

## **I. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and Gender Identity**

Despite the fact that Stephen, the central character in the text, associates masculinity and femininity correspondingly to many of the same phenomena that Weininger does, he neither abandons nor overturns those associations in order to re-gender his men and women. When he appropriates the transcendence and purity of femininity it keeps clutch of its femininity where Weininger recodes it as masculine. The young man is the replica of virginity. This way of figuring sexual instigation clearly overturns what has been and probably is still the more conservative way of gendering the participants in a story of initiation. The process of masculinizing the prostitute and feminizing the young man appears problematic in the text. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* blurs the conventional concept and understanding of the gender as the very binary opposition is transcended and Joyce much drastically breaks up the boundary and leaves the taxonomy of the gender practiced in the society. This subversion of the dichotomy is proven with the role crucially played by Stephen who typifies the people having urges of both gender masculine and feminine.

It is commonly acknowledged that Stephen's sexual frustration and his resulting recourse to prostitutes lead him to writing to get relief in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Stephen's poverty and sexual insecurities keep him from girls like Emma Clery and push him toward prostitutes instead. In an effort to overcome his sexual inadequacies, Stephen seeks out the sexual expertise of harlots who in turn, fuel his masturbatory fantasies and facilitate his creative process. Although his carnal urges are satisfied through his sexual exchanges with prostitutes, vulgar monstrosities continue to grow in his mind and find expression in daydreams and fantasies. These daydreams and

fantasies then become the fictions he crafts in poetry, the distant music as it were, to which he masturbates. In short, like a dog chasing his tail, Stephen Dedalus is entangled in a labyrinthine pattern of sexual desire that frustrates him and forces him to a retreat into his art. In this context, the writing he produces and the sexual techniques he learns do not win him the love of the woman he desires.

Stephen masturbates on the beach and writes a poem, this time about vampires; it appears that he has not overcome his insecurities about himself and toward women. He has not reconciled his carnal desires with his sexual reality. Masturbation is assumed to be a symptom of sexual frustration. As a result of neglecting the study of sexual frustration in Stephen's narrative, the cautionary note Joyce sounds about overtly educated men like Stephen Dedalus, who find themselves sexually and professionally frustrated in the modern wasteland, goes virtually unheeded.

Stephen's poetry is like his onanistic activity: singular and self-absorbed. Both his writing and his autoerotic practices contribute to his artistic failure and isolation. David Hayman is the only critic, who addresses Stephen's masturbation in detail. He maintains that "gratuitous eroticism and onanism provide Stephen with a false release from the self and especially from the body, a mock entry into the world of expression through art: the worst form of 'romanticism'" (14). Hayman does not suggest an alternative method of coping with the world. Furthermore, Stephen's arbitrary and instant bodily and literary expressions together suggest an anxiety he feels he needs to release, a sexual frustration requiring translation.

Suzette Henke explains how sexual frustration is conducive to Stephen's literary production in the novel: "Poetry offers the apprehensive lover aesthetic compensation for

frustrated physical desire and the stirrings of adolescent sexuality are skillfully sublimated through an exercise in lyrical fulfillment" (62). On the one hand, Stephen attempts to solve his body's problem through gracious attempts at poetry, and on the other hand, this hopeless catharsis perpetuates his mad dissatisfaction with himself, his sexual life, and his art by reminding him of what he cannot have. While Henke attributes a significant role to Emma as the girl who inspires Stephen to write, Laurie Teal's focus on the prostitutes aptly suggests that it is the physical experience of the prostitute that gives him inspiration to compose verse. Both types of girls influence Stephen's writing; it is his initiation into the sexual world through prostitutes that dominates his imagination. Equally as revealing is Freud's association of sexual penetration with emasculation. The following passage both affirms and contrasts with Stephen's sexual experience with prostitutes and helps to explain why he resorts to self-stimulation:

The man is afraid of being weakened by the woman, infected with her femininity and of then showing himself incapable. The effect which coitus has of discharging tensions and causing flaccidity may be the prototype of what the man fears; and realization of the influence which the woman gains over him through sexual intercourse, the consideration she thereby forces from him may justify the extension of this fear. (2)

Stephen Dedalus does indeed all but burst into hysterical weeping as he stands silent in the middle of the room waiting to be touched by the prostitute. Kate Soper regards "Stephen as an outsider to his masculine environment, as representing a disruptive feminine sensibility" (251). But Edmund Epstein takes a totally different approach to Stephen's reaction to the prostitute arguing that "Stephen is initiated into sexual maturity

amid much darkness, night and warmth" (62) as he wanders up and down the dark slimy streets peering into the gloom of lanes and doorways, listening eagerly for any sound. For Epstein, visiting the prostitute announces Stephen's development to sexual maturity; from this point onward the attack of the fathers grows both fiercer and subtler as they sense the presence of the rising generation. According to Epstein then, Stephen's sexual maturity is inescapably linked to Stephen's political power and retaliations against church and state.

Epstein's equation is clear: the more Stephen sleeps with whores, the more politically aggressive he becomes. This gives new meaning to Dominic Maganiello's political analysis that Stephen "as revolutionary employs the 'cold steel pen'" (99). What Maganiello means here is that as an artist Stephen believes in the supremacy of the word over force. But Stephen is not writing anything but romantic idiocy spewed as a reactionary measure of his adolescent passion.

Since Stephen Dedalus has a long history of masturbation, 'he is typically accustomed to stimulate himself erotically preparatory to, or in succession of, the composition of a poem. Stephen's anguish and troubles find expression not only in potentially exhibitionist demonstrations on public beaches, but also in vain attempts at composing unsuccessful poetry. *Portrait* leaves the reader expecting something of Stephen as an artist. There is a crucial link between masturbation, sexual frustration and his writing which has not been adequately explored which causes his aesthetic failure. Brown argues that there is an "apparently anti-sexual streak in Stephen's theory of art" (132). Brown's observation over Stephen's theory of art carries on flashes of anti-sexuality is adequately mentioned in the text as well.

Stephen's reluctance in conveying his masturbation directly could explain why his art appears manufactured rather than genuine. The futility of Stephen's art suggests that sexual frustration cannot be resolved through writing. This point is instructive since it prompts the reader to think beyond the written word and presumably effect change through action. Moreover, Stephen's artistic hopelessness urges the reader to reconsider the vanity of private frustration and reevaluate the purpose of art.

Since the publication of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, critics have passed on many distinct views regarding the author's brilliance and the text's essential features. The criticisms the text has received are diverse in nature. Joseph Valente says: "Inversion was the dominant model of homosexuality at the turn of the century in both the popular imagination and in the work of prominent sexologists like Havelock Ellis, Richard Krafft-Ebing, Edward Carpenter, and Freud" (177). Valente is concerned with the historical impact on the entire text and how the trend of the era has deeply touched almost all aspects of the text. Likewise Susan Stanford Friedman states: "Joyce was thinking of his own literary production in maternal terms. In a letter to Nora, Joyce explains that he has been "thinking of the book I have written, the child which I have carried for years and years in the womb of the imagination as you carried in your womb the children you love" (79).

This metaphor draws together the labor of women and men. But at the same time, Joyce evokes the distinction between the mind and the body, between his wife's procreativity and his own creativity. His comparison replicates the sexual division of labor and reinforces the mind-body split permeating the patristic tradition that influences his own Jesuit background. Richard Ellman suggests rather enigmatically that the phrase

“those moments I told you of” refers to Stephen’s moments of epiphany” (217). It is clear from the context that Stephen is in fact alluding to the sexual experiments in which indulged since early adolescence. A masterpiece of subjectivity, a fictionalized memoir, a coming-of-age prose-poem, this brilliant novella introduces Joyce's alter ego, Stephen Daedalus, the hero of *Ulysses*, and begins the narrative experimentation that would help change the concept of literary narrative forever.

The English novelist H. G. Wells reviewed the book in 1917, the year after its publication. Writing in the *New Republic*, Wells called it "by far the most living and convincing picture that exists of an Irish Catholic upbringing. It is a mosaic of jagged fragments that [renders] with extreme completeness the growth of a rather secretive, imaginative boy in Dublin." Wells went on to remark that "one believes in Stephen Dedalus as one believes in few characters in literature." However, Wells was also disturbed by Joyce's references to sex and bodily functions. Like many critics of the time, Wells felt that these subjects were best left out of a serious work of literature. Joyce, he said, "would bring back into the general picture of life aspects which modern drainage and modern decorum have taken out of ordinary intercourse and conversation."

Other critics have been blunter and more scathing in their attacks on the novel. An anonymous reviewer in *Everyman* called the book "garbage" and said that "we feel that Mr. Joyce would be at his best in a treatise on drains” (2). Some of the reviews in Ireland were particularly harsh. A reviewer for the *Irish Book Lover* warned that no clean-minded person could possibly allow it to remain within reach of his wife, his sons or daughters. The reviewer for the British newspaper the *Manchester Guardian* was more receptive,

saying that "When one recognizes genius in a book one had perhaps best leave criticism alone" (13).

The distinguished British novelist Ford Madox Ford admired the book for its stylistic excellence. In a 1922 review of Joyce's next novel, *Ulysses*, he paid tribute to *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. He called it "a book of such beauty of writing, such clarity of perception, such a serene love of and interest in life, and such charity" (7).

Hugh Kenner has pointed out that the opening pages of the novel attempt to do something that has never been done before. The author does not guide the reader in understanding the narrative, but leaves the reader to work things out for him or herself. Kenner sums up the book's impact on literary history, saying that after this novel: "Fiction in English would never be the same" (3). Brown argues for a renewed emphasis on subject-matter in Joyce's fiction, including Joyce's attitude toward marriage, along with the non-reproductive, "priorities of sex which some characterize as modern" (10). In the same way, Rena Sen says:

It describes Stephen's formative years in Dublin; as Stephen matures, so does the writing, until it sparkles with clarity. The style presents numerous, almost insurmountable, problems for the oral interpreter, particularly one with the limited vocal range of John Lynch. But Lynch pays no attention to the problems. Instead, he identifies so completely with Daedalus, throws himself so lustily into the book, that it is as if the passionate young artist himself is bursting out of your speakers. (31)

Sen intentionally portrays Stephen's growing period of his life since she obviously wants to inculcate Joyce personal details in his. Her particular focus is on the style rather than the theme of the text. In this way, another critic, John Brussels says:

Stephen has an intuitive drive towards rebellion. As a young child he plans to marry a Protestant girl from his neighborhood, and when his mother and Aunt Dante scold him for this he defiantly hides under the table. This instinctive drive stays with him throughout the book, until, in the fifth and final chapter, he presents his defiant attitude in mature intellectual terms with his definitive statement beginning 'I will not serve. (21)

Hence Brussels characterizes Stephen and details about his personal life which has got diverse aspects. He further makes it clear the impact of Stephen's mother in his life is inerasable and deep-rooted in such a way that he will remain under her shadowed figure. Hence this researcher has decided to focus on the gender issues implicitly and explicitly incorporated in the text. To meet the required evidence to elaborate the hypothesis, he will expose how the gender identity is subverted in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Hither-to-now nobody seems to have read the text from this perspective.

It is important to reveal how Joyce's manipulation of gender identities in *Portrait* transforms two traditional representations of Ireland as a woman and the equally familiar figuration of literary creation in terms of childbirth. Having persuasively demonstrated the extent to which the Irish literary traditions associates Ireland with the figure of woman, Evan Boland concludes, "so many male Irish poets...have feminized the national and nationalized the feminine that from time to time it has seemed there is no other option" (20). Joyce's conscious manipulation of sexual metaphors such as initiation,



awakening and rebirth, attempts to define Stephen's relation to this "woman" as that of Ireland's first authentically "modern" artist. On the one hand, Stephen, as male artist, wants to seduce Ireland, and creates an imaginary nation that validates both his sexuality and her own. On the other hand, Stephen wants to embody Ireland, to create and contain the new Ireland within himself. Though Stephen, to great extent, reproduces the cultural opposition between male poet and female Ireland, his identification shifts back and forth between the two, producing split gender identity that finds resolution in the same reconfigurations of gender Joyce encountered in continental writings.

The powerfully gendered metaphor in *Portrait* is the parallelism between childbirth and literary creation-Stephen's theory of "artistic conception, artistic gestation and artistic reproduction. This metaphor establishes maternity as a second way for Stephen to identify himself, as artist, with a female figure.

Gender identity to one's chosen social identity from amongst the acknowledged gender identities present in a society, that to represent one's sex and gender aspirations. A person's Gender identity is the combination of one's outer sex, as represented by one's genitalia, and one's inner sex, i.e. the inner sense of being a male or a female. One's inner sex is also referred to as Gender. One's inner sex may tally with one's outer sex. It may also be different from one's outer sex. There are three main forms of gender: masculine, feminine and neutral. Inner sex or Gender is also governed by biology. The formation of a gender identity is a complex process that starts with conception, but which involves critical growth processes during gestation and learning experiences after birth. There are points of differentiation all along the way, but language and tradition in many societies insist that every individual be categorized as either a man or a woman, although there are

societies, such as the Native American identity of a two-spirit, which include multiple gender categories.

Although Joyce associates masculinity and femininity, he neither abandons nor overturns those associations in order to regender his men and women. When Stephen relocates his sexuality in the female body, for example, sexuality retains the masculine associations with the penis. When he appropriates the transcendence and purity of femininity it keeps hold of its femininity. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* subverts the binary opposition between the customary divisions of gender that is masculine and feminine by carving out the situation wherein Stephen, the focal character carries on the radical role owed with attributes of both genders.

The first chapter provides the outline of the overall research. The second chapter develops theoretical tools by deriving the insights from gender studies. The third chapter will be textual analysis and thereby textual extracts will be brought in order to show how the raised issue is relevant in the text. Thus the final chapter will be concluding one that will present a picture of the entire research in a precise form.

## II. Gender Studies

Gender Studies is a field of interdisciplinary study which analyzes the phenomenon of gender. Gender studies is sometimes related to studies of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality and location. The philosopher Simone de Beauvoir says, “One is not born a woman, one becomes one” (7). In Gender Studies, the term "gender" is used to refer to the social and cultural constructions of masculinities and femininities, not to the state of being male or female in its entirety. The field emerged from a number of different areas: the sociology of the 1950s and later; the theories of the psychoanalyst Jaques Lacan; and the work of feminists such as Judith Butler. Each field came to regard "gender" as a practice, sometimes referred to as something that is performative. Feminist theory of psychoanalysis, articulated mainly by Julia Kristeva and Bracha Ettinger and informed both by Freud, Lacan and the Object relations theory, is very influential in Gender Studies.

Gender is an important area of study in many disciplines, such as literary theory, drama studies, film theory, performance theory, contemporary art history, anthropology, sociology, psychology and psychoanalysis. These disciplines sometimes differ in their approaches to how and why they study gender. For instance in anthropology, sociology and psychology, gender is often studied as a practice, whereas in cultural studies representations of gender are more often examined. Gender Studies is also a discipline in itself: an interdisciplinary area of study that incorporates methods and approaches from a wide range of disciplines.

The concept of gender performativity is at the core of Judith Butler's work, notably in *Gender Trouble*. In Butler's terms, "the performance of gender, sex, and sexuality is about power in society" (4). She locates the construction of the "gendered, sexed, desiring subject" in "regulative discourses." A part of Butler's argument concerns the role of sex in the construction of "natural" or coherent gender and sexuality. In her account, gender and heterosexuality are constructed as natural because the opposition of the male and female sexes is perceived as natural in the social imaginary.

Gender identity to one's chosen social identity from amongst the acknowledged gender identities as carved out in a society, that to represent one's sex and gender aspirations. A person's gender identity is the combination of one's outer sex, as represented by one's genitalia, and one's inner sex, i.e. the inner sense of being a male or a female. One's inner sex is also referred to as 'Gender'. One's inner sex may tally with one's outer sex. It may also be different from one's outer sex. There are three main forms of gender: masculine, feminine and neutral. Inner sex or Gender is also governed by biology.

Gender identity was originally a medical term used to explain sex reassignment surgery to the public. *Encyclopedia of Sociology* defines gender identity in these words: "The term is also found in psychology, often as *core gender identity*. Sociology, gender studies and feminism are still inclined to refer to gender identity, gender role and erotic preference under the catch-all term *gender*" (12). The term is also used in gender taxonomy.

Although the formation of gender identity is not completely understood, many factors have been suggested as influencing its development. Biological factors that may influence gender identity include pre- and post-natal hormone levels and gene regulation. Social factors which may influence gender identity include gender messages conveyed by family, mass media, and other institutions. In some cases, a person's gender identity may be inconsistent with their biological sex characteristics, resulting in individuals dressing and/or behaving in a way which is perceived by others as being outside cultural gender norms; these gender expressions may be described as gender variant.

Self concept or self identity may be informed by how a person understands how others perceive them. Gender Identity does not refer to the placing of a person into one of the categories male or female; but without including the concept of interaction with society at large the term has no meaning. People who identify as transsexual may strongly desire that other people consider them to belong to a gender opposite to that of their karyotype; but often are simply trying to modify their bodies and behaviors to match how they feel inside, which may not have anything to do with being either male, female, a man, or a woman.

Many people consider themselves to be gendered, that is, belonging to either the man or woman gender corresponding to their biological sex of male or female. Before the 20th century a person's sex would be determined entirely by the appearance of the genitalia, but as chromosomes and genes came to be understood, these were then used to help determine sex. Those defined as women, by sex, have genitalia that is considered female as well as two X chromosomes; those viewed as men, by sex, are seen as having

male genitalia, one X and one Y chromosome. However some individuals have combinations of chromosomes, hormones, and genitalia that do not follow the traditional definitions of "men" and "women". In addition, genitalia vary greatly or individuals may have more than one type of genitalia, and other bodily attributes related to a person's sex (body shape, facial hair, high or deep voice, etc.) may or may not coincide with the social category, as woman or man. Recent research suggests that as many as one in every hundred individuals may have some intersex characteristic. Because of this reality, everyone is located on a continuum of biological sex, and gender as well.

Transsexual self-identified people sometimes wish to undergo physical surgery to refashion their primary sexual characteristics, secondary characteristics, or both. This may involve removal of penis, testicles or breasts, or the fashioning of a penis, vagina or breasts. Historically, such surgery has been performed on infants who present with ambiguous genitalia. However, current medical opinion is broadly against genital assignment, shaped to a significant extent by the mature feedback of adults who regret these decisions being made on their behalf at their birth. Gender reassignment surgery elected by adults is also subject to several kinds of debate. One discussion involves “the legal sex-gender status of transgender people, for marriage, retirement and insurance purposes, for example. Another involves whether such surgery is ethically sound. Is it a right people should be free to exercise, or is it a responsibility surgeons should accept only in cases of genuine need?” (21).

The formation of a gender identity is a complex process that starts with conception, but which involves critical growth processes during gestation and learning experiences after birth. Belinda Brown, in her debut work, *Gender and Identity*, says:

There are points of differentiation all along the way, but language and tradition in many societies insist that every individual be categorized as either a man or a woman, although there are societies, such as the Native American identity of a two-spirit, which include multiple gender categories. When the gender identity of a person makes him/her a woman, but his/her genitals are male, (s)he will likely experience what is called gender dysphoria, i.e., a really deep unhappiness caused by his/her experience of him/herself as a woman and her lack of female genitals and breasts. (13)

Some research indicates that gender identity is fixed in early childhood and is thereafter static. This research has generally proceeded by asking transsexuals when they first realized that the gender role that society attempted to place upon them did not match the gender identity that they found in themselves and the gender role that they chose to live out. These studies estimate the age at which gender identity is formed at around 2-3. Such research may be problematic if it made no comparable attempt to discover when non-transsexual people became aware of their own gender identities and choice of gender roles.

Some people do not believe that their gender identity corresponds to their biological sex, including transsexual people, transgender people, and many intersexed

individuals. Consequently, complications arise when society insists that an individual adopt a manner of social expression (gender role) which is based on sex, that the individual feels is inconsistent with that person's gender identity. One reason for such discordances in intersexed people is that some individuals have a chromosomal sex that has not been expressed in the external genitalia because of hormonal or other abnormal conditions during critical periods in gestation. Such a person may appear to others to be of one sex, but may recognize him or herself as belonging to the other sex. The causes of transgenderism are less clear; it has been subject of much speculation, but no psychological theory has ever been proven to apply to even a significant minority of transgender individuals, and theories that assume a sex difference in the brain are relatively new and difficult to prove, because at the moment they require a destructive analysis of inner brain structures, which are quite small.

Sometimes the connection between gender identity and gender role is unclear. The original oversimplification was that there are unambiguously male human beings and unambiguously female human beings, that they are clearly men and clearly women, and that "they should behave in all important ways as women and men "naturally" behave. Investigations in biology and sociology have strongly supported the view that "the sex between the ears is more important than the sex between the legs" (21) and the implication has been that people with masculine gender identities will give external representation of their gender identities by adopting gender roles that are considered appropriate to men in their society, and, similarly, that people with feminine gender identities will adopt gender roles that are considered appropriate to women.



Judith Butler is an American post-structuralist philosopher, who has contributed to the fields of feminism, queer theory, political philosophy, and ethics. Her research ranges from literary theory, modern philosophical fiction, feminist and sexuality studies, to 19th- and 20th-century European literature and philosophy, Kafka and loss, mourning and war. Her most recent work focuses on Jewish philosophy, exploring pre- and post-Zionist criticisms of state violence.

The crux of Butler's argument in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* first published in 1990 is that the coherence of the categories of sex, gender, and sexuality—the natural-seeming coherence, for example, of masculine gender and heterosexual desire in male bodies—is culturally constructed through the repetition of stylized acts in time. These stylized bodily acts, in their repetition, establish the appearance of an essential, ontological "core" gender. This is the sense in which Butler famously theorizes gender, along with sex and sexuality, as performative. The performance of gender, sex, and sexuality, however, is not a voluntary choice for Butler, who locates the construction of the gendered, sexed, desiring subject within what she calls, borrowing from Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, "regulative discourses." These, also called "frameworks of intelligibility" or "disciplinary regimes," decide in advance what possibilities of sex, gender, and sexuality are socially permitted to appear as coherent or "natural". Regulative discourse includes within it disciplinary techniques which, by coercing subjects to perform specific stylized actions, maintain the appearance in those subjects of the "core" gender, sex and sexuality the discourse itself produces.

A significant yet sometimes overlooked part of Butler's argument concerns "the role of sex in the construction of "natural" or coherent gender and sexuality" (22). Butler explicitly challenges biological accounts of binary sex, re-conceiving the sexed body as itself culturally constructed by regulative discourse. The supposed obviousness of sex as a natural biological fact attests to how deeply its production in discourse is concealed. The sexed body, once established as a "natural" and unquestioned "fact," is the alibi for constructions of gender and sexuality, unavoidably more cultural in their appearance, which can purport to be the just-as-natural expressions or consequences of a more fundamental sex. On Butler's account, "it is on the basis of the construction of natural binary sex that binary gender and heterosexuality are likewise constructed as natural" (14). In this way, Butler claims that "without a critique of sex as produced by discourse, the sex/gender distinction as a feminist strategy for contesting constructions of binary asymmetric gender and compulsory heterosexuality will be ineffective" (21). The concept of gender performativity is at the core of Butler's work. It extends beyond the doing of gender and can be understood as a full-fledged theory of subjectivity. Indeed, if her most recent books have shifted focus away from gender, they still treat performativity as theoretically central.

Butler, in *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*, seeks to clear up readings and misreadings of performativity that view the enactment of sex/gender as a daily choice. To do this, Butler emphasizes the role of repetition in performativity, making use of Derrida's theory of iterability, a form of citatoriality, to work out a theory of performativity in terms of iterability:

Performativity cannot be understood outside of a process of iterability, a regularized and constrained repetition of norms. And this repetition is not performed *by* a subject; this repetition is what enables a subject and constitutes the temporal condition for the subject. This iterability implies that 'performance' is not a singular 'act' or event, but a ritualized production, a ritual reiterated under and through constraint, under and through the force of prohibition and taboo, with the threat of ostracism and even death controlling and compelling the shape of the production, but not, I will insist, determining it fully in advance. (16)

Iterability, in its endless indeterminacy as to-be-determinedness, is thus precisely that aspect of performativity that makes the production of the "natural" sexed, gendered, heterosexual subject possible, and at the same time opens that subject up to the possibility of its incoherence and contestation.

In *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*, Butler surveys the problems of hate speech and  censorship. She argues that censorship is difficult to evaluate, and that in some cases it may be useful or even necessary, while in others it may be worse than tolerance. She develops a new conception of censorship's complex workings, supplanting the myth of the independent subject who wields the power to censor with a theory of censorship as an effect of state power and, more primordially, as the condition of language and discourse itself.

Butler argues that hate speech exists retrospectively, only after being declared such by state authorities. In this way, the state reserves for itself the power to define hate

speech and, conversely, the limits of acceptable discourse. In this connection, Butler criticizes “feminist legal scholar Catharine MacKinnon's argument against pornography for its unquestioning acceptance of the state’s power to censor” (9). Butler warns that such appeals to state power may backfire on those like MacKinnon who seek social change, in her case to end patriarchal oppression, through legal reforms. She cites for example the R. A. V. v. City of St. Paul 1992 Supreme Court case, which overturned the conviction of a teenager for burning a cross on the lawn of an African American family, in the name of the First Amendment.

Deploying Foucault’s argument from *The History of Sexuality Vol. 1*, Butler claims that any attempt at censorship, legal or otherwise, necessarily propagates the very language it seeks to forbid. As Foucault argues, for example, “the strict sexual mores of 19th century Western Europe did nothing but amplify the discourse of sexuality it sought to control” (18). Extending this argument using Derrida and Lacan, Butler claims that censorship is primitive to language, and that the linguistic “I” is a mere effect of an originary censorship. In this way, Butler questions the possibility of any genuinely oppositional discourse; “If speech depends upon censorship, then the principle that one might seek to oppose is at once the formative principle of oppositional speech” (3). Butler also questions the efficacy of censorship on the grounds that hate speech is context-dependent. Citing J.L. Austin's concept of the performative utterance, Butler notes that words’ ability to “do things” makes hate speech possible but also at the same time dependent on its specific embodied context.

Austin's claim that what a word "does," its illocutionary force, varies with the context in which it is uttered implies that it is impossible to adequately define the performative meanings of words, including hate, abstractly. On this basis, Butler rejects arguments like Richard Delgado's which justify the censorship of certain specific words by claiming the use of those words constitutes hate speech in any context. In this way, Butler underlines the difficulty inherent in efforts to systematically identify hate speech.

Undoing Gender collects Butler's "reflections on gender, sex, sexuality, psychoanalysis and the medical treatment of intersex people for a more general readership than many of her other books" (43). Butler revisits and refines her notion of performativity, which is the focus of *Gender Trouble*. In her discussion of intersex, Butler addresses the case of David Reimer, a person whose sex was medically "reassigned" from male to female after a botched circumcision at eight months of age. Reimer was "made" female by doctors, but later in life identified as "really" male, married and became a step father to his wife's 3 children, and went on to tell his story in *As Nature Made Him: The Boy Who Was Raised as a Girl* which he wrote with John Colapinto. Reimer committed suicide in 2004.

In *Giving an Account of Oneself*, Butler develops an ethics based on the dullness of the subject to itself, the limits of self-knowledge. Borrowing from Adorno, Foucault, Nietzsche, Laplanche, Cavarero and Levinas, among others, Butler develops:

a theory of the formation of the subject as a relation to the social – a community of others and their norms – which is beyond the control of the subject it forms, as precisely the very condition of that subject's

formation, the resources by which the subject becomes recognizably human, a grammatical "I", in the first place. The subject is therefore dispossessed of itself by another or others as the very condition of its being at all, and this process by which I become myself only in relation to others and therefore cannot own myself completely, this constitutive dispossession, is the opacity of the contemporary subject to itself, what I cannot know, possess, and master consciously about myself. (32)

The subject is focused in order to reflect on individual identity in relationship with the normative society that has paved a path for the people to go along. Butler turns to the ethical question: If my narrative account of myself is necessarily incomplete, breaking down tellingly at the point precisely when "I" am called to elucidate the foundations of this "I", my genesis and ontology, what kind of ethical agent, or "I", am "I"? Butler accepts the claim that if the subject is opaque to itself the limitations of its free ethical responsibility and obligations are due to the limits of narrative, presuppositions of language and projection. "You may think that I am in fact telling a story about the prehistory of the subject, one that I have been arguing cannot be told. There are two responses to this objection" (1). There is no final or adequate narrative reconstruction of the prehistory of the speaking "I" does not mean we cannot narrate it; it only means that at the moment when we narrate we become speculative philosophers or fiction writers. This prehistory has never stopped happening and, as such, is not a prehistory in any chronological sense. It is not done with, over, relegated to a past, which then becomes part of a causal or narrative reconstruction of the self. On the contrary, that "prehistory interrupts the story I have to give of myself, makes every account of myself partial and

failed, and constitutes, in a way, my failure to be fully accountable for my actions, my final "irresponsibility," one for which I may be forgiven only because I could not do otherwise. This not being able to do otherwise is our common predicament" (78). Instead she argues for an ethics based precisely on the limits of self-knowledge as the limits of responsibility itself.

Essential reading for all scholars of Joyce, Katherine Mullin's *James Joyce, Sexuality and Social Purity* unveils Joyce as an "agent provocateur" in his battle against censorship: appropriating to his art contemporary debates about morality and sexuality, Joyce anticipated the censorship his texts would solicit. Mullin explores the populist discourse on sex by advocates of social purity, a discourse that paradoxically intended to suppress the explicit expression of sexuality in art, particularly in fiction. Situating Joyce's struggles to publish his art within the strictures imposed by the social-purity movement, Mullin focuses on the evangelical Protestant ideologies and organizations dominant in the United Kingdom, particularly the National Vigilance Association, whose branch in Dublin, the Dublin White Cross Vigilance Association, actively promoted social purity during Joyce's residence.

This focus on Protestant vigilance organizations does not deny the importance of the Catholic Church in regulating sexuality in Ireland, but highlights those aspects of social control and discipline that operated outside Catholicism: the secular public policing of private morals that utilized "far more socially pervasive techniques such as street patrols, agitation for legislation, confiscation and prosecution" (20). Joyce's efforts to publish his art within these strictures became an integral element in the modernist

avant-garde fight against censorship, the publication of his texts "a symbolic act of cultural rebellion staged, in turns, as heroic epic and as melodrama" (17). Historicizing Joyce's assault on social-purity ideology and legislative censorship in the context of the support, critique, or condemnation of these institutions by various feminist movements enables Mullin to argue that "Joyce's infrequent aversion towards 'emancipated' or 'intellectual'" (162) women, despite his friendship for and gratitude to a coterie of women who must be classed as such, can be particularized as hostility towards one particular and dominant strand, the purity feminist mainstream. His art politically aligns itself with the radical feminists who proved his most active helpers, as Bonnie Kime Scott and other scholars have so fully documented: the dissident emancipated women who waged their own assault against cultural taboos, social proscriptions, and politically charged disciplinary acts.

To sum up sexologists hold the belief that gender is not determined by only biological makeup of a person; rather what sort of sexual desire one has is of vital importance. This view separates "sexuality" from its association with the purely biological aspect of sex and gives importance to someone's sexual feelings or sexual preferences. Robert J. Stoller asserts that there is possibility of emerging womanish instinct in a manly body. Ve Kosofsky Sedgwick further problematizes the issue of heterosexual understanding of gender by exploring into the existence of male-identified femininity and female-identified masculinity. Michel Foucault holds the belief that it is culture, in contrast to biology, instinct, that is vital in the definition of sexuality. His work focuses on the point that sexuality is not simply the natural expression of some inner



drive or desire. Rather the discourses of sexuality concern the operation of power as much as they govern the production of a personal identity.

Joyce's portrait of developing sexuality "thus dissolves the distinction between sexual proscription and sexual dissidence which social purity's organized war on the double standard attempted to uphold" (108). Joyce interrogates contemporary social purity initiatives to police the unruly city, exposing the voyeuristic complicities which fissured reform's supposedly detached, altruistic gaze. He dramatizes the perilously self-reflexive quality of the social purity project through a "reformer" both susceptible to the pleasures he purports to discipline, and thereby vulnerable to the policing strategies he claims to operate.

Jhan Hochman, after going through Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, asserts:

The journey of this representative young artist is a growing apart or wrenching away from increasingly imprisoning influences, in Stephen's case, from an economically impoverished home, a theologically impoverished Catholic Church, and the politically impoverished nationalism of Irish independence. The task of the artist, then, is to break free of these constraints and from their bars forge new and better formations. The artist will create not only the guide-posts and protective railings of the future, but in the process will likely have to sacrifice his well-being and perhaps a bit of his sanity as well. For Joyce, the image of

the artist apart conjures up ambivalence, specifically, excitement alternating with dread. (13)

Hence Hochman focuses on the attributes of the artist and makes it clear that s/he can go beyond the social boundary and create the world of wonder and excitement which in one sense promotes ambivalence in the text as well. Robert Brown comments on the technique used in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in this way: “Joyce uses a ‘stream of consciousness’ technique to relay the thoughts of his autobiographical protagonist Stephen Dedalus, and the language reflects the boy’s intellectual development from early childhood until he enters university” (5). Since Stephen is the central character, he embodies the intended plans and objectives of the writer. The stream of consciousness throws light on the inner world of the character. Hence the inner world of Stephen is the focal point that Brown highlights here. He is the very young child whose story is being created by another. Stephen is at once both a child shaped by his parents and a character embedded in a story he didn't create, a combination producing an object that is anything but apart.

Gender is a concept prevalent in the field of sexology with the principle that gender today cannot be defied by its two-fold rigid divisions as “masculine” and “feminine”. Rather it tries to unravel the multiple directions of one’s sexual natures. Gender by concentrating on the issue of homosexuality, attempts not only problematizes but also subverts the heterosexual classification of gender as “masculine” and “feminine” alone. It locates significance on one’s sexual nature instead of one’s bodily make up while defining his/her gender/sexual identity.

Joyce, in *Portrait*, does carve out a clear picture of similar theme through the character, Stephen. Although Stephen associates masculinity and femininity respectively with many of the same phenomena that Weininger does, he neither abandons nor overturns those associations in order to re-gender his men and women. When he appropriates the transcendence and purity of femininity it keeps hold of its femininity where Weininger recodes it as masculine. The young man is certainly the model of virginity. This way of figuring sexual initiation clearly overturns what has been and probably is still the more conventional way of gendering the participants in a story of initiation. The process of masculinizing the prostitute and femininizing the young man appears problematic in the text. Thus the conventional concept of gender is erased and its identity reversed by inculcating feminine qualities in the young man and masculine ones in the prostitute.

### **III. Subversion of Gender Identity in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man**

The central character, Stephen Dedalus in the text, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* suffers sexual frustration and his resulting way out to prostitutes. Critics turn to "Proteus," and disregard how sexual tension affects the artist as a grown man. In *Portrait*, Stephen's poverty and sexual insecurities keep him from girls like Emma Clery and push him toward prostitutes instead. In an effort to overcome his sexual inadequacies, Stephen seeks out the sexual expertise of harlots who in turn, fuel his masturbatory fantasies and facilitate his creative process. But although his carnal urges are satiated through his sexual exchanges with prostitutes, vulgar monstrosities continue to grow in his mind and find expression in daydreams and fantasies: "These daydreams and fantasies then become the fictions he crafts in poetry, the distant music" (*Portrait* 103), as it were, to which he masturbates. In short, like a dog chasing his tail, Stephen Dedalus is entangled in a labyrinthine pattern of sexual desire that sexually frustrates him and forces a retreat into his art. In this context, the writing he produces and the sexual techniques he learns do not win him the love of the woman he desires. It is mentioned in the text how Stephen undergoes the complication and sexual frustration: "His lips would not bend to kiss her. He wanted to be held firmly in her

arms, to be caressed slowly, slowly. In her arms he felt that he had suddenly become strong and fearless and sure of himself. But his lips would not bend to kiss her” (77). Stephen is helpless and cannot kiss the lady which might be due to lack of manliness. Even his sexual organs and bodily urges do not excite and perform any acts that he gets able to kiss her. There is a question to the gender role assigned to him culturally.

In "Proteus" then we learn that neither the harlots, nor the writing, have brought him any closer to love or literary fame. Therefore, when the reader learns in "Proteus" that Stephen masturbates on the beach and writes a poem, this time about vampires, it appears that he has not overcome his insecurities about himself and toward women. He has not, in other words, reconciled his carnal desires with his sexual reality. But as David Hayman explains, "masturbation, as practiced by Stephen is not a disease but a symptom" (16). Masturbation, it could be argued, is a symptom of sexual frustration. As a result of neglecting the study of sexual frustration in Stephen's narrative, the cautionary note Joyce is sounding about overtly educated men like Stephen Dedalus, who find themselves sexually and professionally frustrated in the modern wasteland, goes virtually unheeded.

Stephen's poetry is like his onanistic activity: singular and self-absorbed. Both his writing and his autoerotic practices contribute to his artistic failure and isolation. David Hayman is the only critic who addresses Stephen's masturbation in detail. He maintains that "gratuitous eroticism and onanism provide Stephen with a false release from the self and especially from the body, a mock entry into the world of expression through art: the worst form of 'romanticism'" (14). Hayman is right to argue that Stephen is trying to connect with the world through his art. But he fails to do so because the content of the poetry is too individualistic and does not speak to anyone but himself. I support

Hayman's position when he admits that he is not suggesting that the solution to Stephen's dilemma is necessarily "the cessation of such meditations" (14). And yet, Hayman does not suggest an alternative method of coping with the world. Furthermore, Stephen's post-masturbatory response is to the world in "Proteus," of wiping his snot on a rock, to be a blind shot at forging a connection between him and the world. Thus, Stephen's arbitrary and instant bodily and literary expressions together suggest an anxiety he feels he needs to release, a sexual frustration requiring translation.

Suzette Henke explains how in *Portrait* sexual frustration is conducive to Stephen's literary production: "Poetry offers the timorous lover aesthetic compensation for frustrated physical desire, and the stirrings of adolescent sexuality are deftly sublimated through an exercise in lyrical fulfillment" (62). On the one hand, Stephen attempts to solve his body's problem through gracious attempts at poetry, and yet on the other hand, this hopeless catharsis perpetuates his mad dissatisfaction with himself, his sexual life, and his art by reminding him of what he cannot have. While Henke attributes a significant role to Emma as the girl who inspires Stephen to write, Laurie Teal's focus on the prostitutes aptly suggests that it is the physical experience of the prostitute that gives him inspiration to compose verse. While I agree that both types of girls influence Stephen's writing, it is his initiation into the sexual world through prostitutes that dominates his imagination. Equally as revealing is Freud's association of sexual penetration with emasculation. The following passage both affirms and contrasts with Stephen's sexual experience with prostitutes and helps to explain why he resorts to self-stimulation:

The man is afraid of being weakened by the woman, infected with her femininity and of then showing himself incapable. The effect which coitus has of discharging tensions and causing flaccidity may be the prototype of what the man fears; and realization of the influence which the woman gains over him through sexual intercourse, the consideration she thereby forces from him may justify the extension of this fear. (Freud, *Sexuality* 271)

There is a sort of fear in the man that he might be overcome by the woman in the sense that she is physically and sexually more powerful and she seems dominant in the course of sexual acts that eventually makes it clear that he lacks sexual power and thus suffers tension and fear.

Stephen Dedalus does indeed "all but burst into hysterical weeping" (101) as he stands silent in the middle of the room waiting to be touched by the prostitute. Kate Soper defines Stephen as an outsider to his masculine environment, as representing a disruptive "feminine" sensibility. But Edmund Epstein takes a totally different approach to Stephen's reaction to the prostitute arguing that "Stephen is initiated into sexual maturity amid much darkness, night and warmth as he wanders up and down the dark slimy streets peering into the gloom of lanes and doorways, listening eagerly for any sound (100). For Epstein, visiting the prostitute "announces Stephen's development to sexual maturity; from this point onward the attack of the fathers grows both fiercer and subtler as they sense the presence of the rising generation" (62). According to Epstein then, Stephen's sexual maturity is inexorably linked to Stephen's political power and retaliations against church and state.

Epstein's equation is clear: the more Stephen sleeps with whores, the more politically aggressive he becomes. This gives new meaning to Dominic Maganiello's political analysis that Stephen "as revolutionary employs the cold steel pen" (99). What Maganiello means here is that as an artist Stephen believes in the supremacy of the word over force. But Stephen is not writing anything but romantic drivel spewed as a reactionary measure of his adolescent passion. I argue later in this paper that Stephen's political fervor is sparked more by the sexual agitation and frustration he feels as a pubescent young man than a serious commitment to politics. Joyce says in the text:

When the agony of shame had passed from him he tried to raise his soul from its abject powerlessness. God and the Blessed Virgin were too far from him. God was too great and stern and the Blessed Virgin too pure and holy. But he imagined that he stood near Emma in a wide land and, humbly and in tears, bent and kissed the elbow of her sleeve. (89)

The females remain virgin due to powerlessness of Stephen and such females are far away from him emotionally and do not have any sexual intercourse with him which shows his masculinity under suspect and question.

Spiritual Stephen disguises his autoeroticism in poetic discourse to the extent that readers misunderstand him to be urinating in "Proteus." While masking sexual desire is in keeping with Stephen's alienating disposition throughout *Ulysses*, the disguise fundamentally contradicts the artist's role that he laid out for himself in *Portrait*. And yet, it does not. In other words, if "Stephen's fantasy is to transform the virginal souls of Ireland by giving them sexual experience" (Teal 72), how is the reader to believe that Stephen can teach her/him something about sex when Stephen himself cannot accurately



and honestly describe his own sexual rituals? Yet, on the other hand, if Stephen believes he represents a "priest of the eternal imagination, transmuting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of ever living life" (*Portrait* 221), then the reader anticipates in *Ulysses* that he will surely make some kind of gracious sense out of his base desires, and articulate them instructively to Irish society. But, if his sexual frustration persists then the only thing he can communicate is his own personal torment.

Brown argues that there is an "apparently anti-sexual streak in Stephen's theory of art" (132). Stephen's reluctance in conveying his masturbation directly could explain why his art appears contrived rather than genuine. The futility of Stephen's art suggests that sexual frustration cannot be resolved through writing. This point is instructive since it prompts the reader to think beyond the written word and presumably effect change through action. Moreover, Stephen's artistic hopelessness urges the reader to reconsider the vanity of private frustration and reevaluate the purpose of art.

Suzette Henke argues that while "absolutely refusing to communicate his passion, Stephen mediates libidinal desire through mimetic language and nineteenth-century literary convention" (53). His sentiments, therefore, appear forced and mediated, if not dull and contrived. In *Portrait*, Stephen adopts an aesthetic theory to regulate the body and such aestheticization of the body ultimately compromises the modernness of Stephen's aesthetic, leaving him an unwitting subject of the romanticism which he disdains.

Stephen does not absolutely refuse to communicate his passion. He does communicate his passion quite sufficiently, one could assume, when he is having sexual intercourse with prostitutes. What Henke's argument fails to take into consideration then

is that Stephen experiences an explosive sexual world with harlots. But, because Stephen measures his worth according to women like Emma, he is constantly preoccupied with compensating for his sexual peculiarities and moral deviations through masturbation and romantic poetry.

Stephen's art is shaped by romance as he espies the bird girl on the beach. The magical bird girl sexually arouses Stephen and this "angel of mortal youth and beauty inspires him to want to live, to err, to fall, to triumph, and to recreate life out of life!" (172). He expresses his devotion to art in reproductive and regenerative terms. However, he later redirects this lust in a heated political debate about universal peace with Davin, Cranly and some classmates. Adamantly refusing to die for his country, he instead wants to fly by the nets of "nationality, language, religion" (203) that entangle him in Dublin. The politicization of his emotions may be considered a mask, as it were, because in this case substitutes sexual restrictions for political restrictions. What Stephen is and how he interacts with other characters is pretty presented in the text:

Stephen took his place silently on the step below the group of students, heedless of the rain which fell fast, turning his eyes towards her from time to time. She too stood silently among her companions. She has no priest to flirt with, he thought with conscious bitterness, remembering how he had seen her last. Lynch was right. His mind, emptied of theory and courage, lapsed back into a listless peace. (166)

Stephen who is a priest remains silent and does not show any interest in the woman. This is why the lady asks and expresses her desire that there is no priest to flirt her. She wants to have a man who can satisfy her sexual urges but no one around is as expected.

Stephen identifies two different kinds of literature in *Portrait*. There are books belonging to the "literary tradition" and those belonging to the "marketplace" (213). These two categories of writing correspond with Dedalus' other definitions for art: kinetic and static art. He distinguishes between the two: the feelings excited by improper art are kinetic, desire or loathing. Desire urges us to possess, to go to something; loathing urges us to abandon, to go from something. The arts which excite them, pornographic or didactic, are therefore improper arts. The aesthetic emotion is therefore static.

Stephen also mutates the artist's role depending on who is having sex with him. If he has sexual intercourse with harlots, he is ready to tell the world about monstrosities. If he is denied a sexual exchange with Emma Clery, he crafts romantic vignettes about love. Masturbation is the manifestation of his frustrated sexual desire toward women and it also takes the shape of the poem. In all cases, his art goes unnoticed by everyone. The famous and boastfully heroic claims that assert his will to art are individualistic and personal like Stephen's autoerotic impulses. To reject an audience, his art, like his sexuality, becomes a personal gratification which inverts Otto Rank's argument in *Art and the Artist*: "the work of art for all its personal dynamic expression, always strives to make an effect on others" (95). Unlike some artists who thrive on an audience's applause, Stephen neglects this aspect of literary production and gives himself a hand instead. His poetry speaks more to his private and personal longings for women than to Ireland. It lacks a universal appeal.

Nevertheless, Stephen understands the importance of an audience in order to keep his art immortal. Rank questions: "How does the artist achieve this effect that enables so many others to identify themselves with his work?" (95). Stephen forgets his

audience, so his creations remain esoteric and narcissistic like his autoerotic ejaculations. His artistic theory has failed him because according to it, his writing is informed by a sexual anxiety and appears to have as a definite purpose the aim of advancing his position in society.

There are two key masturbation scenes in *Portrait*: the bird girl scene and the morning Stephen composes the villanelle. The first occurs on the beach and the second in Stephen's bedroom. In the second instance, masturbation induces Stephen to produce a poem. While the two occurrences are separate and distinct from one another they depict a common portrait of Stephen as a helpless young boy who struggles to integrate his physiological urges with a beatific vision of women. When the lady tells him to kiss her, he is helpless to do so. Joyce seems to be overtly presenting this event: Give me a kiss, she said. Do you know that he is a married man? He was a married man before they converted him. He has a wife and children somewhere. By hell, I think that's the queerest notion I ever heard! Eh! (154) It is whether he is able to express masculinity. The issue of marriage comes in order to clarify things much especially his masculine power.

Stephen stands apart from his bathing classmates on the beach and "he, apart from them and in silence, remembered in what dread he stood of the mystery of his own body" (169). He begins to daydream about his "strange name". He equates his name with "a prophecy of the end he had been born to serve" and as "a symbol of the artist forging anew in his workshop out of the sluggish matter of the earth a new soaring impalpable imperishable being" (169). This self-importance physically separates him from the other boys on the beach and induces a kind of fantasy world that lures him toward another part of the strand where he sees the bird girl. While masking his insecurities about his body in

an inflated image of himself as a writer and prophet, he etherealizes the girl. He watches her standing "before him in midstream, alone and still, gazing out to sea. She seemed like one whom magic had changed into the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird" (171). To Stephen, the woman is like a nymph who is from the heaven and she is so beautiful that he keeps on gazing her. He compares her with a seabird. It further clarifies that there is somewhere hidden sexual passion in him but he is still unsure whether he can perform masculine role or not. By framing this scene in terms of aesthetic bliss, Joyce captures Stephen's moment of sexual enticement that confirms for critics like Suzette Henke the reason behind Stephen's intellectual choice of an artistic vocation:

She was alone and still, gazing out to sea; and when she felt his presence and the worship of his eyes her eyes turned to him in quiet sufferance of his gaze, without shame, or wantonness. Long, long she suffered his gaze and then quietly withdrew her eyes from his and bent them towards the stream, gently stirring the water with her foot hither and thither. The first faint noise of gently moving water broke the silence, low and faint and whispering, faint as the bells of sleep; hither and thither, hither and thither; and a faint flame trembled on her cheek.--Heavenly God! Cried Stephen's soul, in an outburst of profane joy. He turned away from her suddenly and set off across the strand. His cheeks were aflame; his body was aglow; his limbs were trembling. (172)

The repetitious hither and thither movements of this moment suggest Stephen's masturbatory mechanics. The flame, or blush, on Stephen's cheek is the physiological response characteristic of an onanistic moment.

In the second instance of Stephen's masturbation, he transforms thoughts about the bird girl and Emma into poetry when he composes the villanelle. Stephen's associative claims Emma's life is simple and strange as a bird's life, gay in the morning, restless all day and tired at sundown. Her heart simple and willful as a bird's heart suggests that both the bird girl and Emma come to represent a source of inspiration for Stephen. The ideal woman is turned into masturbatory fodder and churned into the romantic villanelle by the next page. She becomes both holy and blasphemous for Stephen as she perpetuates a holy vision of beauty, and a rose-like glow, which also speaks for the physiological rise he feels upon waking.

The sexual insecurities Stephen feels in *Portrait*, he sublimates into poetry that offers him, in Henke's terms, "a successfully mediated and comfortably mastered form of sexual gratification" (75). For example, intimations of an actual sexual exchange with Emma are immediately shattered in an afternoon at school by the pestilent reality of a louse crawling along Stephen's neck. As a result, he aggressively attacks Emma in his mind: "Well then, let her go and be damned to her! She could love some clean athlete who washed himself every morning to the waist and had black hair on his chest. Let her" (234). He channels this weakness into lines of poetry by recollecting Thomas Nash's poetry and writing about the lice falling from his head.

Although Stephen composes the villanelle and thinks up other lines of poetry to ignore his insecurities with respect to Emma, he turns to masturbation, but for another reason besides his obsession with his physical image. He resorts to masturbation because it offers him a medium through which he can express his vile imagination and desires. He tries to regain the attention of his distracted friend. This causes Stephen to seek solace in

comforting thoughts about "eyes, opening from the darkness of desire, eyes that dimmed the breaking east" (233). The reference to eyes recalls Stephen's daydreams in class when he is thinking about prostitutes and sex:

The equation on the page of his scribbler began to spread out a widening tail...The indices appearing and disappearing were eyes opening and closing; the eyes ...were stars being born and being quenched. The vast cycle of starry life bore his weary mind outward to its verge and inward to its center, a distant music accompanying him outward and inward. (103)

To abstract himself from the frustration he feels toward Cranly and Emma, Stephen conjures up more images, but this time with the eyes of memory kind gentlewomen in Covent Garden wooing from their balconies with sucking mouths and the pox-fouled wenches. However, the image he has summoned gives him no pleasure because that was not the way to think of Emma. But he cannot avoid thinking about her smell and her body because these fantasies have been so impressed upon his mind while masturbating: "A conscious unrest seethed in his blood. Yes, it was her body he smelt, a wild and languid smell, the tepid limbs over which his music had flowed desirously" (233). Of course, by identifying Emma's angelic body over which "his music had flowed desirously," Stephen recaptures his masturbatory moments as the means of integrating his crude thoughts with gracious ways. What is crucial to note here is the conflation of virgin and whore imagery in his fantasies about Emma. The frustration he feels about his inability to attain Emma is heavily charged with sexual tension and finds physiological release through prostitutes. Although Stephen feels a "dark peace" (103) after a sexual moment, a new frustration emerges from his self-stimulation—a cold indifferent knowledge of himself, a realization

that he is alone. Thus, Stephen relies on his supposed literary talent and masturbation to substantiate his physical shortcomings and compensate for his longings.

The purpose of Stephen's sexual feelings and frustration in the case of the bird girl and Emma Clery can be interpreted, at first, as bringing forth his *vita nuova*. But this image of Stephen as a religious and pious young boy finding God through a womanly creature and then mastering his artistic vocation through an intellectual appropriation of her is, in a word, absurd. The paradisaical invocation of non-sexual love by the emblem of rose that concludes Stephen's rapturous instance is a literary signature that signals beatific and platonic love between man and woman. The similar Platonic love seems overtly presented in the text and Joyce thus says:

For him there was nothing amusing in a girl's interest and regard. All day he had thought of nothing but their leave-taking on the steps of the tram at Harold's Cross, the stream of moody emotions it had made to course through him and the poem he had written about it. All day he had imagined a new meeting with her for he knew that she was to come to the play ... and all day the stream of gloomy tenderness within him had started forth and returned upon itself in dark courses and eddies, wearying him in the end until the pleasantries of the perfect and the painted little boy had drawn from him a movement of impatience. (58)

Stephen is engaged with the imagination about the picture of lady's body and creates only a mental picture which pleases him and loves to play with her and does not want to go beyond. The relationship between a young man and a young lady, if remains so, will surely question their sexuality.



Marilyn French addresses Stephen's preoccupation with religious defilement and masturbation when she identifies the "two forces that draw him, his perverse sensuality and his sense of sex as sin" (79). What can be concluded from Stephen's attitude toward sex and masturbation is less a moral evaluation of his noted perversion than a cultural observation that men were expected to treat women in a particular fashion. While some may prize Dante's treatment of Beatrice, others may caution against the tendency to place women upon pedestals. It may appear that Stephen does wrong to expose Mother Mary to his naked body. What this scene suggests, however, is Stephen's interest in destabilizing religious norms and reconfiguring traditional roles for both men and women.

Laurie Teal identifies how the prostitute evokes Stephen's literary grandeur in *Portrait* by isolating the potency of a supernatural oddity with which he endows himself: "[h]e imagines him vampire-like, initiating both the men and women of Ireland into a kind of sexual awareness that will produce a revitalized and enlightened people" (74). While both Emma and the prostitute are necessary to Stephen's literary production early in his youth, there is the transition from a boyish admiration for the unattainable schoolgirl to a manly hunger for sex once he has grown up. Thus, the prostitute encourages a sexual appetite in Stephen that is denounced and denigrated by the society Emma Clery represents. The sexual frustration he feels then is in part attributed to the cultural norms that decide what is, and what is not, sexually permissible.

Stephen's poverty and his insecurity about his body are not the only things holding him back from pursuing intimate relations with girls like Emma. Paradoxically, it is also the knowledge he gains from experienced prostitutes that keeps him from virgin "nice" girls and redirects his sexual energy into masturbation. While Stanley Sultan

argues that "adolescent boys frequently both glorify objects of infatuation and engage in sexual adventure rather than have a balanced relationship with any one girl" (71), that it is Stephen's immature handling of common courtship and a vast sexual awareness that could potentially intimidate or even frighten a young girl who keeps Stephen separated from them. Perhaps this is more the portrait of a grown man trapped inside the young man's body.

Both Stephen's sexuality and his social persona bring him into relations with the world. Sexual interaction is conducive to communal cohesion: "To initiate sexual interaction it is necessary to open oneself to rejection: There is no way to say no affably and no way to hear it painlessly [...] Whenever there are high risks and high stakes, there are strong sentiments and strong values" (Dillon 188). Dillon gives sexuality a communal context: "We are all in this together...Everyone has sexual contact with someone who has had sexual contact with someone else. And that means that we are all in some way in contact with each other" (Dillon 189). But Stephen's masturbatory fantasies about women distance him from real interactions with people and he compensates for this distance with his writing. Joyce does present the similar theme in the text: "Where was his boyhood now? Where was the soul that had hung back from her destiny, to brood alone upon the shame of her wounds and in her house of squalor and subterfuge to queen it in faded cerements and wreaths that withered at the touch? Or where was he?" (131)

There is no hope of reproduction since Stephen's boyhood is under question and there is some sort of fear in him about sexual intercourse which triggers the fact he lacks sexual power.

Stephen's masturbatory practices and his forged poetry reveal that he has not matured sexually or artistically since *Portrait*. His maturity, if we are to call it that, is a bland acceptance of the fact that his own stiffest theories can break in practice. Using his protean penis, he marks the ever-fluctuating tides of sexual life with sexual frustration and writing. Despite his rebellious postures, he has not affected any revolutionary change among Dubliners. However, Joyce's portrayal of a masturbating sexually frustrated failed artist calls into question the purpose of art and audience. Does sexual frustration work better as the subject or form of a poem? Indeed, sexual tension and frustration provide the topic in many other modernist works like those of T.S. Eliot and D.H. Lawrence. But Joyce admonished Lawrence's writing admitting: "That man writes too poorly ...ask his friend Aldous Huxley for something instead; at least he dresses decently" (87).

Stephen's posturing suggests an unwillingness to accept reality. Stephen's sexuality and art is fractured and frustrated by his separation from society. When we read Stephen's villanelle in *Portrait* we ingest fanciful prose and heroic posturing. In "Proteus" we interpret fractions of his vampire poem as a pronounced expression of death and eroticism but conveyed nonetheless in cheap verse. While the artificial prose acts like a mask which hides his sexual anxieties and keeps him from embarrassment, his sexual failure depicts the sexually repressive regime that haunts him throughout both books.

The most obvious story of Stephen's sexuality can be read on his body. We read Stephen's flaming cheeks and erections to be physiological responses to sexual stimuli. David Hayman describes the situation where Stephen enacts a fight or flight response after masturbating: "belated embarrassment follows intense narcissism after Stephen has just conducted himself most curiously in a public spot" (16). In the course of his

development Stephen Dedalus has utterly undone himself through a sexual fatalism that dooms him to a destiny of desire and corporeality which forever ensnares men in their lusts.

Stephen's masturbatory practices portray the mental and physical character of Stephen who embodies the fluctuating role of gender and the crisis that is due liminal stance. The entire text is a critique of the sexual frustration caused by repression in a particular domain of society pertaining to the male and female dichotomy created in the society for the sake of respecting desires and wants of those who are in power. But the very repressive laws underlain in social system are dismantled due to the unfixed sexual role of Stephen.

#### IV. Conclusion

James Joyce's novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* presents the situation where the traditional gender concept does not work. Rather there is an alteration pervasive gender-relationship and it is indeed shocking and dazzling to the readers. The change in the culturally and socially assigned roles to the particular gender is dominant and further it invites the critical perception of the readers towards. Joycean narrative shows masculinity being overwhelmed by femininity to open up alternative possibilities. So it does not consist of a movement toward a goal but a displacement from one movement toward another, and the subject involved is neither masculine nor feminine but an interaction of the two. This complementary compromise of genders enacts the ideas of Judith Butler, who sees the genders displacing and distorting each other in a playful and significant sexual practice.

In every case, the perpetual male conflict renders the power system that supports masculinity unbearable, yet femininity is also untenable for the protagonist who starts as a male. The goal that is reached is not quite female, but suspended between genders. There is no clear cut role performed by the characters who are involved in the text. It is much difficult to see them in a traditionally set-up frame of gender Stephen crosses the existing barrier and does something unusual that shocks the readers. Joyce as a modernist writer inculcates the wide and broad vision in the matter of portray of odd characters. Judith Butler is much concerned with the subversion of the gender roles. She is much happy as well with the helplessness of Stephen in performing masculine role and the prostitute being attributed with masculine features. Similar vision is also of Butler since

she mixes the two genders in order to modify the other which is the most progressive gender practice. However, she is critical to the stereotypes of male and female ever established in the patriarchy and argues that they can be proven false by exposing that they are the social constructs and they are not natural. It can be supported with the characterization of Stephen and the prostitute. Their characters approve the fact that traditionally assigned gender role is false and they can be changed through reversal.

In Joyce's subversion of genders, the masculine and feminine that interact to make up his narrative dynamics appear not as natural identities but as pathological extremes between which his protagonists move. Butler insists that masculinity and femininity do not exist outside of patriarchal constructions. Within such constructions, obsessive-compulsive behavior is the condition that drives masculinity, while hysteria, which is named for the womb, is the affliction that defines the limits of femininity. Joyce differentiates these stereotypes from biological sex by showing that both operate in a male. Stephen's conversion of thoughts into ungovernable physical states is feminine.

Similarly masculinity and femininity can be seen as abnormal configurations that are designated as normal by society, just as a fairly insane belief in the supernatural may be regarded as normal in some religious societies. As a matter of fact, Stephen's desire is expressed in connection to his longing to copulate with a soul. His role and the role of the prostitute is evidence of blurring the gender dichotomy.

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