in the habit of turning them away quite so cavalierly as in 'Aeolus'—"Will you tell him he can kiss my arse? Myles Crawford said" (7.981)—but there is no reason to think that one of Dublin's largest newspapers would agree to give a puff to a small advertiser who would not commit to more than an extra month's future advertising.

Since he makes up half of Bloom's client base, the advertisement canvasser is forced to go to some lengths to have Keyes's terms accepted. Nannetti, presumably the more tractable of his newspaper contacts, turns out—to Bloom's frustration (12.855-6)—to be on a boat to London, so Bloom is left attempting to pull strings with Joe Hynes: "if he would just say a word to Mr Crawford. [. . .] It's just that Keyes, you see. [. . .] Very kind of you, says Bloom" (12.1144-55). The informal editorial policy of the *Evening Telegraph* was established early on in the novel, with Mr Deasy's arrangement for Stephen to get his letter published in that paper: "You can do me a favour, Mr Dedalus, with some of your literary friends" (2.289-90). Bloom's projected English tour for Molly shows that he takes this informality to be the norm: "he was quite sanguine of success, providing puffs in the local papers could be managed by some fellow with a bit of bounce who could pull the indispensable wires" (16.527-30). Whether or not such a fellow could be found, we see that the informal approach is perfectly workable in the *Evening Telegraph*: it is just such "indispensable wires" that Corny Kelleher pulls to get the report of Paddy Dignam's funeral to include a puff for the funeral director: "*The obsequies, at which many friends of the deceased were present, were carried out by* (certainly Hynes wrote it with a nudge from Corny) *Messrs H. J. O'Neill and Son, 164 North Strand Road*" (16.1253-5).

In *Ulysses*, then, there is no sign of the formalised and professionalised "reading-notices"; the negotiation of puffs appears to operate according to the "wires" pulled, and the caprices of the editor. With the obscure and contradictory involvement of various staff, Joyce depicts a newspaper company that lacks an established operational approach to the advertising upon which its revenue depended. It is very difficult to say whether this depiction is historically accurate. It could be that Joyce exaggerates the informality of the newspaper industry in 'Aeolus' so as to indicate the precariousness of Dublin's "modernity" in 1904, as

with the “trams becalmed in short circuit” (7.1047) at the end of the chapter. Or it could be, as Tomkinson complains, that Joyce had a limited awareness of the workings of the Dublin press, and was simply not qualified to enter the Freeman’s offices in the ‘Aeolus’ chapter. But this complaint is based on Tomkinson’s experience working for a different newspaper in a different country in a very different time. If there are very few historical accounts of Irish advertising, there are even less that deal with the internal workings of individual newspapers. Almost by definition, the conversations and dealings of individuals—still more the invisible “wires” mentioned by Bloom—can be preserved only by anecdote, if at all; and it is worth pointing out that there is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that Joyce’s version is not wildly inaccurate. Piaris Béaslaí has recounted his introduction of Joyce to the *Evening Telegraph* office in 1909, suggesting that the characters Joyce places in Myles Crawford’s office are a fair approximation of Joyce’s experience.<sup>125</sup> Ellmann reports that at the *Evening Telegraph* in Joyce’s time, “drinking capacity was reputed to be a primary consideration in hiring” (*JJII* 289). And in 1965, Patrick F. Byrne of *The Evening Herald* defended Joyce’s representation of the Dublin press against Tomkinson’s repudiation of the ‘Aeolus’ chapter:

Mr Tomkinson hits the nail on the head when he says ‘discipline in the Telegraph office was certainly lax.’ Even in my time people with nothing better to do have wandered in and out of Dublin newspaper offices just as if they were visiting a club—using the telephone, having a chat and passing the time generally.<sup>126</sup>

These comments do not prove anything about the *Evening Telegraph*’s approach to advertising, but they do perhaps suggest that the informality of its operation was not simply of Joyce’s invention.

While Joyce’s depiction of the newspaper’s approach to advertising is hard to gauge historically, we have seen that *Ulysses* certainly downplays Dublin’s advertising industry as a whole. *Thom’s* shows that there were at least twelve agencies operating in 1904 Dublin, concentrated centrally on Middle Abbey Street, Great Brunswick Street, and D’Olier Street. These agencies ranged in size and importance, from the individual agent James Dignam at 71 Middle Abbey Street, whose office was rented at £9 per year, according to *Thom’s*, to the major company Wilson, Hartnell, and Co., whose Commercial Buildings establishment was valued at £520 per year. Joyce could not have been unaware of their existence. The sign for

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<sup>125</sup> Béaslaí, “Joyce among the Journalists,” 42.

<sup>126</sup> Patrick F. Byrne, “A Note from Dublin On ‘Bloom’s Job,’” *James Joyce Quarterly* 2.2 (1965): 108.

Kenny's Advertising Agency, to pick one example, would have been impossible to miss,<sup>127</sup> and even if he had paid little attention to such prominent articles of "Dublin's street furniture" before his departure in 1904, Joyce undoubtedly gained some awareness of the state of the industry when he returned to organise the advertising of the *Volta* in 1909-10, being intimately involved in the organisation of a full range of advertising services through David Allen's, one of the thriving Dublin agencies. We know, therefore, that Joyce had at least some idea of the industry's scale and state of advance when he came to write *Ulysses*.

Within Joyce's novel, however, Dublin's advertising industry is less widespread, less advanced, and far less visible than was historically the case in 1904. That is not to say that Bloom's own role is anachronistic, as Wicke has supposed. As I have shown, Bloom has neither the responsibility nor the independence of the freelance advertising agent. He has little or no part in the design of the one advertisement we see him place: the copy and the image are prepared by the client; the puff is prepared by the newspaper; and he has no decisive control over the positioning. Since he is tied to the publications of Freeman's Journal Ltd., Bloom has no say in the placement of the ads he collects; he has no opportunity for space brokering or "farming"; and if he has some awareness of which titles are most suitable for particular advertisements—"Best paper by long chalks for a small ad," he considers the *Irish Times* to be (8.334)—then this is a skill that his role does not require. Bloom has very little negotiating power, either with his client or with the media, which is why he is forced to run back and forth between client and employer quibbling terms. As an advertisement canvasser for a newspaper, Bloom would have little security, and few prospects of advancement, as Oram's report of the *Dublin Evening Mail* advertisement canvasser suggests: "In all his 53 years with the *Mail* he received no salary, selling advertisements on a commission rate of six per cent."<sup>128</sup> This is substantially lower than the international agency standard of fifteen per cent, established around the turn of the century, and more or less holding to this day.<sup>129</sup> In the downplayed industry represented in *Ulysses*, Bloom holds the lowliest of positions. It is all the more striking, therefore, that Joyce endows Bloom with an advanced theoretical understanding of the practice. And while I have emphasised the difficulty of establishing a firm historical background for his depiction of the practical

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<sup>127</sup> Oram reprints a photograph of Kenny's from the late 1890s. It is a four-storey terraced building, and the sign for the company—"KENNY'S ADVERTISING AGENCY"—extends to the top floor, projected from the building with scaffolding (Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 40).

<sup>128</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 382.

<sup>129</sup> Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising*, 107.



workings of Dublin's advertising industry, Joyce's theoretical engagement can be pinpointed with surprising accuracy.

## Chapter 4

### *Ulysses* and Advertising Theory

It is typical of Joyce's characterisation of Bloom that the external impotence of his role in advertising is contrasted against an outlook which is both progressive and prescient. While he has little opportunity to put his ideas into practice, Bloom has a theoretical understanding of advertising that was not yet fully articulated in advertising guides available in 1904. In this chapter, I consider Bloom's ideas against the theories of advertising with which Joyce familiarised himself as they developed in the first decades of the twentieth century. Building upon the findings of the previous chapter, I will argue that Joyce's depiction of advertising in 1904 Dublin contains a double anachronism—though neither of the kind Wicke has proposed. On the one hand, Joyce presents the Irish advertising industry as less advanced than it really was, situating Bloom on the periphery of an apparently amateurish field. On the other hand, Joyce endows Bloom with a tacit, if limited, knowledge of the theoretical advances in advertising, particularly the advanced psychological approaches that were only just beginning to emerge in 1904, and which only became widespread in the 1910s and 1920s.

#### **“Rectification of the anachronism involved in assigning the date of conversion”:**

#### **Reconsidering Joyce's “Advertising” Notes**

For all of the difficulties Bloom faces as he tries to secure the Keyes advertisement, he does not doubt the efficacy of his trade: “It's the ads and side features sell a weekly, not the stale news in the official gazette” (7.89-90). Bloom apparently takes his “gentle art” seriously, and from the first, Joyce has him reading and evaluating advertisements of virtually every kind: handouts (Agendath Netaim, Dr John Alexander Dowie), newspaper advertisements (Plumtree's Potted Meat), posters (Cantrell and Cochrane's, Clery's Summer Sale, theatrical announcements), postal prospectuses (Wonderworker), sandwichboards (H.E.L.Y.'S), shop advertisements (Thos. H. Dennany, Graham Lemon's), and unusual or innovatively placed advertisements (Kino's, Dr Hy Franks). This is the attentive reading of an advertising practitioner—“a practiced advertising subject” in Wicke's words<sup>1</sup>—and Bloom seems to have some faith in advertising as a viable means to fortune. His scheme for an English tour for

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<sup>1</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 135.

Molly could, he thinks, prove “highly remunerative” if advertised correctly (16.520-22), and he even entertains a utopian ambition to set up “a prosperous rival agency of publicity” to Boylan’s billsticking company (17.2206-7). It is perhaps here that he would get the opportunity to design the “one sole unique advertisement” upon which he ruminates, “to cause passers to stop in wonder, a poster novelty, with all extraneous accretions excluded, reduced to its simplest and most efficient terms not exceeding the span of casual vision and congruous with the velocity of modern life” (17.1770-73).

These “final meditations” of Bloom’s read like a condensed version of the kind of advice given in the advertising guides which proliferated from the early 1900s, and the similarity is not accidental: we know that Joyce took notes on the subject. Joyce’s “Advertising” notes form one section of the notebook catalogued as Cornell 38 and continued partially in Cornell 63, which has been reproduced as the “Notes on Business and Commerce” in the *James Joyce Archive* (JJA 3:474-617). This notebook has received almost no critical attention, and this neglect is partly due to the notebook’s content: these are mundane notes on mundane subjects, 138 pages of reasonably neat longhand notes taken by Joyce on the subjects of banking, commercial law, clerical work, insurance, the stock exchange, shipping, advertising, and trade. However, this critical neglect is also due to the received assumption that these notes were taken by Joyce only to facilitate his short-lived career at Nast-Kolb and Schumacher, the private bank in Rome where he worked between August 1906 and March 1907, aged 24-25. With this dating, the “Notes on Business and Commerce” have been connected with one of the few absolutely non-literary endeavours of Joyce’s life, and thus denied the kind of genetic attention that his other notebooks have long received. I begin this chapter by identifying the sources of Joyce’s “Advertising” notes, using this source to revise the accepted dating of Cornell 38 and 63. This revision allows us to dispel a minor biographical myth, and it retrieves the notes from the closed-off commercial department of Joyce’s biography, granting them a new legitimacy as genetic resources for the study of his fiction. For the purpose of this thesis, it allows us for the first time to identify the exact theories that influenced Joyce’s representation of advertising in *Ulysses*. And as will be seen, this identification has significant ramifications.

The Rome dating was first proposed by Robert E. Scholes in his 1961 catalogue of the Cornell Joyce Collection, with the suggestion that Cornell 38 “reveals the industry and thoroughness with which James Joyce tried to master the banking trade.”<sup>2</sup> When the notes

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<sup>2</sup> Robert E. Scholes, *The Cornell Joyce Collection: A Catalogue* (New York: Cornell UP, 1961) 17.

were reproduced in the *James Joyce Archive* in 1979, Hans Walter Gabler reinforced the connection, affirming that “Joyce methodically familiarized himself with the idiolects of the world of commerce which he joined for a while as a bank clerk in Rome in 1907” (*JJA* 3: preface, vii). And when Franco Onorati published an article on Joyce’s banking role in 1984, the attribution of the notes to his time at Nast-Kolb and Schumacher took on the tone and detail of positive biographical fact:

Joyce had not taken his new job lightly: during the two months of negotiations with Nast-Kolb and Schumacher he had tried hard to make good his lack of specific experience in banking. His preparation could not have been more thorough: it is documented by two notebooks he wrote in long hand in Trieste between May and July, obviously based on a careful study of the most up-to-date publications on the subject.<sup>3</sup>

This account of the genesis of the “Notes on Business and Commerce” stuck, and the occasional critical references to these notes have followed its assumption. So it is that Osteen, the only critic to have discussed the contents of these notes in print, does so with the claim that while “Joyce was less than brilliant in the banking business,” he nevertheless “tried to succeed, filling an entire notebook with notes on banking and commerce, carefully writing each term on the left and its definition on the right.”<sup>4</sup> Scholes’s interpretation of their proof of Joyce’s “industry and thoroughness”; Gabler’s suggestion that Joyce had “methodically familiarized himself” with his new trade; Onorati’s claim for his “thorough” and “careful study”; Osteen’s assertion that Joyce “tried to succeed”: all culminate in the figure of Joyce the banker, temporarily turning his genius away from his literary calling.

Since the first section in Cornell 38 is headed “Banking,” the attribution of the “Notes on Business and Commerce” to Joyce’s time at Nast-Kolb and Schumacher is understandable, although it might have been wondered what relevance insurance or advertising would have had to a relatively menial clerical job. Onorati explains this free range as testament to “the extraordinarily professional conscience of the candidate to a banking career,”<sup>5</sup> but Joyce’s letters to Stanislaus in this period do not give the impression of conscientiousness. He started off in the Italian correspondence department, and wrote to his brother on 7 August 1906 that “[t]he work is very easy and mechanical” (*LII* 145). He was

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<sup>3</sup> Franco Onorati, “Bank Clerk in Rome,” *Joyce in Rome: The Genesis of “Ulysses,”* ed. Giorgio Melchiori (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1984) 27. Onorati does not explain how he has reached this precise dating, but it is presumably by calculating the months between Joyce’s spotting of the job advertisement on or around 11 May 1906, and his arrival in Rome on 31 July.

<sup>4</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 13.

<sup>5</sup> Onorati, “Bank Clerk in Rome,” 28.

moved to the reception room in September, and was apparently not much busier: “Have a desk and lamp all to myself and not at all much to do” (*LII* 159). And by October, Joyce still does not seem to have tried very hard to “master the banking trade”: “I am constantly making the most absurd mistakes here, knowing damn all about banking business” (*LII* 181). So, in February 1907, after just over six months at the bank, Joyce abruptly gave his notice: “I have no ‘carriera’ before me in commerce” (*LII* 215). In his letters from Rome, Joyce describes his diet, his reading, his sightseeing, his health, and almost every other detail of his life in this unhappy period. His references to the banking job are uniformly ironic, dismissive and uninterested.

If contemporary letters do not support the idea of Joyce as a dedicated banker, taking copious notes to forward his career, the real objection to the 1906-7 dating can be found in the notes themselves. The “Advertising” section includes reference to figures for the year 1909: “Financial Times 300 M subscribed in resp to prospectus in 1909” (*JJA* 3:609). However assiduously Joyce prepared for the Nast-Kolb and Schumacher job in 1906, it would have been difficult for him to have made such an accurate prediction for three years hence, and it is this detail that has enabled me to trace the source for this section of the “Notes on Business and Commerce”: Joyce took the “Advertising” notes from a handbook written by the advertising manager for the *Financial Times*, entitled *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known*. As I suggested in chapter 1, one of the contributions made by earlier studies of Joyce’s representation of advertising has been the challenge to absolute distinctions between the spheres of commerce and literature; it is thus unsurprising that the only exceptions to the critical exclusion of the “Notes on Business and Commerce” have emerged from this area, particularly in Osteen’s *The Economy of “Ulysses.”* Yet even here, reliance upon the received dating of these notes has limited the conclusions drawn, as with Elisabetta d’Erme’s recent reference to the notes in her essay “The Gentle Art of Advertisement”:

Joyce’s early interest on ads can be traced in the “Advertising” section of his Trieste 1906 copybook on “Banking.” These brief notes show that he had widely researched the contemporary advertising theories; from psychological to typographical matters, and we must presume that, at that time, his sources must still have been Victorian ones.<sup>6</sup>

The location of Bridgewater’s *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known* as the source for Joyce’s notes allows us to say for the first time that this presumption of Victorian origin is

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<sup>6</sup> Elisabetta d’Erme, “‘The Gentle Art of Advertisement’: Reflections of the Victorian Press in James Joyce’s Writings,” *Joyce Studies in Italy* 9 (2006): 98.

definitely incorrect. Although Bridgewater's book is undated, contemporary reviews and library records allow us to establish the earliest date at which Joyce could have taken his "Advertising" notes. Published in London by Isaac Pitman & Sons, *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known* could not have appeared any earlier than July 1909, as it contains the *Financial Times* advertising revenue figures for "the first six months" of that year (which Joyce approximately doubled to get the annual figure quoted above.)<sup>7</sup> Contemporary journal references to the book give a publication year of 1910, and *The Economic Bulletin* for September of that year includes it in a list of recent publications, "published principally since May 1 1910."<sup>8</sup> Though copies of the book are now relatively rare, the British Library copy was received and stamped by the British Museum on 8 June 1910, and the Bodleian Library copy on 17 June 1910. We can thus say with certainty that *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known* must have been published between July 1909 and June 1910, and most likely in May or very early June 1910—nearly four years after Joyce had moved to Rome to take up his new "carriera" with Nast-Kolb and Schumacher.

That Bridgewater's book is the source for Joyce's "Advertising" section is confirmed by the sequential consistency of Joyce's notes (they follow Bridgewater's account exactly), and by the peculiarity of some of the examples that Joyce copies. Indeed, many of Joyce's notes can only be understood when read against their original source. For instance, Joyce's laconic "Amer. Ad. frog reading ad. for coffee" (*JJA* 3:605) seems nonsensical, but it makes sense as a paraphrase of one of Bridgewater's critical observations: "I have seen an advertisement of a famous coffee firm (American, too!) illustrated by a huge frog depicted reading an announcement descriptive of the virtues of a largely advertised brand of coffee."<sup>9</sup> There are countless examples of this kind to confirm the identification. Joyce records some very specific figures and statistics from Bridgewater, such as the estimated returns from a particular kind of advertising campaign (*JJA* 3:605).<sup>10</sup> He sketches an optical illusion that is printed in Bridgewater's book, and reproduces exactly the irregularly typeset phrase, "You / Are / a / Fair / Dealing / Man" (*JJA* 3:606).<sup>11</sup> He records particular brand-names such as "sunlight"; he notes unusual advertisement examples such as the coffee-drinking frog; and he copies Bridgewater's reference to the famous Pears' Soap advertisement "Bubbles (Millais)." The "Bubbles" advertisement is frequently cited as one of the most influential advertisements

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<sup>7</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 74.

<sup>8</sup> *The Economic Bulletin* 3:3 (Sep. 1910), 333. See also *Journal of Political Economy* 18:8 (Oct. 1910), 647.

<sup>9</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 24.

<sup>10</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 18.

<sup>11</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 29-30.

of the nineteenth century, and Joyce's independent awareness of the advertisement is indicated by his own insertion of the artist's name, which does not appear in Bridgewater (*JJA.3:608*).<sup>12</sup>

Bridgewater's *Advertising* is a 102-page clothbound crown octavo book, priced at a shilling, and published as a number in the popular Pitman's Practical Primer series—a range of non-specialist business and commercial guides “intended to serve the purpose of an introduction to the particular subject treated.”<sup>13</sup> The full prospectus for this series is published at the rear of Bridgewater's book, and this prospectus gives vital clues for the sources of the other sections of the “Notes on Business and Commerce”: I have so far traced six of the eight sections of Joyce's notes back to books in the Pitman's series, each written by a different author, though uniform in appearance and price.<sup>14</sup> The entire series is undated, but the other books upon which Joyce drew were apparently all published the year before Bridgewater's *Advertising*: each has been stamped as received by the British Museum between July and September 1909, dates which are consistent with references to the books in the contemporary journals *The Economic Bulletin*, *Journal of Political Economy* and *The Economic Journal*. It is certain, then, that Joyce did not take the notes for his 1906 banking job in Rome. The two other purely commercial ventures in Joyce's biography are his management of the Volta Cinema in Dublin in 1909-10, and his Triestine agency for Dublin Woollen Co. in 1910-11, and the dates of these ventures perhaps make them tempting explanations for the genesis of the “Notes on Business and Commerce.” Joyce's letters from Dublin show that he was engaged with most of the practical aspects of the running of the Volta; itemised account sheets from this period, in Joyce's hand, demonstrate his organisation of such matters as advertising and insurance.<sup>15</sup> However, while certainly more plausible than the impossible Rome identification, Joyce's Volta involvement still does not correspond easily with the publication date of Bridgewater's *Advertising*, even if the other books in the Pitman's Practical Primer series had just about been published when he left Trieste for Dublin on 18 October 1909. The cinema was opened on 20 December, and Joyce returned to Trieste on 2

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<sup>12</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 48. This advertisement predated the equally famous Pears' slogan included by Joyce in *Ulysses*, “Good morning, have you used Pears' soap?” (5.524-5).

<sup>13</sup> Bridgewater, catalogue B, *Advertising*, 12.

<sup>14</sup> The other sources that I have located are as follows, in the order that they are annotated in the “Notes on Business and Commerce”: J. P. Gandy, *The Elements of Banking: A Guide to the Principles and Practice of Banking*; A. H. Douglas, *The Elements of Commercial Law*; J. Alfred Eke, *The Elements of Insurance: A Guide to the Principles and Practice of Accident, Fire, Marine, and Life Insurance*; Arnold Hall and F. Heywood, *Shipping: A Guide to the Routine in Connection with the Shipment of Goods and the Clearance of Vessels Inwards and Outwards*; A. Emil Davies, *The Money and the Stock and Share Markets* (London: Pitman, n.d.).

<sup>15</sup> McKernan, “James Joyce and the Volta Programme,” 21.

January 1910 (*JJI* 301, 302, 308). He was informed of his partners' intention to sell the cinema on 18 April 1910, and it was finally sold on 14 June of that year.<sup>16</sup> If, as I have established, Bridgewater's book was most likely published in May or June 1910, it is unlikely that Joyce would have had the time to complete the "Notes on Business and Commerce" before the *Volta* was sold—or, since its sale was already decided by the time Bridgewater's book was published, any obvious commercial motive.

Joyce's later work for Dublin Woollen Co., by contrast, is chronologically compatible with Bridgewater's publication. The Cornell Joyce Collection contains six letters and twenty-two invoices from the company to Joyce, dated between 7 November 1910 and 31 July 1911, "indicating charges for shipments made from Dublin to Trieste for various people."<sup>17</sup> Yet if the timing fits, the other objections noted in relation to the Rome explanation still apply. It is hard to see what use *The Elements of Insurance* or *The Money, Stock and Share Markets* would have had to an Irish tweed salesman, even if Joyce had been supremely dedicated to this role. And Joyce does not seem to have been an overly assiduous agent. Ellmann notes that Joyce corrected Gorman's dismissive reference to his involvement with the tweed agency, inserting his own footnote: "He got the agency and did, in fact, succeed in clothing several of his Triestine male pupils in Irish homespuns ordered by them."<sup>18</sup> However defensive this amendment may seem, it does not suggest any activity that would have required the advanced commercial knowledge to which the "Notes on Business and Commerce" attest.

The other period in which Joyce had both the means and the motive for his annotation of the Pitman's Practical Primer series is his time teaching in two commercial schools in Trieste.<sup>19</sup> As John McCourt has detailed, in around October 1910 Joyce was employed to teach English in La Scuola Commerciale di perfezionamento. Here Joyce taught English to shopkeepers and shop-assistants, and his colleagues taught such subjects as commercial law and accountancy. Joyce continued to teach here until 1913, when he was taken on at another commercial school—La Scuola Superiore di Commercio "Revoltella"—remaining here (with a six month interruption) until its closure in June 1915.<sup>20</sup> At the Scuola "Revoltella" Joyce taught "English language and English commercial correspondence," and picked up a curriculum that taught English through "works containing narratives and dialogues

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<sup>16</sup> McCourt, *The Years of Bloom*, 147.

<sup>17</sup> Scholes, *The Cornell Joyce Collection*, 210.

<sup>18</sup> *JJI* 772; Herbert Gorman, *James Joyce: A Definitive Biography* (London: John Lane, 1941) 200.

<sup>19</sup> I am very grateful to John McCourt for suggesting the commercial schools as likely locations for Joyce's exposure to these books.

<sup>20</sup> McCourt, *The Years of Bloom*, 172-3, 207-8, 242-5.



concerning business and commercial dealings.”<sup>21</sup> Pitman’s Practical Primers are just the kind of books—each serving “as an introduction to its subject” and “as an authoritative guide”<sup>22</sup>—that are likely to have been available to Joyce and his students in the commercial schools. It may be, then, that Joyce originally took these notes as a teaching aid, although their copiousness makes them superfluous to that task, and his notes are too fragmentary to have been of direct use within the classroom. In any case, whether Joyce took the notes in order to teach, or whether he took them for his own personal edification—to become, perhaps, like Bloom, an “allround man” (10.581)—it seems likely that they were taken while teaching at one of the commercial schools. However, I would resist the implication from this conclusion that they might for that reason be considered distinct from the other more obviously “literary” notebooks that make up the “workshop of Daedalus.” For what no critic has demonstrated in any concrete way is that Joyce drew upon these notes, both directly and indirectly, in his composition of *Ulysses*.

It will take some time to make a full analysis of Joyce’s note-taking process in the “Notes on Business and Commerce.” For a start, the lengthy source texts need to be read as carefully as Joyce’s annotations, because what he leaves out of his notes is often as interesting as what he includes. The fact that Joyce ignores Bridgewater’s reference to the Irish advertising market, for instance, and more or less skips a section on the disreputable origins of the “Bill-posting Industry,”<sup>23</sup> perhaps suggests that the “Advertising” notes were not taken while Joyce was writing *Ulysses*: such details would presumably have been useful to Joyce in filling out Bloom’s career, or the activities of “Boylan, the billsticker” (16.199). Be that as it may, Joyce demonstrably drew some of the “Notes on Business and Commerce” into the novel. To give just one concrete example, J. J. O’Molloy’s comment in the “Cyclops” episode of *Ulysses*—“the truth of a libel is no defence to an indictment for publishing it in the eyes of the law” (12.1048-9)—can be traced directly to a note in his section on “Trade”: “Belief in truth no excuse in libel action” (*JJA* 3:616). The “Trade” section is one of the two for which I have not yet located a source, but the fact that Joyce drew upon these notes in his fiction, even if they were initially taken for another purpose altogether, justifies the labour that will be involved in transcribing and analysing these notes and their sources.

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<sup>21</sup> McCourt, *The Years of Bloom*, 208.

<sup>22</sup> Davies, catalogue A, *The Money and the Stock and Share Markets*, N. pag.

<sup>23</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 55, 73.

For the purpose of this chapter, it is enough to note that Joyce did not record these notes, as has been supposed, in his period of literary abstention in Rome—"It is impossible for me to write anything in my present circumstances" (*LII* 182)—but some time after mid-1909, and almost certainly after mid-1910. If we accept the commercial school hypothesis, he could have recorded them any time before June 1915, when the Scuola "Revoltella" was closed, and Joyce left Trieste for Zürich. Even with the earliest estimates, therefore, by the time Joyce recorded these notes, he would already have written the first three chapters of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. With the later estimates, Joyce would have published *Dubliners*, finished *Portrait*, and even have written the first chapters of *Ulysses*. Wherever we place them in this important period of Joyce's life, it is clear that these are the notes of a blooming writer, not an apprentice banker.

### **Bloom and the Psychology of Advertising**

Bridgewater's *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known* is presented as a "practical help to those who may find it necessary or desirable to have a knowledge of the main principles governing [. . .] the science of advertising," or for those who "are yet interested in it as a psychological study."<sup>24</sup> Bridgewater does not set out to present any original theories of advertising, and so the fact that few subsequent studies have cited the book does not necessarily suggest that it was not widely read; as part of the Pitman's Practical Primer series, and available for a shilling, this is the kind of popular guide that is likely to have had a significant influence on smaller advertisers and businesses, particularly if it was widely taught at commercial schools such as the Scuola "Revoltella." Bridgewater offers a summary and straightforward application of the new developments in advertising theory that had emerged towards the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. These developments consisted primarily in the conscious application of psychological concepts and techniques to advertisements. Behind its many advances, Victorian advertising had relied upon a combination of Barnum and reason, attempting by any means to draw attention to the name of a company or product, and then extolling the commodity's virtues directly. Little consideration was given to the kind of connotations which these advertisements might carry to the potential consumer. In the early-twentieth century, the techniques which had been used to attain this direct attention were by no means abandoned, but they were gradually

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<sup>24</sup> Bridgewater, preface, *Advertising*, v.

subordinated to an overall principle which privileged connotation and affect over sensationalism and direct message. Bloom's vision of "the infinite possibilities hitherto unexploited of the modern art of advertisement" is an accurate (though, as we will see, partial) summary of these developments: the new advertisements really did seek "to arrest involuntary attention, to interest, to convince, to decide" (17.580-83). It is the adjective "involuntary" which is most telling.

The psychological aspects of Bridgewater's account are based largely upon the work of Walter Dill Scott, the most influential advertising theorist of the early-twentieth century, whose *The Theory and Practice of Advertising* (1903), and especially *The Psychology of Advertising* (1908), are the defining coordinations of these ascendant fields. Scott had been commissioned by the American advertiser John Mahin to apply psychology to advertising, and Mahin even set up his own journal, *Mahin's Magazine*, for Scott to publish his findings; it is from these articles that his books developed. That Scott had no illusions about the commercial nature of this work is suggested by his separation of his advertising research from his academic career at Northwestern University, choosing not to present his work on advertising in academic journals or conferences.<sup>25</sup> Bloom's aim "to arrest involuntary attention" is also Scott's—and Scott's sponsor's. Scott opens with the premise that "[h]uman choice has always been assumed to be unknown, to be the one indeterminable factor in the universe," and perfunctorily grants the individual a measure of free volition—"such things as decision, choice, voluntary actions, and all actions performed after consideration."<sup>26</sup> Pointing out that people may not always avail themselves of this faculty, Scott acknowledges the older assumption that "the advertiser finds it necessary to proceed logically and to appeal to the reason of his customer."<sup>27</sup> Yet this model of the consumer as a rational subject, coolly evaluating his or her needs and the respective qualities of the advertised product, is soon dropped. The advertiser's assumption that human choice is unassailable or unknowable is relegated to the past tense—"has always been"—and the advertiser who commissioned Scott's work is given the answer he wanted: the behaviour of the consumer can be predicted, and even controlled. The "insuperable obstacle" that had long stood in the way of the advertiser, the unpredictability of the human will, is now confined to the apparently deviant individual who commits suicide; for "[e]very normal individual," the "influence of

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<sup>25</sup> David W. Schumann and Edith Davidson, "Early Influences of Applied Psychologists on Consumer Response: 1895-1925," *Historical Perspectives in Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, ed. Laura L. Koppes (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2007) 269-70.

<sup>26</sup> Walter Dill Scott, *The Psychology of Advertising: A Simple Exposition of the Principles of Psychology in their Relation to Successful Advertising*, 5th ed. (1908; Cambridge, MA.: Small, Maynard, 1913) 116, 94.

<sup>27</sup> Scott, *The Psychology of Advertising*, 94.

suggestion” is strong enough to operate predictably, in a similar way to that of hypnosis, under which state “the subject holds every idea presented as true, and every idea suggested is acted out with no hesitation whatever.”<sup>28</sup> Scott devotes much of *The Psychology of Advertising* to an analysis of the will, and to the ways in which the advertiser might manipulate and circumvent its conscious application. Bridgewater picks up this new “science” of advertising, describing research into advertisement presentation that “arrests one’s attention more strongly than any other.”<sup>29</sup> When Joyce has Bloom refer to the “infinite possibilities hitherto unexploited” of advertisements that will “arrest involuntary attention,” he is thus allowing his protagonist to predict developments in advertising theory that would only be seriously underway by the end of the decade.

Bridgewater’s exposition of “the science of Psychology” is unscientific in comparison with Scott’s,<sup>30</sup> and there is no evidence of Joyce reading Scott’s work directly, although *The Psychology of Advertising* was also published in Britain by Isaac Pitman & Son, and advertised in Bridgewater’s book. But whether or not Joyce had direct access to *The Psychology of Advertising*, Bridgewater’s account opens with “special tribute” to Scott, and Joyce took careful notes from Bridgewater’s chapter on “The Psychology of Advertising,” which explicitly summarises Scott’s principles.<sup>31</sup> We can therefore say that at the very least, Joyce was aware of the claims being made by Scott about the new application of psychological techniques to advertisements. A closer examination of *Ulysses* shows that a number of the suggestions made by Bridgewater were carried forward into Joyce’s presentation of Bloom. Osteen has already identified several comments in Joyce’s “Advertising” notes that seem to be included or echoed in *Ulysses*. The most prominent of these is repetition, “the whole secret” of advertising according to Bloom (12.1147). Repetition was already an old technique, of course, and in the 1920s Charles Higham felt able to dismiss it as a trick that was discovered in the nineteenth century “by accident” before being “used by imitators with a certain sensational effect, until contempt and boredom was the outcome.”<sup>32</sup> However, it was also a technique that the advertising theorists ratified with a new, psychological justification. Considering repetition to be the “first principle” of impression, Scott asserts that “[t]he advertisement that is repeated over and over again at

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<sup>28</sup> Scott, *The Psychology of Advertising*, 116, 82.

<sup>29</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 13; details noted by Joyce *JJA* 3:605.

<sup>30</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 11.

<sup>31</sup> Bridgewater, preface, *Advertising*, v.

<sup>32</sup> Higham, *Advertising*, 12.

frequent intervals gradually becomes fixed in the memory of the reader.”<sup>33</sup> Joyce noted Bridgewater’s emphasis upon the “enormous” value of cumulative advertising, and Osteen takes Joyce’s note to indicate his cynicism.<sup>34</sup> Taken as it stands, Joyce’s comment—“Repetition. A liar believes a lie he has repeated” (*JJA* 3:605)—may indeed seem to be his own wry gloss on the subject, pointing up the disingenuousness of advertising. In fact, Joyce has merely condensed the example provided by Bridgewater: “The psychological effect of repetition is shown in one of its strongest forms in the fact that a man may repeat a lie so often as to believe it eventually to be the truth.”<sup>35</sup> If Joyce was cynical of the practice, that cynicism is nowhere evident in his notes.

Bridgewater quotes Scott’s argument that “[t]he power of any object to force itself into our attention depends on the absence of counter attractions.”<sup>36</sup> Joyce noted the phrase (*JJA* 3:605), and seems to apply the principle, for instance, in Bloom’s condemnation of the Barclay and Cook advertisement in ‘Ithaca.’ The boots which are the ostensible subject of this advertisement, the product which Barclay and Cook are trying to sell, are all but lost behind the irrelevant candle, which opens, closes and essentially constitutes the advertisement: “Look at this long candle. Calculate when it burns out and you receive gratis 1 pair of our special non-compo boots, guaranteed 1 candle power” (17.589-90). As Ian Gunn and Clive Hart have noted, this example is based on a real Barclay & Cook advertisement, printed in the *Evening Telegraph* for 17 June 1904.<sup>37</sup> With his fictional adaptation, Joyce minimises the references to the boots, which had in fact opened the original advertisement, and emphasises the candle. In thus exaggerating the counter-attraction at the expense of the advertisement’s subject, Joyce allows Bloom to demonstrate his facility with progressive theoretical developments. As a rule, Joyce has Bloom eschew such old-fashioned gimmicks. So when he sees the Hely’s sandwichmen filing past in the ‘Lestrygonians’ chapter, he is critical of this archaic (though not absolutely outmoded) technique: “Doesn’t bring in any business either” (8.130-31). That is not to say that Bloom is against newer gimmicks. He has suggested an “inkbottle [. . .] with a false stain of black celluloid” to Wisdom Hely (8.137-8), and he recognises that the “vogue of Dr Tibble’s Vi-Cocoa” is due to “the medical analysis involved” (16.805-6). And of course, the original advertising idea upon which Bloom dwells at most length in *Ulysses* is itself a gimmick—Bloom’s unappreciated idea of “a transparent

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<sup>33</sup> Scott, *The Psychology of Advertising*, 10-11.

<sup>34</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 17; Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 124.

<sup>35</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 17.

<sup>36</sup> Scott, *Psychology*, 157; qtd. Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 12.

<sup>37</sup> Gunn and Hart, *James Joyce’s Dublin*, 18.

showcart with two smart girls sitting inside writing letters, copybooks, envelopes, blotting paper” (8.131-3). In line with the advice of contemporary advertising theorists such as Scott, and popularisers such as Bridgewater, the showcart advertisement would appeal, as Bloom recognises, to the facet of curiosity: “Everyone dying to know what she’s writing. Get twenty of them round you if you stare at nothing. [. . .] Curiosity” (8.134-6). The idea follows Bridgewater’s principle of “[t]he natural curiosity of a human being,” and the example given by Scott: “The individual is affected by every member of the crowd and the influence becomes so overpowering that it can hardly be resisted.”<sup>38</sup>

Scott’s and Bridgewater’s approval of repetition as technique, and curiosity as impulse, shows that they did not disavow the means of earlier advertisers. These are the kind of principles tacitly understood by progressive advertisers from an early stage, and there is nothing revolutionary in the utilisation of the techniques themselves. But the advertising theorists of the early-twentieth century were the first to articulate these techniques under the unifying classification of psychology—making them, as Higham put it in 1925, “scientific and verifiable”<sup>39</sup>—and it is in his agreement with these psychological justifications that Bloom appears to be a progressive advertiser. On the other hand, it is true that his transparent showcart would demonstrate deficiencies typical of the earlier Victorian devices, though not necessarily those that have been suggested in previous critical accounts. Osteen states that “even in 1904 traveling showcarts were hackneyed promotional gimmicks,”<sup>40</sup> basing the claim upon Richards’s dismissal in *Commodity Culture*: “Sometime in the 1830’s an enterprising advertiser hit upon the idea of parading big mock-ups of commodities around in carts, and by the 1840’s the streets of London were clogged with the effigies of things.”<sup>41</sup> This description sounds exaggerated, and probably is, since it is based on a satirical portrait made by Thomas Carlyle in 1843:

The Hatter in the Strand of London, instead of making better felt-hats than another, mounts a huge lath-and-plaster Hat, seven-feet high, upon wheels; sends a man to drive it through the streets; hoping to be saved *thereby*. He has not attempted to *make* better hats, as he was appointed by the Universe to do; [. . .] but his whole industry is turned to *persuade* us that he has made such!<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 13; Scott, *Psychology*, 82. Stephen incidentally gives weight to Bloom’s idea when he responds curiously to the woman he sees writing in the library: “Idly writing ...? What? .... Looked ...?” (9.1123).

<sup>39</sup> Higham, *Advertising*, 43.

<sup>40</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 134.

<sup>41</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 48.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present* (London, 1843) 177.

The repetition of Carlyle's sketch in the anecdotal histories of Victorian advertising has lent it the status of historical fact, which Richards and then Osteen have accepted, and which probably gives a distorted view. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that Bloom's is the kind of exaggerated scheme that lent itself well to such satirical treatment in the nineteenth century. Trollope's advertising enthusiast Robinson bankrupts his firm by spending the bulk of their capital on similar mobile advertisements, from his four "men in armour [. . .] who rode about town all day on four brewers horses" until "there was a slight accident with a child," to the "eight footmen in full livery, with powdered hair and gold tags to their shoulders," and the man "dressed as Fame, with a long horn, who had been driven about in a gilt car."<sup>43</sup> A transparent showcart would be a similarly extravagant outlay for the sale of stationery, and the impracticality of this early idea shows that Bloom is closer than he realises when he uses the example as proof that "originality, though producing its own reward, does not invariably conduce to success" (17.606-7). With its mixture of Victorian gimmickry and later psychological insight, Bloom's showcart idea stands on the threshold between the older, flamboyant methods of advertising, and the new, subtler approaches pushed by Scott, expounded by Bridgewater, and recorded by Joyce.

One of the most significant of the new psychological approaches was the recognition that the connotations carried by an advertisement are at least as important as its advertisement's literal or denotative message. Merle Curti has historicised this crucial shift, tracing changes of emphasis in the American advertising journal *Printers' Ink*. Curti argues that in the earlier stage—roughly 1890-1910—editorials tended to be characterised by a belief in the "dominant rationalistic image of man." In this period, the "misleading sensationalism" involved in the "circus-like advertisements" of the earlier decades was increasingly renounced; most contributors "emphasized the basically rational, logical, and sensible qualities of man," and agreed that "the keys to human nature are rationality and a rational understanding of self-interest."<sup>44</sup> As Curti points out, this model was consistent with classical economic theory. Advertisers in this earlier period would detail, as Leiss, et al., put it, "first price, then function, craftsmanship, durability, and benefits, that is, all the reasons why one should buy, in order to make some estimation of the product's worth in terms of one's own priorities."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Anthony Trollope, *The Struggles of Brown, Jones and Robinson: By One of the Firm* (London, 1870) 49, 53.

<sup>44</sup> Merle Curti, "The Changing Concept of 'Human Nature' in the Literature of American Advertising," *The Business History Review* 41:4 (1967): 338-40.

<sup>45</sup> Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising*, 121.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, however, Scott and other theorists placed this rational model of the consumer under increasing strain. As Curti argues, there was “a minority of writers” who argued that instead of contenting themselves with providing information, advertisers should try to engender new desires in consumers. This minority privileged emotion over reason as the key motivator of human action, and, with increasing acceptance, advertising theorists began to “represent man as universally vain, prejudiced, and eager for compliments, and, even in the case of the most sensible, susceptible to flattery.”<sup>46</sup> In this model, consumers were thus liable to act against reason and even against their self-interest. In Curti’s analysis, it was the period between roughly 1910 and 1930 that “saw a majority of advertising experts accepting the non-rationality of human nature.”<sup>47</sup> David W. Schumann and Edith Davison, in their review of the changes in applied psychology in this period, agree: “Although the rational school was dominant during the 1890s and 1900s, by 1910 it was supplanted by the nonrational perspective.”<sup>48</sup> Of course, as Leiss, et al., point out, the division of advertising theory into such neat stages of development—1890-1910 and 1910-1930—implies a distinctness which would not have been felt in reality; these different attitudes developed at different rates in different places, even varying between the particular products that were being advertised, and according to their likely buyers.<sup>49</sup> Yet the impact of Scott’s publication of *The Psychology of Advertising* in 1908 should not be underestimated, and with the proviso of Leiss, et al., acknowledged, it is reasonable to take 1910—the year in which Bridgewater published *Advertising or the Art of Making Known*, and thus the earliest point at which Joyce could have taken his “Advertising” notes—as an approximate watershed between the older, rational model of advertising, and the newer model, in which the appeal is considered to be essentially irrational.<sup>50</sup>

With this watershed in mind, Joyce’s “retrospective arrangement” of Dublin’s advertising scene, mediated by his annotation of Bridgewater’s book, is more complicated than it at first appears. Joyce composed his novel between 1914 and 1921, when advertisements, both in theory and in practice, were designed according to deliberately psychological principles that modelled the consumer as essentially irrational and

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<sup>46</sup> Curti, “The Changing Concept of ‘Human Nature,’” 340-1.

<sup>47</sup> Curti, “The Changing Concept of ‘Human Nature,’” 347.

<sup>48</sup> Schumann and Davidson, “Early Influences of Applied Psychologists,” 266.

<sup>49</sup> Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, *Social Communication in Advertising*, 123.

<sup>50</sup> A fuller study would need to test this approximate dating against contemporary Irish advertisements. It is possible to find examples in the Irish press of both “rational” and “irrational” advertisements either side of 1910, but this change in advertising, as with any historical shift, occurred with significant overlap. I have therefore considered selective evidence to be essentially meaningless without the accompanying analysis of a larger sample, which is beyond the scope of this thesis.



manipulable. Yet he set the novel in 1904, at which time advertisers still largely adhered to the classical model of the rational and sovereign consumer, even as they distanced themselves from the gimmickry of the nineteenth century. The effects of other major recent social shifts upon Joyce's retrospective representation of 1904—the Great War, for instance—have been investigated in some detail.<sup>51</sup> Yet while no previous study of Joyce and advertising has acknowledged the fact, *Ulysses* also straddles the most important watershed in the history of advertising—and therefore, perhaps, in the history of consumer capitalism. It remains to be seen that this specific historical shift explains the blurring of Joyce's representation, with Bloom's ideas looking full into the future, even as his practice remains fixed in the past.

### **“To arrest involuntary attention”: Cognition and Connotation in Advertising Theory**

The foundation of this new emphasis upon irrationality in advertising theory was the acceptance of the primacy of unconscious over conscious motivations in human action. Scott was explicit on this point:

[W]e think that we are performing a deliberate act when we purchase an advertised commodity, while in fact we may never have deliberated on the subject at all. The idea is suggested by the advertisement, and the impulsiveness of the human nature enforces the suggested idea, hence the desired result follows in a way unknown to the purchaser.<sup>52</sup>

In its more practical aspect—and both Scott and Bridgewater insist that it is this aspect with which they are concerned—the privileging of unconscious motivations in consumer behaviour brought advertising theorists to exhort advertisers to seek an emotional rather than a calculating response. Bridgewater says that “any advertisement [. . .] can be made [. . .] to make you sad, or cause a smile, induce sweet recollections, or raise pleasant anticipations; it may make you conscious of the stern realities and dangers of life, or call to mind your duty to those dependent upon you.”<sup>53</sup> He is drawing upon a passage from Scott:

Anything will be remembered which awakens our emotions, whether the thing be ugly or beautiful, whether it causes us to smile or to sympathize with the sorrows of others. That which excites an emotion is not easily forgotten, and

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<sup>51</sup> For a discussion of *Ulysses* in the context of the Great War, see Fairhall, *James Joyce and the Question of History*, 161-213.

<sup>52</sup> Scott, *The Psychology of Advertising*, 83.

<sup>53</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 19.

hence is a good form of advertising, if it can convince the reason at the same time that it stimulates the feelings.<sup>54</sup>

Although the emphasis here is clearly upon the emotions, the persistence of the rational model can be seen in the assumption that an emotional appeal must nevertheless also “convince the reason.” In this transitional phase of advertising theory, there is a discernible tension in the two modes of rationality and irrationality. Scott’s premise depends upon the ascription of some rational basis to advertising—how else is the advertiser to plan his campaign strategically and effectively? Yet at the same time, it depends upon an equal ascription of irrationality: advertising will work upon the individual unconsciously, circumventing rational reflection or conscious choice.

We could perhaps try to resolve this contradiction by remembering the commercial origins of Scott’s research: advertising theory is “sold” as a secret, a “magic system” as Raymond Williams calls it in his essay of that title, and the rational advertiser is offered initiation so as to be able to influence the irrational consumer. Within the discourses of the advertising industry itself, however, the contradiction was increasingly resolved along traditionally gendered lines. As Rachel Bowlby has briefly argued, the rational and the irrational models of the consumer were split in advertising discourse, with the rational consumer (and advertiser) figured as male, and the irrational, pliable consumer figured as female.<sup>55</sup> Joyce engages quite carefully with these gendered models of consumerism in the ‘Nausicaa’ episode; in chapter 6 I will consider some of the ways in which Joyce’s representation of Gerty MacDowell both reflects and challenges male-determined stereotypes of female consumption. In the ‘Nausicaa’ episode, however, the focus is on the figure of the consumer. With Bloom, the focus is also on the figure of the producer. Joyce’s exposure to, and incorporation of, later advertisements and advertising theory mean that this tension between rational and irrational models of consumption is reflected in the advertising insights and blind-spots that he gives to his protagonist.

The tension between rationality and irrationality, manifested in advertising theory, is neither peculiar to Scott’s work, nor the result of it. In fact, as will be seen, the contradiction stems not from advertising theory at all, but rather from a broader tension between contrasting and even antithetical schools within contemporary psychology. In any case, from around the time of Scott’s *The Psychology of Advertising*, there was a general shift in the

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<sup>54</sup> Scott, *The Psychology of Advertising*, 17.

<sup>55</sup> Rachel Bowlby, *Shopping with Freud* (London: Routledge, 1993) 18-34.

advertising industry towards what Bowlby has described as the “romantic” model of the consumer—“the consumer as dupe or victim or hedonist or any combination of these, infinitely manipulable and manipulated by the onslaughts of advertising.”<sup>56</sup> It was this theoretical shift that both articulated and allowed for the full repertoire of intentionally affective advertising methods with which we are now well-familiar, as Curti points out:

Merchandising techniques, techniques to appeal to various non-rational impulses, now received the emphasis. Advertising and the sales plan became linked in an effort to utilize these nonrational impulses. Thus advertising was to operate by suggestion, the use of forceful concrete details and pictures, by attention-arresting stimuli, by playing on human sympathy, and by appeals to the senses. These non-rational appeals became the stock-in-trade of the advertising man.<sup>57</sup>

Bloom’s ideas are much closer to the new “stock-in-trade” here described by Curti—“attention-arresting stimuli” sounding very much like Bloom’s wish “to arrest involuntary attention”—than to the older, gimmicky methods described in the previous section. Joyce projects back on to Bloom a tacit understanding of the “irrational” model of consumerism that was not, in 1904, widespread. In part, this projection may be explained by the fact that when Joyce was composing *Ulysses*, he would simply have been more familiar with the post-Scott advertisements, with their “techniques to appeal to various non-rational impulses,” and indeed, Joyce includes within the novel advertisements that are based on historical analogues from the late 1910s and early 1920s.<sup>58</sup> And while Joyce emphasises the connotational aspects of advertisements, this need not be attributed entirely to his study of advertising theory in his “Notes on Business and Commerce”; Joyce was always unusually sensitive to the undertones of language, and it would be too much to argue that it was only his reading of Bridgewater that allowed this sensitivity to be extended to advertisements. And there were no doubt advertisements prior to 1908 which, if in an isolated and unsystematic fashion, pre-empted the theoretical advances in advertising put forward by Scott and popularised by Bridgewater. Nevertheless, Joyce’s notes from this book provide a concrete site within which his engagement with this significant emergent practice may be measured; and if nothing else, his

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<sup>56</sup> Bowlby, *Shopping with Freud*, 98-9.

<sup>57</sup> Curti, “The Changing Concept of ‘Human Nature,’” 347.

<sup>58</sup> With the ongoing digitalisation of newspaper archives, the sources for Joyce’s advertisements are increasingly traceable. To give two recent examples, “eyebrowline” (13.111) and “The Wonderworker” (17.1819), shown in *Ulysses* to have been advertised some time prior to 16 June 1904, have recently been traced to products advertised no earlier than 1916 and 1917, respectively. See Harald Beck, “Bewitching Eyes beneath a Well-drawn Eyebrow Line,” *James Joyce Online Notes* 2 (2012), 21 June 2012 <<http://jjon.org/joyce-s-environs/eyebrow-line>>; Robert Janusko, “That Wonder Worker,” *James Joyce Online Notes* 2 (2012), 1 July 2012 <<http://www.jjon.org/joyce-s-environs/wonderworker>>.

annotation of Bridgewater crystallised the changes that Joyce would have seen taking place around him.

The purpose of Bridgewater's analysis of the "huge frog depicted reading an announcement descriptive of the virtues of a largely advertised brand of coffee" is to criticise advertisements that give negative connotations to the product being sold. Bridgewater acknowledges the older, basic principle of advertising—"[t]o attract attention is good"—but privileges the newer principle of connotative awareness: "what of the impression left on the mind of the reader? If there is any potency in the association of ideas what is likely to be the effect of the association of a slimy frog with coffee? Ugh!"<sup>59</sup> His example may be crude, but it is essentially the same complaint that Joyce gives to Bloom about the "the association of ideas" of the Plumtree's Potted Meat advertisement: "What a stupid ad! Under the obituary notices they stick it [. . .] Dignam's potted meat" (8.743-5). Plumtree's would have had to pay a premium for its prominent positioning on the front page of the *Freeman's Journal*, and Joyce hereby depicts an advertiser adhering to the key rational advertising principle of the late-nineteenth century: a good position will draw attention. In fact, Joyce has taken some poetic license in this positioning; the only advertisements that seem to have been placed beneath the obituaries in the *Freeman's Journal* or *Evening Telegraph* in 1904 were those for funeral services.<sup>60</sup> In bringing the fictional Plumtree's Potted Meat advertisement into this inappropriate position, Joyce emphasises Bloom's progressive understanding of advertising theory: Bloom recognises the connotative error made by this placement of the potted meat advertisement in a position that would bring cadaverous associations to the mind of the prospective consumer. Through Bloom's objection, Joyce privileges the connotative or emotive concerns of early-twentieth-century advertising over the older, simpler principle of prominent positioning.

As Curti points out, and Bridgewater demonstrates, one of the major ways in which advertisers sought to elicit affect in readers of advertisements was through the use of images. As we saw in the previous chapter, although images had been employed with increasing frequency in the last decades of the nineteenth century, it was in the first decades of the

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<sup>59</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 24.

<sup>60</sup> For the *Evening Telegraph* of 16 June 1904, as a representative example, the three advertisements beneath the obituaries on the first page are for Waller's "FUNERAL REQUISITES OF EVERY DESCRIPTION," "LALOUETTE'S FUNERAL AND CARRIAGE ESTABLISHMENT" (cf. 1.214), and "FARRELL'S FUNERAL AND CARRIAGE ESTABLISHMENT." Only after these do other advertisements appear, starting with "THE MEATH BAKERY / MAINS FAMILY LOAF." The *Daily Express* for the same day likewise carries funeral advertisements after the front-page obituaries, although the advertisement that follows for Keating's insecticide is unfortunate: "Unrivalled Killer. / Unrivalled Killer. / Unrivalled Killer."

twentieth that images became general in advertisements. On June 16 1900, for example, the advertisements of the *Irish Daily Independent* did not include a single image across eight pages. A decade later, the *Irish Independent* was more far more visual, with fourteen images printed across ten pages, including a photograph advertisement on the front page.<sup>61</sup> The two advertisements which Bloom has suggested to Wisdom Hely, the transparent cart and the ink bottle with the false ink stain, are not image-based, but they are both strikingly visual; conversely, the advertisements of Hely's that Bloom criticises are both very much in the earlier, written mode. The first of Hely's advertisements puns on a colloquial meaning of the verb "lick," for "beat"—"You can't lick 'em. What? Our envelopes" (8.139-40)—clearly at the expense of literal sense, given the uselessness of an unlickable envelope in the days when they were still gum-sealed. The second situates the product within a short narrative exchange: "Hello, Jones, where are you going? Can't stop, Robinson, I am hastening to purchase the only reliable inkeraser *Kansell*, sold by Hely's Ltd, 85 Dame street" (8.141-2). Osteen misreads the passage, and supposes that this idea was Bloom's,<sup>62</sup> but it is in fact one of Wisdom Hely's "ideas for ads" that Bloom himself condemns (8.138). And rightly so: it could hardly be more generic. The characters are given stock British names (perhaps alluding to Trollope's *Brown, Jones and Robinson*) and the situation is completely arbitrary to the product being advertised. Indeed, the humour of Bloom's reflection on the advertisement consists in the utter irrelevance of both the product and Hely's street address to the scene, and while this adds to the comedy of 'Lestrygonians,' it could hardly be said to increase the attraction of the only reliable inkeraser. These are just the kinds of old advertising tricks against which the new advertising theorists argued, and once again Bloom's complaint echoes their arguments; as Scott put it, "[a]nything humorous or ridiculous—even a pun—is hard to forget. But unless the attempt is successful, the result is ludicrous and futile."<sup>63</sup>

That Bloom favours visual advertisements over narrative types is established early in the novel, when he critiques an advertisement for the Trinity College races:

College sports today I see. He eyed the horseshoe poster over the gate of college park: cyclist doubled up like a cod in a pot. Damn bad ad. Now if they had made it round like a wheel. Then the spokes: sports, sports, sports: and the hub big: college. Something to catch the eye. (5.550-54)

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<sup>61</sup> *Irish Independent* 18 June 1910.

<sup>62</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of "Ulysses,"* 135.

<sup>63</sup> Scott, *The Psychology of Advertising*, 16.

Osteen suggests that “[t]he germ for this poster probably dates back to Joyce’s 1906 ‘Notes on Business and Commerce,’”<sup>64</sup> and working from Joyce’s notes alone, the supposition is—incorrect dating aside—a reasonable one. Under the heading “Illustration,” Joyce wrote: “Bicycles: all the same: better to draw attention to one feature sectionally: interior” (*JJA* 3:605). However, comparison with Bridgewater’s original suggests that if this note is indeed the germ of the college sports poster, it has at least mutated. Osteen misreads “sectionally” as “pictorially”; the comparison of Joyce’s notes with Bridgewater’s text shows that Joyce has condensed Bridgewater’s phrase—“some particular, and possibly interior, feature of the article”—into the unusual adverb.<sup>65</sup> Bridgewater is referring specifically to the use of illustrations in print advertising to sell products that are visually indistinguishable from those of rival firms, pointing out that the use of generic side-on images of a product defeats the primary purpose of the illustration—to distinguish the advertised product from those of competitors, which were often printed on the same page. The college sports poster operates under no such conditions, since the advertiser has no bicycle to sell, and no competitors from which to distinguish itself. Osteen’s detailed and ingenious analysis of the college sports poster’s “semiotic economy” argues for its effectiveness in catching the eye, suggesting that in its iridic resemblance it stands as “a synecdoche of the viewer,”<sup>66</sup> and that “the viewer’s eyes range around and around the wheel, in a circuit that, unlike the race, could continue interminably, driven by a desire for completion that remains unfulfilled.”<sup>67</sup> Osteen is right to point out that the wheel idea is thus a decent example of Bloom’s sought “sole unique advertisement to cause passers to stop in wonder [. . .] reduced to its simplest and most efficient terms not exceeding the span of casual vision and congruous with the velocity of modern life” (17.1770-73). However, Osteen’s sophisticated appreciation notwithstanding, Bloom’s ideas are also rather limited—a point that can be brought out if we historicise the advertising theory Joyce drew upon in even more detail. With the college sports advertisement, Bloom only takes on the earliest developments in the new advertising theories regarding illustration; of the succeeding theories, which were to have the most decisive influence on the practice of advertising, he is left unaware. As will be seen, this unawareness stems from a deficiency in Bridgewater’s account.

Bloom’s summary of his modification of the college sports advertisement—  
 “Something to catch the eye” (5.554)—is the extent of his intention, and its centrality to his

<sup>64</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 140.

<sup>65</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 24.

<sup>66</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 138.

<sup>67</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 139.

conception of good advertising is indicated by his repetition of the principle to Councillor Nannetti regarding the Keyes advertisement: “Catches the eye, you see” (7.151). The purpose of illustrating advertisements had always been to “catch the eye,” and, like Bloom, the first wave of psychological advertising theorists, who preceded Scott, were concerned with developing techniques to enhance the efficacy of illustrations in this respect. E. W. Scripture and Harlow Gale, the few psychologists of the 1890s to consider their theories in relation to advertising, had concentrated primarily upon factors affecting perception, such as type-size, colour, positioning, and so on. Joyce was certainly aware of these developments from his study of *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known*. Bridgewater writes that “certain colours attract more attention than others, and one authority, Prof. Gale, has come to the conclusion that red arrests one’s attention more strongly than any other, green ranking second and black third.”<sup>68</sup> Joyce recorded these details fully (*JJA* 3:605), and it is notable that certain advertisements in *Ulysses* make use of red, the colour that Gale and Bridgewater specify as the most arresting: the Hely’s sandwichmen, for instance, bear “scarlet letters on their five tall white hats” (8.126). More strikingly still, in ‘Oxen of the Sun,’ we literally see Bloom’s attention arrested by a red label that has been expressly designed for that purpose:

During the past four minutes or thereabouts he had been staring hard at a certain amount of number one Bass bottled by Messrs Bass and Co at Burton-on-Trent [ . . . ] which was certainly calculated to attract anyone’s remark on account of its scarlet appearance. (14.1181-5)

Where Bridgewater notes that red will “attract more attention,” Joyce has the red Bass label “calculated to attract anyone’s remark.” His annotation of Bridgewater’s book was not for nothing, and his understanding of the key principles of the earlier stages of advertising theory is here demonstrated.

The fact that Bridgewater has himself recorded Gale’s research shows that the cognitive theories—how best to arrest attention—were not redundant by 1910. Nevertheless, they belong to the first stages in the psychological theories of advertising, consistent with the mentalist school of psychology that had dominated in the 1890s under the auspices of William James. The techniques investigated in this first stage were justified with reference to the key mentalist concept of ideomotor action—the potential for ideas to actuate involuntary physical response—and it is telling that the words “involuntarily” and “attentiveness” also

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<sup>68</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 13.

appear in the ‘Oxen’ passage referred to above (14.1192, 1196).<sup>69</sup> As Schumann and Davidson point out, from the turn of the century, the mechanistic, cognitive interest was increasingly subordinated to alternative theoretical schools. The first of these was behaviorism, which stressed the importance of habit, exercise and repetition as determinants of human behaviour. But it was dynamic psychology—influenced by Freud, and conceiving the instinct and the unconscious as the basic motivational drivers—that most significantly impacted theories of advertising. As Schumann and Davidson argue, Walter Dill Scott occupies a peculiar place within this transition from mentalism to dynamic psychology in advertising theory, for while Scott’s explanations tend to be “consistent with a mentalist outlook,” he nevertheless focuses upon “such notions of the unconscious as instincts, emotions, and interests”—concepts central to dynamic psychology.<sup>70</sup> Scott’s work on advertising, then, reflects broader shifts in the field of psychology, which “was transitioning from a mentalistic perspective, an ideational-cognitive explanation for unconscious phenomena, to the more dynamic notions of instinct and emotion.”<sup>71</sup> The fact that Bridgewater includes reference both to the fledgling dynamic psychologist Scott, and to his mentalist predecessor Gale, demonstrates the transitional nature of advertising theory at this time, and again supports the identification of 1910 as a turning point. Joyce accessed these very different theories through Bridgewater, who deployed them relatively indiscriminately, without indicating that one outmoded the other. The careful tracing of the “Advertising” section of the “Notes on Business and Commerce” allows us to see that the advertising ideas Joyce gives to Bloom pull in both directions of the new advertising theories—sometimes progressively dynamic, but sometimes reverting to the earlier mechanistic or cognitive stage.

As we have seen, it was the shift from a mentalist to a dynamic emphasis in psychological advertising that brought an increased attention to the emotional or connotative potentials of the use of images in advertisements. In practice, this theoretical interest was materially assisted by the introduction of half-tone process engraving in newspaper printing in 1911. In Ireland as in Britain and America, half-tone process engraving allowed the mass reproduction of photographic illustration in advertisement columns; it was from this time that advertised images really attained the level of sophistication that would enable Roland Barthes

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<sup>69</sup> For an account of the work of the early advertising psychologists in the context of the wider changes within theories of psychology, see D. P. Kuna, “The Psychology of Advertising, 1896-1916,” diss., U of New Hampshire, 1976.

<sup>70</sup> Schumann and Davidson, “Early Influences of Applied Psychologists,” 273.

<sup>71</sup> Schumann and Davidson, “Early Influences of Applied Psychologists,” 269.



in the 1960s to articulate his connotative “rhetoric of the image.”<sup>72</sup> As Daniel Boorstin put it in 1962:

Images from quite different contexts can coexist without contradiction because the message is not being communicated as a ‘rational argument’; they are meant rather to evoke the realm of ‘meaning’—and, since the symbols are only ‘suggestive’ (of whatever meaning may occur to the viewer), the ordinary rules of logical inference simply do not apply.<sup>73</sup>

While Bloom’s critique of the Plumtree’s positioning demonstrates a sensitivity to the importance of “suggestive” emotive or connotative elements of the psychologising turn in advertising, his envisaged wheel advertisement goes no further than the mechanistic or cognitive level. Although Bloom’s wheel might have been effective in catching the eye, it is hard to see—despite Osteen’s ingenious account—the potential for much connotative or emotive complexity in his college sports poster. In his reflections upon the use of images in advertising, therefore, Bloom’s application of the new psychological theories only goes so far; it applies the cognitive elements of the mentalist school, but not always the connotative or emotive advances of dynamic psychology.

The other key way in which the new advertising theories impacted on actual advertisements was in their condensation of language into slogans and short catchlines. Bridgewater’s advice is typical:

It has been determined that, ordinarily, the average person can attend to about four visual objects at the same time—as, for example, about four letters, pictures or words. [. . .] [T]he headline or catch line of an advertisement should not be longer than four words—preferably less. [. . .] [S]hort words are better than long.<sup>74</sup>

Bridgewater says that these figures are the result of “psychological study” from which “definite results have been obtained,”<sup>75</sup> and Joyce seems to accept the objectivity of the results in his notes: “Statistics show 4 visual limit. Headlines 4 limit” (*JJA* 3:605). We have already seen that Bloom is opposed to the retrogressive wordy and narrative-based advertisements of Hely’s, and although it is probably going too far to suggest that when Joyce has “Y lagging behind” from the “H.E.L.Y.S.” sandwichmen procession, he is comically

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<sup>72</sup> Oram, *The Advertising Book*, 32; Roland Barthes, “Rhetoric of the Image,” *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977) 32-51.

<sup>73</sup> Daniel Boorstin, *The Image, Or What Happened to the American Dream* (New York: Atheneum, 1962), qtd. Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, *Social Communication*, 60.

<sup>74</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 12.

<sup>75</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 12.

correcting the advertiser's literal excess (8.125-6), Bloom's acceptance is made explicit in 'Ithaca,' and the "4 limit" principle is even reduced: "the infinite possibilities hitherto unexploited of the modern art of advertisement" are said to depend upon the advertisement being "condensed in trilateral monoideal symbols" (17.580-82). Two examples of this principle are provided: "K. 11. Kino's 11/- Trousers" and "House of Keys. Alexander J. Keyes" (17.586-7). Of these, only "K. 11" literally exemplifies the "trilateral" condition: "House of Keys" is triverbal. But both examples apply Bridgewater's advice to the letter, using less than "about four letters, pictures or words," and, with the Keyes advertisement, using short, monosyllabic words.

As with his use of images, Bloom's primary purpose in this condensation is to gain attention. It is on this principle alone that "K. 11" may be supposed to work: with respect to Gifford's annotation describing the temperature of the Aldebaran star,<sup>76</sup> it is hard to imagine any real connotative value in these three characters. By contrast, the "House of Keys" headline hints towards this more progressive aspect of advertising psychology. Osteen's appreciation of "Bloom's characteristic visual cleverness" is somewhat marred by his incorrect assumption that "Bloom is the primary author" of the Keyes advertisement: we have seen that there is not a part of the Keyes advertisement of Bloom's own devising, since the headline and the image had both been used in Keyes's earlier advertisements.<sup>77</sup> We have also seen that Bloom justifies the crossed keys image to Nannetti by arguing its efficacy in catching the eye, which would put him only at the first level (cognitive rather than connotative) of the visual innovations of the advertising psychologists. However, Bloom provides a gloss to the function of the advertisement which may be considered his own—"You know, councillor, the Manx parliament. Innuendo of home rule" (7.149-50)—and it is this gloss that suggests his grasp of the new, connotative advertising techniques, even if he has not much opportunity to apply them.

It is quite true that the exploitation of nationalist sentiment in advertisements had existed before the advertising psychologists began to concentrate upon connotation. As Richards has shown, British advertisers fixed upon one national image after the other in the late-nineteenth century, from images of royalty in the reign of Victoria, to imperial strength in the heightened nationalist climate during the Boer War.<sup>78</sup> However, such advertisements usually employed an obvious and literal connection. When Pears' describe their soap as

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<sup>76</sup> Gifford, *"Ulysses" Annotated*, 479.

<sup>77</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of "Ulysses,"* 143, 144.

<sup>78</sup> Qtd. Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 122.

“THE FORMULA OF BRITISH CONQUEST,”<sup>79</sup> they make a direct and rational (if obviously hyperbolic) claim, with which the reader of the advertisement might well disagree. Furthermore, this claim might be expected to actively repel consumers who—like the nationalist Irish consumers often bombarded with these advertisements—may not have held much sympathy with imperial “conquest.”<sup>80</sup> The “House of Keys” innuendo, though still politically charged, could bring no such provocation. Osteen says that this advertisement “slyly exploits Ireland’s pervasive sense of dispossession and incompleteness,” offering “its own spurious fulfillment of Ireland’s ‘longfelt want’—political and economic home rule.”<sup>81</sup> The important difference between the Keyes advertisement and the Pears’ one just quoted, however, is that it exploits nationalist feeling without stating a direct claim. There is no explicit proposition against which the consumer can react, so the advertisement can neither alienate those consumers who oppose home rule, nor provoke indignation that a serious political cause is being cynically coerced to private ends. In other words, where the Pears’ soap advertisement makes use of only one of the techniques advanced by the psychological theorists—connotation—the Keyes copy also applies another—condensation—and thus produces an advertisement with all of the affective potency and none of the objections that might arise from what Boorstin describes as “the ordinary rules of logical inference.”

Positioning Bloom’s reflections upon advertising in the context of Joyce’s research into advertising theory between around 1910 and 1915, we can see that his faith in the “possibilities hitherto unexploited [. . .] of the modern art of advertising” is deliberately proleptic: by the time *Ulysses* was published, these possibilities were being increasingly exploited, and the various psychological principles proposed by Gale and Scott were being steadily integrated into organised campaigns by the now fully professionalised agencies. At times, Bloom’s ideas are limited to the earlier stage of psychological advertising theory, which focused upon cognition and the arrest of the attention. At other times—such as with his justification of the “House of Keys” headline, or his criticism of the positioning of the Plumtree’s Potted Meat advertisement—Bloom shows a tacit understanding of the later stages proposed by Scott, which emphasised the unconscious motivations of human action, and sought to affect the consumer through irrational but irresistible linguistic and pictorial

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<sup>79</sup> Rpt. in Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 122.

<sup>80</sup> British advertisers regularly appealed to British imperial pride, even in the Irish newspapers. An advertisement for Colman’s Mustard, for example, prominent in 1904, ran with the following copy: “Some big figures. The population of the British Empire is 396 millions, 26 per cent. of the total population of the world. There is no corner of the King’s vast dominions where Colman’s Mustard is not in constant daily use” (*Kilkenny People* 2 Jan. 1904: 2).

<sup>81</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of “Ulysses,”* 148.

connotations. The inconsistency of Bloom's understanding can be traced to Joyce's deployment of his intermediary source, Bridgewater's *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known*. Joyce has picked up without any obvious discrimination the overlaps and inconsistencies in Bridgewater's own popular condensation of the earlier cognitive theories of the likes of Gale, and the later connotative theories of Walter Dill Scott. Yet the inconsistency of Bloom's understanding is also pleasingly realistic, indicating the transitional nature of the advertising industry in the first decade of the twentieth century. In this period, as Leiss, et al., explain, the speculative techniques and approaches that "had been explored earlier by individuals working alone" were increasingly modified by the agencies "into an integrated technical strategy using the new psychology and statistics."<sup>82</sup> Bloom's inconsistently advanced advertising consciousness, although based upon theoretically anachronistic sources, thus plausibly reflects the outlook of an advertiser who intuitively pre-empted the direction of the practice. This aspect of Bloom's character is consistent with Joyce's representation of him as a Dubliner relatively unhindered by the nightmare of Irish history, looking forward to a more secular civic regeneration. Whatever Joyce's own experience of advertising, this sense of its ascendant fortune would also have been gained from his reading of *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known*. Bridgewater opens his book by listing the qualities of the ideal advertising man, which culminates in his use of one of Odysseus' epithets, "resourcefulness."<sup>83</sup> He ends his book, in a passage noted by Joyce, with a consideration of the industry's dignified and professional future (*JJA* 3:609-10). As Bloom declares to his subjects in the 'Circe' fantasy, "a new era is about to dawn" (15.1542).

In measuring Joyce's representation of advertising against both the historical standard of Dublin's industry in 1904, and the theoretical advances made in the decade that followed, we are able to say that *Ulysses* is doubly anachronistic. Joyce downplays the state of Dublin's 1904 advertising industry, removing most traces of the numerous agencies of which he must have been to some degree aware—whether from his experience growing up in the city, from his Volta experience with the agencies in 1909-10, or from the 1904 *Thom's* directory upon which he drew so heavily. The actual advertisements that Joyce places in 1904 Dublin are also often old-fashioned, based either upon rational claims—"Excellent for shade, fuel and construction" (4.193-4); "The best obtainable" (6.462); "the world's greatest remedy for rectal complaints" (17.1819-20)—or upon attention-grabbing techniques: "A procession of whitesmocked sandwichmen" (8.123); "Look at this long candle" (17.589). By contrast,

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<sup>82</sup> Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, *Social Communication*, 104.

<sup>83</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 2.

Joyce endows Bloom with a theoretical understanding that looks forward to (and derives from) developments in advertising theory that began to be felt only around 1910, the year in which Bridgewater published *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known*. Although Bloom's own participation in Dublin's advertising scene is severely limited, his outlook is progressive, with a prescient understanding of the connotative complexities of image and copy. *Ulysses*, then, reflects the transitional nature of the Irish, British and American advertising industries in the first decades of the twentieth century. We are able to say, for the first time with some certainty, that Joyce makes Bloom a progressive advertiser in an underdeveloped industry.

## Chapter 5

### *Ulysses* and the Ideology of Colonial Consumption

Joyce's representation of Dublin's advertising was coloured by his later experience, in and outside of Ireland. Nevertheless, we have seen that there is ample justification for referring to 1904 Dublin as a modern consumer culture. Not only did it operate with the key material conditions of consumerism—expendable income, mass-produced commodities, centralised retail, and developed transport—but its relatively developed advertising industry ensured the prominence of British and Irish commodities in the public consciousness. In Dublin, the political nature of Irish consumerism was continually emphasised in the radical nationalist press; newspapers such as the *United Irishman* and *The Leader* insisted that the consumption of British goods was inimical to national redevelopment. In *Ulysses*, however, this political dimension is never really articulated in the dialogue or interior monologue of Joyce's Dubliners. This is a curious fact, since many of Joyce's characters are shown to be otherwise pretty well aware of the ideological infiltrations of British rule, recognising a disjunction between the brute fact of colonial occupation, and the idealised claims of the imperial discourses and institutions that facilitate it. This disjunction between an exploitative material reality and a disavowing ideological justification is articulated in several striking scenes. It is such a recognition, for instance, that lies behind the citizen's commentary on the abuses of the "glorious British navy" (12.1346): while the "great empire they boast about" depends upon the labour "of drudges and whipped serfs" (12.1349-50), this material basis is hidden behind affirmations of an abstracted ideal of "civilisation" (12.1196). Similarly, Stephen undercuts the admittedly crude royalist ideals of the soldiers in 'Circe'—"I'll wring the neck of any fucker says a word against my fucking king" (15.4597-8)—by emphasising the material nature of the demand for Irish loyalty: "He wants my money and my life [. . .] for some brutish empire of his" (15.4568-70). In the same scene, Stephen says to the soldier about to strike him: "I have no king myself for the moment. This is the age of patent medicines" (15.4470-71). It may be that Stephen is here recognising the role of consumer goods in maintaining the "brutish empire" he opposes, suggesting that commerce has replaced the monarch as the symbol of Britain's control over Ireland. If so, it is the only such overt recognition in the novel.

In this chapter, I ask why Joyce—who in 1906 had praised the *Sinn Féin* "Buy Irish" policy as the best hope for Irish regeneration (*LII* 167)—leaves his fictional consumers so unaware of its premises. I argue that this apparent absence should be seen as one of Herr's

“silences” rather than an “omission.” To begin with, I argue that the blindness of Joyce’s characters to the political nature of their consumption is itself shown to be a particular effect of colonial consumerism. To illustrate this point, I focus upon a scene in which Bloom directly mouths the dominant British ideology in his contemplation of a single commodity. This is a minor scene, but it has major implications, establishing exactly the strength of an ideology that presents a contingent practice as natural and ineluctable.

### **“Made in Germany”: Imperial Competition and the Irish Consumer**

In the eighth chapter of *Ulysses*, Bloom is apparently looking for lunch, but—in a chapter connected by its Homeric parallel to the voraciously consuming Laestrygonians—he spends as much time contemplating the consumption of commodities as he does food. As he approaches Grafton Street (see fig. 1), Bloom stops to window-shop, and we follow his thoughts as they pass from the commodities in front of him, to his own requirements, to German trade expansion: “He crossed at Nassau street corner and stood before the window of Yeates and Son, pricing the fieldglasses. [. . .] Must get those old glasses of mine set right. Goerz lenses six guineas. Germans making their way everywhere. Sell on easy terms to capture trade. Undercutting” (8.551-6). As Gifford notes, Bloom’s generalisation is not entirely without historical warrant.<sup>1</sup> The shift in the German economy, from primarily agricultural in the mid-nineteenth century to primarily industrial at the outbreak of the First World War, was notoriously successful: between 1871 and 1914 Germany’s industrial production grew at three times the rate of Britain’s.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, Germany increased its share of the world market expeditiously, at least partly as a result of the state-subsidisation of certain German industries under the Kaiserreich.<sup>3</sup> What is surprising is that Bloom is in any way concerned with this expansion, for the aggressive exportation of German goods did not have much obvious bearing upon the Irish economy. It is true that in 1904, as the “Buy Irish” campaign continued to gather momentum, nationalist Irish consumers were increasingly discriminate in their purchases of foreign goods. Yet while there was the very occasional mention in the nationalist press of German goods in Ireland,<sup>4</sup> these did not tend to comment upon German economic practice so much as the questionable commitment of the Irishmen

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<sup>1</sup> Gifford, “*Ulysses*” *Annotated*, 174.

<sup>2</sup> Hans-Joachim Braun, *The German Economy in the Twentieth Century: The German Reich and the Federal Republic* (London: Routledge, 1990) 19-20.

<sup>3</sup> Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire 1871-1918* (Leamington Spa: Berg, 1985) 47-51.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Griffith’s editorial in *United Irishman* 11 June 1904: 4.

who were tempted to buy them. Even a cursory flick through the advertising sections of contemporary Irish newspapers show English goods to be far and away the dominant force against which the “Buy Irish” movement had to contend.

If Bloom’s is not a particularly Irish concern, it is certainly British, as a 1903 editorial in the London *Times* suggests:

Thirty-three years have elapsed to-day since modern Germany emerged decisively triumphant from the ordeal of war [ . . . ] and took her place definitely amongst the Great Powers of the world. [ . . . ] Within little more than three decades Germany, whose trade and industry we were then apt to regard as negligible quantities, has not only become the chief European competitor of this country in the trade of the world, but in some directions has actually surpassed it.<sup>5</sup>

It was the “trade of the world” in which imperial Britain had an interest. In the same year, the Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain sought to block the inroads that Germany had made into the British colonial market, by consolidating the British Empire through trade. In a controversial and divisive speech given in Bingley Hall on 15 May 1903, Chamberlain proposed tariffs upon German goods that were entering Canada and thus affecting British imperial trade:

At the present moment the Empire is being attacked on all sides, and in our isolation we must look to ourselves. We must draw closer our internal relations, ties of sentiment, ties of sympathy yes, and ties of interest. [ . . . ] [I]f we do not take every chance in our power to keep British trade in British hands, I am certain that we shall deserve the disaster which will infallibly come upon us.<sup>6</sup>

The martial rhetoric is explicit in Chamberlain’s speech, and if Britain’s government and press took the German threat seriously, so too did its subjects. Letters published in the *Times* frequently express this public concern. “At the present time Great Britain is being driven out of the Colonial market day after day by cheaper foreign-made goods,” wrote one contributor in August 1903. Bringing attention to the slippage of British trade in Australia, he offered figures to justify his concern: “In the year ended December 31, 1901, the State of New South

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<sup>5</sup> *Times* 2 Sep. 1903: 7.

<sup>6</sup> G.A. Vince, *Mr Chamberlain’s Proposals: What They Mean and What We Shall Gain from Them* (London: Grant Richards, 1903) 13.



Wales imported pianos to the number of 3,766. [. . .] Of these 3,170 [. . .] were made in Germany and only 29 [. . .] were from Great Britain.”<sup>7</sup>

Such agitation had been mounting for at least a decade. In 1896 the author and barrister Ernest Edwin Williams published *Made in Germany*, in which he attempted to bring the English nation “alive to the impending danger” of German competition.<sup>8</sup> While his protectionist stance drew much criticism, Williams was successful in his aim. The book was immensely popular, going through five runs in eight months, and it contributed greatly to the popular British anti-German sentiment which underlies Bloom’s comments about the Goerz lenses. Williams warned that England “must discriminate against Germany. For Germany has entered into a deliberate and deadly rivalry with her, and is battling with might and main for the extinction of her supremacy.”<sup>9</sup> Here, Williams’s characteristically sensational, even violent language is combined with the oversimplification—duplicated by Bloom—that the German government was subsidising all industries in order to “undercut” international competition. Bloom’s idea that the Germans “sell on easy terms to capture trade” follows Williams’s assertion that the Germans “are even supplying the foreigner with German goods *at a loss*, that they may achieve their purpose in the end.”<sup>10</sup> Certainly Bloom’s language is far less coloured than Williams’s, but his word “capture” still holds the pejorative connotations of sneakiness or underhandedness that characterise Williams’s far cruder portrayal of insidious machination (“their purpose”). So too with Bloom’s sense of the “Germans making their way everywhere.” Williams extends this generalisation to the point of farce, at one point challenging the “Gentle Reader” to survey his surroundings for evidence of the “Made in Germany” stamp: “Roam the house over, and the fateful mark will greet you at every turn.” After several pages itemising the reader’s surroundings, Williams ends with a flourish:

You go to bed, and glare wrathfully at a text on the wall; it is illuminated with an English village church, and it was ‘Printed in Germany.’ If you are imaginative and dyspeptic, you drop off to sleep only to dream that St. Peter (with a duly stamped halo round his head and a bunch of keys from the Rhineland) has refused you admission into Paradise, because you bear not the Mark of the Beast upon your forehead, and are not of German make. But you console yourself with the thought that it was only a Bierhaus Paradise any way; and you are awakened in the morning by the sonorous brass of a German band.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *Times* 18 Aug. 1903: 8.

<sup>8</sup> Ernest Edwin Williams, *Made in Germany*, 5th ed. (London, 1897) 1.

<sup>9</sup> Williams, *Made in Germany*, 8.

<sup>10</sup> Williams, *Made in Germany*, 10.

<sup>11</sup> Williams, *Made in Germany*, 10-11.

Bloom's comment, then, about the "Germans making their way everywhere," is very much a British complaint, epitomised in this extract from *Made in Germany*. The phrase "Made in Germany" recurs in Joyce's work, and it must be noted that the phrase was used without obvious reference to Williams's famous book.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the reflection which Joyce gives to Bloom has all of the hallmarks of the British anti-German sentiment that Ernest Edwin Williams both preserved and promulgated.

According to Frank Budgen, Joyce did not believe that the English hated the Germans, even in the enmity of war, but "looked on them as belonging to the same family, cousins perhaps, who were doing pretty well for themselves, maybe a bit too well, on the mainland of Europe."<sup>13</sup> It is true that not all English citizens wrote against German trade incursions in such offensive terms as Williams. In the same year that *Made in Germany* was published, one "C. J. H." of the Oxford and Cambridge Club wrote to the *Times* concerning perceived international hostility against English trade, and while he accepts the inevitable animosity of various rival powers, he asks: "What of the Germans, sprung from the same stock, with whom we have never had any serious disagreement, and with whom as a nation we have undoubtedly much in common? With them, if with no others, we might have expected to remain on a friendly footing."<sup>14</sup> Joyce's emphasis upon the family link is here sustained, yet if he was right to say that the English did not as a rule "hate" the Germans, the fact remains that Williams's rhetorical call to arms became literal in the event of the Great War. It was in wartime that Joyce wrote the 'Lestrygonians' chapter; references to the economic factors and attitudes that had contributed to that war must at the very least be read as instances of dramatic irony. But there is also a more specific local significance in Joyce's placement of a particularly English concern in the thoughts of his Irish protagonist.

The Goerz lenses scene demonstrates the ideological mediation between the individual and the commodity in a relatively straightforward moment: Joyce forces into Bloom's interior monologue an undigested chunk of British imperial discourse. It might be supposed that Bloom's identification is nothing more than a psychological set-piece, part of

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<sup>12</sup> The phrase appears twice in *Ulysses*: once in ironic reference to German Shakespearean scholarship (9.766), and once in ironic reference to the German ancestry of the English royal family (15.4455). It was evidently used outside of its trade context long before 1904. Williams himself, in 1896, notes that it was already "raw material for a jape at the pantomime" (1), and its usage in *Portrait* as a mob jibe against the Protestant faith indicates its common usage in Catholic Ireland (*P* 30). On 15 May 1901 the nationalist MP Tim Healy amused the House of Commons with his reference to "the Lutheran and made-in-Germany religion" (rept. *Times* 16 May 1901: 13).

<sup>13</sup> Budgen, *James Joyce*, 358.

<sup>14</sup> *Times* 8 Jan. 1896: 11

Joyce's characterisation of his protagonist: Bloom, in connection with his trade as an advertising agent, is particularly sensitive to the details of commodities in general, and it is therefore second nature for him to identify, among other things, the country from which a product originates. While such a reading would not explain the pejorative undertones of Bloom's reflection, it would at least find some textual support. As we have seen, Bloom's window shopping in 'Lestrygonians' gives a sense of some of the rich commodities that would have been on display to Irish consumers in 1904: "He passed, dallying, the windows of Brown Thomas, silk mercers. Cascades of ribbons. Flimsy China silks. A tilted urn poured from its mouth a flood of bloodhued poplin. [. . .] The huguenots brought that here" (8.620-24). It is indeed the details of importation that Bloom registers in this passage: the Chinese silk, the origins of the Irish poplin industry with the Huguenot immigrants of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is true too that Bloom has an eye for foreign ingredients: as he pauses at the old applewoman's cart, Bloom notes that it is "Australians they must be" (8.71); he desires specifically Italian olives (8.758), puts a Spanish onion in his imaginary recipe (8.761), and remembers that Molly preferred Malaga raisins (8.24). Bloom even recalls the national origin of the soap that he had used to bathe his daughter some ten years previous: "American soap I bought: elderflower" (8.172).

Yet with the possible exception of the American soap, these are all unbranded commodities. Indeed, their appeal lies in the apparently natural excellence of their respective national origins: silk was first developed in China, Australian apples are in season, olives grow abundantly in Italy, and so on. While the consumption of these products is still ideologically mediated, they are prized for their "naturalness." With mass-made commodities, by contrast, the artificiality is self-evident. One thing that the brand name attempts to do is to overwrite the material contingency of the commodity—if not attaining "naturalness," at least conveying a sense of fixedness and permanence. For example, when Bloom passes the "Rover cycleshop" on Westmoreland Street, the effect of this quintessentially English brand is to bring his thoughts to a bike race that is to be held there in Dublin (8.156). The English product has been naturalised: a foreign commodity, the presence of which in Dublin is contingent upon British industrial strength and the trade benefits of colonialism, is not distinguished from domestic activity. Trevor Williams has argued that "[t]hroughout *Ulysses* Bloom is both immersed in ideology (the status quo is the only imaginable reality; what you see is what you get) and simultaneously able to step outside and appraise it." The example Williams gives, where Bloom defamiliarises the Royal endorsement of Graham Lemon's sweetshop (8.4), is convincing; in this instance, as

Williams argues, “[t]he sweetshop window is ‘natural,’ a part of the landscape and without complication, until Bloom ‘refuses’ to accept it as it is.”<sup>15</sup>

However, a broader survey of the novel shows that, in the context of consumerism, Bloom is more fully “immersed in ideology” than Williams recognises. In a narrative full of British commodities, there are only two that Bloom himself registers as English—“Where was that ad some Birmingham firm the luminous crucifix” (8.18-20), and “that English invention,” the Wonderworker (15.3274-5)—and neither of these are products that Bloom has seen in the Dublin shops. Indeed, these particular geographical specifications seem to be above all satirical. In the first instance, Joyce is perhaps pointing towards the Edwardian taste for kitsch interior decoration, or the willingness of English firms to commercially exploit the popular Catholic Irish devotion to religious iconography. I have been unable to find the luminous crucifix advertised in the Irish press in 1904, but in 1916 an English company, M. Chapman and Co., proclaimed in the *Irish Independent* that “[e]very Catholic should be in possession of a Luminous Crucifix,” offering their sale at 1s. 9d each, with postage paid.<sup>16</sup> With the Wonderworker, Joyce is perhaps gesturing towards the British “cloacal obsession” (7.493), or to the comic incongruity between the ideal of technological innovation and the physical crudeness of its end. In the *Dublin Diary*, Stanislaus deplors “scientific inventions” for their “pampering of an artificial want.” He singles out “such sensual aids as Herbert Spencer’s ear-caps” for particular condemnation: “they seem to me most revoltingly mean and undignified. And to Jim, too, I have forced him to admit. [. . .] [T]here is a great disproportion between the end effected and the means taken.”<sup>17</sup> Joyce’s mockery of the Wonderworker may well stem from a similar distaste; the advertisement for the product in *Ulysses* is rather explicit about the end effected, not to say affected: “Insert long round end” (17.1833). Certainly neither of these inventions bespeak British imperial might.

These instances aside, the national origin of the many English products that he encounters is unremarked by Bloom; they are “just there,” the seemingly natural stock of Irish shops. In great contrast, when Bloom encounters the branded lenses of Goerz in the window of Yeates & Son, his instantaneous reaction is one of resistance. The contingency of the commodity’s presence in Dublin instantly springs to mind, and Bloom at once registers the lenses as foreign: “Germans making their way everywhere. Sell on easy terms to capture

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<sup>15</sup> Williams, *Reading Joyce Politically*, 171.

<sup>16</sup> *Irish Independent* 13 Nov. 1916: 6. M. Chapman and Co. also had Irish competitors for this market: in 1914, for example, D. O’Connell and Co., of Fade Street, Dublin, advertised themselves as the sole manufacturers of “THE WONDERFUL AND MYSTERIOUS LUMINOUS CRUCIFIX,” which they supplied at prices ranging from 5s. to 10s. 6d., depending on size (*Connacht Tribune*, 14 Feb. 1914: 1).

<sup>17</sup> Stanislaus Joyce, *The Dublin Diary*, 49.

trade. Undercutting” (8.555-6). And as I have argued, this recognition of, and resistance to the foreignness of the Goerz lenses is the register of a British imperial discourse that figures non-British products as unnatural and unfairly placed. Duffy, in his discussion of consumerism in *Ulysses*, argues that “the fetishized product [. . .] proceeds to bully, in various ways, the native would-be consumer. [. . .] He or she must be violently coerced into being a consumer.”<sup>18</sup> While Duffy’s assertion may arguably fit the anthropomorphised commodities of the section from ‘Circe’ he analyses, it surely does not fit the wider presentation of consumption that *Ulysses* allows. It does not take into account the insidious naturalisation of brand names by advertising, and it does not recognise that coercion is most effective when it is silent—when the consumer does not realise that he or she is being coerced.

The exploitative nature of an ideology which presents English products as inevitable and natural in a colonial market is laid bare in *Made in Germany*. Williams writes that “[t]here was a time when our industrial Empire was unchallenged. [. . .] Her industrial dominion was immense, unquestioned, unprecedented in the history of the human race; and not unnaturally we have come to regard her rule as eternal.”<sup>19</sup> On the one hand, the illusoriness of the Empire’s claim to universality is here admitted—necessarily so, since that claim is acknowledged to have been challenged. On the other hand, since Williams’s point is that this threatened interruption of the Empire’s “eternal” industrial rule must be overcome—England “must discriminate against Germany” so that the Empire’s “industrial dominion” may once again be “unquestioned”<sup>20</sup>—the claim to universality is ultimately upheld. Certainly Williams does not attempt to provide a defence for this imperial claim, nor to particularly gloss over the exploitative conditions upon which the Empire’s supremacy depended:

There is scarce a nation—certainly not one of any importance—which does not come to England to buy goods sent in for sale from elsewhere. She sells those nations hams from her Colonies, coffee from Arabia, gloves from France, currants from Greece, cotton from America. [. . .] In this retail business, also, the Germans are setting themselves to beat us; and South Americans are already buying their Irish linen through Hamburg houses.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Duffy, *The Subaltern “Ulysses”* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1994) 155.

<sup>19</sup> Williams, *Made in Germany*, 7-8.

<sup>20</sup> Williams, *Made in Germany*, 8.

<sup>21</sup> Williams, *Made in Germany*, 8.

The source of the outrage for Williams is that Irish linen, which, of course, he considers to belong to the national product of Britain (he elsewhere writes of “the total declared value of British and Irish produce exported from the United Kingdom”<sup>22</sup>) is not in all cases being sold profitably by English merchants. Williams’s account of English goods brings to mind Joyce’s amusing description of the famous “full English” breakfast—“Danish bacon, Irish eggs, American sugar, French milk, Canadian marmalade, Scotch porridge, New Zealand butter, Dutch toast” (*LI* 239)—but what is interesting about this passage is that Williams indirectly discloses the economic advantage that England gained from its colonisation of Ireland. Article 6 of the Union settlement of 1800 ensured that, as the Chief Secretary Lord Castlereagh put it, “the counties of Ireland should be like so many English counties, and goods pass from the one to the other without interruption.”<sup>23</sup> In other words, the English would no longer have to pay a tax to ship raw materials from Ireland; and as Irish merchants would no longer have to pay a tariff on goods imported from England (the last of these protective tariffs was annulled in 1821), they would eventually be encouraged to buy mass-produced English commodities, which were cheaper than the more labour intensive equivalents produced on home soil.<sup>24</sup> In this situation, Irish producers could hardly compete. This trade dynamic is crucial to the imperial drive recorded by Williams: England had untaxed access to an abundance of cheap raw materials, and a new market for export goods. So it was that the produce and livestock of Ireland continued to be shipped to England—both for domestic consumption, and for the kind of international retail that Williams celebrates above—even during the Great Famine.<sup>25</sup>

### **English Commodities in the Irish Home**

Bloom’s perception of the commodities that surround him suggests that British commodities were naturalised in the Irish economy. Joyce drives this point home in his picture of their silent infiltration of Irish domestic space. In the ‘Ithaca’ episode, Joyce moves away from the mimetic representation of Bloom’s consciousness, and provides what appears at first sight to

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<sup>22</sup> Williams, *Made in Germany*, 20.

<sup>23</sup> Qtd. Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 44.

<sup>24</sup> Kennedy, Giblin, and McHugh, *The Economic Development of Ireland*, 18.

<sup>25</sup> The traditional populist assumption that the British government could have completely prevented the Famine, had it temporarily blocked Irish exportation, has been effectively disproved by a number of Famine scholars, including P. M. Austin Bourke and Cormac Ó Gráda. They nevertheless confirm that such measures could have saved lives. See P. M. Austin Bourke, “The Irish Grain Trade, 1839-40,” *Irish Historical Studies* 20:78 (1976): 165; Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland Before and After the Famine: Explorations in Economic History, 1800-1925*, 2nd ed. (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1993) 123.

be an objective anatomy of the Blooms' home. The most striking thing about the chapter is the sheer quantity of information about the objects and commodities within 7 Eccles Street. Jameson has argued that one of the unique things about this chapter is the way in which "everything seemingly material and solid in Dublin itself can presumably be dissolved back into the underlying reality of human relations and human praxis."<sup>26</sup> He astutely perceives that our habits of criticism are not geared toward such interpretation, and that therefore Bloom's preparation of cocoa in the 'Ithaca' chapter is "boring," because such objects as the "blue enamelled saucepan" and the "black iron kettle" (17.158-9) "are contingent and meaningless in their instrumental form." As Jameson recognises, dominant critical assumptions leave these objects "recuperable for literature only at the price of being transformed into symbols"<sup>27</sup>; so it is that Plumtree's Potted Meat has been valued in various exegeses as symbolic of a multitude of sexual, existential and political peculiarities, but rarely as a commodity that is produced and sold as part of a capitalist and colonial economy. For the remainder of this chapter, at the risk of dwelling upon the boring, I eschew the symbolic reading that has dominated most previous discussions of the commodities of 'Ithaca.' Tracing the commodities that Joyce places in Bloom's home back to "the underlying reality of human relations and human praxis," as Jameson recommends, I argue that Joyce encodes an extraordinarily full plan of Irish colonial consumerism within the itemisations of the 'Ithaca' chapter. As will be seen, however, this plan is far from straightforward. And this catechistic chapter at times demands that we ask some questions back.

Steven Connor suggests that "[o]ne of the obsessions of the 'Ithaca' chapter is with tracing household objects to their manufacturers and retail suppliers, which sets Bloom's house in an interestingly mixed network of Irish and Jewish commerce."<sup>28</sup> The premise is correct, but the conclusion, even aside from its dubious separation of Irish and Jewish-Irish merchants, is limited. While it is true that the retail suppliers are often Irish, the manufacturers are predominantly English; indeed, the only branded commodities in the chapter that are of definite Irish produce are the "five ounces of Anne Lynch's choice tea at 2/- per lb in a crinkled leadpaper bag" (17.307-8) and the "jar of Irish Model Dairy's cream" (17.311). However, it must be said that Connor's analysis duplicates a limitation that exists in the 'Ithaca' chapter itself. Early in the chapter, for example, we are given plenty of detail

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<sup>26</sup> Jameson, "Ulysses in History," 136

<sup>27</sup> Jameson, "Ulysses in History," 140.

<sup>28</sup> Steven Connor, "From the House of Bondage to the Wilderness of Inhabitation": The Domestic Economies of 'Ithaca,'" *Joyce's "Ithaca,"* ed. Andrew Gibson, *European Joyce Studies* 6 (Amsterdam; Atlanta: Rodopi, 1996) 212.

about the “Abram coal at twentyone shillings a ton from the yard of messrs Flower and M’Donald of 14 D’Olier street” (17.128-30). The specification of the Dublin address certainly gives the coal a local colour, but Gifford’s note on the coal itself—“Advertised in 1904 as the finest A-brand coal in Dublin”<sup>29</sup>—is misleading: if it was “in” Dublin, it was certainly not Irish. Despite Swift’s famous recommendation that the Irish burn “everything that came from England except their people and their coal,”<sup>30</sup> and despite the fact that, while hardly thriving, Ireland did have its own coal industry, the majority of coal consumed in Dublin at the turn of the century was English.<sup>31</sup> The Abram Coal Co. Ltd. was a major English firm, whose suggestively Hebraic name actually derived from the town of Abram, near Wigan, where the company had its mines.<sup>32</sup> The fact that Flower and M’Donald are listed in *Thom’s* as “coal importers” would have reminded Joyce of what he must already have known: that the coal in a Dublin kitchen would almost certainly have come from England.

Joyce refers to a number of other importers of English commodities in *Ulysses*, and many of these were direct agents for particular firms. There is the “Rover cycleshop” on Westmoreland street mentioned above, managed according to *Thom’s* by one Mr. Wilkinson, which was heavily advertised between 1905 and 1914. There is the tea salesman Tom Kernan, “agent for Pulbrook Robertson and Co, 2 Mincing Lane, London, E. C.” (17.1980-81), who Bloom means to “tap” for some free samples (8.371). And there is Gerty MacDowell’s father, who has an office for the English company “Catesby’s cork lino, artistic, standard designs” (13.323). Gifford’s identification of this latter company as a Scottish firm is inaccurate: Catesby’s was a London company, well known for their long-running advertising series “Catesby’s Drolleries.” Joyce read an approving reference to these advertisements in Bridgewater’s *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known* (1910)<sup>33</sup>; they were running in the Irish press at least as late as March 1920, when Joyce included the company in the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter (see fig. 4).

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<sup>29</sup> Gifford, “*Ulysses*” *Annotated*, 568.

<sup>30</sup> Jonathan Swift, “A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture,” *The Works of Jonathan Swift*, vol. 7 (Edinburgh, 1814) 20.

<sup>31</sup> The relative paucity of coal deposits in Ireland was the main reason for this dependence: in 1904, Irish coal constituted only 0.1% of the total output of the United Kingdom. The increased cost of transporting coal within Ireland, and the apparently unpleasant smell of the coal from the large Kilkenny coalfield around Castlecomer, made it an unlikely competitor in the domestic Dublin market. See Ó Gráda, *Ireland*, 315-8.

<sup>32</sup> “West Lancashire’s Mining Industry in 1896—A List of Coal Mines,” Peak District Mines Historical Society, 6 Feb. 2010 <<http://www.pdmhs.com/1896%20Lists/1896-78.htm>>.

<sup>33</sup> Bridgewater, *Advertising*, 25.



**CATESBY LINO**  
Saves Money, Saves Work.



**OUT OF THE DEEP**

love you have for your wife, study her now as you did in the old days. You did not intend that she should ever be a slave to drudgery; but if she has to scrub floors or oilcloth, then she must drudge, for such work is the worst a house entails. It is the type of task that makes women ill; ruins their appearance and makes life a burden. Don't you think it will be nice, aye, and better, if you cover all the floors with Catesby's Cork Lino—the handsome floor material that requires no scrubbing, harbours no dust? Buy the original Cork Lino. We sell on Easy Terms, or allow 4/- in the £ discount for cash. We pay carriage to your door. Write at once for free book or coloured designs, prices, and samples.

Messrs. CATESBY LTD. (LONDON).  
Please send me, post free, Lino Patterns and prices.

Full Name .....

Full Address .....

(45)

Send Coupon. Get Patterns. Be Convinced.

**CATESBYS LTD.**  
(Dept. 45), TOTTENHAM COURT RD.,  
LONDON, W.1.

Fig. 4. Advertisement for Catesby's Cork Lino, Tottenham Court Road, London, *Sunday Irish Independent* 21 Mar. 1920: 4.

The appeal of a permanent job as an agent for one of these large and solvent English companies is easy to understand. *Ulysses* gives the definite impression that regular employment was not easy to come by in 1904 Dublin—"I don't give a shite anyway so long as I get a job, even as a crossing sweeper," says Corley (16.202-3)—and the impression no doubt reflects the experience of many contemporary Dubliners: with reference to the city's

unemployment, O'Brien describes 1904 as a year of "unrelieved gloom."<sup>34</sup> But if English companies provided some much-needed employment with these positions, the agents and agencies were nonetheless a part of the greater problem, reinforcing Ireland's consumerist dependency upon England. The Irish individuals who managed to obtain these jobs presumably benefited financially; Tom Kernan, at least, can pride himself on the "[s]tylish coat" that he has bought second-hand for a "half-sovereign" (10.743-4). But the profits went straight back to the English manufacturers. Kernan may be "pleased with the order he had booked for Pulbrook Robertson" (10.718-20), but the preposition "for" denotes his subservience to a British company whose presence in Ireland was facilitated by colonial rule. Kernan's deference to British authority is emphasised at the end of this section from 'Wandering Rocks,' when he dashes excitedly to greet the earl of Dudley: "His Excellency! Too bad! Just missed that by a hair. Damn it! What a pity!" (10.798-9). The nationality of Kernan's employer is not an incidental or innocent detail; it is inherently political, indicating one powerful dimension of British trade domination. However many agency jobs were available in Dublin, they are no substitution for the jobs that would have been provided if the commodities were manufactured domestically. As the 1904 *Guide to Dublin* complained, despite the fact that the popularity of the modern bicycle was in large part due to the invention of the pneumatic tyre by the Dublin Pneumatic Tyre Co., industrial underdevelopment had forced the company to establish its factories in England. And even if the industrial conditions for such mass production had been allowed to develop in Ireland, the prominent advertising of firms like Catesby's and Rover, with the ready availability of the commodities through their Irish agents, would still have made it difficult for Irish manufacturers to compete in their own domestic market. So although, as the *Guide to Dublin* went on, "[we] have firms like the Shamrock Bicycle Co. or Messrs Waytes or Keating, turning out bicycles as good in every respect and as cheap as those of the best foreign make" the great majority of Irish cyclists were still "riding a mount with an English name."<sup>35</sup> It is no wonder that the Rover agency on Westmoreland Street brings Bloom's thoughts without discrimination to an Irish bicycle race.

That several of Joyce's working characters are agents for British firms is not surprising, given the dominance of British commodities in Irish trade. One of the very few domestic industries to flourish in Dublin was the alcohol industry, particularly with the

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<sup>34</sup> O'Brien, *Dear Dirty Dublin*, 210.

<sup>35</sup> Qtd. Cyril Pearl, *Dublin in Bloomtime: The City James Joyce Knew* (London: Angus and Robertson, 1969) 57.

Guinness brewery at St James's Gate and the Jameson distillery in Bow Street, and the importance of this industry to Dublin trade could hardly be overstated. In the early-twentieth century, the Guinness brewery was the largest in the world, with its own power station and internal railway system.<sup>36</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that Guinness is the only finished commodity that we see leaving Ireland in *Ulysses*—"Brewery barge with export stout. England" (8.45)—or that in *Stephen Hero*, a clerkship in the Guinness brewery was the best suggestion one of Stephen's teachers could make to the gifted young student (*SH* 198). Yet as strong as the Dublin alcohol industry may have been, even this was by no means free of British competition. A number of English alcoholic drinks are drawn into *Ulysses*, such as the "Number one Bass" that lies behind Ben Dollard's "comedown" (11.1012-15), and the "bottle of Allsop" (Allsopps) ordered in Barney Kiernan's (12.1320), both brewed in Burton-on-Trent. There may be a political element to Joyce's inclusion of these products in the Irish pubs, as is perhaps indicated by Lenehan's punning reference to the bottle of Allsopp's as an "imperial yeomanry" (12.1318). But the complexity of Britain's colonial trade advantage is best illustrated by an alcoholic commodity which Joyce places in the Blooms' home, the "halfempty bottle of William Gilbey and Co's white invalid port" (17.305-6). Gifford reproduces the listing from *Thom's*, which places the company locally: "W. A. Gilbey, Ltd., wine growers and spirit merchants, distillers and importers, 46 and 71 Sackville (now O'Connell) Street Upper in Dublin."<sup>37</sup> The implication from the Dublin address is that Gilbey's was a local company, and therefore, with their branded port, a local producer. This is not, however, the case: Gilbey's was a large English firm, which advertised their range heavily in the first decades of the twentieth century, with a very strong-trade presence in Dublin. As one of the "boring" commodities in the 'Ithaca' chapter, the Gilbey's bottle has not received much critical attention, although Roy Gottfried has pointed out that "the abbreviation 'Co'" in the description of the bottle "reminds us visually that we are seeing the label; more than a naturalistic detail about alcohol, we are given a recreation of the material object."<sup>38</sup> In fact, it is a less-than-naturalistic detail, and a distorted recreation of the label. The real-life label did not give the forename "William," but only the brand name "Gilbey's," and advertisements included only the company name "W. & A. Gilbey" (see fig. 5).

<sup>36</sup> Garrett Oliver, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Beer* (New York: Oxford UP, 2012) 66.

<sup>37</sup> Gifford, "*Ulysses*" *Annotated*, 571.

<sup>38</sup> Roy K. Gottfried, *Joyce's Iritis and the Irritated Text: The Dis-Lexic "Ulysses"* (Gainesville: UP of Florida, 1995) 18-19.

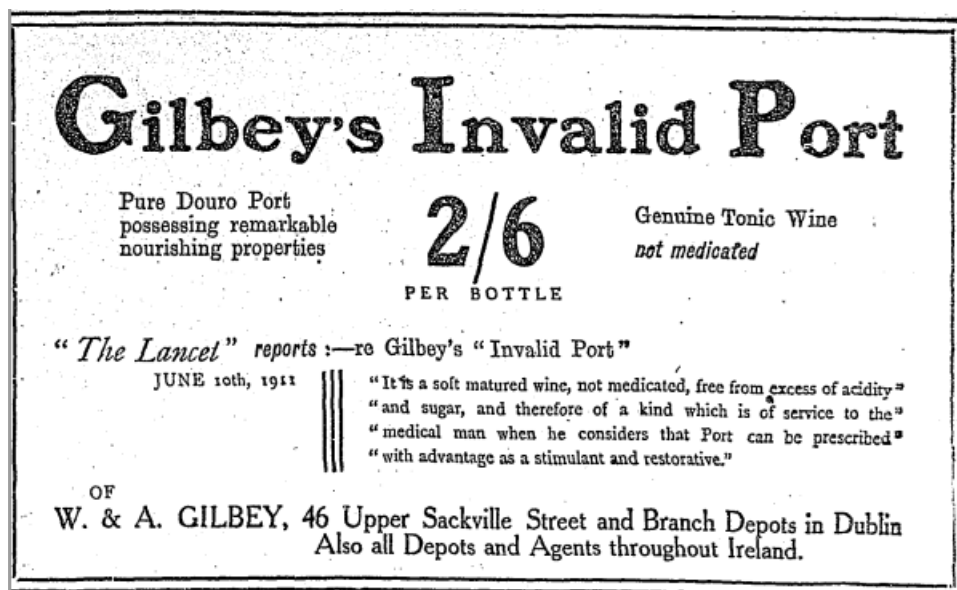


Fig. 5. Early Advertisement for Gilbey's Invalid Port, *Irish Times* 27 Nov. 1911: 7.

Furthermore, contrary to Joyce's description, the "W." of the company name did not stand for "William" at all, but came from its co-founder and co-director Walter Gilbey.<sup>39</sup> In other words, Joyce has introduced a curiously trivial falsehood in his description of the port bottle.<sup>40</sup>

The name of Sir Walter Gilbey had for a time been prominent in the Dublin press. From around the time of Joyce's sixteenth birthday, the company was involved in a lengthy licensing controversy, and reports of the ensuing court case call direct attention to the political nature of Irish consumerism, while demonstrating that the company's strong Irish trade presence was not always uncontested, and their foreignness not always unremarked. Because Sir Walter Gilbey did not reside locally, but in England—itsself an obvious marker of colonial economic exploitation—the company was told in February 1898 that their licenses to sell beer and spirits in their "sixteen houses in the city and the county of Dublin, including the principal house, 46 and 47 Sackville street" would be revoked.<sup>41</sup> To get around this restriction, the company went into a nominal partnership with their Manager for Ireland, W.

<sup>39</sup> Herbert Maxwell, *Half-a-century of Successful Trade: Being a Sketch of the Rise and Development of the Business of W & A Gilbey, 1857-1907* (London: Pantheon, 1907) 7-8.

<sup>40</sup> It would also seem to be another of Joyce's anachronistic commodities. Although Gilbey's Invalid Port had been available since the nineteenth century, it was apparently practically unknown until 1911-12, when a massive advertising campaign made it their most popular product (Alec Waugh, *Merchants of Wine: Being a Centenary Account of the Fortunes of the House of Gilbey* [London: Cassell, 1957] 72-3). See fig. 5 for one of the earliest of these advertisements in the *Irish Times*, appearing on 27 Nov. 1911.

<sup>41</sup> *Freeman's Journal* 13 July 1898: 2.

J. Allwright, who was also English,<sup>42</sup> and had the licenses transferred into his name. This move was obstructed in court, with a series of minor technicalities put forward to uphold the obstruction, but after nearly six months Gilbey's won their appeal against the decision, and the original magistrate was rebuked for his shoddy handling of the case. The Recorder of the appeal took the opportunity to make some suggestive comments, and the *Freeman's Journal's* transcription is worth quoting at length:

he thought that if the Messrs Gilbey or any other great firm with capital came over here from any part of the world for the purpose of entering into trade all over the country to the disadvantage of the traders of the country, it would be very warrantable that the people in Ireland who would be affected by it should not only stand up to defend themselves, but take advantage of every point of law with that object. [ . . . ] This case, however, was wholly different from that. The firm of Messrs Gilbey had been trading in Ireland for 31 years, and at the end of 31 years, simply because some words were thrown out in a certain case in the Queen's Bench it became desirable that they should make use of the benefit of a local name, they not desiring to add one single house to any one in existence. The firm carried on their trade successfully—and as far as he knew doing nothing whatever in the way of unfair competition to anyone interested in the trade in which they were engaged.<sup>43</sup>

This is an interesting statement. On the one hand, the Recorder seems to complain about the unfairness of the English presence in the Irish market, hinting at several of the objections that I have begun to describe, including the company's use of greater capital to establish a strong trade presence, and their effective restriction of Irish commercial development. On the other hand, Gilbey's themselves—protected, of course, by British law—are exonerated as respectable tradesmen, and while the Recorder's hedge ("as far as he knew") may be loaded, the company's longstanding presence in the country's trade is put forward as a justification rather than an indictment of their continuing success. And so the sixteen Dublin branches of W. A. Gilbey, Ltd., "wine growers and spirit merchants, distillers and importers," were allowed to continue to flourish—their English products free to compete with those of Irish manufacturers, and free to enter the houses of consumers like the Blooms. With this context in mind, the inclusion of Gilbey's Invalid Port within the Irish home appears ironically suitable. Not only does the product stand for the British trade domination that has restricted Irish commercial activity—with "invalid port" sounding something like Stephen's description

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<sup>42</sup> Alec Gold, *Four-in-hand: A History of W. & A. Gilbey Ltd., 1857-1957* (London: W. and A. Gilbey, 1957)

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<sup>43</sup> *Freeman's Journal* 13 July 1898: 2.

of Kingstown pier as a “disappointed bridge” (2.39)—but for a time in the Irish court, their licenses had been literally invalid.

‘Ithaca’ presents products such as Abram coal and Gilbey’s Invalid Port in ambiguous terms, allowing and even encouraging the reader to take them to be Irish commodities—as the misidentifications of the astute commentators Gifford and Connor testify. However, tracing these back out of the text shows them to be products made in England, and sold in Ireland either by company branches or by agents employed by the English companies. Some of the small number of working men that Joyce places in his Dublin are employed as such agents, and in the case of Tom Kernan, the political nature of his employment by an English company is emphasised by his pandering to the representative of British colonial rule. Yet if this aspect of Ireland’s consumer culture—its dependence upon British products and producers—can be placed within a broader colonial context by tracing the commodities of ‘Ithaca’ back to their imperial source, it must be acknowledged that the Englishness of the firms or products that underwrite Irish consumption is rarely avowed within the text itself. With the exception of Kernan’s Pulbrook Robertson, the text of *Ulysses* does not allow the reader to see that these companies are English, even as it seems to specify their addresses and origins. We have already seen that Bloom fails to recognise the Englishness of the products he encounters in this day in Dublin, and I have argued that this blindness is a symptom of the ideological naturalisation of British products within a colonial consumerist economy. What is less immediately explicable is why the narrator of the ‘Ithaca’ chapter is similarly blind: not one of the branded English commodities listed in this episode—Abram coal, Gilbey and Co.’s white invalid port, “Epps’s soluble cocoa” (17.307), the “piano (Cadby)” (17.1303), “Fry’s Plain Chocolate” (17.1472), and so on—are specified as English. The only English commodities in Bloom’s house that are acknowledged as such are to be found in Bloom’s locked top drawer:

two partly uncoiled rubber preservatives with reserve pockets, purchased by post from Box 32, P. O., Charing Cross, London, W. C. [. . .] 2 erotic postcards [. . .] purchased by post from Box 32, P. O., Charing Cross, London, W. C. [. . .] 1 prospectus of The Wonderworker, the world’s greatest remedy for rectal complaints, direct from Wonderworker, Coventry House, South Place, London E C. (17.1804-21)

These are exceptional commodities for Edwardian Dublin, and as I argued above with the luminous crucifix, they should be classified separately from the branded, everyday products

just listed.<sup>44</sup> In ‘Ithaca,’ the Britishness of the commodities, and the firms behind their presence in Ireland, is for the most part left undeclared. “[I]mperial, imperious, imperative” (7.486): these products are “just there.”

There is something in the ‘Ithaca’ chapter, then, that complicates any simple political reading of the infiltration of the Irish home by British commodities. If Connor is right to suggest that “[o]ne of the obsessions of the ‘Ithaca’ chapter is with tracing household objects to their manufacturers and retail suppliers,” it is hard to explain the failure of this obsessive imperative to locate the most obvious and politically significant fact of these objects’ manufacture—their Britishness. Furthermore, these blind spots of an ostensibly (if artificially) objective narrative would seem to undermine Jameson’s politicised reading of the chapter as an act of “dereification,” within which the contingency of “the whole dead grid of the object world of greater Dublin” is exposed, and “the transformation of Nature by human and collective praxis deconcealed.”<sup>45</sup> It is true that the water from Bloom’s tap is traced meticulously back to “Roundwood reservoir in county Wicklow” (17.164), and it is easy to see Jameson’s point with such an example. The commodified water supply is denaturalised, its contingency upon the workings of the Dublin Corporation “deconcealed” through such human, incidental details as Mr Spencer, C. E.’s prohibition of “the use of municipal water for purposes other than those of consumption” and the South Dublin Guardians’ conviction for “a wastage of 20,000 gallons per night” (17.179-80, 17.173-5). The water passage could certainly be described as a dereification or a deconcealing of the commodification of water. As we have seen, however, the commodities themselves are not always deconcealed. And as we will see, the contingency of their presence upon the colonial situation is itself, at times, actively concealed.

### ***“Plumtree’s Potted Meat? Incomplete”*: Productive Errors in ‘Ithaca’**

I have shown that Joyce places many British products in the Blooms’ home, and that, with the exception of the illicit top-drawer commodities, these are never explicitly traced back to their English sources. Such recognition depends upon a historicised reading of the chapter, and this approach can yield surprising results. Whereas the fictional Gilbey’s would appear to be Irish, the historical legal case surrounding the company turns out to have itself “deconcealed”

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<sup>44</sup> For a discussion of these commodities in the context of the contemporary Irish discourse surrounding the corrupting influence of English immorality, see Mullen, “English Vice and Irish Vigilance.”

<sup>45</sup> Jameson, “*Ulysses* in History,” 140.

the contingency of this British product in the Irish market, attesting to the inherently political nature of colonial consumerism. Furthermore, a historicising reading of Gilbey's Invalid Port reveals the puzzling fact that Joyce alters a detail of its productive origin: 'Ithaca' traces the commodity back to the agents behind its production—dereifies it, perhaps—but it does so faultily, attributing the wrong name to its manufacturer. These alterations seem trivial, and could be taken as accident. Yet these exact same alterations are made to another, far more prominent commodity, and if the consistency of the alterations is taken to imply design, the chapter's representation of Ireland's consumer culture is far more problematic than it at first appears.

Plumtree's Potted Meat has a presence in *Ulysses* disproportionate to the size of its "4 oz" pot (17.600). The advertisement for the product is first seen in 'Lotus Eaters,' when Bloom reads it "idly" in the *Freeman's Journal*:

*What is home without  
Plumtree's Potted Meat?  
Incomplete.  
With it an abode of bliss. (5.143-7)*

As we saw in the previous chapter, Bloom's disapproval of the advertisement and its positioning under the obituary notices—"what a stupid ad!" (8.743)—is part of Joyce's characterisation of Bloom as a relatively progressive advertiser, attentive not only to an advertisement's design, but to the connotations carried by its position. But this is not the advertisement's only function. It comes back to Bloom again and again throughout the novel in a way that other advertisements do not, and in an unlikely (if Joycean) coincidence, it is just this product that Bloom encounters as evidence of Molly's infidelity. Blazes Boylan sends a jar of it to Molly in 'Wandering Rocks' (10.314-22), along with the bottle of Gilbey's, and the pair consume it after their sexual consummation: it is "some crumbs, some flakes" of this product that Bloom brushes from the sheets as he gets into bed at the end of 'Ithaca' (17.2124-5). The strong presence of Plumtree's Potted Meat in the novel has drawn much critical attention, and there have been a number of interpretations of its significance. These have almost always proceeded with a symbolic impulse, for the most part expanding upon the connections already made explicit in the novel, such as the mortuary connotations set up by the advertisement's position and filled out by Bloom in 'Lestrygonians'—"Dignam's Potted Meat" (8.744-5)—or the sexual and (extra)marital connotations of the



brand name and the advertisement.<sup>46</sup> Some critics, connecting the manufacturer's name to Stephen's Parable of the Plums, have drawn Biblical allusions, or found Classical and Homeric parallels for the product.<sup>47</sup> In recent years, critics have begun to consider the product politically, drawing analogies between the "incomplete" domestic homestead of the Blooms, and an Ireland lacking the autonomy of Home Rule.<sup>48</sup> However, even in this last wave of interpretation, Plumtree's has scarcely been considered as a historical fact—as a commodity sold in turn-of-the-century Dublin. As such, nobody has remarked in print upon a highly suggestive alteration made by Joyce in his fictionalisation of the historical commodity, or considered the relevance of this alteration in the context of his representation of Dublin's consumer culture. As with Bloom's contemplation of the Goerz lenses, a careful historical tracing of Joyce's representation of Plumtree's Potted Meat allows us to recognise that Joyce's complex mimetic drive is as much ideological as it is material.

Plumtree's Potted Meat is, according to the narrator of 'Ithaca,' "[m]anufactured by George Plumtree, 23 Merchants' quay, Dublin," and "put up in 4 oz pots" with the "name on the label" (17.600-604). From here it would be distributed to Dublin retailers such as Thornton's, where Blazes Boylan apparently buys the "small jar" that he sends to Molly (10.301), and Davy Byrne's, where Bloom sees the potted meat on the shelves (8.742).<sup>49</sup> However briefly, Joyce depicts each of the stages that lead to the consumption of this commodity: production, packaging, advertisement, and retail. The specification of "George Plumtree, 23 Merchants quay, Dublin" would thus seem to justify Jameson's idea of the chapter dereifying finished commodities; furthermore, since each of these stages take place within Dublin itself, Plumtree's Potted Meat would seem to fulfil the terms of the "Buy Irish" movement that Joyce had himself endorsed.

However, there is a problem with this neat domestic circuit: the historical product—Plumtree's Home Potted Meat—was English. It was manufactured by G. W. Plumtree,

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<sup>46</sup> Osteen suggests that "Plumtree's Meat functions as a metonymy of Boylan throughout the novel" (Osteen, *The Economy of "Ulysses,"* 120). Cf. Natania Rosenfeld: "Molly in her bed is evoked throughout the novel by references to Plumtree's Potted Meat" (Natania Rosenfeld, "James Joyce's Womanly Wandering Jew," *Jews and Gender: Responses to Otto Weininger*, ed. Nancy A. Harrowitz and Barbara Hyams [Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1995] 218).

<sup>47</sup> Irene Orgel Briskin, "Some New Light on 'The Parable of the Plums,'" *James Joyce Quarterly* 3:4 (1966); Roderick Davis, "The Fourfold Moses in *Ulysses*," *James Joyce Quarterly* 7:2 (1970). Briskin's interpretation is ambitious if nothing else: "As soon as we recognize the plumtree as the source of the twenty-four plumstones, spat out by the guardian Fates, Plumtree's Potted Meat becomes a symbol of literature. [. . .] [T]he inane advertising jingle suddenly rings out as a clear statement of Joyce's belief in literature: 'What is the world without / The Art of Literature? / Incomplete. / With it an abode of bliss'" (246).

<sup>48</sup> Osteen, *The Economy of "Ulysses,"* 121-2.

<sup>49</sup> It is possible that Boylan has bought the product elsewhere, before he gets to Thornton's, since it is already wrapped when he gets to the counter (10.300).

Southport (see fig. 6), and although a number of these pots survive, the disjunction between its actual and its fictional places of manufacture has not been remarked in critical discussions.<sup>50</sup>



Fig. 6. Plumtree's Potted Meat, manufactured in Southport, England, © Matthew Hayward.

The pots came in two different sizes. The smaller of these does not specify the place of manufacture, but the standard-sized pots that have survived give the address as either 184 Portland Street or 13 Railway Street, Southport (there having presumably been, at some point, a change of address). That Plumtree's was based in England is confirmed by the 1901 Census of England and Wales, which lists George W. Plumtree, aged 49, in Southport as a "Manufacturer of Preserved Provisions."<sup>51</sup> (There is no Plumtree listed in the 1901 or 1911 Census of Ireland.<sup>52</sup>) From Southport they were shipped to an Irish agency in Dublin, first at 57 Middle Abbey Street, and, by 1904, at the address Joyce gives as the manufacturer's in 'Ithaca,' 23 Merchants' Quay.<sup>53</sup> The Irish agency was a small establishment, described as a private dwelling in both the 1901 and 1911 Censuses, and so the product could not have been

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<sup>50</sup> Duffy describes Plumtree's Potted Meat as an "ambivalent commodity," but nevertheless takes it to be a "home product" (Duffy, *The Subaltern "Ulysses,"* 83).

<sup>51</sup> 1901 Census Online, 5 Aug. 2010 <<http://www.1901censusonline.com>>.

<sup>52</sup> A number of jars have been preserved in collections such as the Zürich James Joyce Foundation, and in private collections.

<sup>53</sup> Advertisements in the *Weekly Irish Times*, 26 Mar. 1898: 1; 2 Apr. 1898: 1; *Thom's*.

manufactured there<sup>54</sup>; the Irish agency would therefore have received the product from the manufacturer and distributed it to Irish retailers (including, perhaps, Thornton's and Davy Byrne's), who would then have sold it on to Irish consumers. What Joyce represents as an Irish home industry was in reality, like Gilbey's, a British manufacturer enjoying the trade benefits of empire. It is easy to see that Ireland would have been a particularly attractive market to a "manufacturer of preserved provisions." The daily traffic between Liverpool (near Southport) and Kingstown (now Dun Laoghaire) would have made the transportation of the commodity to Dublin a simple and cheap process. Furthermore, the market for preserved foods such as ready potted meats was predominantly the working and lower-middle classes across Britain and Ireland,<sup>55</sup> and it was the increase in spending power among these classes that had facilitated the growth of consumerism in Dublin in the early nineteenth century. Indeed, a potted meat manufacturer such as Plumtree's may be seen as the exemplary beneficiary of the exploitative colonial economy. The Union settlement allowed untaxed access to Irish resources, especially livestock, as reflected in Bloom's remark in 'Hades': "Roast beef for old England. They buy up all the juicy ones" (6.393-4). It is thus bitterly ironic that Plumtree's has packaged the offal—the usually unsaleable "[c]auls mouldy tripes windpipes faked and minced up" (8.750), as Bloom recognises Plumtree's Potted Meat to be—and shipped it back, tariff-free, to Irish consumers like Boylan and Molly.

With this small alteration, then, the distance between the historical Plumtree's Home Potted Meat and the product of Joyce's novel is great. Furthermore, masking as it does the involvement of an English company in colonial economic exploitation, this alteration is of a different kind to others in the novel, such as the date of the Mirus Bazaar's opening (from 31 May, to 16 June), or the fictional viceregal cavalcade.<sup>56</sup> These latter alterations have a demonstrable purpose, and if they affect the political reading of the novel, they do so positively, adding a political connection that might otherwise be lost. So, for instance, the fictional cavalcade of the earl of Dudley allows Joyce to emphasise the political reality of colonial occupation. These are politically significant events, which did not happen to take place on 16 June, but could just as well have done: to adapt a New Historicist phrase, they tell the history of "what might have happened."<sup>57</sup> The alteration of the productive origin of Plumtree's Potted Meat has a very different effect. Far from bringing a political reality into relief, it helps obscure it. We have seen that the address that Joyce gives to the company, 23

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<sup>54</sup> I am grateful to Harald Beck for bringing this information to my attention.

<sup>55</sup> Fraser, *The Coming of the Mass Market*, 38.

<sup>56</sup> Gifford, "*Ulysses*" *Annotated*, 283.

<sup>57</sup> Gallagher and Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism*, 57.

Merchants' Quay, was in fact the address of its Irish agency. As with Gilbey's, the agency at this address is deceptively listed in *Thom's* simply with the company name, "Plumtree, George W. potted meat manufacturer." Why, then, should we not apply Occam's razor, and assume that the error in 'Ithaca'—"[m]anufactured by George Plumtree, 23 Merchants' quay, Dublin"—indicates nothing more than Joyce's overreliance upon *Thom's* in filling out the details of that chapter? If this were the case, Joyce's distortion of fact is mere accident; he takes the company directly from *Thom's*, perhaps attracted to the product's name because of its potential for the connotative connections outlined above, and never knew anything of its English origin.

However, Joyce includes information in 'Ithaca' that was not to be found in *Thom's* at all. The specification of "4 oz" is certainly not to be found there. Neither is the product's proper name, "Plumtree's Home Potted Meat." *Thom's* does not mention "Home," and while Joyce also leaves the adjective out of the product name, he includes it in the company's advertising slogan: "*What is home without Plumtree's Potted Meat?*" Since neither "home" nor the "4 oz" specification are to be found in *Thom's*, Joyce must have made use of another source in his fictionalisation of the product. The obvious suggestion would be that he got this additional information from an advertisement. R. B. Kershner has referred to an advertisement printed for "Plumtree's Home-Potted Meats" in the *Evening Telegraph* on 16 June 1904,<sup>58</sup> and since Joyce is known to have gathered so much else from this issue (the front page alone includes advertisements for Mrs Bandmann-Palmer in *Leah*, *The Lily of Killarney*, the Great Marie Kendal, Eugene Stratton, *Fun on the Bristol*, Cramer's Great Musical Depot, Dockrell wallpapers, and Lalouette's, all referred to in *Ulysses*), it would seem to be the obvious source for Plumtree's too. However, Kershner is mistaken in his identification: there was no advertisement for Plumtree's in this edition. It is to be presumed that Kershner meant to refer to another contemporary issue, although I have not been able to locate the advertisements in my own searches of surrounding issues. It may even be that Joyce has lifted the entire advertisement printed in *Ulysses* from an original advertisement that itself failed to declare the product's British origin. However, the other advertisements for the product that I have been able to find—such as the pair referred to above (150n.53)—do

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<sup>58</sup> R. B. Kershner, *The Culture of Joyce's "Ulysses"* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) 87.

not include the word “manufacturer” or the size of the pot, and they do imply the Englishness of the product by specifying that the Dublin address is only for the “IRISH AGENCY.”<sup>59</sup>

If Joyce’s alteration of the nationality of Plumtree’s Potted Meat is accidental, and attributable to his unknowing dependence upon a limited local source, that fact would serve only to confirm my contention that British commodities were naturalised on the Irish market. However, the fact that this alteration is consistent with his domesticating representation of other English commodities and companies within the chapter, such as Abram’s coal and Gilbey’s invalid port, would seem to suggest design, and this peculiarity in Joyce’s representation of Dublin’s consumer culture—his muddling of the path from the English warehouses to the Irish home—must be taken into account in a historically oriented reading of the chapter’s “dereifying” drive. Excluding accident, there are several possible approaches to understanding this alteration. On a broadly thematic level, it might be linked to the ‘Ithaca’ episode’s Homeric concerns of betrayal and invasion. Plumtree’s Potted Meat and Gilbey’s Invalid Port have been brought into the Blooms’ home by the suitor Boylan, as tributes to Molly. The connotations of these products and the imagery used to describe them undoubtedly complement the sexual aspect of the plot: the “bottle swathed in pink tissue paper and a small jar” (10.300-301) are phallic and ktenic respectively, and “potted meat” has salacious overtones, even without Molly’s merging of the gift and the giver in ‘Penelope’: “it had a fine salty taste yes because I felt lovely” (18.132). So too with Gilbey’s. The literal unlawfulness of Molly and Boylan’s assignation—Bloom does not rule out a “suit for damages by legal influence” (17.2203-4), presumably with reference to the tort of criminal conversation, which allowed the husband to claim compensation for the loss of property rights in an adulterous wife—is perhaps punned upon by Boylan himself, when he tells the shop assistant in Thornton’s that the bottle of Gilbey’s invalid port “is for an invalid” (10.302). And when Bloom finds the bottle, it is “half disrobed of its swathe of coralpink tissue paper” (17.306-7). This description betrays, as Gottfried puts it, “an obvious touch of a heavy hand,”<sup>60</sup> clearly intended to reflect the disrobed state of the bottle’s recipient.

From this thematic perspective, the Englishness of Boylan’s gifts in ‘Ithaca’ may reinforce the analogy suggested by Osteen between the domestic and national senses of “home.” Osteen argues that just as Bloom “must cope with Boylan’s invasion and ‘colonization’ of his home,” so Ireland has to cope with “the invasive colonizing presence of

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<sup>59</sup> The other possibility is that Joyce saw, or recalled seeing, a pot himself. This seems impossible to determine either way, although in 1905 he had advised Stanislaus “to bring a big can of tinned meat” for his journey to Trieste (*LII* 121).

<sup>60</sup> Gottfried, *Joyce’s Iritis*, 89.

Great Britain.” As Osteen reads it, “both Bloom and Ireland are fighting a losing battle against ‘strangers in [the] house.’”<sup>61</sup> Perhaps, then, the analogy between Boylan and Britain is strengthened by the fact that Plumtree’s Potted Meat and Gilbey’s Invalid Port are British—commodities that are quite literally part of the English “invasive colonizing presence.” It is true that Boylan stands as a locus for consumerist and imperial details throughout the novel. His entrance is uniformly signified by the clothes that he wears, as at the end of ‘Lestrygonians’: “Straw hat in sunlight. Tan shoes. Turnedup trousers. It is. It is” (8.1168). He is what Leonard describes as “the modern fashion machine incarnate,” a practiser of what Veblen in 1899 famously defined as “conspicuous consumption.”<sup>62</sup> And the wealth that allows this consumption is elsewhere ambiguously linked with British imperial concerns, with the narrator of ‘Cyclops’ referring to him as “Dirty Dan the dodgers’s son [. . .] that sold the same horses twice over to the government to fight the Boers” (12.998-9).

As neat as this thematic approach may seem, however, the analogy between Boylan and Britain, or 7 Eccles Street and Ireland, is not flawless—certainly not in the context of consumerism or the Empire. Cheng reads Boylan as “one extreme of Joyce’s representation of the effects of the collusion between patriarchal imperial politics and patriarchal sexual politics,” but his interpretation of “Dirty Dan” Boylan as “a man who unpatriotically sold horses to the British during the Boer War” does not take into account the ambiguity of this sale, which apparently involved a swindle, and could thus be described as self-interested and thus anti-colonial.<sup>63</sup> With his criticism of the Goetz lenses, Bloom’s own consumption has also been shown to be inflected with an imperial interest, and if Boylan has brought British commodities into Bloom’s home, so too has Bloom: Abram coal, Epps’s cocoa, the Cadby piano, Fry’s chocolate, and so on, not to mention his top-drawer goods. Moreover, if Boylan’s Irishness is taken to be compromised by his father’s contribution to the British imperial war effort, then Bloom is compromised still further, as the narrator of ‘Oxen’ suggests: “During the recent war whenever the enemy had a temporary advantage with his granados did this traitor to his kind not seize that moment to discharge his piece against the empire of which he is a tenant at will while he trembled for the security of his four per cents” (14.908-12). That Bloom, despite his national sentiments, indeed has a material interest in the British Empire is confirmed by the itemisation of Bloom’s interests in ‘Ithaca’—“Documents: [. . .] certificate of possession of £900, Canadian 4% (inscribed) government

<sup>61</sup> Osteen, “Seeking Renewal,” 718.

<sup>62</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 8; Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899; New York: Oxford UP, 2007) 49.

<sup>63</sup> Cheng, *Joyce, Race and Empire*, 307.

stock” (17.1855-65)—and elsewhere in the chapter he is shown to have been at one stage a vocal supporter of these imperial interests: “he had advocated during nocturnal perambulations the political theory of colonial (e.g. Canadian) expansion” (17.1642-4). With all of these complications, neither Bloom nor his home can simply be equated with betrayed or exploited Ireland, any more than Boylan can stand easily for Britain. So while the Plumtree’s advertisement may be drawn into a general analogy between the domestic and the national “home,” it cannot be reduced to it, nor worked out in this way categorically.

In any case, even excluding these complicating factors, the analogical explanation does not help to explain the alteration in the text of the British origin of Plumtree’s Potted Meat. Not only is it impossible to discern the Englishness of the product from the text alone, the specification of the Irish address for Plumtree’s implies home industry; taken at face value, Boylan’s purchase of the product would denote his own small contribution to national self-regeneration, thus working against an identification between Boylan and the coloniser. This change is no easier to explain in straightforward political terms, or thematically: there is no obvious reason that the sexual, mortuary or political connotations of the product would be more effective with it domesticated. In the final section of this chapter, then, I will suggest that if it cannot be satisfactorily explained analogically, politically, or thematically, the Plumtree’s alteration may be understood in terms of the most prominent feature of the ‘Ithaca’ chapter: its style.

### **Science, Consumerism, and the Ideology of Universal Improvement**

It should be emphasised that it is not the presence of these British products in Bloom’s home that is problematic: this is a plausibly realistic representation of the experience of a colonial consumer. In my discussion of Bloom’s window shopping, I argued that, as English products dominate the colonial Irish market, so the consumption of English products appears as the norm. Bloom, despite his sensitivity to the details of commodities, including their geographic origin, almost never recognises an English commodity as English: they are “just there.” This too is plausibly realistic. In making his fictional consumer unconscious of the details of the commodities that surround him, Joyce exposes the gap between the subjectivity of consumerism and the contingent materiality that allows it—a gap within which Joyce shows an imperial ideology to operate. In ‘Ithaca’—a chapter which pretends to document material and psychological facts about the characters and their environment with scientific objectivity—the consumption of English commodities is again presented as the norm, and the

Englishness is again occluded. Indeed, the suppression is now total: the Englishness of Plumtree's Potted Meat is not just naturalised or left unstated, it is explicitly denied; Plumtree's becomes, literally, a home product.

What is problematic is that this denial cannot be attributed to a particular colonial consumer. The extension of a subjective limitation into an apparently objective limitation complicates the political valence of Joyce's representation of the ideology of Irish consumerism elsewhere in *Ulysses*. In 'Lestrygonians,' the imperial ideology is drawn into relief through Joyce's demonstration that it overdetermines the consciousness of an Irish consumer; this may be taken as an example of what Trevor Williams describes as the novel's "demystification" of dominant ideologies.<sup>64</sup> In 'Ithaca,' however, with the narrative centred upon no particular character's voice, the elision of the politically and economically significant fact of certain commodities' Britishness would seem to prevent such demystification. Likewise, despite Joyce's otherwise defamiliarising description of Plumtree's Potted Meat—with its attribution of a large industrial process to a single man, George W. Plumtree, casually "putting up" the product into pots on Merchants' Quay—the failure of the narrative to locate that action fully within the novel's articulation of colonial overdetermination would seem to render incomplete the process that Jameson has described as dereification. While the historically determined nature of consumer capitalism is perhaps exposed by this picture of commodity exchange as a contingent process, the specific contingency of Ireland's consumer culture upon hegemonic colonial relations is suppressed. It is true that Jameson extends his concept of dereification to the work of art itself, praising *Ulysses* for refusing "to solidify into an achieved and codified symbolic order" by continually pointing towards signifying elements or events outside of the text.<sup>65</sup> But it is again difficult to see how this point could justify the Plumtree's description, which could and should, like Bloom's imperial Goetz commentary, point outside of the text, but which instead pretends to explain itself fully while actually cutting off a significant extratextual element.

In light of recent studies, however, it is just this claim to objectivity in the 'Ithaca' chapter that may help to explain the distortion of the Plumtree's Potted Meat detail. Joyce designated the "art" of the episode to be "Science,"<sup>66</sup> but the partiality of the objective or

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<sup>64</sup> Williams, *Reading Joyce Politically*, 135.

<sup>65</sup> Jameson, "Ulysses in History," 132.

<sup>66</sup> Gilbert, *James Joyce's "Ulysses,"* 356.



scientific technique of 'Ithaca' is well known, particularly in relation to addresses.<sup>67</sup> In the final section of this chapter, I will develop Gibson's recent politicised explanation for the partiality of this imperial scientific ideal, and argue that Joyce's alteration of the productive origin of Plumtree's Potted Meat is consistent with the 'Ithaca' chapter's established incorporation and subversion of the mainstays of imperial self-justification. For just as imperial discourses such as science and economics legitimised their function by appealing to principles of objectivity, universal benefit, and the furthering of civilisation, so the discourses of British consumerism denied self-interest by appealing to the universalist idea of improvement and "quality of life."

In 1904, Stanislaus Joyce made an observation about his brother's "method" which implies that the younger of the brothers had the clearest understanding of the limitations of the scientific claim to objectivity:

It will be obvious that whatever method there is in Jim's life is highly unscientific, yet in theory he approves only of the scientific method. About science he knows 'damn all.' [. . .] I call it a lack of vigilant reticence in him that he is ever-ready to admit the legitimacy of the scientist's raids outside his frontiers. The word 'scientific' is always a word of praise in his mouth.<sup>68</sup>

Whether or not this is a fair representation of Joyce's thought, it is astute in its identification of the particularity of scientific objectivity, with the military metaphor relativising the claimed universality of the "scientific method." Yet if the young James Joyce was beguiled by the apparent stability of this method, his credulity seems certainly to have waned by the time he came to compose 'Ithaca.' As Gibson has argued in some detail, the 'Ithaca' chapter both plays upon and challenges the spurious impartiality of scientific discourse. On the one hand, Gibson argues, 'Ithaca' manifestly "lays strenuous claim to powers of empirical and systematic method—clarity, reason, deliberation, exactitude, observation." On the other hand, the distortions of the chapter serve to resist this method. So, as Gibson points out, scientific terms in 'Ithaca' may be "coinages, fake or parodic"; these terms may be used in "more or less unscientific ways"; and at times, as Gibson points out, the science of 'Ithaca' is "plain wrong."<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> See Gunn and Hart, *James Joyce's Dublin*, 15-25, for detailed accounts of these errors. Richards suggests that the incorrect address for Hely's in the 'Ithaca' chapter "waggishly raises the issue of truth in advertising" (Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 197n.17).

<sup>68</sup> Stanislaus Joyce, *Dublin Diary*, 53-4.

<sup>69</sup> Gibson, *Joyce's Revenge*, 242-3.

The slipperiness of the “facts” of ‘Ithaca’ has been recognised for many years. Unlike previous accounts, however, Gibson’s analysis proposes an explanation for this slipperiness, politicising Joyce’s subversion of the scientific method by locating it carefully within a contemporary imperial context. As Gibson has argued, the imperial claim to scientific objectivity, and the accompanying promise of universal progress, belied particular and self-serving motives, particularly in trade and industry. The method of ‘Ithaca’ works to undercut this spurious claim. As Gibson puts it, the chapter “mocks the triumphalism of imperial science,” and “resists its efforts to present what is particular as universal.”<sup>70</sup> Gibson’s reading of Joyce’s exposure of the contingency of scientific ideals, and his tracing of that exposure to the particular context of Ireland’s colonial relationship with Britain, is corroborated by a remarkable exchange between Joyce and H. G. Wells that took place in 1928. Wells had written to reject Joyce’s surprising request for some kind of assistance in the writing of *Finnegans Wake*, claiming, we might say, creative differences:

Your training has been Catholic, Irish, revolutionary; mine, such as it was, was scientific, constructive and, I suppose, English. The frame of my mind is a mould wherein a big unifying and concentrating process is possible, [. . .] a *progress* not inevitable but interesting and possible. That game attracted me and holds me. For it, I want language (and statement) as simple and clear as possible. (*LI* 274-5)

At first sight, Wells’s comments betray just the imperial ideals that are taken apart in the technical assaults of ‘Ithaca.’ The “scientific” method is connected to a universalising imperative (“a big unifying and concentrating process”), to an emphasised ideal of “*progress*,” and to a seemingly neutral or objective linguistic style (“as clear as possible”). Furthermore, Wells contrasts his progressive “scientific” neutrality to Joyce’s “Catholic” training, implying, presumably, that his is therefore the more stable and reliable. At the same time, however, Wells goes some way to relativising these ideals by attributing them to his English “training,” a relativisation that he extends as the letter goes on, perceptively recognising both sides as partial: “while you were brought up under the delusion of political suppression I was brought up under the delusion of political responsibility. It seems a fine thing to you to defy and break up. To me not in the least” (*LI* 275). Joyce’s gloss to these comments, in a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, relativises Wells’s assumptions further still,

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<sup>70</sup> Gibson, *Joyce’s Revenge*, 249. On the nineteenth-century British promotion of scientific study and practice in the colonies, particularly India, as part of the drive for natural resources, see George N. Vlahakis, et al., “The British Empire and the Development of Science in its Colonies,” *Imperialism and Science: Social Impact and Interaction*, ed. Mark A. Largent (Santa Barbara; Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2006).

and shows that he had come to renounce the faith in “scientific method” for which Stanislaus had once criticised him:

I enclose a letter of his to me which seems to me—I don’t know what it seems to me. [. . .] For the moment I will content myself by saying in reply to his letter, which is quite friendly and honest, that I doubt whether his attitude towards words and language is as scientific as he himself ought to wish it to be. (LI 276)

Joyce draws attention here to the unscientific basis to the rational, positivist ideals of language and thought, and recognises the actual contingency of a claimed universal. It is an important key to the penultimate chapter of his most recent publication: as Gibson has shown, ‘Ithaca’ works to expose just this falsely scientific “attitude towards words and language.”

Crucially, the “English” ideal of “progress,” to which Wells appeals in his letter to Joyce, and which was used to justify both the Empire and the sovereignty of science and technology, was also used to proclaim the universal benefit of the dissemination of British consumer goods to new markets. The fact that British advertisers in the latter part of the nineteenth century drew heavily upon images of the Empire in order to sell commodities is well documented, particularly by Richards, and by Anne McClintock in *Imperial Leather: Race Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*.<sup>71</sup> As Richards has shown, these advertisements in the first place presented commodities as central to imperial might, as with the infamous late-1880s Pears’ soap advertisement that depicted a conquered Sudanese company halted in wonder before a Pears’ slogan, beneath the heading “THE FORMULA OF BRITISH CONQUEST.”<sup>72</sup> At the turn of the century, major British companies such as Bovril ran countless advertisements associating their products with imperial campaigns, with captions and images ranging from the restrained (“Bovril reinforcements”) to the direct (“Bovril and the Boer War”) to the hyperbolic (“THE EVENT OF THE YEAR. [. . .] [T]he route followed by Lord Roberts in his historical march [. . .] has made an indelible imprint of the word Bovril on the face of the Orange Free State”).<sup>73</sup> The company ran these advertisements indiscriminately in the Irish press, and some of these advertisements include long testimonials, with intrusive headings: “WHAT THE SOLDIERS SAY ABOUT BOVRIL,” “ALWAYS FIRST TO THE WOUNDED SOLDIER,” “A LUCKY FELLOW

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<sup>71</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 119-67; Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995) 207-31.

<sup>72</sup> Mike Dempsey (ed.), *Early Advertising Art from A. & F. Pears Ltd.* (London: Fontana, 1978) 16; rpt. Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 121.

<sup>73</sup> Rpt. Peter Hadley, *The History of Bovril Advertising* (London: Alabaster Passmore, n.d.) 14-16.

TO HAVE BOVRIL,” “A USEFUL THING, I CAN TELL YOU,” or simply “BOVRIL AND THE SOLDIERS.”<sup>74</sup> This strand of imperial advertising is mocked in ‘Ithaca’ with the testimonial for the Wonderworker, which concludes with the “absentminded beggar’s” endorsement: “What a pity the government did not supply our men with wonderworkers during the South African campaign! What a relief it would have been!” (17.1837-9).

Another significant imperial advertising trope, however, already hinted at in the Pears’ advertisement quoted above, presented British commodities as in themselves the means to civilisation. The quintessential example, reproduced and analysed by both Richards and McClintock, is the Pears’ soap advertisement headed “THE BIRTH OF CIVILIZATION,” which depicts a loinclothed black man, spear in hand and feathers in headband, holding aloft and gazing at a bar of Pears’ soap that has washed up from a wrecked ship. Beneath the picture, the caption reads: “The consumption of soap is a measure of the wealth, civilisation, health, and purity of the people.”<sup>75</sup> The Empire is not specifically denoted in this advertisement: it is the British product itself that will civilise, although the fantastic list of benefits—“wealth, civilisation,” etc.—is an easily recognisable run of the usual justifications for the Empire. In other advertisements, however, the connection of British commodities, progress, health, and empire are brought together under the banner of science. In a lengthy advertisement published in the *Irish Times* in 1899, an advertisement for other champion of imperial advertising, Boveril, proclaimed that “THE WIDESPREAD USE OF BOVRIL THROUGHOUT THE BRITISH EMPIRE [. . .] is one of the most striking indications in recent years of the satisfactory progress made in the science of dietetics.” The advertisement goes on to detail the use of the product in the imperial military campaign in South Africa: “Boveril, Limited, are also supplying large quantities of their special Emergency Rations for the troops actively engaged.”<sup>76</sup> Science and military imperialism are brought together in the consumption of the British commodity.

Of course, the nature of the “science” to which such advertisements alluded was never really explained. The shibboleth of science was so well-used that it could be deployed with no further context to justify more or less any product. So Mellin’s could advertise their cod liver oil with reference only to their “Scientific Methods,” and Boveril could claim simply that their product was approved by “scientific experts everywhere.”<sup>77</sup> These appeals were particularly prominent in advertisements for patent foods and medicines, and a variation of

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<sup>74</sup> *Irish Times* 3 Apr. 1900: 8.

<sup>75</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 141; McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 224.

<sup>76</sup> *Irish Times* 18 Dec. 1899: 7

<sup>77</sup> *Freeman’s Journal* 3 Jan. 1898: 2; 10 Sep. 1889: 8.

this kind of advertising is mentioned in ‘Eumaeus’: “Anyhow inspection, medical inspection, of all eatables seemed to him more than ever necessary which possibly accounted for the vogue of Dr Tibble’s Vi-Cocoa on account of the medical analysis involved” (16.804-6). The irony is that when these kinds of advertisements were printed in an Irish newspaper—and they were, daily—they promised everything that the commodities’ imperial participation helped preclude: “wealth, civilisation, health,” and so on. It need hardly be pointed out that these claims are disingenuous: if consumer goods such as Bovril truly did improve the quality of life, they did so not to that end, but as part of an imperial hegemony that depended upon trade supremacy and the maintaining of consumer markets. With Bovril such an exemplar of the combined imperial consumerist appeal of science, military expansion, and universal improvement, the single reference to the product in *Ulysses*—otherwise rather puzzling—begins to make perfect sense.

Towards the end of the ‘Oxen of the Sun’ chapter, apparently in connection with the enigmatic M’Intosh, comes a similarly cryptic line: “Jubilee mutton. Bovril, by James” (14.1547-8). The meaning of “Jubilee mutton” is well-enough understood: in June 1897, to celebrate Queen Victoria’s Jubilee, quantities of mutton and beef were brought from Australia to be distributed among the British and Irish poor. According to the *Freeman’s Journal* for 29 June, the city’s allocation “of about 900 carcasses of sheep and 200 quarters of beef” was well enough received in the city by the charities who were to cook and distribute it. Responses in other parts of Ireland, however, were less enthusiastic. On the same day, the *Freeman’s Journal* reported “EXCITING SCENES” in Limerick: “The majority of people who were to receive it declined it, and those who accepted brought it only as far as the river, into which they flung it.”<sup>78</sup> There were similarly disdainful responses in Armagh, Clonmel, Derry and Kilkenny. At Clonmel railway station, for instance, “[t]he ordinary carriers refused to remove it. The railway porters were offered carcasses but declined. The priests refused to have anything to say to it, and the poor people declared they would rather starve than take it.”<sup>79</sup> In Armagh, the Catholic committee—who had been invited to distribute the twenty carcasses allotted to the city’s Catholic poor, out of the city’s total allocation of fifty—refused to have anything to do with its distribution. In the Catholic committee’s letter to the Town Clerk, Father Quinn gave a dignified explanation for this refusal: “As the Catholics of the town took no part in the recent Jubilee celebrations they think it would be unbecoming for

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<sup>78</sup> *Freeman’s Journal* 29 June 1897; 5.

<sup>79</sup> *Freeman’s Journal* 1 July 1897: 6.

them to accept this gift.”<sup>80</sup> He follows this statement with a rather brilliant snub—“Fears are entertained that the meat may be unsound, and therefore dangerous to life”—but the political significance of his comments lies in the acute recognition of the disingenuousness of the “gift,” an understanding that its acceptance would be compromising in its implication of a requited colonial contract of fealty.

The unpopularity of the Jubilee mutton gesture has been noted by Joycean critics,<sup>81</sup> but I have not found any explanation for Joyce’s juxtaposition of this reference with the brand name Bovril. It seems to me that he does so by way of direct analogy. The juxtaposition of the Jubilee mutton and the British commodity implies their equivalence, and it is no accident that Joyce has chosen Bovril in particular: the parallel is impressively consistent. From an Irish perspective, the Jubilee mutton was a gift culled from one colony and shipped back to the poor of another. Bovril too was manufactured only with beef extracted from Australia and other colonies, and indeed, this fact was advertised as a virtue of the product: the first display advertisement for Bovril, printed in the *Lady’s Pictorial* in 1889, specified Australia as a source for their cattle, and introduced the famous advertising copy proclaiming “THE 1,000 GUINEA CHALLENGE.”<sup>82</sup> This same copy ran in Irish newspapers throughout the 1890s, offering the prize to anybody who could disprove the claim that “not one ounce of any description of Beef produced, procured, or manipulated on the Continent of Europe has ever been used in the preparation of Bovril.”<sup>83</sup> And finally, just as Jubilee mutton was sent in commemoration and celebration of a system that itself engendered and maintained the very poverty the meat was supposed to attenuate, so the colonial distribution of Bovril included the celebration and self-congratulation of the Empire, as seen in the scientific and military advertisements quoted above.

Bovril and Plumtree’s Potted Meat are equivalent commodities: both are British meat products, and both involve the indeterminable parts of animals being “put up” and shipped back to the colonies as consumer goods. Since Bovril is critiqued so perfectly by its juxtaposition with the Jubilee mutton, it is hard not to suspect that Joyce intends a similar critique of the spurious “home” product. I have shown that advertisements for British products drew upon the same rhetoric of objectivity and disinterested beneficence as other imperial discourses. With Gibson’s analysis in mind, the ‘Ithaca’ chapter’s simultaneous

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<sup>80</sup> *Freeman’s Journal* 29 June 1897: 5.

<sup>81</sup> “The inadequacy of this gesture in contrast to the appalling need of the poor gave rise to this anti-English phrase” (Gifford, *“Ulysses” Annotated*, 447).

<sup>82</sup> Hadley, *The History of Bovril Advertising*, 9.

<sup>83</sup> *Freeman’s Journal* 25 Jan. 1890: 4.

gesture towards, and subversion of, the language and form of scientific objectivity perhaps explains the falsehoods introduced in relation to the chapter's British commodities. The narrator's de-Anglicisation of Plumtree's Potted Meat gestures towards both the spuriousness of imperial objectivity, and the self-interestedness of an ideology that presented commodities as natural on the Irish market. From this perspective, the error is a part of the chapter's stylistic critique of the partiality of British ideals of science and progress. As the errors of 'Ithaca' work to expose the contingency of its scientific discourse and style, so the errors of its consumerist details work against the connected imperial rhetoric of progress—which espoused the dissemination of commodities as a universal improvement of the quality of life, while disavowing the Empire's particular and self-serving interest in this expansion. In 'Ithaca,' the self-seeking hypocrisy of the imperial ideology of consumption—the claim that commodification is driven by an altruistic desire to improve people's quality of life, just as imperial expansion is driven by the wish to spread the light of civilisation—is exposed. The promised improvement is not disinterested or universal, but self-directed and particular. At the very best, this improvement is only incidental to the Empire's driving purposes of expansion, domination and wealth; at worst, it is the economic means by which Ireland's colonial subservience is maintained.

## Chapter 6

### ‘Nausicaa,’ Intertextuality, and the Gendered Language of Advertising

A number of recent discussions of the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter have focussed upon the saturation of Gerty’s narrative with the material of consumer culture. Richards’s chapter in *The Commodity Culture of Victorian Britain* is the first explicit analysis of this material; yet while he traces the intertextual origins of Gerty’s character in great detail, both to Maria Cummins’s *The Lamplighter* (1854), and especially to the advertising figure of the “seaside girl,” Richards nevertheless proceeds to read Gerty as Joyce’s mimetic depiction of a “real” early-twentieth-century female consumer.<sup>1</sup> In doing so, he repeats an entrenched critical tendency. Almost from the start, critical accounts of the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter have interpreted Gerty as in some way a “product” of commercialised discourses. With very few exceptions, this representation has been taken literally as Joyce’s satirical critique of the pernicious psychological effects of a crassly commercial modern world. Kenner describes the first part of ‘Nausicaa’ as “the section shaped by the mind of a Victorian lady novelist,” reading Gerty as a character “whose mind has been shaped by such minds.”<sup>2</sup> Karen Lawrence describes her in more or less the same way: “What Joyce presents in the first half of ‘Nausicaa’ is the indirect monologue of Gerty MacDowell, translated into a language appropriate to her; he parodies her sentimental mind by parodying the second-rate fiction that has nurtured it.”<sup>3</sup> Suzette Henke is more sympathetic, both towards Gerty as a character and towards Joyce’s intentions: “The poignant, satirical jest of ‘Nausicaa’ is directed less against Gerty than against the manipulative society of which she is a product.” Nonetheless, Gerty is still “a product,” her mind “shaped”—that word again—“by the clichéd rhetoric of fashion magazines.”<sup>4</sup> Richards brings a new thoroughness in tracing the commodified aspects of her character, and expands his analysis into a more general historical account of the psychological effects of consumerism. However, his broad argument, that “advertisers sucked

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<sup>1</sup> More recently, Leonard’s *Advertising* includes a chapter on Gerty (98-143), as does Gibson’s *Joyce’s Revenge*, which locates Gerty’s consumption of British women’s magazines within the specifically colonial context of an early-twentieth-century Irish readership (127-49). Katherine Mullin, while not concerned with consumerism in itself, argues for the centrality of a particular commodity—the mutoscope—to the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter. See Katherine Mullin, *James Joyce, Sexuality and Social Purity* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003) 140-70.

<sup>2</sup> Kenner, “The Rhetoric of Silence,” 382.

<sup>3</sup> Karen Lawrence, *The Odyssey of Style in “Ulysses”* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981) 120.

<sup>4</sup> Suzette Henke, “Gerty MacDowell: Joyce’s Sentimental Heroine,” *Women in Joyce*, ed. Suzette Henke and Elaine Unkeless (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1982): 134-5. Henke’s point is made slightly differently by Kimberly Devlin, who takes it that the “episode’s irony” is “aimed not so much at Gerty—a figure who becomes increasingly human as ‘Nausicaa’ progresses—but rather at the absurd romance exemplar she unsuccessfully tries to imitate” (Kimberly Devlin, “The Romance Heroine Exposed: ‘Nausicaa’ and ‘The Lamplighter,’” *James Joyce Quarterly* 22:4 [1985]: 393).



consumers, especially women, into the vortex of a master-slave dialectic,” still rests upon his conventional valuation of Gerty MacDowell as a young woman disfigured and debilitated by her consumerism, a valuation evident even in as sympathetic a reader as Henke, whose description Richards’s certainly resembles: “Gerty has been sucked into a whirlpool of commercial fantasy.”<sup>5</sup>

Leonard’s terse assertion that “Gerty’s ‘personality’ is a product” would seem to promise a break from such naturalistic interpretations of Gerty as a “real” woman who responds to the commands of consumerism, but this turns out not to be the case.<sup>6</sup> In fact, the only fundamental difference between Leonard’s and Richards’s account of Gerty’s response to consumerism is that Leonard gives Gerty a more active role in the “production” of her consciousness. Richards finds Gerty to be all but helpless in the face of the dominant consumerism: she is a “generalized and impoverished” consumer “shaped by the developing forms of commodity culture.”<sup>7</sup> For Leonard, Gerty’s response is more deliberate and deliberating: her commodified self is “a desperate and crafty tactic for survival and not [. . .] the vain pursuit of a simpleminded girl.”<sup>8</sup> In both accounts, whether Gerty is knowingly or unknowingly manipulated, there is still the naturalistic assumption that Joyce is depicting a “real person” who has either been shaped by, or shapes herself according to, the dictates of consumerism. Indeed, the naturalistic reading of Gerty reaches its apex with Leonard and Richards, because they reify the character into a psychological and historical case study. This reification is a necessary manoeuvre for Richards, since his analysis of ‘Nausicaa’ is justified only insofar as it contributes to his social history of the growth of commodity culture. So it is that, despite some tricky rationalisation at the start of the chapter, Richards is more or less frank in his claim that “[i]n cultural history Joyce’s narrative of Gerty MacDowell ought to occupy a position similar to Freud’s narrative of Dora.”<sup>9</sup> Leonard’s methodology is fundamentally similar, if rather more generalised. He analyses the psychology of Gerty, and combines this analysis with what he describes as the “more historicized point of view of cultural materialism,” suggesting that “Gerty and Bloom are able to look at one another as much as they want, but only because they both know that actually touching what they so enjoy gazing upon is out of the question. This is a similar dynamic to that experienced by the

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<sup>5</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 7; Henke, “Gerty MacDowell,” 135.

<sup>6</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 99.

<sup>7</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 211.

<sup>8</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 134.

<sup>9</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 210.

consumer in the modern marketplace.<sup>10</sup> In these accounts, the author is almost literally refined out of existence, for Gerty appears no longer as the representation of a partial creator, but a subject in her own right.<sup>11</sup> For Leonard, Gerty is a “self-conscious manipulator who views herself as a commodity that must be carefully packaged and advertised, in accordance with a media representation of what is feminine, in order to attract a male consumer.”<sup>12</sup> He may provide a more empowering reading than Richards’s interpretation of “Gerty as a preconditioned receptacle of false needs,” but his account still assumes a merely mimetic or even didactic intention on Joyce’s part.

The naturalistic, character-based readings of ‘Nausicaa’—whether they take the narrative intention to be the mockery of Gerty herself, as with Kenner and Lawrence, or whether they take it to be a broader cultural complaint, as with Henke, Richards and Leonard—all assume that Gerty is modelled upon a “real” historical type: the deluded, sexualised, fashion-attentive young woman. Yet with the style of ‘Nausicaa’ foregrounded as it is, the chapter is manifestly intertextual: it is parody proper—“a composition in which the characteristic style and themes of a particular author or genre are satirized by being applied to inappropriate or unlikely subjects, or are otherwise exaggerated for comic effect.”<sup>13</sup> By definition, therefore, the chapter’s parodic style requires that it be read against a specific set, or specific sets, of other discourses. Such an intertextual approach does not necessarily discredit psychological interpretations of character, or deny the recognition that Joyce includes a wealth of realistic local detail in his portrayal of Gerty MacDowell. It does, however, cut away the anchorage of the chapter in her imagined psychology, and push away from the assumption harboured by the majority of critics—that Gerty is an example of Joyce’s tendency to naturalism, his portrait of a young woman whose personality, like his earlier heroine Eveline’s, is conditioned and stunted by her social environment. In this chapter, I pursue Gerty’s intertextual origins, arguing that the first half of ‘Nausicaa’ is even more fully comprised of consumerist discourses than has been recognised. With reference to Carl A. Naether’s 1928 itemisation of the language of women’s magazine advertisements, supported with examples from the *Lady’s Pictorial*, I argue that Gerty’s narrative is

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<sup>10</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 114.

<sup>11</sup> It is likely that Leonard was influenced by Richards in this approach; his earlier review of Richards’s account, at least, is enthusiastic: “quite frankly, I am not sure it is possible to hold a comprehensive discussion about ‘Nausicaa’ unless one first reads at least the penultimate chapter [ . . . ] in Richards’ book. The chapter has what I would call a high ‘Eureka’ component.” See Garry Leonard, rev. of *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England*, by Thomas Richards, *James Joyce Quarterly* 28:4 (1991): 1004.

<sup>12</sup> Leonard, *Advertising*, 99.

<sup>13</sup> “Parody,” def. 2a, *OED Online*, The Oxford English Dictionary, 24 June 2012 <<http://oed.com>>.

composed from the vocabulary of a specifically female-oriented advertising—not only, as has long been recognised, in the brand-names and advertisement-claims that form the content of her narrative, but also in the general and non-specific language used to describe her. Where previous accounts of the ‘Nausicaa’ episode ultimately revert to naturalistic readings of Gerty as a “real” type, I argue that although Joyce pours in a great deal of realistic detail, her character originates as a stock figure, drawn wholesale from the consumerist discourses towards which the style and language of the chapter point.<sup>14</sup>

### **Advertising to Women**

In 1928, Carl A. Naether, an advertising copywriter and assistant professor of English at the University of Southern California, published a business guide entitled *Advertising to Women*.<sup>15</sup> In Britain, this book was brought out by Isaac Pitman & Son, who had also published Scott’s *The Psychology of Advertising*, and Bridgewater’s *Advertising, Or the Art of Making Known*, on which Joyce drew for his “Advertising” notes. Although Naether’s background was in psychology, his book is free of the psychological terminology employed by Scott, indicating the extent to which the premises of Scott’s work had been absorbed into advertising practice. In numerous ways, but particularly in his attention to the affective qualities of language, Naether reflects Scott’s arguments, even if he avoids his terminology. So, with the assumption that advertisements operate by playing on people’s unconscious or irrational urges, Naether sets out to aid “the business man who wants thoroughly practical information on how to appeal to women.”<sup>16</sup>

It is questionable whether Naether’s book does indeed, as he claims, reveal “the mind of woman [. . .] and so give us a glimpse of her personality—mental and physical”; it is more often the mind and personality of the author that is revealed, from his mild condescension towards the “fair reader,” to his stereotypical view of the female incapacity for objective thought: “Without exaggeration it may be stated that woman, as a general rule, finds it hard to look upon things and persons about her as not relating in some more or less definite way to

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<sup>14</sup> Since this chapter is concerned with Joyce’s appropriation of a stock character from British magazines, it does not consider Gerty as a specifically Irish consumer so much as an intertextual figure drawn from these sources. That is not to say, however, that there is not also a very precise colonial context to Gerty’s character. For a discussion of this context in relation to Gerty’s readership of the British women’s magazines, see Gibson, *Joyce’s Revenge*, 127-49.

<sup>15</sup> Carl A. Naether, *Advertising to Women* (London: Pitman; New York: Prentice Hall, 1928).

<sup>16</sup> Naether, preface, *Advertising to Women*, v.

her.”<sup>17</sup> However, Naether’s practical approach to the subject gives his book a particular historical value. In the first place, it provides an example of the way in which contemporary advertisers viewed female-oriented advertising, not to mention their attitude to female consumers themselves. Secondly, it provides a concise (if selective) archive of the kind of language used to appeal to female consumers in contemporary advertisements. Naether analyses advertisements for commodities “produced for feminine use,” in magazines intended for women: *Vogue*, *Good Housekeeping* and *The Ladies’ Home Journal*. From these advertisements, Naether draws a list of what he describes as “bywords” or “watchwords”—the general language that he finds to be “omnipresent [. . .] in the sentences and paragraphs of copy written for firms using space in women’s magazines.” Elsewhere, Naether gives positive examples of what he considers to be good copy, but in his analysis of these watchwords, he proceeds by negative example: the successful advertising man “has just one reason for noting hackneyed terms and phrases in this wise—to avoid using them.”<sup>18</sup> A careful attention to the language of the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter shows that Joyce too noted such “hackneyed terms and phrases,” but for the opposite reason—to ensure that he used them. Setting up Naether’s list alongside the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter of *Ulysses*, I propose a reading of the narrative of Gerty MacDowell that is attentive to the historical determination of its language. While the relevance of advertising and consumerism to the chapter is well known, the thoroughness of Joyce’s engagement with these practices has not been fully recognised. By reading Gerty’s narrative intertextually, against Naether’s list of watchwords and against contemporary advertisements in the British women’s magazine *Lady’s Pictorial*, I argue that Joyce drew carefully upon the specific lexicon of female-oriented advertisements in his construction of the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter.

Naether’s methodology is not clearly defined. He does not specify exactly which issues of *Vogue*, *Good Housekeeping* and *The Ladies’ Home Journal* he draws upon, and his list is impressionistic rather than quantitatively established. Nonetheless, his identification of the words “more or less common to all advertising” in the fields of “toilettries and feminine attire”<sup>19</sup> gives an idea of the language that was most inescapably overused in the 1920s. Of course, *Advertising to Women* was published after *Ulysses*, and so cannot be considered even an indirect source; the question of dating is important, and will be discussed in detail below. The first thing to say, however, is that Naether’s watchwords are employed by Joyce in a

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<sup>17</sup> Naether, preface, *Advertising to Women*, vi; 6, 32-3.

<sup>18</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 5, 77, 87.

<sup>19</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 77.

specific and distinctive way: they are overwhelmingly concentrated in the ‘Nausicaa’ and ‘Penelope’ chapters. That just these two chapters share the diction of Naether’s “softer, more delicate, and often more suggestive terminology” is no coincidence.<sup>20</sup> Most fundamentally, it suggests that Joyce drew upon a stereotypically feminine language in his depiction of the novel’s two most prominent female characters, Gerty MacDowell and Molly Bloom. The “femininity” of these chapters does not consist only in the fact that they contain female characters. Implicitly or explicitly, Joyce specified the style of these chapters as “feminine” too: the famous “namby-pamby jammy marmalady drawery [. . .] style” of the first half of ‘Nausicaa’ (*LI* 135); the “technic” of “[m]onologue (female)” in ‘Penelope.’<sup>21</sup> It may be that in indulging linguistic stereotypes, Joyce betrays a complicit sexist element in his characterisation of these female characters. But with Joyce’s sensitivity to the cultural valence of particular language uses, and with the styles of these chapters foregrounded as they are, it seems unlikely that Joyce’s deployment of a stereotypically feminine language is anything other than deliberate.

However, the careful analysis of Joyce’s use of the “softer, more delicate” language identified by Naether will show that there is something far more specific going on than broad gender-stereotyping. For if Joyce uses much of the same language for his two female characters, he uses it in very distinct ways. Whereas in ‘Penelope,’ Naether’s watchwords are used in a broad range of contexts, with a broad range of applications, in ‘Nausicaa’ they are almost always used in the context of commodities and/or physical appearance: that is, the elements that constituted the discourse of early-twentieth-century female-oriented advertising. It is no doubt true that these words were “feminised”—constructed as typically feminine, whether in attribution of use or in descriptive application—long before their appropriation by advertisers, particularly in other forms of commercial literature, such as popular fiction and the press. Indeed, outside of ‘Nausicaa’ and ‘Penelope,’ these words tend to be used in connection with just these media—in the extracts from *Sweets of Sin*, for example, or in the press parodies of ‘Cyclops.’ Such generalised feminine connotations perhaps explain Joyce’s use of these words in ‘Penelope,’ and it might be asked what are the implications for feminist readings of the language of this chapter if Joyce’s female protagonist is shown to use the lexicon of stereotypical femininity—male-determined, vague, conventional and unreflective. In the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter, however, these words remain connected to their local source—the female-oriented advertisements of the kind analysed by

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<sup>20</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 27.

<sup>21</sup> Gilbert, *James Joyce’s “Ulysses,”* 372.

Naether, prominent in the pages of women's magazines such as *Lady's Pictorial*. Richards has gone some way towards demonstrating the consumerist connotations of the language of 'Nausicaa,' pointing towards women's magazines, which "consistently link the moral style of the domestic storyteller with a variety of commodities presented in advertisements between the same covers."<sup>22</sup> In fact, the relationship that Richards detects between such fiction and advertisements is much more involved than mere adjacency: within the women's magazines—*Vogue*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Good Housekeeping* in America; *Lady's Pictorial*, *The Gentlewoman* and *The Princess's Novelette* in Britain and Ireland—the ostensibly separate discourses of journalism, fiction and advertising were drawn together into a shared consumerist register.<sup>23</sup> To begin with, then, I corroborate Naether's list of watchwords with reference to the *Lady's Pictorial*, which Joyce drew into the 'Nausicaa' chapter, and cross-reference this list against Joyce's narrative, to demonstrate the extent to which his construction of Gerty MacDowell incorporates the language of contemporary female-oriented advertising.

#### **“But who was Gerty?” Female-oriented Advertising in ‘Nausicaa’**

The fact that Naether's watchwords correspond with Joyce's language in 'Nausicaa' should not be surprising; after all, their research followed a similar method. Naether drew his list by consulting popular American women's magazines from the mid to late 1920s. Joyce builds the narrative of 'Nausicaa,' at least in part, with reference to English popular women's magazines from the late 1910s. The language of the advertisements was clichéd in 1928, and it was at the very least in heavy usage less than a decade before; and if Naether found it to be worn in 1928, there can be little doubt that Joyce also perceived its tiredness. That Joyce built 'Nausicaa' from a received, commercial language was recognised from the first.<sup>24</sup> What has not been fully recognised is just how thoroughly Joyce draws in a specific language of the discourse of consumerism, as represented in the women's magazines.

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<sup>22</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 215.

<sup>23</sup> As will be seen, by the early-twentieth century the discourses of fiction, journalism, and advertising were closely implicated within the broader, shared discourse of consumerism, and it is this interconnection that explains the similarity between the 'Nausicaa' and the 'Cyclops' language. Kershner has demonstrated that the 'Cyclops' parodies draw heavily upon contemporary Irish newspapers, and Fritz Senn has pointed out their linguistic similarity to the first part of 'Nausicaa.' See Kershner, *The Culture of "Ulysses,"* 118-123; Fritz Senn, "Nausicaa," *James Joyce's "Ulysses": Critical Essays*, ed. Clive Hart and David Hayman (Berkeley: U of California P, 1974) 296.

<sup>24</sup> "Gerty MacDowell is the star. She is described in the familiar novelette style of the period" (Budgen, *James Joyce*, 208-9).

Upon opening a contemporary *Lady's Pictorial*, it is immediately evident that the magazine is largely constituted by advertisements. The issue from 4 January 1919, the first of the year in which Joyce began writing 'Nausicaa,' contains eighteen pages of advertisements, and twenty-six pages of editorials, images and stories. Of these twenty-six, however, at least three are comprised fully of reading-notice, or puffs, explicitly naming particular commodities and stores, and at least another six consist of editorials and images praising or promoting the types of clothing and materials advertised more specifically in the surrounding pages. Even a cursory scan of these pages indicates the accuracy of Naether's list of words overused in female-oriented advertising. In the same January issue, an advertisement for the London drapers and mercers Stagg and Mantle includes four captions for four images, each opening with one of Naether's watchwords: "attractive," "attractive," "smart" and "fascinating." In the columns headed "THE SEASON OF SALES," attributed to the fashion writer Mrs Florence Roberts ("Butterfly"), but presumably sponsored by the companies the column directly promotes, almost every "par" confirms Naether's list.<sup>25</sup> In the short paragraph devoted to Stagg and Mantle, the words that had been used in their advertising captions multiply:

There are some *charming* coats [. . .] and there are many other equally good value in *smart* fur-trimmed cloth coats. [. . .] *smart* designs [. . .] very *charming* Jumpers in *crêpe de Chine* in *fascinating* designs, and the daintiest blouses. [. . .] There are also some very *graceful* afternoon and semi-evening frocks. [. . .] Skirts for all occasions, *smart* millinery, trimmed and untrimmed, and underwear.<sup>26</sup>

The word "smart" is here particularly prominent. Naether describes the "omnipresent 'smart'" as "[s]triking in point of frequency of use and variety of reference," and says "[w]ithout fear of being exaggerative" that it "is indeed rare" to find an advertisement for women's clothing which does not contain "smart" or "smartness."<sup>27</sup> His description certainly holds for 1919: "smart" is by far the most commonly used word in the "SEASON OF SALES" columns, appearing in one form or another fifteen times across the three pages; an advertisement for Dickins and Jones in the same issue uses "smart" or "smartly" in three of its six picture captions.<sup>28</sup> Next in frequency is Naether's "[u]biquitous 'charm' and 'charming,'" which appears six times in the "SEASON OF SALES" pages; his other

<sup>25</sup> *Lady's Pictorial* 4 Jan. 1919: ix, 18-20.

<sup>26</sup> *Lady's Pictorial* 4 Jan. 1919: 18; emphasis added.

<sup>27</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 77, 78.

<sup>28</sup> *Lady's Pictorial* 4 Jan. 1919: vii.

“common advertising bywords” follow, with at least forty instances of “beautiful,” “delightful,” “fascinating,” “lovely” “attractive,” “graceful,” “wonderful” and the “commonplace ‘exquisite.’”<sup>29</sup>

To focus on this particular issue is in some sense, of course, arbitrary. Although Joyce’s letters show that he frequently requisitioned newspapers and magazines from Dublin, particularly from his aunt Josephine Murray, we do not know exactly which issues or even which titles Joyce drew upon for the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter. It is a surprising fact that while the style of ‘Nausicaa’ is frequently assumed to be based, in part, upon the women’s magazines to which the chapter refers—*Lady’s Pictorial* and *The Princess’s Novelettes*—very few accounts of the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter have paid much attention to the content of these magazines. As far as I am aware, only Gibson has attempted to read ‘Nausicaa’ against the particular titles that form the chapter’s background, and he identifies a number of “extremely specific details” that Joyce has drawn into the figure of Gerty MacDowell. More to the purpose of my argument, however, is his demonstration that aside from the specific details Joyce includes in the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter, “the magazines are also a more general and diffuse source of some of the chapter’s features.”<sup>30</sup> Gibson shows that “[t]he *Lady’s Pictorial* for 11 June 1904 has a number of connections with *Ulysses*,” but he is careful not to explicitly claim it as a direct source, for there is no evidence to suggest that Joyce read or drew upon this issue.<sup>31</sup> References to the Mirus bazaar and the Alake of Abeokuta—the connections Gibson notes—were extremely prominent in the Irish and British press in June 1904, and there are no details exclusive to the *Lady’s Pictorial* accounts to indicate them as sources.<sup>32</sup> In fact, many of the same features Gibson identifies in issues contemporary to the novel’s 1904 setting can be found in the issues from 1919, when Joyce sketched his “notation of flapper’s atrocities” (*LI* 132) and began working on the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter.

For instance, Gibson rightly points out that “[e]ven Gerty’s moments of superstition [. . .] may stem less from her ‘Irishness’ than from English magazines.”<sup>33</sup> He instances stories and advertisements from 1904 issues of *The Princess’s Novelettes*, but there are equally suggestive examples in the 1919 *Lady’s Pictorial*. A weekly column entitled “THE MAGIC

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<sup>29</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 77, 82, 84.

<sup>30</sup> Gibson, *Joyce’s Revenge*, 138.

<sup>31</sup> Gibson, *Joyce’s Revenge*, 132.

<sup>32</sup> The Mirus bazaar had a near-constant presence in the Irish press in June 1904; Phillip F. Herring has documented Joyce’s use of *The Times* for 14-15 June 1904 in his descriptions the Alake of Abeokuta. See Phillip F. Herring, *Joyce’s Notes and Early Drafts for “Ulysses”*: *Selections from the Buffalo Collection* (Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1977) 139-40.

<sup>33</sup> Gibson, *Joyce’s Revenge*, 138.



OF SELF-HELP” featured a section in which “O Hashnu Hara” would reply to readers’ letters, briefly addressing their comments and then advising them of their lucky colours and their lucky day. These are just the superstitions that Gerty holds: Thursday is Gerty’s lucky day “for wealth” (13.119), and she is “wearing the blue for luck, hoping against hope, her own colour” (13.179-80). In Jan 1919, O Hashnu Hara replied to a Dublin reader, giving her lucky colours and advising that her “best day, as a rule, will be Thursday.”<sup>34</sup> O Hashnu Hara would also briefly address specific questions, although for a clairvoyant, her replies are not always especially sensitive; to the same young woman from Dublin, who had apparently complained of her poverty and unemployment, the columnist replies in stereotypically English terms that belie her exotic (Indo-Irish?) name: “money isn’t everything, and will and work will go a long way if you keep a stiff upper lip and learn to laugh at trouble.” Another point of correspondence between the ‘Nausicaa’ narrative and the more recent issues of the *Lady’s Pictorial* is Iron Jelloids. These are the pills that have done Gerty “a world of good much better than the Widow Welch’s female pills” (13.84-5), and throughout 1918 and 1919 they were advertised on the front page of every four issues of the *Lady’s Pictorial*, “[d]evoid of all the usual drawbacks of Iron Tonics.”<sup>35</sup>

There are other similarly suggestive items in the 1919 issues of the *Lady’s Pictorial*, and we already know that Joyce drew upon recent advertisements for the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter<sup>36</sup>; it could be further argued that Joyce was more likely to have had access to recent issues when he began the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter in Trieste towards the end of that year (*LI* 132). However, to privilege 1919 issues in this way would be to miss the essential continuity of the women’s magazines in the first decades of the twentieth century—in their content, but especially in their commodified use of a general “feminised” language. The language that Naether identifies in 1928, with reference to the American magazines *Vogue*, *Ladies’ Home Journal*, and *Good Housekeeping*, is substantially the same as the language of the English magazine *Lady’s Pictorial* in 1919. A detailed or quantitative analysis of the history of this vocabulary is well beyond the scope of this thesis, but it would seem fair to say that this commodification of particular words was well underway in 1904, although my impression of these magazines is that the sexualisation of this language (which Naether laments and ‘Nausicaa’ reflects) is less obviously prominent at this earlier stage. For the purpose of this

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<sup>34</sup> *Lady’s Pictorial* 25 Jan. 1919: 112.

<sup>35</sup> *Lady’s Pictorial* 4 Jan. 1919.

<sup>36</sup> “Eyebrowleine” (13.111) was advertised from around 1916 and recorded by Joyce in his ‘Nausicaa’ notesheets between September 1919 and February 1920 (Beck, “Bewitching Eyes beneath a Well-drawn Eyebrow Line”).

chapter, it is enough to say that the advertising bywords identified by Naether in 1928 were equally prominent in this context when Joyce began to write the chapter in 1919. And as will be seen, Joyce was as methodical in his attention to this language as was Naether. Table 1 shows the distribution within *Ulysses* of the female-oriented advertising watchwords identified by Naether, and although there may be a rather Ithacan disjunction in presenting this undiscerning language in such a methodical way, it forms a useful point of reference for the discussion that follows.

Table 1

Distribution of Naether's Advertising "Watchwords" in the 'Nausicaa' and 'Penelope' chapters

Watchword	<i>Ulysses</i> Total	'Nausicaa'	'Penelope'	'Nausicaa' Percentage
[Beautifully]	4	3	1	75.0%
[Loveliness]	3	2	0	66.6%
Graceful	6	3	0	50.0%
Exquisite	8	3	0	37.5%
Exquisitely	3	1	1	33.3%
[Perfection]	3	1	0	33.3%
Fashionable	5	1	0	20.0%
Wonderful	22	4	1	18.2%
Charm	6	1	0	16.7%
Beautiful	38	6	4	15.8%
Lovely	75	11	20	14.7%
Attractive	7	1	2	14.3%
Delightful	7	1	1	14.3%
Smart	22	3	0	13.6%
[Charming]	15	2	2	13.3%
Distinguished	8	1	1	12.5%
Beauty	49	4	9	8.2%
[Perfectly]	13	1	0	7.7%

The squared brackets denote a derived form of Naether's original watchword. These figures do not distinguish between Gerty's and Bloom's sections of the chapter, although the distinction is made in my analysis. 'Nausicaa' makes up 6.6% of the novel's word-count: any percentage greater than that shows skew in the chapter's use of the particular advertising watchword.

The most prominent of Naether's watchwords in *Ulysses* is "beauty." Naether advises against the use of this word in advertisements aimed at women, both because it is overused, and because it makes a mostly unrealisable promise; he suggests unromantically that the cosmetics advertiser "would approximate the truth much closer if, in place of beauty, he

would promise in all his advertising a varying degree of personal attractiveness.”<sup>37</sup> “Beauty” is a favourite word of Molly, with nine of the novel’s forty-nine usages given to her, but in Molly’s parlance it rarely denotes “personal attractiveness” in any degree, only twice being used by her to describe particular people (Mrs Galbraith and Lily Langtry; 18.476, 18.484) and otherwise used variously in an idiomatic sense (“that other beauty Burke”; 18.964-5), aesthetic sense (“theres real beauty and poetry for you”; 18.1351), or abstract sense (“the woman is beauty”; 18.559).<sup>38</sup> It is used only once in Gerty’s narrative. The adverb form “beautifully,” however, is strongly concentrated in the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter, with three of its four instances in the novel appearing in Gerty’s narrative. The fourth comes in ‘Penelope,’ and again, Molly’s usage is non-personal (describing the moon; 18.1336), whereas in ‘Nausicaa’ it is used to describe Gerty’s appearance: her throat is “so slim, so flawless, so beautifully moulded” (13.582-3), and she has “graceful beautifully shaped legs” (13.698). When the word is used to describe the “beautifully appointed drawingroom” of her envisaged marital home (13.231), Gerty’s narrative runs straight into a full inventory of the kind of domestic commodities advertised in the magazines Naether analyses, and the magazines upon which Joyce drew in his composition of the chapter: “with pictures and engravings and the photograph [. . .] and chintz covers for the chairs and that silver toastrack in Clery’s summer jumble sales” (18.231-5). It will be seen that this pattern is absolutely typical of the distribution of Naether’s advertising watchwords in the narrative of *Ulysses*. When these words are found within the novel, they are concentrated into the chapters which centre on a feminine or feminised narrative. But whereas their usages in Molly’s monologue are various in application, in Gerty’s narrative they are used to describe the physical appearance or attractiveness of a female individual (usually Gerty herself), and they are in some way connected with advertisements or commodities. In other words, they take on the two fundamental conditions that Naether finds in all female-oriented advertising language: the promise of an attractive appearance is connected, directly or indirectly, to an advertised commodity.

The pattern is even clearer in the adjective form of Naether’s first watchword. Nine of the thirty-eight usages of the word “beautiful” occur in the narratives of Gerty and Molly, showing a definite feminine concentration: nearly a quarter, in sections that make up less than a tenth of the total narrative of *Ulysses*. Once again, Molly’s use of the adjective is varied in

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<sup>37</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 82.

<sup>38</sup> The other time the word is given a personal application in ‘Penelope’ is in quotation, as Molly recalls the English soldier Gardner’s term of endearment for her: “my Irish beauty” (18.392).

application, from the appearance of Byron (18.209-10), to the female genitals (18.542), to the lyrics of a song (18.1340), to the countryside (18.1560). In ‘Nausicaa,’ by contrast, the word is directly attributed to the headline of an advertisement—“you have a beautiful face but your nose?” (13.114)—and elsewhere used primarily to describe Gerty’s appearance: she is “pronounced beautiful by all who knew her” (13.81-2), and she has “beautiful eyes.” (13.106). And sure enough, this description of Gerty’s physical appearance quickly slides into an attribution of her attractiveness to her consumption of commodities: “It was Madame Vera Verity, directress of the Woman Beautiful page of the Princess Novelette, who had first advised her to try eyebrowline” (13.109-11). The beauty of Gerty’s eyes apparently depends upon her adherence to an advertisement in a women’s magazine (an editorial recommendation of a named commodity would almost certainly have been a “puff,” paid for by the manufacturer of eyebrowline).<sup>39</sup> Just as the specific advertised commodity has been adopted by Gerty the consumer, so the language of the column has been lifted into the narrative that describes her: Gerty’s obedience to “the Woman Beautiful” has brought the woman “beautiful eyes.”

There is a similar integration of the personal and the commodified in the “beautiful thoughts” (13.642) that Gerty has recorded in her “lovely confession album with the coralpink cover” (13.635-6). As Richards has pointed out,<sup>40</sup> mass-made commodities are central to this ostensibly private experience: the thoughts have been “written in it in violet ink that she bought in Hely’s of Dame Street” (13.642-3), and her “girlish treasure trove” is full of commodities (13.638-9). It is arguable whether her “tortoiseshell combs, her child of Mary badge, the whiterose scent, the eyebrowline” (13.639-40), and so on, should, as Richards also suggests, be sharply distinguished from May Dedalus’s supposedly pre-commodified collection of “old featherfans, tasselled dancecards, powdered with musk, a gaud of amber beads” (1.255-6); both collections seem to demonstrate degrees of the same imbrication of the subjective and the commodified. But if Gerty’s possessions are not essentially more commodified than anyone else’s, the vocabulary with which they are described is more closely connected to advertising, the primary discourse through which commodities are presented and perceived. It is the “transient loveliness” (13.648) that Gerty admires in the poem that she has kept in her keepsake box, and it is “loveliness” that follows on Naether’s list. The poem, “*Art thou real, my ideal?*” (13.645-6), is, as we know, the same that brought

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<sup>39</sup> Ellen Gruber Garvey provides evidence to show that puffing was typical of women’s magazines as well as newspapers in the late-nineteenth century. See Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York: Oxford UP, 1996) 94-5.

<sup>40</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 221.

to the protagonist of *Stephen Hero* “a long staining blush of anger,” prompting him to abandon the Irish language classes that the poem’s author taught (*SH* 88). In its earlier manifestation, the poem was passed around in manuscript, “a sheet of foolscap folded in four” (*SH* 87). In ‘Nausicaa,’ it is explicitly commodified: Gerty has found the poem in a newspaper, and copied it down with the same “violet ink that she bought in Hely’s.” The poem is a commodity; Gerty’s appreciation of the poem is rendered in the commodified language of advertisement.

The noun “loveliness” is used only three times in *Ulysses*, and two of these are in Gerty’s narrative. As with “beautiful,” the other instance once again describes Gerty’s appearance (13.541). The adjective form, “lovely,” is used far more broadly, but it is again concentrated in the narratives of Gerty MacDowell and Molly Bloom. Of the seventy-five occurrences of the word in *Ulysses*, nine appear in Gerty’s part of ‘Nausicaa,’ and twenty in ‘Penelope.’ At least another ten of its usages are given to other female characters,<sup>41</sup> which means that in a novel massively oriented towards male or implied-male speech and narration, over half of the usages of the adjective form of Naether’s watchword “loveliness” are spoken by women. And as with “beautiful,” the word is used in Gerty’s narrative primarily to describe her feminine appearance—“she looked so lovely in her sweet girlish shyness” (13.121); “You are lovely, Gerty, it [the mirror] said” (13.192-3); “the lovely colour of her face” (13.519)—or to describe commodities: the colours of the “christmas almanac [. . .] were done something lovely” (13.333-6); the “lovely confession album with the coralpink cover” (13.635-6). And again, as with “beautiful,” these two usages—for appearance and for the commodity—at times come together. Gerty’s appearance is made “lovely” by her consumption of commodities such as the bow bought from Clery’s: “She did it up all by herself and what joy when she tried it on then, smiling at the lovely reflection” (13.161-2).

Almost all of Naether’s watchwords serve a different function in the ‘Penelope’ chapter than in ‘Nausicaa’: “beautiful” and “beautifully” are not linked to advertisements and commodities in Molly’s monologue as they are in Gerty’s narrative, and are rarely even applied to people. With “lovely,” however, their usage is more or less the same. It is used three times by Molly to describe manufactured commodities, mainly clothing: “theyve lovely linen up there” in Belfast (18.405); “that lovely frock fathers friend Mrs Stanhope sent me

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<sup>41</sup> The milkwoman in ‘Telemachus’ begins with a comment about the “lovely morning” (1.390). Milly Bloom uses the word three times in the letter read by Bloom in ‘Calypso’: “Thanks ever so much for the lovely birthday present. [. . .] I got mummy’s lovely box of creams and am writing. They are lovely” (4.398-400). It is used once by Lydia Douce (11.921) and twice by Mina Kennedy (11.1175-76). In ‘Circe,’ it is given to the Honourable Mrs Mervyn Talboys (15.1067), to Kitty Ricketts (15.2717), and to Mina (15.2879).

from the B Marche paris” (18.612-3); “that lovely little statue he bought” (18.1349-50). Two other examples in the context of commodities—“shawls amusing things but tear for the least thing still there lovely I think dont you will always think of the lovely teas we had together” (18.619)—though occurring in Molly’s interior monologue, are in fact part of her quotation from a recalled letter that she received from Hester Stanhope. Wicke has argued that it is Hester’s gift of a frock, and the language of her letter, that draws Molly into consumerism through a heightened appreciation of fashion: “Molly receives both the garment and the evocative words as a direct hit from the center, as she persists on the fringes of the metropole, in Gibraltar. [. . .] Mrs Stanhope’s operative word ‘lovely’ fans out to incorporate Molly into the nets of fashionability.”<sup>42</sup> In this argument, Molly’s use of the word in connection with the dress is a replication of Hester’s use of the word to describe commodities (lovely shawl, lovely cakes). It is a subtle reading, compelling in its linguistic placement of the fashionable Hester as the medium through which the distant Molly experiences that consumerist temple, the Bon Marché. It is true that even Molly’s wider use of the word, in describing the appearance of other people (although not often regarding her own, unlike Gerty’s usage), tends to centre upon the commodified social signifiers of the person’s clothing: “he was a lovely fellow in khaki” (18.389-90); “lovely stuff in that blue suit he had on and stylish tie and socks with the skyblue silk things on them” (18.420-21). The fact that Molly’s usage of “lovely” operates in a clearly commodified context shows how difficult it is to distinguish absolutely between Joyce’s deployment of such vague and general words. In this instance, it is used with the same consumerist application by both female characters. However, whereas ‘Nausicaa’ consistently demonstrates Joyce’s incorporation of the generalised language of feminised consumerism in his treatment of Gerty MacDowell, ‘Penelope’ does so only intermittently. In ‘Nausicaa,’ these words are used almost exclusively in relation to the consumerist nexus of commodity and appearance. In ‘Penelope’ they are sometimes used in this context, but they are just as often used in a range of other contexts. This is an important distinction. Molly’s consumerism is just one element of Joyce’s depiction of her character. Gerty’s character, I will argue, is just one element of Joyce’s depiction of consumerism.

Around a third of the thirty uses in *Ulysses* of Naether’s watchword “grace” describe a quality of kinetic movement, almost always in a male character, from the “slow grace” of Bloom’s hand in ‘Calypso’ (5.22), to Lenehan’s “quick grace” in lighting cigarettes in ‘Aeolus’ (7.476), to O’Madden Burke, who falls “back with grace on his umbrella” (7.593).

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<sup>42</sup> Jennifer Wicke, “Molly Bloom and the Work of Consumption,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 28:4 (1991): 757.

It is used to describe the movement of Lydia Douce in ‘Sirens’—“with grace of alacrity towards the mirror gilt Cantrell and Cochrane’s she turned herself. With grace she tapped a measure of gold whisky” (11.214-6)—and the grace of her movement is later explicitly feminised: “a lady’s grace” (11.661). The word is not used in *Ulysses* in the context of advertisements or commodities, and is hardly used even to describe physical appearance. But as with “beauty/beautiful” and “loveliness/lovely,” Joyce draws the adjective form into the nexus of female appearance and commodities in the first half of ‘Nausicaa.’ “Graceful” is used three times in the novel, and all three times it describes the appearance of Gerty MacDowell: “Her figure was slight and graceful” (13.83); “her slim graceful figure” (13.155); “her graceful beautifully shaped legs” (13.698). Whereas the noun is used to describe a quality of motion, more often in men than in women, the adjective form is used only for Gerty, and always to describe a static physical quality: her figure or her legs are as fixed as in the illustration for an advertisement, set in the suspended present of advertising copy.

It would be easy to continue to adduce examples, working from Naether’s list. Three of the seven instances of “attractive” occur in ‘Nausicaa’ and ‘Penelope.’ Four of the twelve usages of “delicate” are in these chapters, and the three in ‘Nausicaa’ all describe Gerty’s appearance: “her delicate hands” (13.98), her “telltale flush, delicate as the faintest rosebloom” (13.120), a “delicate pink crept into her pretty cheek” (13.360-61). Of the eight instances of “exquisite,” one comes in Gerty’s narrative—“he was undeniably handsome with an exquisite nose” (13.140-1)—and while the word is not used in ‘Penelope,’ it is used four times in the speech and descriptions of Mina Kennedy and Lydia Douce in ‘Sirens.’ Once again, while such words are concentrated in the language of female characters—not just Gerty and Molly, but also the barmaids of ‘Sirens’—they take on far more explicitly consumerist connotations when used in the first part of ‘Nausicaa,’ as with the commodified fantasy of Gerty “exquisitely gowned with jewels on her brow” (13.102). A quarter of the twenty uses of “perfect” in *Ulysses* occur in ‘Nausicaa’ and ‘Penelope,’ with two of the four instances in ‘Nausicaa’ describing Gerty’s appearance: her mouth is “Greekly perfect” (13.89), and “her wellturned ankle displayed its perfect proportions” (13.168-9). This latter example is part of the extensive inventory of Gerty’s commodities, as is the usage of the noun form of the word (one of only three examples in the novel): “a navy threequarter skirt cut to the stride showed off her slim graceful figure to perfection” (13.155). “Radiant” is used to describe Gerty’s hair: “a radiant little vision” (13.511). “Wonderful” is used in the same connection—“Gerty’s crowning glory was her wealth of wonderful hair” (13.115-6)—and of

the twenty-two appearances of this word in the novel, four are to be found in ‘Nausicaa’ and ‘Penelope.’ “Delightful” occurs seven times in the novel, once in ‘Nausicaa’ and once in ‘Penelope,’ with the latter appearing in a quotation from an advertisement in *The Gentlewoman* for “one of those kidfitting corsets”: “what did they say they give a delightful figure line 11/6” (18.446-8).

The significance of these statistics is arguable when each word is taken by itself, but cumulatively, they are compelling. As table 1 shows, Naether’s watchwords are starkly concentrated in ‘Nausicaa’ and ‘Penelope,’ the chapters that are based explicitly upon female subjects. The fact that this last example from Naether’s list of watchwords, “delightful,” appears directly in Joyce’s production or reproduction of a female-oriented advertisement from a women’s magazine helps confirm the impression that this analysis has established. When Molly uses the word in connection to an advertisement in *The Gentlewoman*, it is in quotation. As we have seen, when other words from Naether’s list are concentrated in the ‘Penelope’ chapter, they are given a range of contexts, meanings and applications, with Molly’s use of “lovely” to describe commodities being the only notable exception. These words seem to be used simply (and not obviously ironically) as examples of what Joyce takes to be “feminine language.” In ‘Nausicaa,’ by contrast, the advertising language identified by Naether and found in the *Lady’s Pictorial* is almost always used to describe feminine appearance, commodities, or both. Drawing attention to the lack of “discrimination and finesse” in advertisements for women, Naether advises that “more attention paid to the individuality and character of the style of writing would endow many a piece of printed salesmanship with greater attention value.”<sup>43</sup> The “character of the style of writing” of the first half of ‘Nausicaa’ is the antithesis of “individuality,” both in the sense that it gestures outwards intertextually, and in that it is so obviously comprised of dead metaphors, hackneyed phrases, and received figures of speech. Reading the chapter against Naether’s list of advertising watchwords, it is clear that the same is true of the chapter’s descriptive vocabulary. Words that at first sight seem to be drawn from a neutral if uninspiring lexicon—beautiful, lovely, graceful, attractive, delicate, exquisite, perfect, radiant, wonderful, delightful, fascinating, entrancing, smart—are in fact drawn from a specific discourse, the exhausted diction of advertisements to women. In ‘Penelope’ and occasionally in ‘Sirens,’ these words are for the most part detached from the advertising discourse within which they were burdened and implicated, and used only to indicate a “feminine” diction. In their

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<sup>43</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 263.



advertising context, however—the context of ‘Nausicaa’—these words are discursively and ideologically overdetermined, and the connection Joyce draws between stereotypes of ideal feminine appearance and advertised commodities is reinforced with his use of these overdetermined words.

### “She would be wild, untrammelled, free”: Consumerism, Gender and Agency

Naether returns to his watchwords in a chapter entitled “Intensifying Feminine Consciousness of Sex.” He clearly disapproves of what he calls the “sex appeal” in advertisements, although he does not suggest that this is the advertisers’ fault so much as the nature of the “woman” being targeted:

Well nigh every woman’s wish to possess eyes that, softly shaded by long beautiful lashes, radiate brilliancy; a complexion that is smooth and velvety, showing rosy health through cheeks and lips; hands that are well shaped and white and soft; and whatever else she considers needful to make her physical self pleasing to the point of magnetism is largely a desire to fascinate the other sex.<sup>44</sup>

Naether’s characterisation suggests that the desire which such advertising language attempts to stimulate is a desire that is already innately feminine, and he makes this point explicit: “woman to-day has enough sex self-consciousness; the advertiser need not increase it by means of suggestive terminology.” So it is that Naether rejects the adjectives “‘alluring,’ ‘charming,’ ‘fascinating,’ ‘beguiling,’ ‘bewitching,’ ‘entrancing,’” as they serve only to draw attention to physical sexual attraction—which, Naether believes, women spend too much time thinking about already.<sup>45</sup> In ‘Nausicaa,’ these adjectives are used in just this sense: Gerty’s eyes have “a *charm* few could resist” (13.106-7); Bloom is “*fascinated* by a loveliness that made him gaze” (13.541); she has “eyes of *witchery*” (13.107) and “an *entrancing* blush” (13.723; emphasis added). In language as well as sentiment, Joyce presents Gerty in a manner that is consistent with Naether’s generalisation that “well nigh every woman’s wish” is “to fascinate the other sex”: Gerty has dressed carefully “for she felt that there was just a might that he might be out” (13.148-9).

Indeed, despite his complaints about overused language, Naether’s characterisation of “well nigh every woman” itself deploys the same tired register as Joyce in ‘Nausicaa.’ Where

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<sup>44</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 251.

<sup>45</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 84, 258.

Naether's feminine ideal has eyes "softly shaded by long beautiful lashes," Gerty has eyes "set off by lustrous lashes" (13.108); where Naether's ideal has "a complexion that is smooth and velvety, showing rosy health through cheeks and lips," Gerty has a complexion of "ivorylike purity" (13.88) with a "rosy" blush and "rosebud mouth" (13.266; 13.88); and where Naether's ideal has "hands that are well shaped and white and soft," Gerty's are "of finely veined alabaster" (13.89). The similarity is no doubt due to the shared discourse upon which these writers draw. In this instance, however, Naether seems to be doing so unconsciously: the words he uses to describe women's "sex-awareness"—here, "beautiful," "radiate," "brilliancy," and so on—are largely the same as those he criticises advertisers for overusing. Furthermore, his opening claim—"[w]ell nigh every woman's wish" is to be attractive—is a common gambit in female-oriented advertising. The first advertisement in the 1919 *Lady's Pictorial*, for example, opens with the statement that "[t]he greatest wish in the world of every woman is to look beautiful."<sup>46</sup> Even as Naether exposes the overuse of this feminised vocabulary, therefore, he reinscribes it—seemingly unreflectively—in his description of the nature of women. The male advertiser has identified a stereotypically feminised vocabulary, which has itself been defined by male copywriters: there were very few women copywriters at this stage, Naether points out. His explanation says a lot about the way in which women were perceived in the male-dominated advertising industry. While women copywriters might be expected to have a better idea of what female consumers would respond to, he says, in "actual practice" their number is "still small" because "[f]eminine correspondents' and copy-writers' output [. . .] lack in definite degree the vital selling punch to impress itself deeply on the gentle reader's mind and promptly to lead her straying thoughts into the straight and narrow path of final—buying—action."<sup>47</sup> In his "every woman" passage, having identified this stereotypically feminised language, Naether reproduces it in his description of his imaginary or ideal woman, before finding these words' sexual signification to be inherent in the female subject. In drawing upon the language of the women's advertisements, Joyce repeats this sleight of hand in advertising discourse. Joyce identifies the stereotypical vocabulary of female-oriented advertisements. He then uses these words to represent the thoughts or implied thoughts of a female character, and uses them in the same sense that Naether identifies as typical of "woman to-day": in an attempt to sexually attract men. What both examples show is that, in a consumerist context, these words are deeply historicised and ideological—even, we should say, commodified.

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<sup>46</sup> *Lady's Pictorial*, 4 Jan 1919, vi.

<sup>47</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 18.

Naether's disapproval of the "sex appeal" of female-oriented advertising may seem to demonstrate a rather belated prudishness: from the point of view of the seller or advertiser for whom his book is intended, his distaste should be irrelevant if, as he implies, the "sex appeal" is one to which female consumers respond. However, Naether's comments should be read in the context of a longstanding anxiety within consumerist discourses, particularly in the advertising industry. In Ellen Gruber Garvey's analysis of the editorials of advertising journals from around the turn of the twentieth century, she identifies what she describes as an "uneasiness and irritation" in the advertising industry regarding the role of female consumers. As Garvey argues, when professional advertisers began to recognise the inherent unpredictability of advertising campaigns—the refusal of sales to follow "any straightforward effort-response model"—their frustration was directed into a misogynistic declamation of the fickleness of female consumers, who were already figured as the primary respondents to advertisements. The apparent irrationality of the advertising enterprise was thereby attributed to "already existing stereotypes of the capricious woman."<sup>48</sup> Yet as a mainstay of the market, the female consumer, fickle or otherwise, could hardly be ignored; so, as Garvey argues, advertisers—and the magazine editors who depended upon them—began to express resentment at "what they saw as women's power over them in their role as shoppers."<sup>49</sup> From the advertisers' perspective, the imperative to consume offered a worrying potential for female agency. The freedom to act, even as "irrational" consumers, may have in some ways ratified a subjectivity which women were otherwise conventionally denied, as Bowlby suggests: "it is the woman who is thought of as object or complement to the male subject," yet "she is herself the agent *vis-à-vis* the commodity, becoming, in this different context, a subject in a relation where she is elsewhere in the objective position."<sup>50</sup> This new threat of female subjectivity was epitomised by the "sex self-consciousness" Naether describes. While the promise of sexual attraction was central to much of the advertising copy and images targeted at women, there was a patriarchal backlash against this license, and as Garvey demonstrates, one way in which this tension was registered and resolved within women's magazine fiction was in the subordination of the apparent sexual liberation to the domestic ideal of marriage. In the final section of this chapter, I suggest that since Joyce draws Gerty MacDowell so fully from advertising discourse, it is this particular ideological tension—

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<sup>48</sup> Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor*, 176.

<sup>49</sup> Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor*, 175.

<sup>50</sup> Rachel Bowlby, *Just Looking: Consumer Culture in Dreiser, Gissing and Zola* (New York; London: Methuen, 1985) 27-8.

between the female consumer as subject and as object, between sexual awareness and domestic obedience—that Joyce’s characterisation of Gerty MacDowell should be situated.

A number of recent essays on the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter have reconsidered the question of Gerty’s agency. Philip Sicker has pointed out that earlier critical discussions of the ‘Nausicaa’ chapter—particularly those of Richards and Leonard—have incorrectly interpreted Gerty as “culturally circumscribed” by a restrictive consumer culture which deprives her of “both lucid subjectivity and agency.”<sup>51</sup> He refutes this position by arguing that Gerty contravenes the similarly restrictive discourse of the sexologist Havelock Ellis: she demonstrates “the erotic self-awareness that Ellis denies his subject” by indulging her “exhibitionistic agency and visual pleasure.”<sup>52</sup> Sicker’s refutation of Richards and Leonard seems more rhetorical than essential: if we accept that Gerty finds some sexual agency in her exhibitionism, that does not in itself rule out the consumerist circumscription that these critics describe. From an alternative point of view, however, Sicker’s point could be restated to argue that Gerty appropriates the conditions of one dominant cultural paradigm, consumerism, in order to press against those of another—the sexual restrictions against which women were judged and held accountable in early-twentieth-century Irish and British culture. This is roughly the position taken by William Kupinse, who argues directly against Richards’s assertion that Gerty’s wholehearted adoption of consumerism makes her “one-dimensional.” As Kupinse argues it, “Gerty’s relationship to a consumer culture’s media images grants her the opportunity to subvert the submissive ideology of Cummins’s novel. By moving between different ideological positions, each unsatisfactory in some way, Gerty resists being subsumed by any one discourse.”<sup>53</sup>

Although Kupinse does not lay out a theoretical framework for his reading of ‘Nausicaa,’ his description of Gerty’s consumerist agency basically illustrates Michel de Certeau’s concept of the “tactic,” whereby the individual—apparently powerless before a structurally established and dominant consumer culture—forges unauthorised and subversive

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<sup>51</sup> Philip Sicker, “Unveiling Desire: Pleasure, Power and Masquerade in Joyce’s ‘Nausicaa’ Episode,” *Joyce Studies Annual* 14 (2003): 96.

<sup>52</sup> Sicker, “Unveiling Desire,” 94. In a very different context, Walter Kendrick argues that Joyce positions Gerty in an active role over the passive Bloom: “a young woman, taking charge of her own body, has driven an older man to self-abuse.” Kendrick reads this as a deliberate inversion of the stereotype of the predatory older male tempting a young female virgin to sexual awakening and subsequent ruination. See Walter Kendrick, “The Corruption of Gerty MacDowell,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 37:3-4 (2000): 415.

<sup>53</sup> William Kupinse, “Household Trash: Domesticity and National Identity in *The Lamplighter* and the ‘Nausicaa’ Episode of *Ulysses*,” *South Carolina Review* 32:1 (1999): 85.

pleasures and effects from the proscribed act of consumption.<sup>54</sup> Yet to position Gerty's consumerist agency in this way leads to a theoretical dilemma. The de Certeau model of consumer resistance—the “art of making do”—is incompatible with Adorno's critique of a restrictive and determining “culture industry.” For Adorno and Horkheimer, the apparent sexual permissiveness of the culture industry is a facade which conceals a deeper constraint; as they put it in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, “the culture industry is pornographic and prudish.” From this position, the pleasure offered by twentieth-century consumerist mass culture is one that denies its own consummation:

The culture industry perpetually cheats its consumers of what it perpetually promises. The promissory note which, with its plots and staging, it draws on pleasure is endlessly prolonged; the promise, which is actually all the spectacle consists of, is illusory: all it actually confirms is that the real point will never be reached, that the diner must be satisfied with the menu.<sup>55</sup>

There are several ways in which Adorno and Horkheimer's critique can be brought to bear on Joyce's representation of Gerty MacDowell. First of all, if we continue to read Gerty as she has in most cases been read—as a young woman attempting to negotiate the dictates of cultural imperatives—Adorno's critique would suggest that consumerism conditions and even contains the sexual liberation for which Sicker argues. Of all of the commodities that Joyce bestows upon Gerty MacDowell, articles of clothing dominate—underwear in particular—and they are increasingly sexualised as the chapter progresses. We are told early on that “[a]s for undies they were Gerty's chief care” (13.171):

She had four dinky sets with awfully pretty stitchery, three garments and nighties extra, and each set slotted with different coloured ribbons, rosepink, pale blue, mauve and peagreen, and she aired them herself and blued them when they came home from the wash and ironed them. (13.173-77)

This unfolding of Gerty's clothing includes reference to the conditions of its sale (“nighties extra”), and we are told more and more about these details—the price and place of Gerty's

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<sup>54</sup> Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley; London: U of California P, 1984). Leonard explicitly makes a claim for Gerty's consumption as an exemplification of the de Certeau tactic: “Gerty practices ‘tactics’ that give her a brief respite from her cultural and economic position—oppressed as she is by both British colonialism and the mental colonialism of British advertising” (Leonard, *Advertising*, 223n.27). It should be pointed out that the empowerment in de Certeau's model does not come from mere “respite.” The example Leonard gives of Gerty consuming in order to “maintain her competitive edge in the sexual marketplace” (133) lacks the subversive quality of de Certeau's tactic, adhering rather to the conventional dictates of Edwardian patriarchy: dress well to attract a husband.

<sup>55</sup> Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (London: Verso, 1997) 140, 139.

purchase—each time the narrative returns to her underwear. Similarly, the exhibitionism that was faintly implied in the first passage (“she aired them herself”) becomes increasingly explicit; it is not only their price, but Bloom’s attentiveness to Gerty’s exposed stockings that allows her to assess herself favourably against Cissy Caffrey: “Three and eleven she paid for those stockings in Sparrow’s of George street [. . .] and there wasn’t a brack on them and that was what he was looking at, transparent, and not at her insignificant ones that had neither shape nor form” (13.499-503). And in Gerty’s climactic finale, these three elements of hosiery, cost and exhibitionism are bound together completely: “he could see her other things too, nainsook knickers, the fabric that caresses the skin, better than those other pettiwidth, the green, four and eleven, on account of being white and she let him and she saw that he saw” (13.724-6). That we are witnessing a consumerist display is confirmed by the inclusion of an apparent advertising slogan at the crux of this action: “the fabric that caresses the skin.” From an Adornian perspective, far from subverting consumerist circumscription, Gerty’s exhibitionism is shown to be an integral part of it.

Yet this argument could be met once again with reference to de Certeau. After all, de Certeau’s valuation of “modern commodity culture” is no less antipathetic to that culture than Adorno’s. For de Certeau too, the culture industry is hegemonic—“a rationalized, expansionist, centralized, spectacular and clamorous production” that strategically attempts to circumscribe the universally marginalised consumers who “buy and pay for the showy products through which a productivist economy articulates itself.”<sup>56</sup> It is in the consumer’s response to this production that de Certeau finds potential for agency. Adorno says that the culture industry, with advertising its most pernicious tool, “impedes the development of autonomous, independent individuals who judge and decide consciously for themselves.”<sup>57</sup> For de Certeau, by contrast, the disenfranchised subject resists with a “tireless but quiet activity,” which “shows itself not in its own products (where would it place them?) but in an art of using those imposed on it.”<sup>58</sup> This perspective too could be brought to bear on ‘Nausicaa.’ Naether distinguishes between the usage of the word “smart” in advertisements aimed at women—“frequently [. . .] used to convey no idea whatever”—and the word’s “proper” meaning in the context of dress: a smartly dressed woman is one who “expresses her individuality to the best advantage through the choice, the construction, and the

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<sup>56</sup> De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 31, xvii.

<sup>57</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, “Culture Industry Reconsidered,” *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, ed. J. M. Bernstein (London: Routledge, 1991) 106.

<sup>58</sup> De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 31.

‘wearing’ of her clothes, for all of which she is individually responsible.’<sup>59</sup> It is clear in which sense the word is used in ‘Nausicaa,’ when we read of Gerty’s “neat blouse of electric blue [. . .] with a smart vee opening down to the division and kerchief pocket [. . .] and a navy threequarter skirt cut to the stride” (13.150-55). The “smart vee” is just the kind of vague advertising description that Naether criticises, with the adjective adding no qualification or distinction to the vee at all. Yet it is interesting to note that the passage as a whole comes closer to Naether’s description of the individuality of the “smartly dressed woman.” Gerty’s blouse is “selfinted” and selected to show off “her slim graceful figure to perfection”; in this respect, she fulfils Naether’s “proper” definition of the adjective; her clothes “not only conform to the latest mode, but are of such becoming fit and general attractiveness of appearance as to proclaim her an adept in the selection of materials and colors and in adaptation of materials and even of mode itself to her own face, figure, and manner.”<sup>60</sup> Here, consumption becomes an art. It is true that the personal quality of what is described as the “instinctive taste” of Gerty’s dress is immediately questioned by the information that she has followed just what was “expected in the *Lady’s Pictorial*,” and perhaps this contradiction is part of Joyce’s comedy. Nevertheless, Gerty has had an active part in the composition of her outfit, from her “selfinted blouse” to the bow on her hat: “All Tuesday week afternoon she was hunting to match that chenille but at last she found what she wanted at Clery’s summer sales, the very it” (13.158-9). The forum that provides the material for Gerty’s dress is commercial; the particular items that she wears are mass-produced, and so even is the dye with which she has altered them. But her appropriation of these items towards a general arrangement is, in however limited a sense, her own: “She did it up all by herself and what joy was hers when she tried it on then” (13.161-2).

Joyce’s representation of Gerty gives room for both the de Certeau and the Adornian reading, and so critics have found within ‘Nausicaa’ the Gerty MacDowell closest to their theoretical perspective, whether or not that theoretical framework is defined. Critical disagreements over Gerty’s agency—whether she has some self-determination, or whether she is helpless in the face of a colonising consumer culture—ultimately iterate incompatible theoretical models of the consumer. Richards draws upon Debord’s idea of “Spectacle,” which was in turn heavily influenced by Adorno’s critique of the culture industry. Richards thus remains close to the Adornian perspective, and so finds Gerty “wholly circumscribed.” Leonard, by contrast, is explicitly sympathetic to the de Certeau model of consumer culture,

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<sup>59</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 79, 78.

<sup>60</sup> Naether, *Advertising to Women*, 77-8.

and so finds Gerty's consumerism to be a "crafty tactic for survival." Neither reading can be said to be incorrect; both find support within the text. I would argue, however, that to focus on Gerty's agency from a naturalistic point of view is to miss Joyce's intertextual engagement with the crucial moment of the development of consumer culture that Garvey identifies. In this moment, traditional patriarchal imperatives pushed back against the potentially liberatory elements of consumerism. The relevance of this context, manifest in the women's magazines, can be drawn out if we continue to privilege the intertextual or discursive approach that so many critics have initiated, but have not always fully pursued. Richards has demonstrated the extent to which Gerty's character is modelled upon a specific figure of the "spectacle" of advertising, the "seaside girl." As Richards persuasively argues:

[W]e can no longer see her as straying unexpectedly across the field of vision of a lonely man; now Gerty is herself the seaside girl, looking at passersby from within the frame of an advertised fiction by which she is wholly circumscribed, looking out at a scene over which she reigns as the queen of ointments.<sup>61</sup>

Richards concludes that Gerty is so overwritten by consumer culture that she develops a false consciousness, living out the "advertised fiction" in which she has been immersed. We might, however, follow his intertextual line of enquiry further before settling on this conclusion. Richards's identification of Gerty with the advertising figure of the seaside girl; Gibson's confirmation that a large part of her character is made up of specific and non-specific elements drawn from the women's magazines; my demonstration that even the general vocabulary derives from the ideologically and historically loaded "feminised" discourse of the advertisements in these magazines: all recommend that we read Gerty as an intertextual figure of a specific discourse of the culture industry.

After all, the connection that Joyce establishes between Gerty's consumerism and her sexual display is entirely consistent with Adorno's account of the operation of the culture industry as a practice. Whether or not we follow Adorno in assuming that the dictates of the culture industry are irresistible, there is no arguing with his statement that the culture industry drew sexuality—"pleasure"—into "spectacle": this is a historical fact, describing the increasing commodification of the female image in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, as Richards and others have demonstrated. Joyce's Linati schema lists the sense or meaning of the chapter as the "projected mirage," and this is as good a description of the

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<sup>61</sup> Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 234.



advertised spectacle of femininity as any other.<sup>62</sup> Since Gerty's character can be shown from every side to be underwritten and constituted by the language of an advertising discourse, I will conclude this chapter by briefly considering the extent to which Gerty's character is related to the figure of the female consumer, so prominent in this discourse.

Popular magazines, like the newspapers, had become dependent upon advertising revenue in the late-nineteenth century, and as with the newspapers, the editorial matter of magazines became increasingly hard to distinguish from the advertising matter. With this integration, as Garvey demonstrates, the contemporary women's magazines became internally unanimous in urging consumerism as a valid activity—even responsibility—for their readers.<sup>63</sup> Garvey's analysis is based upon American magazines primarily from the 1890s, but her account holds just as well for the magazines upon which Joyce seems to draw for 'Nausicaa.' In the first *Lady's Pictorial* of 1919, the three-page editorial headed "The Season of Sales" gives a survey of the London sales, with a paragraph each on a number of the larger stores. It is written in the first person, ostensibly by a single objective adviser (presumably "Butterfly" herself), who tells the reader directly about the goods at each store: "And let me tell you that there are many other bargains. [ . . . ] I should advise you to secure two, in different colours, as you have the choice of pink and mauve and sky-blue, all trimmed alike, and most attractively, with fine French lace and satin ribbon."<sup>64</sup> The language here is eminently Nausicaean, sounding very close to the description of Gerty's underwear, "each set slotted with different coloured ribbons, rosepink, pale blue, mauve and peagreen" (13.175-6). However, while the number of different department stores described gives the impression of disinterestedness, a look through the advertising pages of the same issue shows this not to be the case: each of the thirteen shops have large display advertisements elsewhere in the magazine, consistent in both language and commodities with the "recommendations" of the "Season of Sales" column.<sup>65</sup> There can be no doubt that the editorial has been paid for by the specific department stores named.

It was not only the editorials that were reconfigured to accommodate the consumerism explicitly promoted by the advertisements. As Garvey shows, even the fiction published in these magazines was also often implicated by the requirements of the advertisers. This implication was in large part due to the changing practices of the editors, who "no longer

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<sup>62</sup> Richard Ellmann, appendix, "*Ulysses*" on the *Liffey* (1972; London: Faber, 1974) N. pag.

<sup>63</sup> Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor*, 136.

<sup>64</sup> *Lady's Pictorial* 4 Jan. 1919: 18.

<sup>65</sup> The sales for Harrod's, and Robinson and Cleaver's, did not start for another week, so they are advertised only in the following issue, 11 Jan. 1919.

waited in genteel fashion for stories to drop in over the transom, but actively solicited and commissioned topical, timely material”<sup>66</sup>—which very often turned out to consist of just the items and images that advertisers were trying to sell. At its most obvious, this blur between fiction and advertisements can be seen in the “blind ads,” in which an advertisement presents itself as an editorial or a piece of fiction, only revealing its commercial intent in the article’s conclusion.<sup>67</sup> Something of this form can be seen in ‘Nausicaa’ when we read of Gerty’s confession album, where the specification of the place of purchase is entirely superfluous to the action related: “there were some beautiful things written in it in violet ink that she bought in Hely’s of Dame Street” (13.641-3). From another point of view, this passage resembles what Garvey describes as “brand-name realism.” She finds that in some late-nineteenth-century women’s fiction, particularly that which was published in the popular magazines, “brand names became a convenient, nationally intelligible shorthand for conveying information about characters and their tastes.”<sup>68</sup> These were not puffs, and not directly intended to promote the sale of the commodity named, but were rather attempts to root the narrative in a particular social context through the use of recognisable, advertised products. While the brand-name realism that Garvey discusses uses these articles to ground the narrative in the present, and Joyce’s use of brand-names and slogans grounds his narrative in the recent past, both involve an extension of the mimetic reach to include key signifiers of the ascendant consumer culture, advertised brand names. In ‘Nausicaa,’ not only are proper nouns drawn from the advertisements in a similar way, but the “feeling” words—the soft, vague, and essentially meaningless adjectives used to give female-oriented advertisements the luxuriousness to which it was supposed female consumers would respond—are drawn in also.

In her analysis of the literally commercialised stories, Garvey finds that acts of female consumption are frequently figured as liberations from paternal or domestic authority—often as part of a sexually suggestive or unchaperoned experience with an attractive male. However, this apparent transgression would promptly be contained in a reinforcement of the patriarchal ideal of domestic femininity through marriage. Consumption, if sometimes suspicious in its promise of freedom, would be shown to lead to sanctioned consummation, and thus revealed as a productive (and indeed, a reproductive) activity.<sup>69</sup> There were two

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<sup>66</sup> Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor*, 123.

<sup>67</sup> See Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor*, 95-8, for a description of the presence of the blind ad in contemporary American women’s magazines.

<sup>68</sup> Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor*, 101.

<sup>69</sup> Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor*, 125.

parts, then, to the promotion of feminine consumption in women's magazines: the promise of greater freedom, often with connotations of sexual experience, and the reinscription of this freedom into established patriarchal ideals of marriage and domesticity. As Garvey puts it, these stories subsumed "both feminist and conservative views in the interest of sales."<sup>70</sup> With this context in mind, Joyce's representation is cleverly subversive, for while he too draws in both elements of the fictional female consumer's predestination—the feminist or liberatory promise of sexual freedom, and the conservative or patriarchal containment within marriage—a closer look at his narrative will show that he denies their sequence.

As we have seen, Gerty's sexual frisson is shown to be intimately entwined with her enjoyment of commodities. Nevertheless, her consumerism is also shown to be intended as a means to marriage—more crudely so, even, than in the conventional formula the chapter borrows from. She had "put on the transparent stockings thinking Reggy Wylie might be out" (13.426-7), and this act is part of her daydream of their marriage: "the weddingbells ringing for Mrs Reggy Wylie T.C.D. [. . .] and in the fashionable intelligence Mrs Gertrude Wylie was wearing a sumptuous confection of grey trimmed with expensive blue fox" (13.195-9). Likewise, as the chapter progresses, the stockings are explained as a step towards her marriage to "her dreamhusband" Bloom (13.430-31); were this fantastic marriage to take place, "[s]he would care for him with creature comforts too for Gerty was womanly wise and knew that a mere man liked that feeling of hominess" (13.222-4). As with conventional magazine fiction, consumerism is presented as a means to marriage. However, unlike these stories, in Joyce's narrative that end is denied. The conventional compromise is broken, and the two parts separated: consumerism leads not to marriage, but only to some form of illicit sexual experience. From a naturalistic point of view, this separation of the two elements of proscribed female consumption—sexual freedom reinscribed within patriarchal domesticity—can be read as liberatory: Gerty accepts the offer of sexual pleasure without fulfilling the necessary patriarchal condition of marriage. If read as Joyce's intertextual engagement with a figment or figure of the consumerist imagination, however, the agency that Sicker sees in Gerty's sexual encounter is all but irrelevant. What we see with Bloom on Sandymount Strand is the "projected mirage" of a consumer culture that exploits the female image even as it promises liberation. So if, as Sicker somewhat questionably assumes, we say that Gerty herself enjoys agency in the "orgasmic satisfaction" of her exposure, all that pleasure exposes is the underlying logic of the consumerist discourses upon which Joyce

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<sup>70</sup> Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor*, 106.

draws.<sup>71</sup> Gerty's masturbation, if it can be described as such, comes into relief as the very symbol of consumption: a solitary, self-directed, and endlessly repeatable fantasy.

I have argued that the style of the chapter is even more closely connected to the language of the women's magazines than has been recognised, from the specific language of the commodities that was used explicitly in advertisements, editorials, and the brand name fiction, to the general language of female-oriented advertisements identified by Naether, and evident in the *Lady's Pictorial*. Joyce drew comic attention to the commercial origin of the style of 'Nausicaa' in his earliest description of its gestation, using the terms of commodity patenting: "I have not written a word of *Nausikaa* beyond [. . .] general plan of the specially new fizzing style (Patent No ZP.BP.LP.)" (*LI* 132). That the style of 'Nausicaa' is related in some way to so-called mass culture has been recognised from the earliest criticism of *Ulysses*. However, this criticism assumed that Joyce draws advertisements into the chapter in order to mock the silliness of a character who has apparently taken them to heart. As critics began to move away from the easy valuation of mass culture as a thing inherently base, wholly separate from the higher sphere of literature, Joyce's depiction of Gerty MacDowell began to be subject to broader claims: she was read as a case study of the early-twentieth-century female consumer—either the victim of an increasingly ubiquitous commodity culture that colonised thought itself, or a "tactical" consumer, forging her identity within a treasury of advertised images, perhaps to subversive or even liberating effect. Common to these interpretations is the assumption that Gerty is the primary subject of the chapter: whether she is to be scorned, laughed at, or sympathised with, Joyce has written the chapter to give a naturalistic portrait of Gerty MacDowell. In this view, advertisements, commodities and consumption are adjuncts to Gerty's character, however much they are argued to determine its shape.

My analysis suggests that it is just as productive to reverse the proposition: Gerty's character is adjunctive to the advertisements, commodities and consumption of the 'Nausicaa' chapter. This essential content comes from a particular complex of consumerist ideology, as presented in the women's magazines in the first few decades of the twentieth century. This complex entailed both the promise of liberation to female consumers—connecting sexuality and consumption—and the reinscription of that liberty into conservative and patriarchal ideals of marriage and domesticity. Likewise, the plot of 'Nausicaa' involves a single young woman whose eventually unchaperoned encounter with a man is accentuated,

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<sup>71</sup> Sicker, "Unveiling Desire," 97. It is worth remembering that unlike Bloom's ejaculation, which is made explicit in lines 851-3, Gerty's orgasm can only be inferred.

even facilitated, by her consumption of commodities. However, Joyce subverts the stereotypical plot device, with its anchoring of personal agency in the act of consumption, by making the sexual encounter in 'Nausicaa' consist only in the mirage of exhibition. Instead of containing the encounter within authorised marriage, the sexual act—the act of consumption—becomes an end in itself. This is consumerism taken to its logical conclusion. The self-serving nature of the act—self-serving in that it is the willed act of an individual, self-serving in that it is self-directed, and self-serving in that it leads to no further communion—is perfectly symbolised by the act of masturbation that brings the narrative back to Bloom's consciousness, establishing the 'Nausicaa' chapter as Joyce's manual of sexualised consumerism.

## Conclusion

This thesis has shown that Joyce includes within his representation of 1904 Dublin linguistic and theoretical registers of a later stage in the development of advertising. It is perhaps no wonder, then, that critics have been able to find so many indications of advanced consumerism within *Ulysses*. It would be wrong to conclude, however, that Joyce has duped us into an “incorrect” understanding of Dublin’s consumer culture. We have seen that Dublin in 1904 already exhibited all of the major components of consumerism, from the mass-made, branded commodities on sale in the department stores, to the advertisements placed in the national newspapers and on billboards by the numerous agencies, to the consumers themselves, connected to the shops by the advanced transport system. Certainly, Joyce does not reproduce this culture with photographic accuracy. In material terms, he underexposes Dublin’s advertising industry, causing it to appear less developed than it seems to have been in 1904. In terms of advertising theory, by contrast, he superimposes features that would have been difficult to discern in 1904, and which only really developed in the decade that followed.

These chronological manipulations could be explained in several ways. It may be that Joyce uses advertising to contribute to his representation of Bloom as a progressive outsider in insular Dublin—if not quite “the world’s greatest reformer” (15.1459), as a fervent supporter in the ‘Circe’ coronation scene puts it, at least a forward-thinking counter to the civic paralysis that Joyce famously depicted in *Dubliners*. This interpretation would accord with Declan Kiberd’s recent endorsement of the humanist interpretation of Bloom as the “spiritual representative of the present and future community,” bringing together practical wisdom and “artistic” sensibilities.<sup>1</sup> It may be that Joyce exaggerates the retardation of the Irish advertising scene as part of his indictment of the British imperial suppression of Irish growth, as Wicke seems to imply.<sup>2</sup> This manoeuvre would be consistent with the novel’s general impression of stifled industry, and is supported by some of Joyce’s earlier political arguments: “What do the yellowjohns of Anglia owe us for our ruined trade and our ruined hearths?” asks the citizen in ‘Cyclops’ (12.1254-5); “500 million francs” comes Joyce’s proleptic answer, from his 1907 article “Home Rule Comes of Age” (*CW* 195). Or it could simply be that, in filling out the finer details of Bloom’s career, Joyce inadvertently projects back his experience of a later stage of advertising’s development, while imperfectly

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<sup>1</sup> Declan Kiberd, *“Ulysses” and Us: The Art of Everyday Living* (London: Faber, 2009) 192.

<sup>2</sup> Wicke, *Advertising Fictions*, 126.

reconstructing some of its earlier material conditions, whether through negligence or indifference.

All three of these explanations are reasonable, and they are by no means mutually exclusive. However we explain them, these chronological distortions serve to constitute *Ulysses* as a kind of convex historical lens, through which the development of Dublin's consumer culture can be pictured in a manner more comprehensive and more revealing than that afforded by the standard histories, the advertising guidebooks, or even the advertising pages of the time. In this respect, a historicising approach to *Ulysses* may itself stand as a warning against naive materialist historicism. Joyce's manipulation of historical reality in his representation of 1904 Dublin shows that the creative or imaginary act can allow a means of registering, reflecting upon, and anticipating socio-cultural change in a way that the strictly mimetic chronicle cannot.

Furthermore, as the last chapters of this thesis suggest, Joyce's literary act does more than just reflect. It also serves to uncover and even intervene in the ideological obfuscations and coercions that accompany material, socio-economic change. In the first place, *Ulysses* sets up material indications of Dublin's consumer culture alongside subjective responses to this material, and thus narrativises and defamiliarises the immaterial space in which ideology functions. This technique drives home the point, for instance, that consumerism could not function innocently or neutrally in colonial Dublin, but was overdetermined by an imperial ideology. As I argued in chapter 5, Joyce shows that this ideology silently disallowed the encroachments of other foreign manufacturers, as seen in Bloom's response to the German Goerz lenses in 'Lestrygonians,' and thus sought to restrict the agency and self-determination of Irish consumers. Furthermore, as part of the same ideological process, the consumption of British products was presented as the "natural" state of things in the Irish market, thus restricting home industry—a crucial element of national regeneration, as Joyce recognised from an early stage. *Ulysses* narrativises this process in the earlier chapters by making Britishness invisible, or literally unremarkable, to his otherwise perceptive Irish consumers. This is a denaturalising technique, and thus eminently political. Joyce includes an unprecedented amount of concrete detail to portray a material "reality" exceeding the subjective limitations of a colonial consumer. The reader is thus placed in a position to decode the workings of ideology in practice.

Joyce's depiction of Bloom's subjective limitation and ideological overdetermination is really a sophisticated form of naturalism, with Dublin's environment shown to shape and determine its inhabitants. As I argued in the final chapter of this thesis, the technique of

‘Nausicaa’ has traditionally been explained in the same way. Gerty’s narrative has been taken to betray the way in which a female consumer has been conditioned and overwritten by a cheap commercialised discourse, which determines her consciousness even as she remains unaware of her circumscription. There is evidence enough to support a naturalistic reading: the details of her home life with her alcoholic father (13.299), and the “intrusive presence” of the vernacular that Gibson identifies in Gerty’s narrative, would seem to be intended mimetically.<sup>3</sup> But there is still a crucial difference between her character and Bloom’s. While Bloom’s thoughts undoubtedly point to external influences, he is in no way what could be described as an intertextual figure. Joyce includes all manner of material in his creation of Bloom—some of it, as with the stereotypes of the Jewish travelling salesman, conventional. But these touches are secondary, and he is not in the first place intended as a type of character drawn from another identifiable discourse. Gerty, on the other hand, manifestly is. The style of the ‘Nausicaa’ episode so obviously points to the texts that are named within the chapter—the advertisements, fiction and editorials of the popular women’s magazines, and other popular fiction—that we cannot but see the character as, at some level, the “projected mirage” of these external discourses. The effect of this technique is significant. Whereas with Bloom Joyce exposes the workings of a coercive ideology upon the individual, in ‘Nausicaa’ he exposes the way in which ideology is coded in popular discourses. He overloads the narrative with the linguistic register of a male-determined, female-oriented commercial discourse, pointing out from the text towards the particular ideological complex contained in the figure of the female shopper. Within the discourses upon which he draws, consumerism is presented as first a thrilling liberation, and then as a reassuring means to marriage and sanctioned domesticity. Agency is denied even as it is proclaimed. In Joyce’s hands, by contrast, the fantastic spectacle of consumerism leads only to the spectacle of consumerism. It is neither the means to liberation, nor marriage, but only to consumption.

In ‘Nausicaa,’ then, Joyce uses parody to expose a dominant coercive ideological strand of consumerism. In ‘Ithaca,’ although the parodic source is perhaps somewhat more diffuse, the same technique is applied, with another coercive ideology exposed. The style mimics and subverts the claim to neutrality upon which imperial ideology depended. It thus accomplishes what is unimaginable through more straightforward narrative techniques, even those of the earlier chapters of *Ulysses*. It draws in and anatomises the entire ideological premise of British imperialism—the disingenuous promise of disinterested and universal

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<sup>3</sup> Gibson, *Joyce’s Revenge*, 146.



improvement, which was refracted and rephrased in countless discourses. As argued in chapter 5, the ostensibly discrete pursuit of science stood as a euphemism for the exploitation of local resources. The same is true of the consumerist claim to universal improvement. By spuriously localising commodities such as Plumtree's Potted Meat in its parodic subversion of the "scientific" claims of British advertisements, the 'Ithaca' chapter demonstrates the consistency of the ideology of British consumerism with other self-legitimising imperial shibboleths—"science," "improvement" and "civilisation"—which deny their self-interest, and present themselves as objective and universally desirable imperatives.

Joyce's representation of Dublin's consumer culture, then, is complex. In some ways, consumerism is connected with tangible material benefits, both within the home and in the more general civic improvements in transport, communications, and so on. But in other ways, this improvement is shown to be disingenuous, and even to silently reinforce Irish dependency upon England. In this respect, it predicts later-twentieth-century notions of globalisation and neocolonialism, suggesting that in "the age of patent medicines" (15.4470-71), a commercial stronghold is a more effective means of colonial exploitation than direct political subjugation. Against the long critical tradition that has found Joyce's representation of consumerism to be simply negative—from Eliot and Pound, through Moretti and Jameson, and on to Richards—it does not seem obvious to me that Joyce sets out to condemn commodities in themselves, or consumerism in itself. The pleasures afforded to Bloom by his reflections on the "sunwarm silk" displayed in Brown Thomas (8.634) does not seem ironic, and there is certainly no sense that consumerism has displaced some earlier golden age: the 'Cyclops' parodies dispel any such notion. Rather, *Ulysses* works to expose and critique the ideological manipulations of consumerism, which are shown to condition its practice, and control the more liberatory potentials afforded by commercial and technological development. In 1927, Wyndham Lewis famously rejected *Ulysses* as "a suffocating [. . .] expanse of objects, all of them lifeless, the sewage of a Past twenty years old, all neatly arranged in a meticulous sequence."<sup>4</sup> As we continue to learn how to read these objects, and continue to reflect upon a past now more than a century old, we are only now beginning to understand Joyce's aesthetic and political purpose in arranging this sequence of lifeless matter so meticulously. This thesis has demonstrated that the very distortions involved in Joyce's incorporation of this material into his fiction are what make *Ulysses* the fullest compendium of "modern life" (17.1774).

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<sup>4</sup> Lewis, *Time and Western Man*, 108.

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