

James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*

English 9096A
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classes: UC 377
Tuesdays
12:30-3:20
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<http://instruct.uwo.ca/english/9096A/>

course schedule and assignments

course Web site:
<http://instruct.uwo.ca/english/9096A/>

text

Finnegans Wake
(any edition with 628 pages,
print or online)

also:

Finnegans Web (Trent Univ.)<http://www.trentu.ca/faculty/jjoyce/>

Finnegans Wiki

<http://www.finnegansweb.com/wiki/index.php/TOC>
link to Word version of *FW* on
course Webpage

optional text

Roland McHugh
Annotations to Finnegans Wake
3rd ed., Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006
(1st ed. = 1980, 2nd ed. = 1991)

We are still learning to be
James Joyce's contemporaries,
to understand our interpreter.
(first words of Richard Ellmann's
biography of Joyce, 1959, revised 1982)

James Joyce 1882-1941 (1)

1882 born February 2 in Dublin
1888 enters Clongowes Wood College
1891 death of Charles Stewart Parnell
1893-98 Belvedere College in Dublin
1898-1902 begins University College Dublin (BA 1902)
1902 to Paris to study medicine
1904 back in Dublin, death of mother, teaches school,
first *Dubliners* stories, starts novel *Stephen Hero*,
meets Nora Barnacle, they leave - unmarried - for
continent

James Joyce 1882-1941 (2)

1905-7 to Trieste (Italian city but part of Austrian Empire) - son Giorgio, daughter Lucia - more *Dubliners* stories, continues *Stephen Hero*
 1905-14 attempts to publish *Dubliners*
 1907 *Chamber Music* (poems) published
 1910-14 reworks *Stephen Hero* into *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* - meets Ezra Pound
 1914 *Dubliners* published - *Portrait* serialized in *The Egoist* - starts *Ulysses*, but puts it aside for play *Exiles* - World War I (to Zurich in 1915; war lasts to 1918)
 1916 *Portrait* published

James Joyce 1882-1941 (3)

1915-22 writes *Ulysses* (in *Little Review* 1918-20 until court case stops it, book Feb. 2, 1922, Joyce's 40th birthday)
 1915-18 in Zurich, Switzerland; 1918 return to Trieste (Italy)
 1920 to Paris
 1922 finishes *Ulysses*, published on 40th birthday (February 2)

James Joyce 1882-1941 (4)

March 10, 1923: announces first new pages of writing
 1923-early 1939: writes *Work in Progress*, mostly in Paris
 April 1924: first fragment of *Work in Progress* published
 1930-1934: frequent trips to Zurich to consult with eye doctor
 May 1931: Joyce and Nora married
 December 1931: death of father John Stanislaus Joyce
 February 15, 1932: grandson Stephen James Joyce born
 March 1932: daughter Lucia's nervous breakdown, schizophrenia diagnosed
 late 1933: *Ulysses* ruled not pornographic in US; published 1934 (in UK in 1936)
 May 4, 1939: *Finnegans Wake* published (World War II begins in September)
 late 1940: fall of France to Nazis, Joyce and family to Zurich
 January 13, 1941: death in Zurich after abdominal operation

James Joyce: Published Works

Chamber Music (poems) (1907)
Dubliners (1914)
A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916)
Exiles (play) (1918)
Ulysses (1922)
Pomes Penyeach (poems) (1927)
Collected Poems (*Chamber Music*, *Pomes Penyeach*, and "Ecce Puer"; 1936)
Finnegans Wake (1939)

James Joyce: Posthumous Works

Stephen Hero (early version of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*; written 1904-06, surviving pages published in 1944 and 1963)
Critical Writings (1959); *Occasional, Critical, and Political Writing* (2000) - essays and book reviews, mostly from before 1910
Letters (volume 1, 1957; volumes 2-3, 1966); *Selected Letters*, (1975)
Giacomo Joyce (short sketch from 1914, published 1968)
 translation of Gerhart Hauptmann's 1889 play *Before Sunrise* (translated 1901, published 1978)
 "The Cat and the Devil" (1964) and "The Cats of Copenhagen" (2012) - sketches for children, in letters written in August 1936

Yesterday I wrote two pages - the first I have written since the final *Yes* of *Ulysses*.

Joyce to Harriet Shaw Weaver
 March 11, 1923
Letters, vol. 1, p. 202

We must become as little children, for they have no difficulty with *Finnegans Wake*. They have no taste: they can enjoy good writing as well as bad.

Only with time and teaching do they learn to prefer the bad. Our first job as college teachers is to unteach them: to restore their innocence: and for this purpose *Finnegans Wake* is uniquely effective.

J. Mitchell Morse, "On Teaching *Finnegans Wake*" [1966], p. 65

from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1)

He crept about from point to point on the fringe of his line, making little runs now and then. But his hands were bluish with cold. He kept his hands in the sidepockets of his belted grey suit. That was a belt round his pocket. And belt was also to give a fellow a belt. One day a fellow had said to Cantwell:

–I'd give you such a belt in a second.

Cantwell had answered:

–Go and fight your match. Give Cecil Thunder a belt. I'd like to see you. He'd give you a toe in the rump for yourself.

from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (2)

–We all know why you speak. You are McGlade's suck.

Suck was a queer word. The fellow called Simon Moonan that name because Simon Moonan used to tie the prefect's false sleeves behind his back and the prefect used to let on to be angry. But the sound was ugly. Once he had washed his hands in the lavatory of the Wicklow Hotel and his father pulled the stopper up by the chain after and the dirty water went down through the hole in the basin. And when it had all gone down slowly the hole in the basin had made a sound like that: suck. Only louder.

from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (3)

–Tell us, Dedalus, do you kiss your mother before you go to bed?

[. . .]

He still tried to think what was the right answer. Was it right to kiss his mother or wrong to kiss his mother? What did that mean, to kiss? You put your face up like that to say goodnight and then his mother put her face down. That was to kiss. His mother put her lips on his cheek; her lips were soft and they wetted his cheek; and they made a tiny little noise: kiss. Why did people do that with their two faces?

Joyce's writing: progress on *Ulysses*

I enquired about *Ulysses*. Was it progressing?

"I have been working hard on it all day," said Joyce.

"Does that mean that you have written a great deal?" I said.

"Two sentences," said Joyce.

I looked sideways but Joyce was not smiling. I thought of Flaubert.

"You have been seeking the *mot juste*?" I said.

"No," said Joyce. "I have the words already. What I am seeking is the perfect order of words in the sentence. There is an order in every way appropriate. I think I have it."

"What are the words?" I asked.

"I believe I told you," said Joyce, "that my book is a modern Odyssey. Every episode in it corresponds to an adventure of Ulysses. I am now writing the Lestrygonians episode, which corresponds to the adventure of Ulysses with the cannibals. My hero is going to lunch. But there is a seduction motive in the Odyssey, the cannibal king's daughter. Seduction appears in my book as women's silk petticoats hanging in a shop window. The words through which I express the effect of it on my hungry hero are: 'Perfume of embraces all him assailed. With hungered flesh obscurely, he mutely craved to adore.' You can see for yourself in how many different ways they might be arranged."

(Frank Budgen, *James Joyce and the Making of "Ulysses,"* pp. 19-20; Joyce refers to *Ulysses* 8:638-39, p. 138)

Finnegans Wake's language

puns, "portmanteau words" - from Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass*, chapter 6:

"'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves

Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;

All mimsy were the borogoves,

And the mome raths outgrabe."

"That's enough to begin with," Humpty Dumpty interrupted: "there are plenty of hard words there. 'Brillig' means four o'clock in the afternoon - the time when you begin broiling things for dinner."

"That'll do very well," said Alice: "and 'slithy'?"

"Well, 'slithy' means 'lithe and slimy.' 'Lithe' is the same as 'active.' You see it's like a portmanteau - there are two meanings packed up into one word."

Finnegans Wake's language

also from Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass*, chapter 6:

"I don't know what you mean by 'glory'," Alice said.

Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. "Of course you don't - till I tell you. I meant 'there's a nice knock-down argument for you!'"

"But 'glory' doesn't mean 'a nice knock-down argument'," Alice objected.

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master - that's all."

We may come, touch and go, from atoms and ifs
but we're presurely destined to be odd's without
ends. (455.16-18)

Gricks may rise and Troysirs fall (11.35-36)
to Finnegan, to sin again, and to make grim
grandma grunt and grin again (580.19-20)
Was liffe worth leaving? (230.25)

Loud, heap miseries upon us but entwine our arts
with laughters low! (259.7-8)

Joyce to Swiss writer Jacques Mercanton

You are not Irish . . . and the meaning of some passages will perhaps escape you. But you are Catholic, so you will recognize this and that allusion. You don't play cricket; this word may mean nothing to you. But you are a musician, so you will feel at ease in this passage. When my Irish friends come to visit me in Paris, it is not the philosophical subtleties of the book that amuse them, but my recollection of O'Connell's top hat. (quoted in Jacques Mercanton, "The Hours of James Joyce," [in French in 1967], trans. in Willard Potts, ed., *Portraits of the Artist in Exile: Recollections of James Joyce by Europeans* [1979], p. 234)

Wipe your glosses with what you know. (*FW* 304 fn3)

the "plot" of *Finnegans Wake*

Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker

Aнна Livia Plurabelle

Shem – Shaun – Issy

+ Sackerson, Kate, the 4, the 12, the 2, the 3, the 28

Finn MacCool (Fionn mac Cumhaill)
buried with head at Howth and feet in Phoenix Park

Tim Finnegan falling from a ladder
in "The Ballad of Tim Finnegan"
(or "The Ballad of Finnegan's Wake")

"Ballad of Tim Finnegan" introduction

(from *Finnegans Wake* 4:18-5.12 + 6.9-10 and

recording by The Clancy Bros. with Tommy Makem)

Bygmester Finnegan, of the Stuttering Hand, freemen's murer, lived in the broadest way immarginable in his rushlit toofarback for messuages before joshuan judges had given us numbers or Helviticus committed deuteronomy . . . During mighty odd years this man of hod, cement and edifices in Toper's Thorp piled building supra building pon the banks for the livers by the Soangso. . . . A waalworth of a skyerscape . . . entowerly, erigenating from next to nothing . . . with a burning bush abob off its baubletop and with larrons o'oolers clittering up and tombles a'buckets clottering down.

Of the first was he to bare arms and a name: Wassaily Booslaough of Riesengeborg. . . Hohohoho, Mister Finn, you're going to be Mister Finnagain! . . . Hahahaha, Mister Funn, you're going to be fined again! . . .

Dimb! He stottered from the latter. Damb! he was dud.

"Ballad of Tim Finnegan" 1

Tim Finnegan lived in Walkin Street
A gentleman Irish mighty odd.
He had a tongue both rich and sweet,
And to rise in the world he carried a hod.
Now Tim had a sort of a tippler's way,
With the love of the liquor he was born,
And to help him on with his work each day,
He'd a drop of the craythur every morn.
Whackfolthedah, dance to your partner,
Welt the flure yer trotters shake,
Wasn't it the truth I told you,
Lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake.

"Ballad of Tim Finnegan" 2

One morning Tim was rather full,
 His head felt heavy which made him shake,
 He fell from the ladder, and he broke his skull,
 And they carried him home his corpse to wake.
 They rolled him up in a nice clean sheet,
 And laid him out upon the bed,
 With a gallon of whiskey at his feet,
 And a barrel of porter at his head.
 Whackfolthedah, dance to your partner,
 Welt the flure yer trotters shake,
 Wasn't it the truth I told you,
 Lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake.

"Ballad of Tim Finnegan" 3

His friends assembled at the wake,
 And Mrs. Finnegan called for lunch,
 First they brought in tay and cake,
 Then pipes, tobacco, and whiskey punch.
 Biddy O'Brien began to cry,
 "Such a neat clean corpse, did you ever see,
 Tim avourneen, why did you die?"
 "Ah, hould your gab," said Paddy McGee.
 Whackfolthedah, dance to your partner,
 Welt the flure yer trotters shake,
 Wasn't it the truth I told you,
 Lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake.

"Ballad of Tim Finnegan" 4

Then Maggy O'Connor took up the job,
 "Biddy," says she, "you're wrong, I'm sure,"
 But Biddy gave her a belt in the gob,
 And she left her sprawling on the floor;
 Then the war did soon engage,
 'Twas woman to woman and man to man,
 Shillelagh law was all the rage,
 And a row and a ruction soon began.
 Whackfolthedah, dance to your partner,
 Welt the flure yer trotters shake,
 Wasn't it the truth I told you,
 Lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake.

"Ballad of Tim Finnegan" 5

Then Micky Maloney raised his head,
 When a noggin of whiskey flew at him,
 It missed and falling on the bed,
 The liquor scattered over Tim;
 Begod he revives, see how he rises,
 Timothy rising from the bed,
 Says, "Whirl your liquor round like blazes,
 Thanam o'n dhoul, do ye think I'm dead?"
 [Irish, "Soul to the devil . . ."]
 Whackfolthedah, dance to your partner,
 Welt the flure yer trotters shake,
 Wasn't it the truth I told you,
 Lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake.

⌠ (Earwicker, H C E by moving letter round)
 Δ Anna Livia
 □ Shem-Cain
 Λ Shaun
 ⚡ Snake
 P S. Patrick
 T Tristan
 ⊥ Isolde
 X Mamalujo
 □ This stands for the title but I do not wish to say it yet
 until the book has written more of itself.

from Joyce's letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver,
 March 24, 1924, *Letters*, vol. 1, p. 213
 the symbols are in *Finnegans Wake*, pp. 119 & 299 fn. 4

Adaline Glasheen, *Third Census of
 "Finnegans Wake"* (pp. lxxii-lxxxiv):
 "Who Is Who When Everybody Is Somebody Else"

⌠	Λ	□	⊥	Δ
Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker HCE	Shaun Shaun the Postman John Jaun Yawn	Shem Shem the Penman James	Issy Isabel	Anna Livia Plurabelle ALP

Adaline Glasheen, *Third Census of "Finnegans Wake"* (pp. lxxii-lxxxiv):
"Who Is Who When Everybody Is Somebody Else"

⌌	^	⌋	⌑	Δ
Howth (head of God / Adam	Liffey (left bank) Angel Mick (St. Michael) Abel	Liffey (right bank) Devil Nick Satan Cain	Chapelizod Eye Rainbow (7 girls)	River Liffey Eye Mrs Noah
Noah	Japhet	Shem / Ham		

Adaline Glasheen, *Third Census of "Finnegans Wake"* (pp. lxxii-lxxxiv):
"Who Is Who When Everybody Is Somebody Else"

⌌	^	⌋	⌑	Δ
	Butt Chuff Archdruid Berkeley Mutt Browne (Bruno of Nola) Kevin (St. Jevin) Kevin	Taff Glugg St. Patrick Jute Nolan	Maggies	

Adaline Glasheen, *Third Census of "Finnegans Wake"* (pp. lxxii-lxxxiv):
"Who Is Who When Everybody Is Somebody Else"

⌌	^	⌋	⌑	Δ
	Mookse Ondt Burrus (Brutus) Space Wyndham Lewis Stanislaus Joyce (brother)	Gripse Gracehoper Cascous (Cassius) Time James Joyce James Joyce		

"One great part of every human existence is passed in a state which cannot be rendered sensible by the use of wideawake language, cutanddry grammar and goahead plot."

(Joyce to Harriet Shaw Weaver,
November 24, 1926, *Letters* 3:146)

dream

but: dream without an identifiable dreamer
or without a single dreamer
Freud's condensation and displacement

structure

Giambattista Vico's *The New Science*
(1725, 1744)

four cycles:

- a) age of gods
- b) age of heroes
- c) age of humans
- d) ricorso → thunderclap

Book I: eight chapters (two groups of four)

Book II: four chapters

Book III: four chapters

Book IV: one chapter

Finnegans Wake "is not about something; it is that something itself."

(Samuel Beckett,

"Dante . . . Bruno. Vico . . . Joyce," 1929)

"lovesoffun at Finnegans Wake" (*FW* 607.16)