

James joyce and his literary works essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

James Augusta Aloysius Joyce was born on 2 February 1882 to John Stanislaus Joyce and Mary Jane “ May” Murray in the Dublin suburb of Rathgar. He was baptised in the nearby St. Joseph’s Church in Terenure on 5 February by Rev. John O’Mulloy. His godparents were Philip and Ellen McCann. He was the eldest of ten surviving children; two of his siblings died of typhoid.

His father’s family, originally from Fermoy in Cork, had once owned a small salt and lime works. Joyce’s father and paternal grandfather both married into wealthy families, though the family’s purported ancestor, Sean Mor Seoighe (fl. 680) was a stonemason from Connemara. [3] In 1887, his father was appointed rate collector (i. e. , a collector of local property taxes) by Dublin Corporation; the family subsequently moved to the fashionable adjacent small town of Bray 12 miles (19 km) from Dublin. Around this time Joyce was attacked by a dog, which engendered in him a lifelong cynophobia.

He also suffered from keraunophobia, as an overly superstitious aunt had described thunderstorms to him as a sign of God’s wrath. [4] He was also a Gaelic football goalkeeper. 5] In 1891, Joyce wrote a poem, Et Tu Healy on the death of Charles Stewart Parnell. His father was angry at the treatment of Parnell by the Catholic church and at the resulting failure to secure Home Rule for Ireland. The elder Joyce had the poem printed and even sent a part to the Vatican Library. In November of that same year, John Joyce was entered in Stubbs Gazette (a publisher of bankruptcies) and suspended from work. In 1893, John Joyce was dismissed with a pension, beginning the

family's slide into overt poverty caused mainly by John's drinking and general financial mismanagement. [6]

Joyce at age six, 1888 Joyce had begun his education at Clongowes Wood College, a Jesuit boarding school near Clane, County Kildare, in 1888 but had to leave in 1892 when his father could no longer pay the fees. Joyce then studied at home and briefly at the Christian Brothers O'Connell School on North Richmond Street, Dublin, before he was offered a place in the Jesuits', Dublin school, Belvedere College, in 1893.

In 1895, Joyce, now aged 13, was elected to join the Sodality of Our Lady by his peers at Belvedere. [7] By the age of 16 however, Joyce appears to have made a break with his Catholic roots, a subject of varying degrees of dispute. [citation needed] Nonetheless, the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas continued to have a strong influence on him for most of his life. [8] Joyce enrolled at the recently established University College Dublin (UCD) in 1898, studying English, French, and Italian. He also became active in theatrical and literary circles in the city.

In 1900 his laudatory review of Henrik Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken* was published in *Fortnightly Review*; it was his first publication and, after learning basic Norwegian in order to send a fan letter to Ibsen, he received a letter of thanks from the dramatist. Joyce wrote a number of other articles and at least two plays (since lost) during this period. Many of the friends he made at University College Dublin appeared as characters in Joyce's works. His closest colleagues included leading figures of the generation, most notably, Thomas Kettle, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington and Oliver St.

John Gogarty. Joyce was first introduced to the Irish public by Arthur Griffith in his newspaper, *The United Irishman*, in November 1901. Joyce had written an article on the Irish Literary Theatre and his college magazine refused to print it. Joyce had it printed and distributed locally. Griffith himself wrote a piece decrying the censorship of the student James Joyce. [9] In 1901, the National Census of Ireland lists James Joyce (19) as an English and Irish-speaking scholar living with his mother and father, six sisters and three brothers at Royal Terrace, Clontarf, Dublin. 10] Bust of Joyce in St. Stephen's Green, Dublin After graduating from UCD in 1902, Joyce left for Paris to study medicine, but he soon abandoned this after finding the technical lectures in French too difficult.

Fearing for her son's impiety, his mother tried unsuccessfully to get Joyce to make his confession and to take communion. She finally passed into a coma and died on 13 August, James and Stanislaus having refused to kneel with other members of the family praying at her bedside. [12] After her death he continued to drink heavily, and conditions at home grew quite appalling. He scraped a living reviewing books, teaching and singing—he was an accomplished tenor, and won the bronze medal in the 1904 Feis Ceoil. [13]

On 7 January 1904 he attempted to publish *A Portrait of the Artist*, an essay-story dealing with aesthetics, only to have it rejected from the free-thinking magazine *Dana*. He decided, on his twenty-second birthday, to revise the story into a novel he called *Stephen Hero*. It was a fictional rendering of Joyce's youth, but he eventually grew frustrated with its direction and abandoned this work. It was never published in this form, but years later, in Trieste, Joyce completely rewrote it as *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young*

Man. The unfinished *Stephen Hero* was published after his death. 14] The same year he met Nora Barnacle, a young woman from Connemara, County Galway who was working as a chambermaid.

On 16 June 1904, they first stepped out together, an event which would be commemorated by providing the date for the action of *Ulysses*. Joyce remained in Dublin for some time longer, drinking heavily. After one of these drinking binges, he got into a fight over a misunderstanding with a man in Phoenix Park; he was picked up and dusted off by a minor acquaintance of his father's, Alfred H. Hunter, who brought him into his home to tend to his injuries. 15] Hunter was rumoured to be a Jew and to have an unfaithful wife, and would serve as one of the models for Leopold Bloom, the protagonist of *Ulysses*. [16] He took up with medical student Oliver St John Gogarty, who formed the basis for the character Buck Mulligan in *Ulysses*.

After staying in Gogarty's Martello Tower in Sandycove for six nights, he left in the middle of the night following an altercation which involved another student he lived with, Samuel Chenevix Trench (Haines in *Ulysses*), firing a pistol at some pans hanging directly over Joyce's bed. 17] He walked all the way back to Dublin to stay with relatives for the night, and sent a friend to the tower the next day to pack his trunk. Shortly thereafter he eloped to the Continent with Nora. 1904–20: Trieste and Zurich Joyce in 1915 Joyce and Nora went into self-imposed exile, moving first to Zurich in Switzerland, where he had supposedly acquired a post to teach English at the Berlitz Language School through an agent in England. It turned out that the English agent had been swindled, but the director of the school sent him on to

Trieste, which was part of Austria-Hungary until World War I (today part of Italy).

Once again, he found there was no position for him, but with the help of Almidano Artifoni, director of the Trieste Berlitz school, he finally secured a teaching position in Pola, then also part of Austria-Hungary (today part of Croatia). He stayed there, teaching English mainly to Austro-Hungarian naval officers stationed at the Pola base, from October 1904 until March 1905, when the Austrians—having discovered an espionage ring in the city—expelled all aliens. With Artifoni's help, he moved back to Trieste and began teaching English there.

He would remain in Trieste for most of the next ten years. [18] Bronze statue of Joyce standing on a sidewalk, next to a railing. Behind the statue is a street scene with pedestrians and stores. Joyce's statue in Trieste Later that year Nora gave birth to their first child, George. Joyce then managed to talk his brother, Stanislaus, into joining him in Trieste, and secured him a position teaching at the school. Joyce's ostensible reasons were desire for Stanislaus's company and the hope of offering him a more interesting life than that of his simple clerking job in Dublin.

In truth, though, Joyce hoped to augment his family's meagre income with his brother's earnings. [19] Stanislaus and Joyce had strained relations throughout the time they lived together in Trieste, with most arguments centring on Joyce's drinking habits and frivolity with money. [20] With the chronic wanderlust of Joyce's early years, he became frustrated with life in Trieste and moved to Rome in late 1906, having secured employment in a

bank. He intensely disliked Rome, and moved back to Trieste in early 1907. His daughter Lucia was born in the summer of the same year. [21]

Joyce returned to Dublin in mid-1909 with George, in order to visit his father and work on getting *Dubliners* published. He visited Nora's family in Galway, meeting them for the first time (a successful visit, to his relief). While preparing to return to Trieste he decided to take one of his sisters, Eva, back with him to help Nora run the home. He spent only a month in Trieste before returning to Dublin, this time as a representative of some cinema owners and businessmen from Trieste. With their backing he launched Ireland's first cinema, the Volta Cinematograph, which was well-received, but fell apart after Joyce left.

He returned to Trieste in January 1910 with another sister, Eileen, in tow. [22] Eva became very homesick for Dublin and returned there a few years later, but Eileen spent the rest of her life on the continent, eventually marrying Czech bank cashier Frantisek Schaurek. [23] Joyce returned to Dublin again briefly in mid-1912 during his years-long fight with his Dublin publisher, George Roberts, over the publication of *Dubliners*. His trip was once again fruitless, and on his return he wrote the poem "Gas from a Burner" as an invective against Roberts.

After this trip, he never again came closer to Dublin than London, despite many pleas from his father and invitations from fellow Irish writer William Butler Yeats. One of his students in Trieste was Ettore Schmitz, better known by the pseudonym Italo Svevo. They met in 1907 and became lasting friends and mutual critics. Schmitz was a Catholic of Jewish origin and became a

primary model for Leopold Bloom; most of the details about the Jewish faith in *Ulysses* came from Schmitz's responses to queries from Joyce. [24]

While living in Trieste, Joyce was first beset with eye problems that ultimately required over a dozen surgical operations. [25] Joyce concocted a number of money-making schemes during this period, including an attempt to become a cinema magnate in Dublin. He also frequently discussed but ultimately abandoned a plan to import Irish tweeds to Trieste.

Correspondence relating to that venture with the Irish Woollen Mills are displayed in the windows of their premises on Aston's Quay in Dublin. His skill at borrowing money saved him from indigence. What income he had came partially from his position at the Berlitz school and partially from teaching private students.

Circular fountain surrounded by pavement. The fountain's center is a sculpture of a pair of abstract human figures. The so-called James-Joyce-Kanzel (plateau) at the confluence of the Sihl and Limmat rivers in Zurich where Joyce loved to relax In 1915, after most of his students were conscripted in Trieste for World War I, he moved to Zurich. Two influential private students, Baron Ambrogio Ralli and Count Francesco Sordina, petitioned officials for an exit permit for the Joyces, who in turn agreed not to take any action against the emperor of Austria-Hungary during the war. [26] There, he met one of his most enduring and important friends, Frank Budgen, whose opinion Joyce constantly sought through the writing of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. It was also here where Ezra Pound brought him to the attention of English feminist and publisher Harriet Shaw Weaver, who would become Joyce's patron, providing him thousands of pounds over the

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next 25 years and relieving him of the burden of teaching in order to focus on his writing. While in Zurich he wrote *Exiles*, published *A Portrait...*, and began serious work on *Ulysses*.

Zurich during the war was home to exiles and artists from across Europe, and its bohemian, multilingual atmosphere suited him. Nevertheless, after four years he was restless, and after the war he returned to Trieste as he had originally planned. He found the city had changed, and some of his old friends noted his maturing from teacher to full-time artist. His relations with his brother (who had been interned in an Austrian prison camp for most of the war due to his pro-Italian politics) were more strained than ever.

Joyce headed to Paris in 1920 at an invitation from Ezra Pound, supposedly for a week, but he ended up living there for the next twenty years. 1920-41: Paris and Zurich Half-length portrait of a fortyish man wearing distinctive Windsor (circular-lens) glasses with black Zylor-covered frames, short and slicked-down brown hair, a small mustache, light tan jacket, and brown tie. His mouth is turned down in a slightly truculent expression In Paris, 1924. Portrait by Patrick Tuohy. Joyce set himself to finishing *Ulysses* in Paris, delighted to find that he was gradually gaining fame as an avant-garde writer.

A further grant from Miss Shaw Weaver meant he could devote himself full-time to writing again, as well as consort with other literary figures in the city. During this era, Joyce's eyes began to give him more and more problems. He was treated by Dr Louis Borsch in Paris, undergoing nine operations from him until Borsch's death in 1929. Throughout the 1930s he travelled frequently

to Switzerland for eye surgeries and treatments for Lucia, who, according to the Joyces, suffered from schizophrenia. Lucia was analysed by Carl Jung at the time, who after reading *Ulysses*, concluded that her father had schizophrenia. 27] Jung said she and her father were two people heading to the bottom of a river, except that he was diving and she was falling.

Were it not for their support (along with Harriet Shaw Weaver's constant financial support), there is a good possibility that his books might never have been finished or published. In their literary magazine "Transition," the Jolases published serially various sections of Joyce's novel under the title *Work in Progress*. He returned to Zurich in late 1940, fleeing the Nazi occupation of France. On 11 January 1941, he underwent surgery in Zurich, for a perforated ulcer. While he at first improved, he relapsed the following day, and despite several transfusions, fell into a coma.

He awoke at 2 a. m. on 13 January 1941, and asked for a nurse to call his wife and son before losing consciousness again. They were still on their way when he died 15 minutes later. Joyce's body was interred in the Fluntern Cemetery near Zurich Zoo. Swiss tenor Max Meili sang *Addio terra, addio cielo* from Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* at the burial service. Although two senior Irish diplomats were in Switzerland at the time, neither attended Joyce's funeral, and the Irish government later declined Nora's offer to permit the repatriation of Joyce's remains.

Nora, whom Joyce had married in London in 1931, survived him by 10 years. She is buried now by his side, as is their son George, who died in 1976. Joyce and religion L. A. G. Strong, William T. Noon, Robert Boyle and others have

argued that Joyce, later in life, reconciled with the faith he rejected earlier in life and that his parting with the faith was succeeded by a not so obvious reunion, and that *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* are essentially Catholic expressions. [31]

Likewise, Hugh Kenner and T. S. Eliot saw between the lines of Joyce's work the outlook of a serious Christian and that beneath the veneer of the work lies a remnant of Catholic belief and attitude. [32] Kevin Sullivan maintains that, rather than reconciling with the faith, Joyce never left it. [33] Critics holding this view insist that Stephen, the protagonist of the semi-autobiographical *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* as well as *Ulysses*, is not Joyce. [33] Somewhat cryptically, in an interview after completing *Ulysses*, in response to the question "When did you leave the Catholic Church", Joyce answered, "That's for the Church to say. [34] Eamonn Hughes maintains that Joyce takes a dialectic approach, both affirming and denying, saying that Stephen's much noted *non serviam* is qualified – "I will not serve that which I no longer believe... ", and that the *non serviam* will always be balanced by Stephen's "I am a servant..." and Molly's "yes". [35] Umberto Eco compares Joyce to the ancient *episcopi vagantes* (stray bishops) in the Middle Ages. They left a discipline, not a cultural heritage or a way of thinking. Like them, the writer retains the sense of blasphemy held as a liturgical ritual. [36]

In any case we have first-hand testimonies coming from the early Joyce, his brother Stanislaus Joyce, and his wife: My mind rejects the whole present social order and Christianity—home, the recognised virtues, classes of life, and religious doctrines. [...] Six years ago I left the Catholic church, hating it

most fervently. I found it impossible for me to remain in it on account of the impulses of my nature. I made secret war upon it when I was a student and declined to accept the positions it offered me. By doing this I made myself a beggar but I retained my pride.

Now I make open war upon it by what I write and say and do. [37] My brother's breakaway from Catholicism was due to other motives. He felt it was imperative that he should save his real spiritual life from being overlaid and crushed by a false one that he had outgrown. He believed that poets in the measure of their gifts and personality were the repositories of the genuine spiritual life of their race and the priests were usurpers. He detested falsity and believed in individual freedom more thoroughly than any man I have ever known. [... The interest that my brother always retained in the philosophy of the Catholic Church sprang from the fact that he considered Catholic philosophy to be the most coherent attempt to establish such an intellectual and material stability. [38] When the arrangements for Joyce's burial were being made, a Catholic priest offered a religious service, which Joyce's wife Nora declined, saying: " I couldn't do that to him. "[39] However, some critics and biographers have opined along the lines of Andrew Gibson: " The modern James Joyce may have vigorously resisted the oppressive power of Catholic tradition.

But there was another Joyce who asserted his allegiance to that tradition, and never left it, or wanted to leave it, behind him. "[40] It is also known from first hand testimonies and his own writing that Joyce attended Catholic Mass and Orthodox Sacred Liturgy, especially during Holy Week, purportedly for aesthetic reasons. [41] His sisters also noted his Holy Week attendance

and that he did not seek to dissuade them. [41] One friend witnessed him cry “ secret tears” upon hearing Jesus’ words on the cross and another accused him of being a “ believer at heart” because of his frequency in church.