Reading Classics

Dubliners

James Joyce

Teacher's Book

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Study Questions

The study questions are designed for the most part to supplement the introduction and footnotes: most of them suggest ways of looking at individual stories and at *Dubliners* as a whole that have not been covered elsewhere in this volume. They can be used either as essay questions or as a basis for seminar discussion.

Some of the questions consist of quotations from the text, from other Joyce sources, or from critical commentary. Their primary purpose is to elicit responses to particular aspects of *Dubliners*, but they also give students an inkling of its critical history. Responses should consist of a discussion of issues raised by the quotation.

There are seventeen sections – one of context questions, one on each story, and a final longer section on *Dubliners* as a whole. This last section is divided into seven parts: image and symbol; nationality and religion; language; structure; gender and sexuality; reflexivity and intertextuality; narrative technique.

Context Questions

1. The short story is notoriously difficult to define both in terms of its form and in terms of its history. It is fairly safe, however, to cite Poe as the originator of the modern short story (in the 1830s and 40s), and Chekhov and Maupassant as masters of the short story (in the 1880s and 90s) to the point that their works are exemplary of the form. Poe defined the short story as a work of fiction that can be read in one sitting and that aims at a single effect. To these definitions, which seem to me both convincing and helpful, I would add a definition by analogy with other art forms: the short story is like a line-drawing or a flute solo, in that all three aim at a single effect in a distilled or minimal form; the novel, on the other hand, is like an oil painting or an orchestral piece, in that all three aim at an exhaustive treatment of a combination of effects. All the stories of *Dubliners* conform without difficulty to these three definitions, except 'The Dead', and it is no accident that this last story has been seen by some critics as a novella or a short novel. Joyce himself defined the stories as a series of epiphanies. However, it is difficult to isolate the epiphanies of some of the stories; some seem to have more than one epiphany, and sometimes the epiphany is not in the mind of a character but in the mind of the reader. More will be said about this in the answers to questions on the epiphany. Since the introduction covers the question of the short-story genre at length, I will not go into further detail here.

2. Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*, Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time* and William Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses, and Other Stories* are the most famous examples of the short-story cycle, except for *Dubliners* itself, which precedes them and can therefore be seen as the originator of the form (Conan Doyle's *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* precedes *Dubliners*, but, although it shares some of the features of the short-story cycle, it does not conform to the definition that follows). In these short-story cycles, each story is complete in itself and conforms to the definitions of a short story outlined in the answer to question 1, but in each case the volume taken as a whole creates an effect that is similar to the orchestral effect of the novel: an entire community, generation, or family comes to light through the combination of stories. Joyce might have been drawing on older narrative forms in which brief self-contained stories are held within a frame narrative (for example, *Arabian Nights*, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Cervantes' *Don Quixote*). He might also have been influenced by novel-cycles such as Balzac's *La Comédie Humaine* and, in a very different vein, Trollope's Barchester novels, in which some of the same characters, settings and events are used in various texts, producing an overall effect of a kind of heightened realism: the reader grows gradually familiar with an entire society. This effect has a long and impressive history that passed through the Oedipus cycle of Sophocles and the history plays of Shakespeare before Balzac adapted it to prose narrative.

3. Joyce began writing *Dubliners* to make a little money. George Russell suggested that he submit some stories to *The Irish Homestead*, and that he take care not to offend his readers. It is possible, and it seems likely, that Joyce took this as a challenge to write a series of intensely subversive stories but to disguise their more controversial elements and to give them a surface appearance of conventional realism. He signals this intention to careful readers when he places the word 'gnomon' in the first paragraph of the first story (see General Questions 'Image and symbol' b and 'Gender and sexuality' b). Modernist writing is characterised by a rejection of established rules, traditions and conventions. Historically, the Modernists' defiance of literary convention can be seen as a rebellion against the cultures from which they sprang. Woolf, Lawrence and Forster, for example, are rejecting the Victorian way of living and thinking as well as writing. As a novelist, James Joyce was the ultimate Modernist. His use of language became more and more experimental as his career went on. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* describe a trajectory in which Joyce moves progressively further away from conventional grammar, diction, spelling, representation and thought. Many critics have seen *Dubliners* as the naturalistic beginning from

which he set out on his literary and linguistic odyssey. But some critics, especially more recent ones, have seen in *Dubliners* the same obsession with language itself, the same multireferentiality and plurality of interpretative possibilities that were to be made more explicit in the later work.

In answer to the last part of the question, apart from unconventionality and experimentation, one might expect that point of view is particularly important. Although *Dubliners* does not use revolutionary narrative techniques, such as stream-of-consciousness (first used by Dorothy Richardson in 1915 and first employed by Joyce in *Ulysses*), the centre of interest is not so much the characters' situations as how they see their situations: as in the paintings of Cézanne, here the mode of perception is more important than the object of perception.

4. Forster's *A Passage to India* places enormous emphasis on the setting, so that India emerges almost as the central character of the novel. George Eliot's *Middlemarch* and Manzoni's *I promessi sposi* portray entire societies the representation of which is as at least as important as the stories of the central characters. Balzac's Paris, Dickens' London, Hardy's Wessex, Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha county – these are all settings that become more important than any single character or action set in them, and each is represented over a series of texts. Fiction of this kind expresses social, cultural, political, religious or historical concerns that are above and beyond the personal concerns of the characters.

The Sisters

1. The title suggests a much greater centrality for Eliza and Nannie than they actually achieve in the story. The interest of Eliza and Nannie lies in the extent to which they have been eclipsed by their brother in life. By entitling the story 'The Sisters', then allowing their brother to become the centre of interest of the story, the narrative imitates what has happened to them in life. In *Ulysses* there is a scene in which Stephen meets one of his sisters who is selling Stephen's books in order to buy food for the family. It was a common occurrence in Irish families of limited means (for example, in the Joyce family) that the younger children, especially the girls, were deprived so that the eldest son could be educated in the hope that he enter the priesthood. Money that might have gone to educate the girls or to provide dowries for them (without which it was difficult to find a husband) went instead to the education and equipping of the eldest son. The girls were therefore destined for a life of uneducated spinsterhood, which, after the death of their parents, would be spent taking care of the elder brother. The scene in *Ulysses* betrays Joyce's own sense of guilt at the sacrifice of his sisters so that he, the eldest son, should have everything, as does Stephen's nickname in the first sentence of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, 'baby tuckoo', being just one letter away from 'baby cuckoo' (the baby cuckoo elbows its foster-siblings out of the nest and thereby becomes the sole object of its foster-parents' care). I would argue that, in this early story, Joyce is already concerned with this issue of inequality in the treatment of boys and girls (is this perhaps why he gives the priest his own name, James?). When the boy-narrator and his aunt come down from seeing the priest's corpse, we are told they 'found Eliza seated in his arm-chair in state.' The rest of that paragraph can be read as a parody of the Eucharist, with Eliza and Nannie as priest and curate and crackers and sherry as the bread and wine. Clearly Eliza, and to a lesser extent Nannie, feels freed by the death of the priest, as does the narrator (see the end of the answer to question 3).

There are many sisters mentioned in *Dubliners*. The beloved of 'Araby' is identified not by her name but as 'Mangan's sister'. Eveline is a sister whose brother, a parody of a priest, can go off into 'the church decorating business' while she must stay at home with her violent father. In 'Clay', Maria's closest relationships are with her brothers, and she thus emerges as first and foremost a sister. And the Morkan sisters in the final story 'The Dead' seem to mirror these humbler sisters of the first story.

In *Conversations with James Joyce*, Arthur Power records Joyce saying that 'the greatest revolution in our time is in the most important

relationship there is – that between men and women: the revolt against the idea that they are the mere instruments of men.' If we look at Father Flynn's sisters with this in mind, the uneducated speech of Eliza, which is used to comic effect, has a serious undertone: why should her education have been so neglected, while her brother has been sent to the Irish college in Rome? And it seems no accident that the description of Nannie's shabby clothes on p. 11 is followed by the narrator's comment 'The fancy came to me that the old priest was smiling as he lay in his coffin'. It is not surprising either that Eliza and Nannie seem to feel emancipated by their brother's death or that Eliza, as soon as her pious and conventional mourning utterances are discharged, takes the first opportunity to betray her brother, discussing his failures with relish, gossiping about him as if he had been a mere acquaintance with no claim to her loyalty.

Several critics have seen the word 'gnomon' in the opening paragraph of 'The Sisters' (see General Questions 'Image and symbol' b) as a signal to the careful reader to be aware of what is left out (of 'The Sisters' and of *Dubliners* as a whole), to pay attention to what is unsaid. If this is the case, the word 'gnomon' and the title of the story direct the reader to take note of the sisters whom both life and the narrative have left in the margins.

2. On the literal level his hands are 'loosely retaining' the chalice because he is dead, but on a symbolic level it seems he retained it loosely in life too, not only in the physical sense that caused him to drop and break the chalice, but also in metaphorical sense that 'the duties of the priesthood was too much for him' (p. 14). This idea was intimated by the narrator on p. 9: 'The duties of the priest towards the Eucharist … seemed so grave … that I wondered how anybody had ever found the courage … to undertake them'. At that point the boy thinks that the priest has found the courage, and the priest clearly hopes the boy will find the courage. As it turns out, neither is the case. The loose retention and idleness of the chalice signify that it is not being used as it ought, in the service of communion (in both the literal Catholic sense of the sacrament and the wider sense of bringing people together), and here the priest becomes symbolic of the Catholic Church in Ireland. The idle chalice, like the hints of simony (which is clearly not Father Flynn's literal sin), suggest a Church that has failed in its purpose, that has become corrupt, idle and paralytic. (For the secular implications of the chalice, see 'Araby' question 5).

3. The three enigmatic words, 'paralysis', 'gnomon' and 'simony', have nothing in common for the boy-narrator except their mysteriousness and the strangeness of their sounds. However, their association in the first paragraph can be read as follows: the priest's physical ailment ('paralysis') is linked to and becomes symbolic of a moral ailment, a sin ('simony') and the word 'gnomon' might indicate that the nature of the priest's sin is what is missing from the narrative. It is clear that the priest has done something wrong, and it is also clear that his transgression is unlikely to be literal simony, traffic in sacred things, such as ecclesiastical preferments, pardons, or blessings. Old Cotter introduces the word 'queer' (p. 4), and Eliza uses it of the priest on p. 13. In both cases the speaker probably intends the word in its simple sense of 'strange' (see question 4 below), but its repetition suggests that the implied author might be intending us to consider also its slang sense of 'homosexual'. When the boy's uncle says the old priest had 'a great wish' for the boy (p. 5), Old Cotter responds that he would not like children of his to have 'much to do with *a man like that*'. The last phrase could mean 'a man who has been dismissed from the priesthood' or it could mean 'a paralytic', but it could also mean 'a man who feels sexual desire for young boys'. When asked to explain himself, Old Cotter responds with one of his unfinished sentences: 'let a young lad run about and play with young lads of his own age *and not be* …' The missing phrase could be 'cooped up with a sick old man' or 'pressured into joining the priesthood', but it could also be 'intimate with an old homosexual'. It is clear that neither the uncle nor the aunt suspect any sexual innuendo in Old Cotter's speech, but it is possible that the implied author is encouraging the reader to do so. On p. 6, the narrator tells us 'I felt my soul receding into *some pleasant and vicious region*; and there again I found [the face of the paralytic] waiting for me'. The two descriptions of the priest's mouth are disturbing: 'I wondered why it smiled continually and why the lips were so moist with spittle' (p. 6); and 'When he smiled he used to uncover his big discoloured teeth and let his tongue lie upon his lower lip – a habit which had made me feel uneasy …' (p. 10). After seeing the notice of the priest's death the boy feels 'a certain sensation of freedom as if [he] had been freed from something by his death' (p. 9). This can be read as freedom from the pressure to fulfil the priest's wishes and become a priest himself, but it could also be the 'sense of freedom' of a child freed from the oppressive sexual interest of an adult. All these insinuations of homosexuality in the priest could lend a meaning to Eliza's enigmatic remark that 'his life was, you might say, crossed' (p. 14). Readers who find this evidence negligible might like to reconsider it after reading 'An Encounter' (see question 4).

4. The old priest has suffered a third stroke. One of the results of stroke is paralysis. Before this fatal stroke he had had two others that had partially paralysed him. This third stroke will result in the absolute paralysis of death. This physical paralysis of the priest is arguably the deserved punishment or *contrappasso* for his moral paralysis, which is only hinted at and never fully revealed in the story. Old Cotter says there is 'something queer' about the priest, 'something uncanny'. These two

judgments, uttered as if the second were a rewording of the first, have very different implications. 'Queer' means 'strange, odd, eccentric', but in pejorative slang usage it also means 'homosexual'. 'Uncanny', on the other hand, means 'strange and rather frightening; extraordinary, beyond what is normal', but also 'not to be trusted; having dealings with supernatural arts and powers'. One can read in Old Cotter's insinuations the possibility that the priest had a sexual interest in the boy (see 'The Sisters' question 3 and 'An Encounter' question 4). These hints at sexual interest might, however, be metaphorical rather than literal. The priest is certainly preying upon the boy in some way. If it is simply a case of wishing the boy to follow him into the priesthood, this might well be seen as taking advantage of the boy's innocence, and so described with a sexual metaphor that underlines the predatory nature of the priest's interest. This links 'The Sisters' to Dante's *Inferno*, where prostitution is used as a metaphor for simony (see *Inferno*, the end of Canto 18 and the beginning of Canto 19). Simony itself is brought up twice in the story and stands as the sign of the mysterious lack, sin or oddity in the priest that is never made explicit.

Throughout *Dubliners* the two main sources of paralysis seem to be the Church and British rule. In *Ulysses*, Stephen says 'I am the servant of two masters … the imperial British state … and the holy Roman Catholic and apostolic church'. It is perhaps no accident, then, that the day of the priest's death is 1 July, the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne (1690), which established British rule in Ireland. And the priest's house is on Great Britain Street.

5. One could reasonably argue that the Catholic Church is not represented in the story. Father Flynn is clearly not representative in the sense of being the average priest: we are told twice that there was something 'queer' about him; he has clearly failed in some way as a priest; and he is more sensitive and better educated than the average priest. The 'they' of Eliza's last speech (from 'That affected his mind' to the end of the story) at first refers to the clerk, Father O'Rourke, and another priest, three individuals, but in their final judgment 'they' perhaps represent the Church as an institution, Father Flynn's employer, whose attitude to a nervous breakdown in an employee is like that of any other employer: 'they' see him as an instrument that has ceased to function ('something gone wrong with him …'). The similarity between the Church and secular business concerns will be made more explicit in 'Grace'.

It is only as we read on in *Dubliners* that we see how Father Flynn is representative, not in the sense of being average or typical, but in that paralysis, the oppression of 'sisters', and death are all ideas that will be repeated in association with other priests and the Church as a whole in the stories that follow.

An Encounter

1. In choosing to read 'The Apache Chief' rather than Caesar's *Bello Gallico*, the boys are choosing the story of the victim of imperialism rather than that of the imperialist, the oppressed rather than the oppressor. This is fitting since they are Irish boys (oppressed as Irish by the English; oppressed as boys by men). However, 'The Apache Chief' appears in one of the three magazines for boys mentioned in the opening paragraph that were, as their titles suggest, designed to inculcate the English values (patriotism, courage, thrift) upon which the British Empire was built. All three magazines were published in London, and their publisher was, ironically, an Irishman. Similarly, the stress on the Roman Empire in English education during the Victorian period was clearly in part an identification of the present empire with one of the past, another way of inculcating imperialist values in English boys. Ironically, under English rule Irish boys were submitted to the same influences, the same indoctrination if you like, even though they were of a subject, not the ruling, race. The account of the influence of these adventure stories on the boys, then, evokes a complex of power relations: of Europeans over native Americans; of men over boys; of English over Irish. But it also evokes the ironies and inversions of those power-relations: although the boys see the Wild West literature as the opposite of Roman History, the magazine titles reveal to the reader the similarities between the two; and Joe Dillon, the boy who most fully immerses himself in the 'Indian' identity, turns out to have a vocation for the Church (in Joyce's view, the other great oppressor of the Irish people). More generally, the Wild West serves the same function here that 'Araby' will serve in the next story: it is an image of a life elsewhere that is richer, fuller, freer than the life actually being lived by the characters.

2. The narrators of *Dubliners*, like the man in 'An Encounter', often rely on repetition to produce a kind of hypnotic effect (see, for example, the first paragraphs of 'Clay' or the closing paragraphs of 'The Dead'). In the first of the passages cited, the repetition of 'girl', 'soft', 'nice' in the narrative has the same effect on the reader as the man's speech has on the boy-narrator. In the second passage the words 'whip' (or 'whipping', or 'whipped') and 'boy' are repeated to the same effect. The narrator tells us, 'At times he spoke as if he were simply alluding to some fact that everybody knew, and at times he lowered his voice and spoke mysteriously as if he were telling us something secret which he did not wish others to overhear' (p. 29): this could also describe the narrative technique of *Dubliners*, the way in which the stories maintain a surface of harmless moral realism but from time to time make subliminal suggestions of a more subversive, shocking or iconoclastic nature.

The reflexive implications are startling: the implied author figures himself as a threat to the reader, a seducer by words, sexually ambiguous, predatory and sadistic. First the man appeals to the boys' knowledge of literature, then he fixes upon the narrator, saying 'I can see you are a bookworm like myself' (p. 28). As in 'The Sisters', boys who are more interested in sports than in books are perceived as safe from and less susceptible to the advances of adult homosexuals.

3. We are not told what is happening here. It could be that the man has gone off to urinate, but Mahony's startled comments, and the man's own cautious phrases ('saying that he had to leave us for a minute or so, a few minutes') suggest something more alarming, and the most likely possibility is that he has gone off to masturbate. As in 'The Sisters', the word 'queer' is introduced, and 'josser' is slang for 'fellow'. If this conjecture is tenable, the boy-narrator's attitude is very strange. He ignores Mahony's startled remarks and changes the subject completely: '– In case he asks for our names, I said, let you be Murphy and I'll be Smith'. Not only is this odd as a reaction to the spectacle before him but the two names, Murphy and Smith, reintroduce the Irish/English implications of the opening paragraphs (see 'An Encounter' question 1): Murphy is a common Irish name and Smith a common English one. Mahony's reaction is open and self-protective: he exclaims at the man's strangeness then runs away on the pretext of chasing a cat. The narrator, however, makes no comment and remains in the man's dangerous vicinity. It is not until the end of the story that the boy's fear overcomes his fascination.

4. The boy narrator of 'An Encounter' encounters a man whose clothes, like those of the priest in 'The Sisters', are greenish-black, and whose 'yellow teeth' remind us of the priest's 'big discoloured teeth'. This man's interest in the boy is quite explicitly homosexual, whereas that possibility was merely hinted at in 'The Sisters'. In both stories the older man appeals to the boy through learning and books. In both cases the boy's reaction is ambivalent. And in both cases the kind of corruption involved in a predatory sexuality is linked obscurely to the oppression of Ireland's governing institutions: the Catholic Church in the case of 'The Sisters' and the British Empire in the case of 'An Encounter'. In both stories the preyed upon boy is to a certain extent 'a portrait of the artist' as a child, but more disturbingly in both cases the predatory man is also identified with Joyce (Father Flynn's Christian name is James, and the style of the man's monologue in 'An Encounter' resembles the narrative style of *Dubliners* as a whole). When seen in the light of these affinities, the possibility of homosexual desire in Father Flynn's relationship with the boy seems much more likely.

5. Many critics see these three as the same boy and some have seen this boy as the young Joyce. Certainly they have many things in common, but all three, unlike Joyce himself, seem to be orphans: in both 'The Sisters' and 'Araby' the boy-narrator lives with his aunt and uncle, and the narrator of 'An Encounter' never mentions his own family even though the families of the other boys are mentioned. All three narrators are sensitive, secretive, thoughtful, more drawn to books than to sports. Each narrator seems a little older than the one before, but in fact 'Araby' is set in May 1894, over a year earlier than the setting of 'The Sisters', July 1895 (which we learn from the death-notice of Father Flynn). Joyce was very attentive to detail, and, given this time difference, it seems unlikely that he intended the three narrators to be seen as one boy in successive stages of his childhood. It is more likely that he drew heavily on his own childhood in the creation of all three boy-narrators and that their orphaned state is a literal realisation of Joyce's feeling of being different from the rest of his family.

Araby

1. This title is part of a network of east-west imagery in *Dubliners*. For example, in 'The Sisters' the boy thinks his dream might have been in Persia and Mrs Kearney in 'A Mother' consoles herself by eating too much of a sweet significantly called 'Turkish Delight'. In 'The Dead' Gabriel usually spends his holidays to the east of Ireland in Europe, but Miss Ivors wants him to go to the west of Ireland, and in the end we are told 'The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward'. Turning to the east has a long history as a literary and religious metaphor of renewal and hope, resurrection and rebirth. To the east of Ireland is the imperial power that oppresses her, England, and east of that is the Europe of which many Irish people wanted to be a part (independent statehood as a European nation was seen as a desired alternative to being part of the United Kingdom). But it seems that in *Dubliners* the important thing is to get out of Dublin (as the author did) and the question of whether one turns east or west is secondary (other critics disagree with me on this). In 'An Encounter', the narrator reflects that 'real adventures … do not happen to people who remain at home: they must be sought abroad.' (The boy-narrator intends 'abroad' in the sense of 'out and about', but the implied author also intends the other sense of abroad – 'out of one's own country'). And in 'A Little Cloud', Chandler reflects 'There was no doubt about it: if you wanted to succeed you had to go away. You could do nothing in Dublin'.

Beyond partaking in this east-west imagery, the name 'Araby' evokes the sensuality that the boy is seeking and is perhaps also a reference to *Arabian Nights*, in which absence is crucial (it is the absence of the ending of each story that saves Sheherazade's life for another day) and sexuality is linked with death. Both these things are also characteristic of *Dubliners* as a whole. *Arabian Nights* is one of the early narrative forms that might have inspired Joyce's short-story cycle (see Context Questions 2).

2. 'North Richmond Street, being blind', 'the *blind* end', 'The other houses … *gazed* at one another', 'The *blind* was pulled down … so that *I could not be seen*', 'I was thankful that *I could see so little*', and the closing lines:

I heard a voice call from one end of the gallery that the *light was out*. The upper part of the gallery was now completely dark.

Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven by vanity; and *my eyes burned* with anguish and anger.

Symbolically, the lack of *sight* represents a lack of *insight*, and this is encapsulated in the opening of the last sentence. The word 'gazing' is literal in its reference to eyes and sight, but the word 'saw' is metaphorical (I imagined myself, I thought of myself, I understood myself). The fact that he is literally gazing 'into the darkness' (where, despite one's gazing, one cannot see) suggests that the way he 'saw' himself was mistaken. And this inability to 'see' himself is underlined by 'my eyes burned', which is a metaphorical way of saying that his eyes were stung by imminent tears; he was about to cry. Burning eyes can no longer see clearly. All this suggests that the boy's epiphany is different from the epiphany intended for the reader. We do not see the boy, as he saw himself at that moment, as 'a creature driven by vanity', we see him rather as an innocent who has experienced fully for the first time the frustration of desire, and this difference is encapsulated in the word 'vanity'. The boy intends it in its sense of 'conceit', that he himself was vain, conceited, presumptuous. The other meaning of 'vanity' is 'futility', to try something 'in vain' is to make a useless attempt, to have no chance of success, and this sense of the hopelessness of desire (be it part of the human condition or owing to particular social, cultural and political circumstances) is the reader's – as distinct from the boy's – epiphany. This is just one of many possible readings. Other critics have seen the boy's epiphany as at one with the reader's.

3. This is a lovely example of naïve narration. The boy is simply repeating the value judgment he has heard his elders make. There is no irony in his retelling of this detail, but there is a great deal of irony in the implied author's selection of it. The priest gets a reputation for charity by leaving his money to charitable institutions. That his sister, who presumably kept house for him as did the sisters of the first story (see 'The Sisters' question 1), should be left nothing but the furniture does not strike the boy, or the elders who have given him the information, as uncharitable.

4. She is unable to do as she pleases; something imprisons her. The image of the silver bracelet, in the context of 'she would love to go. – And why can't you?', becomes symbolically a manacle, and the 'railings' take on the aspect of prison bars. 'She could not go, she said, because there would be a retreat that week in her convent.' As in 'The Sisters' and 'The Dead', this sister is oppressed by the Catholic Church (see 'The Sisters' question 5). The boy, by contrast, seems free, he has a choice: 'If I go', he says. However, the final epiphany is that he too is imprisoned. Neither of them can go to 'Araby' in the symbolic sense, and he, who is free to go there literally, is just as frustrated by going as she is by being unable to go.

5. Some critics have seen this as an image of the Holy Grail, an object of quest in chivalric romance. The Holy Grail was supposed to be the original chalice, the cup from which Christ and the disciples drank at the last supper. The idea that he bore his chalice safely contrasts with the image of the priest dropping and breaking the chalice in 'The Sisters'. The boy narrator sees himself at that point as successfully defending the precious blood of Christ (the wine within the chalice) or the precious relic (the Holy Grail) against heathen attack. That is the metaphor. But literally the precious thing is not a religious object in the strict sense but rather 'Her image'. This secularization of the religious image is frequent in Joyce. He doesn't believe in the Eucharist in any orthodox Catholic sense, but he uses eucharistic imagery to suggest things that he does believe in and see as important: human communion and reverence for human things such as the image of the beloved. In 'The Sisters', the chalice was literal as well as symbolic, but if we look back at the chalice of 'The Sisters' after considering this image in 'Araby' we can see secular implications as well as the religious implications we saw at the time: the priest failed not only as a priest but also as a brother and in his relationship to the boy. Those chances for 'communion' in his life have been ruined and thus the chalice is symbolically broken (see 'The Sisters' questions 1 and 2).

Eveline

1. (Quotation a) Dust has a symbolic meaning in Christian funeral rites: 'ashes to ashes, dust to dust' in the funeral service signifies that humanity was created by God from dust, and after life on earth the human body becomes dust once more. The dust in Eveline's house (which is mentioned frequently) is therefore symbolic of death, and the implied author's caustic answer to her innocent and clichéd housekeeper's question 'where does all the dust come from' would be that it comes from the generations of Dubliners who have lived as Eveline is living and died as Eveline will die, without ever having really lived at all.

(Quotation b) This is one of a series of images of dysfunction in *Dubliners*. Other examples are the empty fireplace at the end of 'The Sisters', the 'rusty bicycle pump' at the beginning of Araby, the 'disused distillery' at the beginning of 'A Painful Case'. All suggest a society that has ceased to function, lives lived amid ruins. This particular example is symbolic of the ruin of Eveline's family. She recalls a comparatively happy childhood, but since her mother died and her circle of friends broke up life in the home has been sad and frightening. A 'harmonium' is a musical instrument, but its name shares its root with the word 'harmony', and therefore the broken harmonium becomes symbolic of the comparative harmony of the family's life during Eveline's childhood, which is now 'broken' ruined, a thing of the past.

(Quotation c) The 'illumined portholes' of the boat, in contrast to the fading light of Eveline's living-room, seem to confirm, through the use of traditional light imagery, that to go with Frank is the right choice. But she does not go. Several critics have noticed the phrase 'the black mass of the boat'; the literal meaning could be paraphrased 'the dark bulk of the boat', but the choice of 'black mass' in a Catholic context signifies that she perceives the boat, and the choice of going in the boat, as either death (the 'black mass' was a popular name for the requiem mass given for the dead) or blasphemy (the term is also used of satanic or other blasphemous rites).

2. There are a lot of iron railings in *Dubliners* and they contribute to the sense that Dubliners are imprisoned by their culture (see 'Araby' question 4 and 'Two Gallants' question 2). The railings at the North Wall figure Ireland as a prison or a cage and Eveline as a 'helpless animal' in the cage. But Eveline is not literally unable to act. Although the action of gripping is one that serves to keep her in her place, it is nevertheless an action. Through it she prevents Frank from pulling her past the barrier. The image of her as a 'passive', caged, and 'helpless' animal does not refer to the literal situation in terms of Eveline's exercise of will, it refers rather to the paralysis of mind (by the family, by the Church, by her acceptance of the values of her milieu) that makes her unable to act *for her own good*, as the text sees it. It would be possible, therefore, for a Catholic critic to make a convincing argument 'against the grain' of the text, i.e., to argue that there is nothing wrong with Eveline or her decision, but the narrator's view of them is distorted by his own political agenda. It would be in such a critic's interest to doubt the sincerity of Frank's intentions (see question 4 below).

3. The name Eveline Hill is a combination of the names of two well-known characters of pornography. 'Eveline' was the title of a well-known Victorian pornographic novel, in which, among other things, the eponymous heroine has an incestuous relationship with her father. Fanny Hill was the name of the protagonist of John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1749), the most famous pornographic novel of all time. And 'going to Buenos Ayres' was a slang expression for becoming a prostitute. I suppose a conservative critic could read these details as subliminal suggestions that the desire to go with Frank is corrupt and sinful. It seems more likely that they are there as a joke upon the serious treatment of the moral dilemma presented on the surface of the story and in Eveline's consciousness. The conservative critic would have to assume that the implied author condemns prostitution. However, 'Buenos Ayres' literally means 'good air' and this image of freshness and circulation is placed in contrast with the musty and stagnant interior of Eveline's living-room. A similar connection between prostitution and fresh air is made in 'The Boarding House' (see question 2). It is fairly clear that the implied author sees Eveline's refusal to go with Frank as a failure, and this is the case regardless of whether their union ends in marriage or not (see question 4 below).

4. 'Frank was very kind, manly, open-hearted.' This sentence is delivered by the narrator from Eveline's point of view. This is what Eveline thinks of her lover. His name might tend to support this view ('frank' means 'showing one's thoughts and feelings unmistakably'). Some critics, however, have doubted Frank. The boat on which they are to leave is headed not west but east, to Liverpool in England, and critics have gone so far as to claim that Eveline realises this, and therefore suspects Frank's motives and makes the decision not to follow him. At the time, no ships to Argentina left directly from Dublin. They would have had to take a ship from England, so this detail does not necessarily open Frank to suspicion. However, the references to prostitution (see question 3 above) and the fact that he takes her to

see *The Bohemian Girl* seem to support the view that his intentions are not what she imagines them to be ('Bohemian' means from Bohemia, but it also means 'informal in one's way of living', with implications of sexual freedom). If we begin to doubt Frank, his name can be seen as an irony on the part of the implied author of *Dubliners* (whom we recognize, by this point, as heavily ironic). What seems important is that Eveline's decision not to go with him is represented in a negative light *regardless of Frank's intentions*.

5. The unnamed priest whose photograph hangs on the wall is 'in Melbourne now'. Frank has emigrated from Ireland and is encouraging Eveline to do so. When the Italian organ-player disturbs the sickroom of Eveline's mother, her father says 'Damned Italians! coming over here!' Emigration and immigration, then, seem to be recurring ideas in 'Eveline'. Emigration has played a large part in Irish history. In particular, the famine of 1847-51 was responsible for the deaths of one million Irish people and the emigration of a further million, mostly to the United States. Emigration did not stop after the famine. Once it had become a common and acceptable way to escape Ireland's problems, emigration continued, in less spectacular but still appreciable numbers, beyond the time of the writing of *Dubliners*. Immigration was negligible, and Eveline's father's exasperation with Italian immigrants seems historically groundless. At the time, significantly, most Italian emigration was to Argentina. The father's exclamation can be understood as a reference (on the part of the implied author, not the father) to the Roman Catholic Church, which, in *Dubliners* is given a large part of the blame for the condition of Ireland and therefore for the need to emigrate (remember Joyce was writing *Dubliners* in exile). Although the narrator withholds judgment for the most part on whether or not Eveline should go, elsewhere in *Dubliners* the notion that life in Ireland is hopeless, that emigration is the only solution, is reiterated again and again (see 'Araby' question 1).

After the Race

1. 'His father, who had begun life as an advanced Nationalist, had modified his views early. He had made his money as a butcher in Kingstown and by opening shops in Dublin and the suburbs he had made his money many times over.' Making money and Nationalism seem to be incompatible, and as soon as the money is made, the Dublin butcher's idea of 'life' is not Irish life but English (he sends Jimmy to Cambridge) and French (both Jimmy and his father think Ségouin 'well worth knowing' because he was 'reputed to own some of the biggest hotels in France'). Jimmy Doyle is the first of his family to be brought up in prosperity: to his parents wealth, luxury and the internationalism that only the wealthy can afford are still new, strange and exciting, and this is also true of Jimmy himself. The young men with whom he is associating, however, are accustomed to wealth and luxury; they have no personal experience of 'the labour latent in money'. This difference is one that Jimmy tries to obscure or obliterate – he wants to appear to be one of them; he wants to be accepted by them. When the narrator tells us on p. 67 that the ticket-collector – an old man – addressed Jimmy as 'sir', he is pointing out the reversal of customs of deference when class comes into play: usually, a young man would show deference to an old man, but when the young man is wealthy and the old man is humble, the protocol is reversed. (A similar point is made in 'Ivy Day' where old Jack's deference to the young men and their condescension to him is meticulously recorded). But he is also pointing out how new this is to Jimmy: that the detail is noticed in a narrative seen largely from Jimmy's viewpoint suggests that this new deference was still a source of pleasure, still conferred a feeling of newly-attained power.

2. It is important to keep in mind that the story is set in 1903 when the automobile was a very new and exciting thing. The comparison made in the first sentence of the passage between rapid motion, notoriety and money is a precocious one and it holds for the entire story: throughout the reader has the sense that money is linked to motion, and that Doyle is moving too fast. His upward social mobility – his move from the stasis of the Dublin petit bourgeoisie to the dizzying speed of the international set in which he finds himself on the evening of the story – has been too quick for him to adjust. We are told on p. 62 that he has innocent-looking eyes, and as the story unfolds it becomes apparent that he is unable to cope with and defend himself against this new context. Although he is 'the inheritor of solid instincts' and knows 'the labour latent in money', he is dazzled and confused by the elegant company and his instincts and knowledge are rendered useless.

In the second paragraph we are told that Ségouin 'had managed to give the impression' that Jimmy's money was not necessary to the venture. The phrase suggests that the facts are otherwise and that Ségouin is deceiving Jimmy. Certainly Jimmy's father is right in thinking that there was 'money to be made in the motor business, pots of money', and the reader's hindsight on this point makes Jimmy's loss all the greater. The final sentence of the second paragraph is interesting in its inversion of the animal and the mechanical: in it 'human nerves' are seen as

'machinery' and the machine, the car, is seen as a 'swift blue animal'. If we consider it in the context of the opening sentence of the passage, it suggests perhaps that the three things (rapid motion, notoriety, the possession of money) tend to mechanise and dehumanise the person who experiences them.

3. This is the first time that a truly omniscient narrator is used in *Dubliners*. The narrators of the first three stories are first-person, and the narrator of 'Eveline' restricts himself to her viewpoint except at the end when he describes her as 'passive, like a helpless animal'. Here there is no reticence: the narrator feels free to tell the reader things of which Jimmy is ignorant. On p. 66 the narrator conjectures thoughts of Jimmy's father and of Villona, and later on the same page we are told that 'Rivière, *not wholly ingenuously*, undertook to explain to Jimmy the triumph of the French mechanicians'. This, like the phrase 'Ségouin had managed to give the impression' (see p. 64), suggests that Jimmy's money is in fact important to them. These subtleties are totally lost on Jimmy: as will be the case in 'A Little Cloud' and 'Clay', the narrator and the reader share knowledge denied to the protagonist.

4. The story opens with a contrast between the poor of Ireland and the rich Continentals:

> … through this channel of poverty and inaction the Continent sped its wealth and industry. Now and again the clumps of people raised the cheer of the gratefully oppressed. Their sympathy, however, was for the blue cars – the cars of their friends, the French.'

The Irish rebellion of 1798 was led by the United Irishmen, a society dedicated to the establishment of an independent Irish republic and inspired by the French Revolution. The United Irishmen sought military aid from France, with which Britain was at war. French aid arrived too late, however, and the rebellion was crushed. The rebellion led to the Act of Union of 1801, which cemented British rule of Ireland. This is the clearest historical instance of an Irish tendency. The Irish had often looked to France for help. France was Catholic, European and antagonistic to Britain, and all three of these characteristics seemed to bode well for Irish hopes. But in fact no effective aid ever came from France, and so a reader conversant with this history is likely to have forebodings of disaster for Doyle from the beginning. The characters in the story represent their nations. The Hungarian is almost certainly there because of a well-known pamphlet published in 1904 by Arthur Griffith and entitled *The Resurrection of Hungary*. Griffith used the example of Hungary's struggle for independence as the model for the Irish struggle against British rule. The rather weak joke about the hungry Hungarian ('… the Hungarian, who was beginning to have a sharp desire for his dinner' – p. 66) thus has a political significance.

The elegant quality of life that Doyle glimpses in the company of Ségouin, Rivière, Farley and Routh is the quality of life possible to people in France, Canada, the United States and England. Doyle, raised from the Dublin petit bourgeoisie by the commercial success of his father the butcher, yearns to become part of that life. While his illusion of friendship and equality with the international company lasts, Dublin wears 'the mask of a capital' (p. 67), that is to say, just as Doyle appears to be one of the rich international set so Ireland appears to be a nation among equal nations. In the card game, Doyle stakes his small fortune in order to appear to be like his wealthy companions (the Hungarian, who is penniless, does not gamble). The outcome of the game is veiled in the haze of Doyle's drunken stupor. The only thing that is clear is that Routh won, as Britain always wins in Irish eyes, and that the others could afford to lose. Whether or not the others conspired to relieve Doyle of his capital is left unclear.

5. The epiphany, the revelation, the breaking of the light, then, is that Doyle is not one of them, Ireland is not one among equal nations, and that pretending to be so is disastrous. The French will never come to Ireland's aid. England will always win. France and England might be antagonists, but they are equal nations and as such treat each other with a respect and attention that neither gives to Ireland. That this epiphany is offered by the Hungarian is a reference once again to Griffith's pamphlet (see question 4 above). The Hungarian solution was to refuse to cooperate either politically or economically with the imperial oppressor. In short, Ireland should not play cards with England. This story alone in *Dubliners* is clearly decodable, offering an uncomplicated political message and characters who are almost allegorical.

Two Gallants

1. The story is built around the question of whether or not Corley can get some money from the young woman. The reader discovers what the question is only in the last sentence of the story. Since the conversation of Lenehan and Corley is to do with sexual exploits, and the young women is introduced in this context, the reader might assume that the favour Lenehan wishes Corley to ask of the young woman is sexual in nature. And since the favour clearly concerns Lenehan and Lenehan is anxious that she will not oblige, the reader could easily assume that Corley is going to ask the young woman if she would accept Lenehan as a sexual partner as well as himself. The

confusion or bewilderment of the reader is clearly intended by Joyce and serves a very precise purpose. So long as the question is unknown it remains ominous and sinister. The revelation of the sovereign at first seems an anti-climax. It is only when we consider how much the sovereign represents to the young woman (that is, about one quarter of her likely annual salary) that we realize that the ominous atmosphere of most of the story, which is generated by the deferral of an explanation, is totally justified. And the sexual innuendoes that formed the basis for such speculation create a correspondence between the violation of the young woman that has actually taken place and that which we feared was going to take place.

2. Again we see railings, the image of imprisonment that we found in 'Araby' and 'Eveline'. The harp is a symbol of Ireland, and here Lenehan is figured as a harpist playing on railings instead of strings – an image of Ireland and the Irishman imprisoned and unaware of being so. In Lenehan's case, the whole 'song and dance' of flattery, jokes, keeping up a cheerful appearance, being an entertaining companion, is in fact necessary to his survival: if he stops 'playing', people will stop buying him drinks and lending him money. He is imprisoned in his role, his unemployment, and, it is suggested, his nationality – here as elsewhere in *Dubliners* the reader is encouraged to believe that until Ireland has full nationhood Irishmen cannot reach full manhood.

3. Corley is presented without any sympathy whatsoever. The details of his life and his personal appearance that the narrator chooses to tell us are all to Corley's disadvantage. His name, and the way he pronounces it, suggest that the narrator sees Corley as Corley sees the young woman (and women in general) – as a prostitute. The suggestion that he is a police informer ('He was often to be seen walking with policemen in plain clothes, talking earnestly.' p. 76) is one instance of this. His use of his influence over the young woman to extract money from her is another.

Lenehan is seen more sympathetically, but only marginally so. The difference between Lenehan and Corley is not in the quality of their acts – they are both guilty of what will in effect have been robbing the 'slavey', and if anything Lenehan is seen as more despicable, in that he is the parasite of a parasite. But Lenehan is conscious of his degradation, and this wins him a little sympathy from the narrator. The young woman is the victim of the piece, but the narrator is careful not to romanticise or idealise her. She, like Corley, is mindlessly carnal and self-satisfied, but he is the predator, she the prey.

4. It is because they are unemployed that Corley and Lenehan prostitute themselves in different ways: Corley as a police informer and as a man who takes money from a woman over whom he has a sexual influence; Lenehan as a flatterer of other men who may, in exchange for his flattery, buy him a drink or help him financially in some other way.

The story's treatment of men's attitudes to women links it to 'A Painful Case': Corley's vulgarity expresses, crudely and explicitly, the same attitude to women that underlies Duffy's fastidious refinement: 'that they are the mere instruments of men' (see the Joyce quotation in the answer to 'The Sisters' question 1); Lily's bitter comment in 'The Dead' echoes the same idea.

The treatment of deception pairs the story with 'The Boarding House' (see 'The Boarding House' question 5). In the course of his flattery of Corley, Lenehan calls him 'Base betrayer'. This is flattery because Corley likes to be seen as one with sexual power over women who can then do as he likes with them. While Lenehan intends this and Corley receives it as a flattering joke, the narrator intends the reader to consider it in all seriousness, especially on a second reading.

5. Horse-riding is a time-honoured metaphor for sexuality. It was particularly popular among Victorian novelists such as George Eliot, but perhaps the most famous example is the scene in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* where Vronsky breaks the back of his racing mare. Lenehan's name is 'vaguely associated with racing tissues', and Corley uses horse-racing slang when he talks about women: his term for prostitution is 'on the turf' ('the turf' is a term for the racecourse and for horse-racing); when he thinks Lenehan wants to approach the young woman he asks 'Are you trying to get inside me?' (when one horse is trying to overtake another horse in a race, he 'gets inside', i.e. comes up beside the leading horse). It is interesting that in the second example it is not the woman but Corley himself who is figured as the racing horse, the implication being that Corley's sexual attitudes degrade and enslave not only his partner but also himself. In this the racing metaphors echo Corley's name in implying that he who sees all sexually-attractive women as prostitutes ('She's a fine decent tart') is himself a prostitute.

The same imagery appears in 'The Boarding House' when we are told that Jack Mooney was always sure to know 'a likely horse or a likely *artiste*'.

The Boarding House

1. That Mrs Mooney hopes to go to communion at twelve suggests that she does not see what she is doing as a sin (confession the previous evening is supposed to ensure that the communicant takes the eucharist in a state of grace). Doran has confessed his affair with Polly and suffered 'acute pain' doing so because he believes that what he has done is a sin. The implied author of 'The Boarding House' clearly believes the opposite: that Mrs Mooney is committing a sin, and Doran's affair with Polly was not sinful. As in 'Eveline' and in 'A Painful Case', Christian values are overturned (see 'A Painful Case' question 5). That the Catholic Church is responsible for Mrs Mooney's and Doran's opinions of their own actions places it once again at the root of the problem.

2. This is a very unusual description of an interior in *Dubliners*. Generally the insides of houses are represented as dark, musty and depressing (the fading light and dust of Eveline's living-room, for example, or the empty fireplace in Father Flynn's house). And generally the darkness and gloom of the interiors reflects the quality of the lives being lived within them. Here, however, the windows are open, the room, it is implied, is both light and airy, and the image of the curtains is pleasing and cheerful. It could be that the openness of the windows symbolizes the receptiveness of Polly and the lack of constraint in the house. If so, this description is a very positive and uncensorious rendering of that lack of constraint and seems to contradict the whole feeling of entrapment in the story. Although I do not think this can change our understanding of Mrs Mooney and Jack Mooney, it does suggest other ways of looking at Polly and Doran (see question 3 below).

3. Mrs Mooney clearly emerges as the strongest character and the only fully-aware and therefore fully-culpable character. The narrator seems to have no ambivalence towards her, although the account of her husband pursuing her with the butcher's cleaver at the end of the first paragraph suggests that even butcher's daughters can be victims sometimes. The narrator's telling of her speculations about Doran's finances is touched with a fine edge of contempt. He incorporates her vulgar slang into his elegant prose ('sit', 'screw', 'a bit of stuff put by'), which makes the slang seem even more vulgar by contrast (all three expressions refer to money): this diction suggests that Mrs Mooney has a greasy familiarity with money matters.

The narrator's attitude to Doran is more complex. Since he is the victim of the story he is bound to win some sympathy from the reader, but the narrator's account of Doran's thoughts, with its implications of a small-

minded man, anxious about his job, cowed by his Church, snobbish, spineless, tends to undermine that sympathy. We last see Doran descending the stairs. He believes that 'once you are married you are done for' and that 'he was being had'. The sense of doom in both these expressions is echoed in this final image of him going down the stairs, to what he sees as his doom, meekly, like a lamb to the slaughter. However, this sense of absolute tragedy is undermined in *Ulysses*, where we get a glimpse of Doran drunk in a pub holding a bunch of wilting flowers. In the later work Joyce seems to be laughing at the idea of absolute tragedy, showing its comic side, and possibly even its consolations – saying, in short, that you are not 'done for' until you are dead.

Polly too is problematic. The narrator seems ambivalent. The subtle and brilliant passage on pp. 95-6 beginning 'Things were as she expected' and ending 'her mother's tolerance' describes the nuances of Polly's and Mrs Mooney's mutual understanding. The difference between Polly and Mrs Mooney in terms of culpability is that although Polly understands that she and her mother are manipulating Doran, she does not seem to fully understand the implications of doing so. She does not see what she is doing as a violation of Doran and cynically go ahead despite the knowledge (as does Mrs Mooney). This lack of awareness in Polly can only be suspected by the reader, not confirmed, because though the closing section focuses on Polly it is not written 'from her viewpoint' in the way that the sections on Mrs Mooney and Doran are written from their respective viewpoints. In the closing section, the narrator tells us that Polly is having 'amiable memories', 'a revery', 'hopes and visions' but we do not find out what they are, we never 'hear' them as we 'hear' the thoughts of Mrs Mooney and Doran. Nevertheless, if she is not fully aware, it is possible that marriage to Polly might not be that bad after all. She is no romantic heroine and does not 'love' Doran in that sense, but her 'amiable memories' of him suggest that perhaps she will do her best for him. Her fault, in short, may be more that of stupidity than of heartless cynicism. This reading of Polly has negative implications for our reading of Doran: from this perspective, he appears not only spineless but also self-indulgent. His sense of doom is a ridiculous affection in a man who can neither extricate himself from the situation nor make the best of it.

4. Tenants refer to Mrs Mooney as 'The Madam' (the expression used for the older woman who runs a house of prostitution). If 'a likely *artiste*' means (as I think it does) 'an actress likely to accept the advances of young men', Jack Mooney is acting as a pimp in the boarding house, procuring women for the tenants. Polly's song ('I'm a … naughty girl …') figures the singer as a prostitute. Taken together, these hints are

enough to explain why the boarding house is getting 'a certain fame'. And as it turns out all three Mooneys act out their roles (Madam, pimp and prostitute) in their relations to Doran. Mrs Mooney has exposed Polly to Doran (and the other young men) in the hope that Polly will awaken a sexual interest. One of the roles of a pimp is to provide the physical threat necessary to make the prostitute's client pay, and Jack does just that. And Polly seduces Doran in the hope of eventually getting something out of it.

5. In 'Two Gallants' two men conspire to take advantage of a woman; in 'The Boarding House' the sexes are reversed, the conspirators are female, the victim male. In both cases the aim of the 'put-up job' is to get the victim's money, but whereas in 'Two Gallants' the conspirators are agreed on this, in 'The Boarding House' it is suggested that Mrs Mooney alone is after the money and Polly simply wants to get married. Although Mrs Mooney represents her own position to herself as one in which honour is preferred over money (see p. 97, 'Some mothers … marriage'), by forcing Doran to marry Polly, she gains access to all his money, and his ability to produce it, rather than settling for a single payment. In both cases a sexual relationship makes the initial breech in the victim's defences that is necessary for the fraud to take place. In both cases the conspirators consist of one absolutely unredeemed character (Corley, Mrs Mooney) and a weaker accomplice of more mixed character (Lenehan, Polly).

A Little Cloud

1. This story, like 'Eveline', deals with emigration, but here the returned emigrant is a much more central figure, and the reader is in a position to evaluate him (Frank, the returned emigrant of 'Eveline', can only be the object of vague speculation – see the answer to 'Eveline' question 4). It is odd that in a book that seems so set on recommending emigration as the only solution (see 'Araby' question 1 and 'Eveline' question 5), the returned emigrant should be such a despicable character. Gallaher is a braggart, and there is very little reason to believe that he has actually succeeded in London. The assurance of Gallaher's success expressed in the opening paragraph is Chandler's, not the narrator's, and the proofs of success offered are flimsy. Be that as it may, Gallaher does not give the reader the impression that leaving Ireland will solve the problem of moral paralysis: in certain respects, he is just a more sophisticated version of Corley in 'Two Gallants'. This has a retrospective effect on our reading of 'Eveline'. Whereas we might have read her failure to leave Ireland as absolute tragedy along the lines of one reading of 'The Boarding House', in retrospect and with Gallaher in mind, 'Eveline' no longer seems to be the story of a young woman who misses her great chance in life. Gallaher took his chance, and here he is, just a little more prosperous and a little more vulgar than before.

2. The narrator's description of Chandler's walk betrays a keen awareness of history and of the social classes. The awareness is the narrator's, not Chandler's. After describing the children of a poor neighbourhood, the narrator tells us 'Little Chandler gave them no thought'. After contrasting those children with their setting amid ancient buildings that had once housed the Dublin nobility, we are told 'No memory of the past touched him, for his mind was full of a present joy.' The word 'joy' raises great expectations that are promptly deflated in the following paragraph when we learn that this 'joy' was simply the prospect of going to an expensive and fashionable bar.

3. A revival of interest in Celtic folklore and the dying languages of the Celtic peoples had been growing since about 1750 and was linked to the growth of romanticism. In 1865, the English poet, critic and educator Matthew Arnold gave a series of lectures on Celtic literatures (Irish, Welsh, Scottish, Cornish, Manx and Breton) at Oxford University. Ironically, this recognition by a member of the dominant culture had the effect of making Celtic writers who had never thought of their writing as particularly Celtic turn to their Celtic origins as something suddenly of interest. Moreover, these writers then began to write in the way Arnold had described. Phrases of his such as 'natural magic' and 'Celtic melancholy' shaped subsequent Celtic literature (even though, when uttered, they were little more than the cultural stereotypes of an Englishman's perspective on subject peoples). The title of W. B. Yeats's collection of folk stories, *The Celtic Twilight* (1893), was adopted as the term for the whole movement of Irish literature in the 1890s and early 1900s. The advent of a very different kind of Irish writer, represented by Joyce himself and Sean O'Casey, more or less put an end to the Celtic school by making it seem false, self-indulgent and anachronistic. 'A Little Cloud', then, was one small nail in the coffin of the Celtic school. In it, Joyce highlights the ridiculousness of an aspiring Irish writer wishing to seem more Irish in order to conform to a fad created by 'the English critics'.

4. The expression figures the child as the infant Christ, both redeemer and scapegoat, and it figures Annie as the Virgin Mary (in the photograph, she is wearing pale blue). Certainly the child has been the scapegoat in the scene where Little Chandler shouts at him (Chandler's situation is not the child's fault but the child nevertheless has to bear the punishment for it). It is clear that for Annie the child is a redeemer,

he alone makes life worthwhile. And the spectacle of her passionate love for the child shows Chandler how he too could be redeemed by love for his son (instead of using him as a scapegoat). For a discussion of the ambiguity of this epiphany, see question 5 below.

5. 'A Little Cloud' is another example of an ambiguous epiphany. Little Chandler's final remorse is his epiphany: he realises that he has behaved shamefully and that in yearning for things he cannot have he has mistreated his child and betrayed his wife in his thoughts ('Why had he married the eyes in the photograph?'). He is brought to this realisation by the spectacle of his wife's absolute and passionate love for the child, which verges on idolatry (her language represents the child as Christ, see question 4 above). This is certainly Chandler's epiphany, but are we as readers supposed to feel the same way? Does the implied author see this revelation as the truth or just another of Chandler's delusions and misreadings? I would argue that Annie emerges more positively from the story than does Chandler – her passionate and effective love for the child (the child stops crying in her arms) dwarfs Chandler's shallow fantasies of a life of sexual fulfilment and financial ease provided by anonymous partners ('rich Jewesses'). On the other hand, 'the family' (not just this family but the institution) is seen as suffocating and imprisoning its members, trapping them with such mechanisms as this of feeling shame and remorse for having expressed the desire to escape. Many Dubliners are represented as racked by shame in these stories (Father Flynn, Doran, Mrs Sinico, Gabriel), and it is always seen as a destructive thing, a terrible oppression from which no good can result. I would argue then that Chandler's epiphany differs from the reader's. He sees himself as having sinned; the text sees him as a small-minded man trapped in a hopeless society paralysed by its institutions (the Church, the government, the family). Whereas presumably from Chandler's point of view there is hope to be obtained through repentance, the implied author suggests there is no hope at all.

Counterparts

1. 'A Little Cloud' is the story of Chandler's anticipation of his meeting with Gallaher, the meeting itself, and the aftermath of the meeting, and this continuity of idea binds the three different parts together. That Gallaher has left Ireland and become successful makes Chandler think of the inadequacies of his own life and fantasize about becoming an

established poet of the Celtic school. The meeting with Gallaher is a disappointment, and instead of poetry they discuss the sexual life of foreign capitals (London, Paris, Berlin), which leads Chandler to think about the missed opportunities of his own sexual life. Back home afterwards, the poetry resurfaces as Chandler tries to read Byron (a figure associated with both political and sexual freedom) but is unable to do so because of the crying of his baby son. When he shouts at the child he is rejecting what he has because of his frustration about all the things he does not have, has never had, and will never have now. His remorse afterwards, which is possibly heightened by the religious undertones of Annie's murmurings to the child, bring the story full circle. He is reconciled to the life he has; the disturbance that Gallaher brought into his life is over.

'Counterparts' follows a similar route. Beginning at Farrington's place of work, continuing in the public houses, and ending at home with an act of violence against his son. Farrington, however, is a brutal character, and the story can be seen as a variation upon the theme of 'A Little Cloud' with the drama heightened. When we consider that these are the first two of the four stories of mature life, the implications are all the more depressing. That structure – the dissatisfying job, the heavy drinking with other men, the violent return home – is seen as a norm, a pattern common to the gentle and the brutal.

2. Farrington loses at arm-wrestling with Weathers, who, to make things worse, has been accepting drinks from him all evening without paying for a round of drinks himself. On the literal level, Weathers is simply a poor semi-employed acrobat and showman, but he symbolises all that Britain is to Ireland: a humiliating victor and a drain on her resources. Like Routh's victory at cards in 'After the Race', Weathers' victory is symbolic not only in the text but also in the mind of the defeated Irishman (Doyle, Farrington). Farrington desires the woman who says 'Pardon', but he cannot pursue her because he has no money. He blames his lack of money on Weathers' failure to buy a round. England, then, is seen as producing objects of desire with one hand and taking away the means to attain them with the other.

3. Although we are told Farrington's name early on, the narrator continues to refer to him as 'the man'. This has two effects: it marks the narrator's distance, and therefore distances the reader, from Farrington; and it defines Farrington in terms of his masculinity (just as referring to him as 'the copyist' would have defined him in terms of his profession). The story traces a series of threats to Farrington's masculinity. At work he is emasculated by the humiliating treatment he receives from his employer, and the image of Miss Parker with her typewriter is a more serious threat in the background: Farrington is a

copyist, and at the time legal documents were not binding if typewritten, but that was soon to change, and women with their typewriters would soon replace Farrington and his entire class. His sneaking out for a drink several times a day is both the cause and the result of this humiliation at work. That the head clerk's name is Shelley evokes everything that is absent from Farrington's life at work: beauty, nature, imagination, revolution, poetry, triumphal masculinity. In his retort to Mr Alleyne, Farrington seizes back his sense of masculine dignity and equality, and is rewarded by the smile of Miss Delacour (though he will be punished at much greater length later on). The recounting of his retort sustains him through the early hours of the evening: in the public house, among his male friends, he is a man again. But with the appearance of the Englishman Weathers and the Englishwoman who says 'Pardon', his masculinity suffers again in his inability to pursue the woman and his failure at arm-wrestling with the man. When he gets home he is empowered, and all the frustrations and humiliations of his day can be taken out on the absolutely powerless.

4. Throughout *Dubliners* light imagery is of great importance. The empty fireplace of 'The Sisters', the lights going out at the end of 'Araby', the fading light of the living-room scene in 'Eveline', the daybreak at the end of 'After the Race'. At the end of 'A Little Cloud', Chandler 'stood back out of the lamplight', and that is one indication that his coming epiphany is not a true enlightenment. Here the spent fire is symbolic of all the hopelessness of Farrington's life. The boy let the literal fire go out, but he is being beaten as a scapegoat for the extinguishing of symbolic fire (light, warmth, hope) in his father's life.

5. Like 'A Little Cloud', 'Counterparts' ends with the language of the Church. In this case, the boy promises that if his father does not beat him he will say a 'Hail Mary' for him. This pitiful attempt to bargain shows how inadequate the Church is as a refuge for such as the boy. He has nothing else to offer, and the offer of a 'Hail Mary' is clearly not going to stop Farrington at this point. But the repetition of the name of the prayer brings the whole text of the prayer to mind, and again, as in the evocation of Shelley, everything missing from Farrington's life is suggested: grace, divine presence, the blessedness of women, the blessedness of children. The ending of the prayer brings us back to the reality of his life: 'pray for us sinners, now and in the hour of our death'.

Clay

1. a. The word 'clay' in Christian discourse and in English literature is traditionally symbolic of human mortality. Adam was created from clay and after death we return to clay (as in the symbolism of the word 'dust' – see 'Eveline' question 1a). A fine example of this is the poem by Byron that Chandler is trying to read towards the end of 'A Little Cloud': the few lines quoted serve to link the earlier story with 'Clay' (as well as to contrast the poet's attitude to the dead loved-one with Chandler's attitude to the live one in his arms). The game involving the saucers is an interesting mixture of superstition and Catholicism, as is the feast of Halloween, or All Saints' Eve, itself. The game is an example of the use of symbolism in popular culture: the ring symbolises marriage, the prayer book symbolises entry into a convent etc. The clay, of course, symbolises imminent death. The fact that Maria touches the clay shocks and silences the company because the suggestion that she will die underlines her humanity, something that they disregard in their treatment of her. For others, Maria is the object of mild teasing, they see her as ridiculous because of her looks, her simplicity and her spinsterhood, and they make jokes about these things that Maria, in her simplicity, is fortunately unable to perceive as ridicule. The jokes are made for the benefit of other hearers who are able to interpret them, and they constitute a betrayal of Maria by those who pretend to be her friends (for a discussion of so-called friends in 'A Mother', see question 2).

b. Her name associates her with the Virgin Mary, and therefore opens the possibility of interpreting her very differently from the way she is read by the other characters. Maria too is a virgin-mother ('–Mamma is mamma but Maria is my proper mother' p. 148). But Maria is a sort of distortion or inversion of the Virgin Mary (just as Polly in 'The Boarding House', was a 'perverse madonna'). The Virgin Mary is highly potent and venerated in Catholic culture; Maria, by contrast, is powerless and ridiculed. Whereas Mary's virginity is what lends her power, Maria's spinsterhood is one of the things that make her ridiculous. The Virgin Mary's innocence is distorted (or 'deformed' – to use Joyce's word – see General Questions, 'Narrative Technique' b) as Maria's simple-mindedness. And whereas the Virgin Mary is perhaps the most powerful positive female figure in Dublin mythology, the witch is the most powerful negative or evil figure, and Maria looks like the traditional representation of a witch. The kind of institution Maria works for was commonly known at the time as a 'Magdalene institution': are we then to entertain the possibility

that the ‘Maria’ alluded to by her name is Mary Magdalene? This seems unlikely, but when we consider the ease with which her plumcake was stolen from her by a tipsy ‘gentleman’ in the tram (it is also possible that he did not steal it but flustered her so much that she forgot it – even so) we might see support even for this possibility. So what are we to conclude from all this? I suggest we are not meant to conclude but simply to be aware of the various possible ways of looking at Maria in contrast to the single reductive way in which she is perceived by other characters.

2. This narrator incorporates expressions that would be used by Maria herself – or by the other women speaking to or about Maria – into his description and thus ironically highlights the childishness and simplicity of her language and thought. The words ‘nice’ and ‘very’, introduced here, are repeated throughout the narrative with an effect of ever-increasing irony and absurdity. If we compare it to the opening of ‘A Little Cloud’ we can see how the narrator of ‘Clay’ goes a step further: the narrator of ‘A Little Cloud’ also incorporates phrases from the main character’s thoughts, and the sensitive reader might well guess that Chandler’s opinion of Gallaher is not to be relied upon, but Chandler is not crudely ridiculed by his narrator, whereas, in the opening of ‘Clay’, phrases like ‘spick and span’, ‘nice and bright’, and above all ‘Everyone was so fond of Maria’ constitute a bitter satire on mindless and infantile optimism. The last sentence is the most interesting in this respect: it is not taken from Maria’s thoughts but rather from the conversations the other women might have about Maria. It is a simple and clichéd expression of the rather artificial fuss that people at work and at Joe’s party make of her. In general, that kind of excessive cordiality is reserved for those with whom one is not truly intimate. Thus ‘Everyone was so fond of Maria’ is a way of saying that no one was really intimate with Maria. The interest lies in an apparent contradiction: although the entire story seems to be an effort to get the reader (and Joe, Maria’s brother) to see Maria as human, the narrator’s attitude to her is as dehumanizing (perhaps even more so) as the attitudes of the people around her. A similar conflict seems to be taking place in ‘A Mother’.

3. This might be the kind of joke referred to in the answer to 1a above. If Maria either does not know or does not think of this other meaning of ‘nutcrackers’, Joe is able to make this joke at his sister’s expense in front of her for his own entertainment and/or for that of other listeners. If neither Maria nor Joe understands the joke, the narrator is presumably indulging in a rather silly and unpleasant joke with the reader, the fullest expression of the irony verging on sarcasm that has characterized the entire narrative.

4. It could be entirely irrelevant. The simple fact that she repeats the first verse indicates a weakness in her that, in association with the incident of the clay, might impress upon Joe that she is going to die (see question 5 below). On the other hand, the second verse deals with marriage, and the missing of the verse can be seen as emblematic of Maria’s having missed that kind of communion (perhaps it is a Freudian slip on her part, though Joyce would not have known it as ‘Freudian’). In this reading, what is revealed to Joe is loss and lack: Maria will die, and she has never fully lived. The possibility of marriage for Maria has been raised earlier in the story: jokingly by Fleming in the laundry, who says that Maria is sure to get the ring (p. 150), the symbol of imminent marriage; and sarcastically by the woman in the cake shop, who asks Maria if it is a wedding-cake she wants to buy (p. 152). Maria’s poverty and her odd appearance might be enough to have prevented her from getting married if she had wanted to, but Maria protests that she does not want ‘any ring or man either’ (p. 150). The second verse of the song is also concerned with indifference to marriage: the singer remains faithful to an unattainable original love who, she hopes, still loves her. In Maria’s case this can only be Joe himself, and seen in this light her single life is a long empty aftermath to her fulfilling life in the original family home, when Joe used to say ‘Mamma is mamma but Maria is my proper mother’.

5. Maria never experiences an epiphany in the story. Joe is the one who suddenly sees (and then is unable to see because his eyes are filled with tears). His epiphany could be explained as follows: a man who has the fondest memories of his sister from his childhood has grown into the habit, during adulthood, of treating her with friendly condescension and thinking of her as laughable and negligible. When she touches the clay the idea of her death restores him to his original sense of her value, and when she inadvertently misses the second verse of the song, he feels keenly her weakness and vulnerability. It could be (see question 4 above) that he also remembers vividly their early life together and her love for him, which, the song suggests, is still there.

Some critics have seen the epiphany as the reader’s final awareness of Maria’s isolation and of her own ignorance of it. This seems to me unconvincing as an epiphany, since it is apparent from the opening paragraphs.

A Painful Case

1. The phrase is used in the newspaper article to describe Mrs Sinico's death, but the title might allude to Duffy himself as a painful case. In the newspaper article, the adjective means 'giving pain to those who think about it' and that sense could also be used of Mr Duffy: the emptiness of his life is painful to contemplate. He himself experiences this pain at the end of the story and is therefore painful in the sense 'full of pain'. But his case is also painful in the sense that he inflicts pain. There is an underlying sadism in his treatment of Mrs Sinico (and perhaps an underlying masochism in her attraction to him) that has been foreshadowed in the description of his room at the beginning of the story (see question 2 below).

2. In its emphasis on citizenship, the opening sentence presents Duffy's attitude as snobbery (which is odd, because his attitude is strikingly similar to that of the author as implicit in *Dubliners*). The disused distillery, like the empty fireplace of 'The Sisters', the rusty bicycle pump of 'Araby' and the broken harmonium of 'Eveline', is a symbol of dysfunction. The contents of his room – '… a black iron bedstead, an iron washstand, four cane chairs, a clothes-rack, a coal-scuttle, a fender and irons …' – are telling. On the literal level they suggest austerity, severity, a pared-down existence in which the bare necessities alone are permitted. On a symbolic level, the repetition of the word 'iron' suggests inflexibility of character and harks back to the 'iron railings' of earlier stories (e.g. 'Araby' and 'Eveline') and so suggests a kind of mental imprisonment. Furthermore, the words 'cane', 'rack', and 'irons' have definitions other than those intended on the surface level associated with corporal punishment, torture, and imprisonment respectively. These details lead us to expect a person severe to the point of cruelty to himself and to others.

   The ordering of his books according to bulk suggests a finicky obsession with tidiness at the expense of ease of reference. *Michael Kramer* is about a hermit and leads us to expect voluntary isolation and inability to communicate. *Bile Beans* is a patent medicine for biliousness, which was figuratively associated with anger, ill-temper and peevishness, and so we might expect to find these characteristics in Duffy as well.

   Among the contents of Duffy's desk is 'an over-ripe apple' (p. 160). Critics have seen this as a symbol of the temptation to which Mr Duffy does not succumb. In fact the apple seems out of place. Only an untidy – some might say slovenly – person would leave food lying about to the point that it becomes 'over-ripe', and the description so far has

portrayed Duffy as obsessively neat and orderly. Thus the apple draws attention to itself, and it is only in its symbolic resonance that its presence seems logical. The only thing that Duffy has neglected to do is to 'sin', to eat the apple of Genesis, to succumb to temptation. And this the text presents as a failure, or, in the inverted theology of the implied author, a 'sin'. In the story that follows, his rejection of Mrs Sinico is seen as a cold, cruel, even sadistic act. He is perceived as responsible for her death, as the heavy irony of the last line of the newspaper clipping – 'No blame attached to anyone' – makes clear. The warm, the kind, the human act would have been to accept her, to love her, to 'commit adultery'.

3. (Quotation a) The obvious and idiomatic meaning of 'a redeeming instinct' is 'a virtuous instinct that will redeem an otherwise worthless character', but the phrase could also mean 'an instinct to redeem or save others'. This second reading is ironic, because that is just what Mrs Sinico has and what Duffy fails to see.

   (Quotation b) In a symbolic sense, Mrs Sinico herself sings to empty benches: she gives herself to Duffy, but Duffy is not emotionally present to receive her; she expresses her most intimate self and is met with a blank wall of incomprehension and distaste. It is only when Mrs Sinico has ceased to 'sing' – only, in short, when she is dead – that Duffy begins to listen.

   (Quotation c) Duffy is perfectly sincere when he says this, but the narrator's retelling of it, in the context of the story, is heavily ironic. Although the implied author is in entire agreement with Duffy on this point, what Duffy fails to see, and the implied author wishes the reader to see, is that the reason there will be no change in Dublin is because of Dubliners like Duffy.

   (Quotation d) This simple medical opinion also resonates as a description of the psychological cause of her death: her 'shock' at Duffy's rejection. The 'sudden failure of the heart's action' in this reading refers to Duffy's heart, not Mrs Sinico's and to its metaphorical, not its literal, function.

4. Duffy's first reaction to the news of Mrs Sinico's death is disgust and indignation. The change in him, the epiphany, seems to be brought about by Mrs Sinico's ghost, or his imagined experience of her ghost. It is through listening to her for the first time that he begins to doubt his former position: 'He stood still to listen. Why had he withheld life from her?' Is the second sentence meant to represent a thought that Duffy comes to on his own? A question asked by the ghost of Mrs Sinico? Or Duffy's imaginary construction of what Mrs Sinico's spirit might say to him were she to speak? In any case, the approach of this real or imagined spirit is preceded by a dawning awareness of his own mortality:

'The cold air met him on the threshold; it crept into the sleeves of his coat', and more explicitly, 'His life would be lonely too until he, too, died' (both quotations are anticipations of similar intimations of approaching death towards the end of 'The Dead'). 'He felt his moral nature falling to pieces.' – this is the point at which Duffy begins to see his actions from the same perspective as the narrator, i.e., from a perspective of inverted theology in which the failure to succumb to temptation is seen as the true sin. Up to this point Duffy, though not a Catholic, lives by the moral precepts of Catholicism, according to which his rejection of Mrs Sinico (and is the first syllable of her surname a deliberate reference to this?) was the virtuous thing to do.

It is possible that we are meant to see in Duffy's epiphany the same egotism that has characterized him throughout. What he feels is not remorse for what he did to Mrs Sinico or any real if belated empathy for her but fear of dying himself and of living on without love. Twice we are told that he felt himself 'outcast from life's feast', and this is what really troubles him. If we accept this reading, there are two epiphanies in 'A Painful Case': Duffy's realization that he is alone and will die; and the reader's realization of how thoroughly, even to the end, Mrs Sinico was 'singing to empty benches' (see question 3b above).

5. The word 'Eveline' could be read as referring to 'Eve'. When we come to 'A Painful Case', and Mr Duffy's uneaten apple invites us to think of Eden, this possible reading of 'Eveline' becomes intriguing because of the obvious parallels between the two stories. In both cases the main character is offered the 'temptation' of a sexual life: in both (s)he refuses the temptation. In 'Eveline', life with Frank is the temptation, and Eveline eventually resists it. The Eve of Genesis, needless to say, goes ahead and eats the apple, and this is represented not only as a terrible mistake, with awful consequences not only for Eve but for humankind in general, but also as a moral failure on Eve's part. Eveline's resistance to temptation, however, is not presented as a moral victory or the avoidance of a terrible mistake – quite the contrary. The image of her as 'a helpless animal' is important here. Eve's temptation has sexual undertones as symbolized in the serpent and the forbidden fruit, but it is also a temptation to insubordination and as such resembles Lucifer's fall because he would not serve. Eve's sin is a sin of intellectual aspiration. She wishes to be 'like unto God', the fruit she eats is from the tree of the *knowledge* of good and evil. Her act of eating the apple can be seen as a refusal to be 'a helpless animal'. This positive reading of the fall of humankind was expressed by the romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley when he read the Satan of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* as a heroic revolutionary figure. Joyce was certainly familiar with it and seems to be using it in 'Eveline'. Seen in this light, 'Eveline' is a reworking of Eve's story with the opposite outcome and told in a completely different moral framework in which 'good' and 'evil' are reversed (in both cases, you will notice, the woman does the wrong thing).

In 'A Painful Case', the sexes are reversed (as in the pairing of 'Two Gallants' and 'The Boarding House' – see 'The Boarding House' question 5): whereas Eveline is the story of an Eve who does not succumb to temptation, 'A Painful Case' is the story of an Adam <%-3>who does not eat the apple (see the end of question 2 above). Duffy is presented less sympathetically than was Eveline. His interaction with Mrs Sinico is seen as egotistic from the beginning – he uses her as a mirror, telling her his thoughts and enjoying the idea that 'in her eyes he would ascend to an angelical stature' (p. 165). He is not at all interested in her thoughts or desires, and as soon as she expresses them he recoils coldly. If Frank sincerely loves Eveline (see question 4), her treatment of him at the end, especially as seen in the final sentence, is as harsh as Duffy's treatment of Mrs Sinico. The difference lies in Duffy's arrogance, which finds its fullest expression in his first reaction to Mrs Sinico's death (p. 169). He is full of righteous indignation, and the ironic double meanings of phrases from the newspaper article (see question 3d above) encourage the reader to see his reaction as arrogant, twisted and cruel. Eveline, on the other hand, is simply paralysed.

Ivy Day in the Committee Room

1. When Joe Hynes first enters the story he is voice alone, speaking from the darkness, and he asks, 'What are you doing in the dark?' This question is loaded with symbolic significance. All the characters in the story and all Ireland are symbolically in the dark since the death of Parnell, their lost political leader. Since the Act of Union in 1801, the British monarch had been sovereign of 'the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland', but Hynes does not recognize the Act of Union: he sees Edward VII as 'a German monarch', 'a foreign king'. Mr Henchy sees sound economic reasons for greeting Edward as king (pp. 191-2) and these are placed in opposition to the political and religious reasons for not welcoming him that have nothing to do with the profit-motive and are voiced by Hynes in the first case and O'Connor and Lyons in the second. Hynes rejects the royal visit as an imperialist intrusion on what should be an independent nation (p. 180); O'Connor and Lyons object

as Catholics to welcoming a man they consider a fornicator, especially since Ireland rejected her own political leader, Parnell, on the same grounds (p. 192). Henchy's is the same economically-motivated man-of-the-world reasoning as Father Purdon's at the end of 'Grace', and his incompetence to make political judgments is revealed in a historical blunder: on p. 192 he says 'The old one never went to see these wild Irish'; in fact Queen Victoria visited Ireland on four occasions, the last in 1900, only two years before the setting of the story (6 October 1902).

More generally, the defeated atmosphere of the gathering and the petty pragmatic political world they are discussing reveal a nation bereft of political ideals, and this, the story suggests, is the result of British rule and of the failure of the movement for Irish independence after the defeat of Parnell.

2. The obsequious deference that Henchy shows to Father Keon reveals how strong the grip of the Catholic Church is upon him and others like him (such as Grimes, the voter O'Connor canvassed, who is likely to be influenced by the name of Father Burke, p. 181). Father Keon, like Father Flynn of 'The Sisters', is 'an unfortunate man of some kind' (p. 186), a priest who, for some offence unmentioned, has been relieved of his duties, nevertheless even this tattered remnant of priesthood elicits a fawning solicitousness from Henchy, who, in the political discussion that precedes Father Keon's arrival, seemed such a strong and opinionated figure. The episode prepares us for the poem: it demonstrates how weak minds can be brought to change their attitudes and behaviour by the powerful institution of the Catholic Church. The reasoning of O'Connor and Lyons – that the British monarch should not be welcomed because he is an adulterer (p. 192) – shows how Catholic ideology can penetrate political thought, and this too prepares us for Hynes's poem.

In the poem, Christianity is divorced from and opposed to the Church: Parnell is figured as Christ, the Irish priesthood as Pharisees and independent nationhood as the Kingdom of God. Although Joyce personally rejected Christianity as well as the Church, here he, like Dante, separates the two and condemns the latter as a corruption of the ideals of the former.

3. Henchy thinks that Hynes is a spy for the opposing candidate (pp. 182-4), and he believes that many of those who voice the kind of uncompromising nationalism expressed by Hynes are actually agitators – that is to say, double-agents – in the employ of the British government ('Some of these hillsiders and fenians … are in the pay of the Castle', p. 184). Although Tierney is running on the Nationalist ticket, Hynes believes he is likely to support the welcome of Edward VII for economic reasons, and Tierney is characterized in the conversation as always locked in conspiratorial conversation with someone. As the story unfolds, Hynes emerges as the only truly faithful man, loyal to Parnell and the nationalist cause, inaccessible to the arguments of the Church or of economic self-interest, and even Henchy (again showing his muddle-headed inconsistency) acknowledges this (p. 194). In the sixth stanza of his poem, Hynes represents those followers of Parnell who deserted him because of the influence of the Church as Judas-figures. (Even those who probably fall into this category, O'Connor and Lyons, are moved rather than offended by the poem because it gives them a sense of dignity and solidarity as Irishmen). Treachery and the suspicion of treachery are seen as a kind of disease in Dublin society and political life; at the same time, no one, with the possible exception of Colgan, Hynes's candidate, is seen as worthy of loyalty. These two things taken together form the particular kind of political paralysis represented in 'Ivy Day', in sharp contrast to the political activity, hope and potency symbolized in the ivy leaf and extinct with Parnell.

4. The most striking thing about the poem is that it is in no way modernist, it does not partake in the formal experimentation (the 'scrupulous meanness', for example, see General Questions, 'Narrative Technique' b) that characterizes the story and the book as a whole. It has a simple regular metre and rhyme-scheme. Its imagery too is traditional: the hero of the poem is figured as Christ (see question 2 above); hope is figured as resurrection in the symbol of the Phoenix. Its diction is archaic ('slain', 'mire', 'pyre', 'where'er', 'woe', 'wrought', 'warriors', ''twas', 'caitiff', 'smote', 'befoul', 'list'); it borrows from traditional forms such as eulogy, elegy, epic, chivalric romance and devotional poetry. It is characterized by lofty ideals and righteous indignation in sharp contrast to the petty and pragmatic concerns expressed elsewhere in the story. And it is a very moving poem. The reader is moved, as the assembled company is moved, by the poem's expression of a political passion palpably absent from the life of the story. Mr Henchy, who earlier was capable of announcing 'Parnell is dead' as a hard-headed realist's way of sweeping the lost leader into the dustbin of history (p. 192), is transformed by the poem (but as we have seen, Mr Henchy is easily transformed – see question 2 above). The poem, then, functions to demonstrate the power of political literature (like *Dubliners* itself), and the hope expressed in the poem, that 'his spirit may/ Rise, like the Phoenix', is momentarily realized by the recitation of the poem itself. (All this should be kept in mind when we evaluate Gabriel's thought, in 'The Dead', that 'literature was above politics', p. 268.)

5. Stout bottles are black; in their colour and form they resemble miniature cannon. The popping of the corks can be seen as a weak sad salute to the dead leader. Since the death of Parnell, Irishmen have abandoned the metaphorical 'cannon' (the political fight) and turned to the stout bottle to drown the sorrows of British rule. It is a small detail but typical of Joyce's acid wit. In the 'Sirens' chapter of *Ulysses*, the siren-figures are barmaids, and the bar in the public house are the rocks on which many a Dubliner has been shipwrecked.

A Mother

1. Turkish Delight is a kind of sweet popular in the British Isles. Even on the literal level, then, there is the suggestion of seeking one physical pleasure – the eating of sweets – to make up for the lack of others – romantic? sexual? – in her life. But the name of this particular sweet connects it with earlier images of exotic pleasures. The idea that other countries, especially the countries of the east, offer more 'delight' than Ireland has been suggested several times. In 'Araby', the name of the bazaar suggests sensuality and eastern riches; in 'A Little Cloud' Chandler fantasizes about making love to 'rich Jewesses' in Europe (p. 122); in 'The Boarding House', Doran longs 'to ascend through the roof and fly away to another country where he would never hear again of his trouble' (p. 100). That Mrs Kearney too has or had her romantic yearnings does a little to redeem the otherwise negative characterization she receives.

2. We are told that Mrs Kearney had 'made few friends at school' (p. 201), but later, when she is approaching an age beyond which it was unlikely that she would ever marry, she does have 'friends': 'However, when she drew near the limit and her friends began to loosen their tongues about her …' There is a proverbial expression in English that goes, 'With friends like these, who needs enemies?', and this seems appropriate for all the 'friends' mentioned in 'A Mother'. On p. 203 the word 'friends' is repeated often to ironic effect, suggesting that they do not really merit the name but were simply members of a common interest group: they maintain that Kathleen is 'a very nice girl and, moreover, that she was a believer in the language movement' (p. 203). The choice of 'moreover' makes the point. Mrs Kearney is 'friendly' to Mr Holohan (p. 205) so long as he serves her purposes, and she buys tickets to send to 'friends who could not be trusted to come otherwise' (p. 205). Miss Healy is representative of these so-called friends: 'Miss Healy wanted to join the other group but she did not like to do so because she was a great friend of Kathleen's …' (p. 215). Nevertheless, it is she who volunteers to take Kathleen's place as accompanist and thereby enable Mr Holohan to win his dispute with Mrs Kearney: 'But Miss Healy had kindly consented to play one or two accompaniments' (p. 216). The phrase 'kindly consented' is probably Mr Holohan's and sincerely intended (Miss Healy's consent gets him out of a difficult situation), but by including it the narrator draws attention to the unkindness – indeed the treachery – of this consent when viewed in the context of Miss Healy's friendship with Kathleen.

   These ironic references to what passes for friendship in Mrs Kearney's social circle, taken together, constitute a portrait of a community of egotists in which what is called friendship is in fact simply a temporary alliance for the obtaining of a mutual goal.

3. Mrs Kearney is a strong character, 'unbending in manner', determined to get what she wants. She is also a snob and places a great deal of value on being considered a lady ('But she knew that it would not be ladylike to do that: so she was silent' p. 208) which is why Holohan's remark 'I thought you were a lady' (p. 216) is so cutting. She is very concerned about her social position and about how she is perceived by others, and she uses her husband and daughter to attain her social aspirations (for example, 'When the Irish Revival began to be appreciable Mrs Kearney determined to take advantage of her daughter's name', pp. 202-3).

   > Mrs Kearney said:
   > – This is four shillings short.
   > But Kathleen gathered in her skirts and said: *Now, Mr Bell…* (p. 165)

   Kathleen uses her mother just as much as her mother uses her. At the height of the debate about payment, a little before the quotation above, we are told, 'Kathleen looked down, moving the point of her new shoe: it was not her fault.' She leaves the ugly job of making a fuss to her mother: even though Kathleen herself will profit by her mother's unpleasantness, she would probably not make the fuss herself. This gesture of looking down constitutes both a betrayal of her mother and an unspoken lie (she lets others believe that she is embarrassed by her mother's behaviour). As soon as the money is handed over, Kathleen takes control of the situation, showing that she is not the meek oppressed creature she was pretending to be. This situation of mutual exploitation of mother and daughter was also explored in 'The Boarding House'.

4. Mr O'Madden Burke will review the concert for the newspaper, so his comments have particular importance. When he says on p. 214 that 'Miss Kathleen Kearney's musical career was ended in Dublin', he is in a position to act on his words, and the story ends on the note of his

approval of Holohan's action. When we first meet him, we are told 'His magniloquent western name was the moral umbrella upon which he balanced the fine problem of his finances. He was widely respected.' This is a good example of the narrator's ability to express the views of others and implicitly contradict them. O'Madden Burke, like Mrs Kearney, is using an Irish name to profit from the Irish Revival. And his umbrellas, both physical and moral, serve as symbols of his self-regarding, self-protecting character (for a discussion of the symbolism of waterproofing in *Dubliners*, see 'The Dead' question 1).

5. The narrator seems to despise everyone in the story. This is not peculiar to 'A Mother' in *Dubliners*, far from it (see the second paragraph of the answer to General Questions, 'Narrative Technique' a), but 'A Mother' seems to be the most extreme example. Although Mrs Kearney is the most aggressive figure in the story, she is also its victim, its loser, yet she receives no narrative sympathy for this. The narrator seems to despise equally Mrs Kearney's behaviour and the behaviour of those who turn against her. Kathleen is maybe despised more than her mother because she is hypocritical, she lets her mother fight her battles for her and receive the disapprobation for making a fuss (see question 3 above). Even the harmless Mr Kearney is subject to narrative ridicule ('His conversation, which was serious, took place at intervals in his great brown beard', p. 202). Miss Healy is the Judas-figure of the piece, and she is also glimpsed flirting with the reviewer to get a good review (p. 212). Her name, Healy, is also the name of the priest who turns Julia Morkan out of the church choir in obedience to the Pope's edict in 'The Dead' (pp. 275-6), and Joyce used the name in an early poem about the betrayal of Parnell, 'Et Tu, Healy?'. J.I.M. Stewart had the following comments to make upon the narrators' attitudes in *Dubliners* as a whole (in Morris Beja, *James Joyce: Dubliners* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (London: MacMillan, Casebook Series, 1973, p. 203):

> It is urged upon us that almost every aspect of Dublin life is horrifying or pitiful or degraded; that everything is nasty and that nothing nice gets a square deal; and that to the effective asserting of this the artist must bend all his cunning.

The intense irony of this comment is justified as that of an older critic condemning the harshness of a young writer, but it betrays a traditional expectation that fiction should offer the reader hope, or at least a sympathetic character with whom to identify. It must be admitted that after the child-narrators of the first three stories, sympathetic characters are thin on the ground in *Dubliners* (and this reaches its extreme in 'A Mother'), and that is precisely Joyce's point: he chooses not to portray innocent individuals embattled by a corrupt society but rather a corruption that both surrounds and permeates the individual.

Grace

1. This title, like 'A Little Cloud' and 'Counterparts', is difficult to interpret, not least because of the variety of definitions of the word 'grace'. For ease of reference, I will quote the *Oxford English Dictionary* (definitions that are clearly irrelevant to our discussion have been omitted):

grace n. 1 the quality of being attractive, especially in movement, manner, or design. 2 elegance of manner; *he had the grace to apologize*, realized that this was right and proper, and did it. 3 favour, goodwill. 4 a delay or postponement granted as a favour, not as a right, *give him a week's grace*. 5 God's loving mercy towards mankind. 6 a short prayer of thanks before or after a meal.

I would add to this the expressions 'period of grace' (time allowed after the day on which payment or punishment is officially due), 'state of grace' (the condition of the repentant Catholic after confession and before he or she sins again), and 'by grace of' (because of, by virtue of). At the end of the story, we find Father Purdon confusing definitions 4 and 5 of the word 'grace'. In figuring himself as the businessmen's 'spiritual accountant', he implicitly figures God as a kind of almighty tax inspector. His phrase 'with God's grace' therefore evokes not the mysterious and unpredictable granting of spiritual gifts (implicit in definition 5) but the pragmatic allowance of time by a creditor in the hope that this will enable the debtor to pay up (definition 4). For uses of the words 'grace' and 'gracefully' earlier in the story, see question 5 below.

The title, like the word 'Araby' and the evocation of Shelley in 'Counterparts', brings to mind everything that is missing from the story, in this case elegance, favour, goodwill, loving mercy, and an emotional and intellectual life that values something higher than 'accounts'.

2. The end of the first sentence ('he was quite helpless'), like the opening sentence of 'The Sisters', is an image of absolute paralysis. That he has fallen down the stairs mirrors the social fall we learn about later on and has the same kind of symbolic resonance as Doran descending the stairs towards the end of 'The Boarding House'. That these stairs lead to the lavatory simply emphasizes the point, and the graphic description that follows of a man physically injured and dead drunk is made all the more effective by these symbolic suggestions of the wider import of his fall. This description of a helpless state echoes earlier descriptions: Father Flynn's paralysis; Eveline at the railings 'like a helpless animal'; Doyle in a stupor at the end of 'After the Race'; Doran 'sitting helplessly on the side of the bed'. The critic Cheryl Herr has made the following claim: 'As 'Grace' presents it, the Church is undeniably among the powers responsible for the "paralysis" of *Dubliners*' ('The Sermon as

Massproduct: "Grace" and *A Portrait*' in Mary T. Reynolds, editor, *James Joyce: a collection of critical essays*, Englewood Cliffs N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1993, p. 89). Although this is undeniably true of *Dubliners* as a whole, it seems inexact as an evaluation of 'Grace': Kernan starts out paralysed; he is paralysed before the Church gets him. The story is rather the account of a movement from one sort of paralysis to another.

3. In both quotations the literal physical organ 'the tongue' is deliberately confounded with the metonymic use of 'tongue' to mean speech. Thus the injury to Mr Kernan's tongue becomes symbolic of the curtailing of his speech. When we first hear him, his speech is curtailed in the sense that he is unable, because of his injury, to pronounce certain letters. On p. 229 we are told that he was fond 'of giving side-thrusts at Catholicism'. And immediately afterwards, we are told 'Martin Cunningham was the very man for such a case'. Beside their effort to redeem Kernan from drunkenness and restore him to respectability, then, his friends are concerned to stop him making anti-Catholic remarks.

4. Mrs Kernan remarks bitterly of the men who abandoned her husband at the pub 'Nice friends!' The implication is that the men who call themselves his friends were only interested in drinking companionship, and as soon as it became apparent that Kernan was too drunk to continue they abandoned him. When she makes this remark, she contrasts these false friends with her husband's true friend Mr Power, who was kind enough to bring him home. However, it soon becomes apparent that even Mr Kernan's 'real friends', those with his best interests at heart, like Mr Power, have a rather disturbing view of what friendship is. The narrator's characterization of Kernan as 'the victim of a plot' devised by his friends anticipates 'The Dead', in which Gabriel refers to the assembled company as the 'victims' of the Misses Morkans' hospitality. For the most part in *Dubliners* 'friends' are people who use, prey upon, or manipulate one; the priest of 'The Sisters' is the boy-narrator's 'old friend'; Ségouin is Doyle's friend; and Miss Healy in 'A Mother' is Kathleen's friend. Here the friends conspire to reform Mr Kernan, and though his life as he was living it is represented as hopeless, the Church into which he is being urged by his friends is seen, in the person and the speech of Father Purdon, as corrupt and ridiculous.

5. His hat is first mentioned in the opening paragraph, then, at the bottom of p. 222 it is described as a 'dinged silk hat', and on p. 223 'The battered silk hat was placed on the man's head'. At the bottom of p. 225 we are told,

> Mr Kernan was a commercial traveller of the old school which believed in the dignity of its calling. He had never been seen in the city without a silk hat of some decency and a pair of gaiters. By grace of these two articles of clothing, he said, a man could always pass muster.

The silk hat thus becomes symbolic of a dignity that Mr Kernan no longer possesses, and he himself recognizes its symbolic value. On this occasion it has become 'dinged' and 'battered', it has 'rolled a few yards' over the lavatory floor, the 'filth and ooze' of which is so graphically described in the first paragraph. This is a sharp contrast to his wife's image of Mr Kernan on their wedding day twenty-five years before: 'a jovial well-fed man who was dressed smartly in a frock-coat and lavender trousers and carried a silk hat gracefully balanced upon his other arm' (p. 228). Notice that both here and in the long quotation from p. 225, the silk hat is associated with 'grace' (see question 1 above). On p. 225, 'by grace of' means that the silk hat and the gaiters allowed him to pass muster, to be accepted. 'Gracefully' in the wedding-day description means 'elegantly' and implies a personal attractiveness that depends on fluidity of movement. But in the next sentence we are told 'After three weeks she had found a wife's life irksome and, later on, when she was beginning to find it unbearable, she became a mother.' (p. 228). This suggests that even then there was an appreciable difference between the appearance and the reality of Mr Kernan. On p. 226 we learn of his social decline over the years: the hat, it appears, is a remnant of his former self; he no longer has grace in the sense of personal elegance, and his 'period of grace' has run out. At the end of the story, Mr Kernan's hat has been 'rehabilitated by his wife' and it receives its wonted attention from both Mr Kernan and the narrator (pp. 248-9). For the brief period of the accident, the hat *said something*, it expressed an inner truth, was eloquent of a state in which even the pretence of dignity has become 'battered', but by the end of the story the hat is restored to its place as an empty signifier, one that has lost its referent.

The Dead

1. Oddly enough, Mr Browne, who has been seen by most critics as the devil-figure of the piece, claims he would like to be out in the snow (p. 289), Miss Ivors walks home, showing a fine disregard for the weather, and Gabriel himself, so protective of others, wishes to be outside instead of at the supper-table (p. 272). The most important example in 'The Dead', the one all these foreshadow, is Michael Furey disregarding the cold to stand in Gretta's garden. He does not protect himself physically or emotionally; he exposes himself to love, pain and the weather, and this is seen as a positive thing. The problem with most

Dubliners is they protect themselves too much, to the point of never really experiencing life.

In earlier stories waterproofing is mentioned repeatedly: there is a sign saying 'Umbrellas Recovered' in the window of the priest's house in 'The Sisters' (p. 6); Mrs Mercer claims that the night air is bad for her in 'Araby' (p. 43); Lenehan of 'Two Gallants' carries a 'light waterproof' (p. 73); Maria is 'glad of her brown raincloak' in 'Clay' (p. 151); and Mr O'Madden Burke of 'A Mother' has both a literal and a moral umbrella (see 'A Mother' question 4).

2. Some critics have seen the song as a source of doubt about Gretta's story. Gretta tells a story in which a boy dies for love of her, but the memory is triggered by a song about a girl who is seduced and abandoned; in the song it is the girl who dies for love. The story of Michael Furey as Gretta tells it is romantic, literary and tragic somewhat in the style of the song itself. Gabriel accepts her story without hesitation. His only doubt is that she might not have told him everything (p. 306). Regardless of whether or not the story is true, Gretta's telling of it is inconsiderate of her husband's feelings to say the least, and is perhaps a deliberate attempt to hurt him. Neither of these possibilities occurs to Gabriel. One might argue that the narrator endorses Gretta's story in the final paragraph: 'It was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried.' However, the closing lines of the story (from 'Yes, the newspapers were right') might very well be a narrative retelling of Gabriel's thoughts rather than the unmixed voice of the narrator. In any case, the song raises questions about the ending of 'The Dead'. Many contemporary critics see Gabriel's final reaction as self-deluding and mistaken: he is lying down to die; he is wallowing in self-pity; he is regressing into romanticism, Catholicism and provincialism. For more on 'The Dead', I strongly recommend the Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism series, *James Joyce: The Dead*, Daniel R.Schwarz, editor (New York: St Martin's Press, 1994).

3. a. Gabriel is thinking of using a quotation from Browning in his speech (in the event he omits it). His review of Browning contains the phrase 'thought-tormented music'. In his speech he refers to the present age as 'thought-tormented'. When he sees Gretta on the stairs, he imagines painting her and calling the painting 'Distant Music'. Browning often writes about painters' relations to women and about paintings of women: 'Fra Lippo Lippi', 'Andrea Del Sarto', 'A Likeness' and 'My Last Duchess' are the clearest examples. In 'My Last Duchess', the speaker values the painting (static, controllable beauty) over the woman it depicts (living, moving and beyond his control). This may well have a bearing on Gabriel's relation to Gretta. Towards the end of the story we are told he wished to 'overmaster her' (p. 301), which is of course the dark side of his romantic attitude to her mysterious figure on the stairs. In the Michael Furey story, Gretta establishes not merely that she has and has had an existence of her own separate from Gabriel but also that her origins – provincial, far from the sophistication of Gabriel with his repeated references to the continent – have their own value: a seventeen-year-old boy from the gasworks in a small west of Ireland community can be more of a 'man' and more of a romantic hero than that same sophisticated Gabriel Conroy.

Another hint that Gretta's story might not be true, apart from the song, is the idea of the 'gasworks'. The word 'gas' has been used several times in *Dubliners*: 'have some gas with' in 'An Encounter' (p. 22) means to tease, to have some fun with, and earlier in 'The Dead', Mr Browne has been 'laid on here like the gas'. These references might be linked with the images of the failing light, dimness, blindness, darkness, throughout *Dubliners*. In the absence of true light there is 'the gas', an artificial light, a deception.

b. The scene where Michael Furey stands outside Gretta's house is like the balcony scene of *Romeo and Juliet*, and his death is foreshadowed by the princes (a subject from British history). Their images of ill-fated love and the sacrifice of the innocent will be realized in Gretta's narrative. There are many such foreshadowings in the early scenes of 'The Dead'. Kate and Julia say that Gretta must be 'perished alive' (p. 255), which is an idiomatic way of saying 'very cold', but the idiom involves the idea of dying of cold, as Michael Furey will literally do in Gretta's narrative. Miss Ivors wants Gabriel and Gretta to come to the west of Ireland (p. 269); Gretta's story is set in the west of Ireland, and at the end Gabriel decides that 'The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward' (p. 308). Bartell D'Arcy is a singer and has a cold (p. 295) and in both these aspects Michael Furey is foreshadowed yet again. These are just a few of the many examples of foreshadowing in the text.

4. a. The turning point from the general to the particular is the moment when Gabriel sees Gretta on the stairs (p. 292). One could also describe this as a transition from public life to private life. From that point onward, the narrative focuses on the intimate marital relationship of Gretta and Gabriel, whereas up to that point it covered the broad spectrum of social interaction at the party. The second transition, that from the particular to the universal, is achieved slowly over the last few paragraphs from 'She was fast

asleep' (p. 306). Sentences like 'One by one they were all becoming shades' (p. 307) and 'Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland' suggest a broader application of Gabriel's epiphany: these observations apply to the Irish in general or perhaps humanity as a whole. 'His own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world' (p. 307) applies just as much to the narrator and to the reader as to Gabriel. By this point the narrative has lost any semblance of documentary realism, it has become poetry, symbolism rather than realism, no longer concerned with a particular case.

Although the above description might be helpful in the understanding of 'The Dead', it helps by simplifying. Three simple words (general, particular, universal) are used to resolve all the subtleties, contradictions and possibilities of 'The Dead'. This kind of reductiveness was characteristic of literary criticism at the time of Loomis's comment.

b. Notice that this, like Loomis's definition of the structure, is tripartite. A tripartite reading of the structure is justified by the story's division into three parts (the divisions occur on pages 265 and 288). Each of the first two sections ends with Freddy Malins and Freddy is the subject of conversation between Gabriel and Gretta in the third section, which suggests that he has a greater importance than the text seems explicitly to allow him (no critic I have read on 'The Dead' offers an adequate explanation of this). The virtue of Margaret Norris's definition of the structure is that it is faithful to Joyce's divisions: each of Joyce's three sections contains just one of the confrontations she refers to, whereas the divisions in Loomis's analysis do not coincide with the divisions of the story. In any case, the tripartite structure is another echo of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, as is the title of the story. In all three confrontations with women, Gabriel feels discomposed, depressed and humiliated. These feelings are more intense with each successive confrontation because each is more intimate than the last. In this reading, Gabriel is brought to question himself in terms of his own masculinity in its relation to class difference (Lily), national identity (Molly Ivors) and sexuality (Gretta). This sheds some light on the prominent place given to Freddy Malins: Freddy is a sort of honorary 'woman' in that he identifies with the dispossessed, he defends an old woman (Aunt Julia on p. 274) and a black man (the singer on p. 280), insisting upon their importance and their right to be heard in a world that is only interested in 'the legitimate opera' (p. 280). For discussion of the representation of singing as political voice, see General Questions, 'Image and symbol' c.

5. It could be argued that the coin extorted from the house-maid in 'Two Gallants' is symbolically restituted by Gabriel to the house-maid in 'The Dead', although the value of the coin Gabriel gives to Lily is not mentioned and is unlikely to be as much as a sovereign. A sovereign is mentioned in Gabriel's account of his loan to Freddy Malins and Freddy's repayment of it (p. 301). Both references suggest a kind of recompense. Joyce came to regret the harshness of the earlier stories, and 'The Dead' is a kind of recompense to Dublin and Dubliners for that earlier harshness. Freddy in particular might be a compensation for the portrayals of heavy-drinking Dublin men as violent and corrupt in the earlier stories (Eveline's father, Farrington of 'Counterparts'); the characterization of Freddy implies that it is not always so – drinking can be an expression of sorrow in a gentle man as well as voraciousness in an aggressive one. Similarly, the dignity and humanity of Lily seem to compensate for the harsh treatment of the 'slavey' in 'Two Gallants'. There are many other links back to the earlier stories. The Morkan sisters echo the Flynn sisters of the first story, and again the representation is more generous; in both cases two elderly sisters live together after the death of their brother, but here they are allowed a life of their own, a rich life of female community centred on a profession – music (this greater scope is afforded by their higher social class). The predatory corruption of the man in 'An Encounter', which was echoed in the man on the tram in 'Clay', is there again in Mr Browne (each of these figures has a grey mustache, which becomes a sign of corruption). Gretta listening to distant music echoes Eveline listening to the Italian air: in each case the music evokes memory of a deep emotional experience. Like 'A Little Cloud' and 'Counterparts', 'The Dead' begins in the public sphere among colleagues and friends and ends in the intimate circle of marriage or the family and in all three cases it is a move from a superficial joviality to real pain. Like 'A Little Cloud' and 'A Mother', 'The Dead' deals with aspects of the Irish Revival and the nationalist movement (see question 6 below), and the treatment is more generous and complex, less of a bitter caricature, than in the earlier stories. Finally, the music heard fleetingly in 'Eveline', 'Two Gallants', 'The Boarding House', 'Clay', 'A Painful Case' and 'A Mother' swells to fill the entire story in 'The Dead' (see General Questions, 'Image and symbol' c).

6. Many critics have seen Miss Ivors as an insufferable hectoring fanatic, and this is the way that Gabriel, in his embarrassment, strives to see her. But the narrator repeatedly uses the words 'frank', 'warm', and 'friendly' in reference to her with apparent sincerity, and these words have rarely been used without irony in *Dubliners*.

Joyce's own relation to the Irish Revival was a difficult one. He saw it as provincial: in his opinion Irish artists should strive to transcend

nationality and provincialism by educating themselves, as he did, in the languages and literatures of Europe. The extreme position of the Irish Revival was not simply that writers should use Irish history and folklore as their material, but that they should write in the Irish language. This, from Joyce's point of view, would guarantee the provincialism of Irish literature by making it illegible to everyone except the members of the Irish Revival, since the Irish language was already dying (the characters of *Dubliners* speak English not simply because Joyce was writing in English but because English was and is the language of Dublin). Joyce himself could not write in Irish, so his position was dictated by self-interest as well as conviction.

Joyce, who like Gabriel wrote literary reviews for *The Daily Mail*, did not see Irish as his own language, and spent more time in Europe than in the west of Ireland. However, Joyce himself would never have maintained that 'literature was above politics' (p. 268), as the whole of *Dubliners* demonstrates. Gabriel is seeking to escape his 'thought-tormented' generation (whereas Joyce led his generation, albeit in a very different direction from that indicated by Miss Ivors). In his epiphany, Gabriel falls back on the forms of past thought – the romantic, the Christian – and the idea that 'The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward' (p. 308) can be read in at least two ways. Perhaps he has changed his mind about going to Galway: now that he has seen transcendent significance in the death of a simple west of Ireland boy, he has decided to do as Miss Ivors suggested after all and look to the west for meaning in his life. Or perhaps the journey westward is his journey towards death, towards the 'lonely churchyard on the hill' (and remember that images of the east – the opposite direction – have been erotic and life-affirming throughout *Dubliners*).

In either case, the treatment of the Irish Revival is much gentler and more thoughtful in 'The Dead' than in the earlier stories 'A Little Cloud' and 'A Mother', in which it is treated ironically and dismissively.

7. **a.** The story of Michael Furey makes Gabriel realise that he has not been the central romantic interest of his wife's life. This in turn makes him feel a failure in general and makes him aware of the approach of his own death. The contrast between the figure of Michael Furey and Gabriel's final self-image leads him to the wider philosophical conclusion: 'Better pass boldly into that other world, in the full glory of some passion, than fade and wither dismally with age' (p. 307). A rather romantic epiphany, then, in which youth is valued over maturity, feeling over intellect, the grand self-sacrificial gesture over the life of sustained but more modest accomplishment. The images of Michael Furey as Christ tend to confirm this reading:

> It was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on **the hill** where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked **crosses** and headstones, on the **spears** of the little gate, on the barren **thorns**.

Why are they there? Gabriel sees Michael Furey as a Christ figure, a heroic innocent who sacrificed his life for love. The Christ images increase the pathos of the Michael Furey story, and of Gabriel's own situation in relation to the romantic 'lesson' that he learns from that story. Some critics, however, have seen this as Gabriel's romantic and self-indulgent delusion: as with Doran's sense of doom at the end of 'The Boarding House' (see question 3), the narrator views the protagonist's epiphany as a false one, and the reader's epiphany is meant to be very different.

What, then, is this other epiphany? The idea of passion, introduced in the quotation above, startles the reader of *Dubliners*. Looking back, it has hardly been mentioned. One cannot describe what Eveline feels for Frank, what Doran feels for Polly and *vice versa*, what Duffy feels for Mrs Sinico as 'passion'. Mrs Sinico might very well have felt a misguided passion for Duffy, and the boy-narrator of Araby could be said to feel passion for Mangan's sister. Miss Ivors is possibly a passionate woman; she is certainly passionate in her beliefs, as is Joe Hynes of 'Ivy Day'. But these are the exceptions; generally, the characters of *Dubliners* live without passion, and this is perceived by the implied author as a living death. 'The Dead', like 'A Painful Case' convinces the reader of the importance of passion by taking what could be called a post-mortem perspective. Seen from this perspective, the things that most of the characters value (money and social position) seem trivial and mean, and to have spent one's life striving for them seems a waste. This is the reader's epiphany as distinct from Gabriel's, and it does not depend, as Gabriel's does, on a romantic reading of Michael Furey's story (see 'The Dead' question 2).

b. In the closing paragraphs of 'The Dead', the narrator abandons the meticulous realism of the rest of the story and adopts a poetic, musical, symbolic and almost abstract style. For example, some critics have asked – how can Gabriel have 'heard' the snow falling 'through the universe'? Specific parts of the ending are discussed in detail in 7a above and General Questions, 'Language' b (iv). This narrative voice differs from that of the rest of 'The Dead' and from that of earlier stories in that it is no longer ironic, no longer characterized by a 'scrupulous meanness', in whatever sense we give that phrase (see General Questions, 'Narrative technique' b).

General Questions on *Dubliners*

Image and symbol

a. The water imagery of *Dubliners* can be sub-divided into river, sea, rain and snow. Its symbolic significance in large part echoes the entire tradition of water-imagery in Western literature. In Christianity, water is used in baptism and is therefore a symbol of life, renewal, and cleansing from sin. In science, water is the source of life and the basis of its sustenance. From the most primitive agrarian cultures, water has been twinned with the sun as the source and sustainer of life. By extension from all these sources, water has also become symbolic, in a private human context, of passion, love, feeling, fullness and fecundity.

The Liffey, the river upon which Dublin is built, is referred to several times in the text. In 'An Encounter', the boys cross the Liffey in a ferryboat. Here the river and the ferryboat evoke the crossing of the river Acheron in Dante's *Inferno* (Canto III). Having escaped from their everyday life by skipping school, the boys are in some sense dead; they cross over into an Underworld in which they meet the man. In this context the similarity of sound in the words 'Liffey' and 'Lethe' might be significant and is unlikely to have escaped Joyce. The River Lethe in ancient Greek mythology is the river of forgetfulness, from which the shades drink and thereby gain forgetfulness of the past. Dante has it running from Purgatory to Hell (*Inferno* 14). In 'A Painful Case', the Liffey is described as 'the shallow river on which Dublin is built' (p. 159), which might possibly be a reference to the shallowness of emotional life in Dublin and especially in 'the painful case' of Mr Duffy.

The sea is also alluded to frequently: sometimes explicitly as in 'Eveline' (see General Questions, 'Language' b (iii) and other times obliquely. In most of these references there is clearly a symbolic meaning, although the messages are often mixed. For example, Lenehan of 'Two Gallants' wears a yachting cap and a light waterproof, which, in this symbolic context, are conflicting signs and possibly indicate the conflicting elements of his character; the yachting cap also is a sign of affinity with the 'slavey' who wears a 'sailor hat'.

The rain and the snow have been discussed in the answer to 'The Dead' question 1. The tendency of Dubliners to protect themselves from the elements is symbolic of their tendency to protect themselves from passion, emotion and life itself. The snow, however, has a particular range of symbolic possibilities and has been the subject of endless critical debate. Snow is a form of water but it is frozen and therefore it contains two conflicting symbolic gestures: that towards life and that towards death. The frozen world at the end of 'The Dead' may very well be an echo of the lake of ice at the bottom of Dante's *Inferno*, and here freezing is linked to paralysis (the shades of the ninth circle of the Inferno are frozen in the lake of ice). There is of course much more to be said about the various kinds of water imagery in the text.

b. (See also Context Questions 3, 'The Sisters' 1 and 2). Derived from the Greek for 'to perceive, to judge, to know', the 'gnomon' in the Euclid to which the boy refers is 'what remains of a parallelogram after one of its corners is removed'. Another definition of 'gnomon' is 'the pin or triangular plate on a sun-dial, which, by casting its shadow on the marked surface of the sun-dial, indicates the time'. In both cases the important thing is what is missing: the gnomon is defined by what is missing from the parallelogram; the time is indicated by the shadow, the absence of light. It could be that here the implied author is suggesting that the reader pay particular attention to what is missing, what remains unsaid, and what is left in the margins of *Dubliners*. The immediate example of this is old Cotter's speech. The boy-narrator of 'The Sisters' tells us 'I puzzled my head to extract meaning from his unfinished sentences' (p. 6). And the reader too feels that the story's secrets lie in the unspoken endings of those sentences. The story centres on the untold mystery of the priest's transgression. In the margins, but given prominence by the title, is the untold story of his sisters' lives (see 'The Sisters' question 1).

For variations on this theme, see David Fabian, "Joyce's 'The Sisters': gnomon, gnomic, gnome," *Studies in Short Fiction 5*, pp. 187-9 (1968), and Gerhard Friedrich, 'The gnomonic clue to James Joyce's *Dubliners*,' in the periodical *Modern Language Notes* vol. 72, p. 422 (1957).

c. The Italian air in 'Eveline' causes Eveline to remember her promise to her mother. Both on the occasion of her mother's illness and on this occasion, Eveline hears the music at a distance (it is being played in the street); she, like Gretta in 'The Dead', is a woman listening to 'distant music', and in both cases the music triggers distant memory – the music becomes symbolic of the past itself and the strongest emotional experiences in that past life. Polly's song in 'The Boarding House' reveals her hidden nature, suggesting that song can express what speech cannot. Similarly Maria's song in 'Clay' expresses the emptiness of her life, whereas her speech is a constant effort to make everything seem all right. In 'A Painful Case' we are told that Duffy's liking for Mozart's music brought him to operas and concerts, which were 'the only dissipations of his life' (p. 161). It is no accident that he meets Mrs Sinico at one of these concerts, begins his relationship with her at one of the rare moments of softness and receptiveness in his austere life. Mrs Sinico's first remark about singing to empty benches (p. 161) becomes symbolic of her fruitless relationship with him (see 'A Painful Case' question 3b and the end of 4), and here again singing symbolises

the expression of emotion, the pouring out of one's inner being. 'A Mother' is centred around a series of concerts, but here the music is used as a means of obtaining money and social status: the music is not 'heard' in the story as it is in 'Eveline', 'Clay' and 'The Dead', but happens on the sidelines of a story whose central focus is the issue of being paid to play music. 'The Dead' is full of music and talk of music. The three Misses Morkan are singers and music teachers. That Julia can no longer sing in the church choir because of the Pope's edict becomes symbolic: a woman cannot express her innermost self in a Catholic context (see General Questions, 'Nationality and religion' b). Freddy Malins speaks of a black singer who had 'one of the finest tenor voices he had ever heard', and when no interest in shown in this, Freddy retorts 'And why couldn't he have a voice too?... Is it because he's only a black?' (p. 280) And here 'voice' becomes more than a singing voice – it becomes (as with the women) the right to be heard, a political voice, the right to self-expression. It is with irony, then, that the narrator tells us 'Mary Jane led the table back to the legitimate opera' (p. 280): the linking of 'voice' and 'legitimacy' further underlines the political flavour that singing has assumed at this point of the story. The song that Bartell D'Arcy sings triggers Gretta's memory of Michael Furey and so starts the narrative's movement towards its poetic and musical ending. The last paragraphs of 'The Dead' seem to strain towards music: the narrator abandons prose, description, analysis, common sense and moves into a poetic and musical realm. By doing so he implicitly endorses everything that music has represented in the book: passion, political freedom, the expression of the innermost self.

d. (The quotation is from *Casebook*, p. 101.) In 'The Sisters', the priest is both literally and morally paralysed, and our viewpoint and sympathy are with the boy. In 'Eveline' the morally paralyzed character (the character who is unable to act, make decisions, take control of her own life) is also the viewpoint and the object of our sympathy or at least pity. Whereas in 'The Sisters', the moral paralysis was only hinted at, in 'Eveline' it is quite clear – we know what Eveline has failed to do but we can only speculate about Father Flynn. As a priest, Flynn represents the Catholic Church, which is seen as one of the greatest sources of the moral paralysis that pervades the Dublin of *Dubliners*. Eveline is simply a member of the Church: she is prey, not predator, victim not perpetrator. It could be argued that Eveline's paralysis hurts no one but herself (and possibly Frank, but Frank, one feels, will recover), whereas Father Flynn's paralysis has subtle and half-veiled consequences for other people, among them the boy-narrator. In both stories, however, there is a pervasive sense of lives not lived to the full and of the crippling influence of the surrounding society.

Dublin is represented as a paralysed society. Individual Dubliners are paralysed not only by the surrounding society but also by their own internalization of its values. The twin sources of paralysis are the Catholic Church and the British government. The Catholic Church cripples Dubliners by making them feel guilt and shame about their natural desires. The British government cripples them by taking away their autonomy, infantilizing them, robbing them of their sense of self, their national identity, and their ability to control their own lives. The effect of this is that Dublin men are emasculated both sexually and politically, and their frustrated masculinity finds vent in alcoholism and violence. This, put crudely, is the polemic of *Dubliners*. But there is also a poetics of paralysis in the book. The theme is used to tie the stories together, giving unity to its disparate parts. It is figured in many different ways: as illness in 'The Sisters', as imprisonment in 'Araby' (see question 4) and the iron railing imagery of other stories, as the frozen landscape of 'The Dead'. There are also emblems of paralysis and dysfunction: the rusty bicycle pump in 'Araby', the broken harmonium in 'Eveline', the horse going round and round the statue in 'The Dead'. When characters are crippled by a moral paralysis, an inability to act, this is figured in a physical immobility, such as Eveline's refusal to pass the physical barrier (and the psychological barrier) at the end of her story or Doran 'sitting helplessly on the bed'. This unity of polemic and poetic seems to me the supreme achievement of *Dubliners*.

Nationality and religion

a. The idea of 'corruption' is connected to the idea of living among 'the dead', of Dublin as a city of the living dead. In 'The Sisters' we are told 'There was a heavy odour in the room – the flowers', but 'the flowers' are delayed just long enough for the reader to fear it is the odour of death, of the dead priest. Similarly in 'Araby' the 'musty' air of the house follows in the sentence after the death of the priest in the back drawing-room. The dust in Eveline's living-room (see question 1a), the clay of 'Clay', all these images of corruption in the sense of the decaying of the human body anticipate the title and the general tendency of 'The Dead'. In that last story it is not just bodies but society as a whole that is decaying: we are repeatedly told about 'thirty years ago', when Aunt Julia's voice was at its best, when Dublin opera-goers could hear the greatest voices of their time, when the Home Rule Association was just beginning its work and Parnell his career.

The other sense of 'corruption' is not unconnected to this first sense. We see Dubliners deceiving each other, betraying each other, doing anything for money, and it suggested that this happens because the social fabric is rotten and because individual Dubliners have lost their

pride and their moral energy. Why this should be an 'Irish subject' is summed up in my discussion of the polemic of paralysis (see 'Image and symbol' d above).

b. Let us begin with the Church and in particular its priests. Father Flynn of 'The Sisters' is the first and strongest image of paralysis in the book (see questions 4 and 5). He is then echoed in another dead priest in the opening of 'Araby', former tenant of the boy's house, and again in the photograph of the emigrated priest in the opening of 'Eveline'. Coming after the priests of 'The Sisters' and 'Araby', both dead, the priest at the beginning of 'Eveline' seems associated with death (though in fact he has only emigrated). His photograph is 'yellowing', and it hangs over 'the broken harmonium' (see question 1b). Eveline's promise to her mother 'to keep the home together as long as she could' was made and kept because of a network of beliefs rooted in the Catholic Church: that the wishes of the dead should be respected; that self-sacrifice is a virtue, especially in women; that the family – any family – is a good thing. Although Eveline is remarkable for her immobility, 'she kept moving her lips in silent fervent prayer'. When movement would save her, the only movement she makes is this.

By this point the reader has the impression that the Catholic Church, as represented by her priests, pervades Dublin homes as a dead or ineffectual presence. The priest who hears Doran's confession in 'The Boarding House' succeeds in causing Doran 'acute pain' and convincing him that his only way out is marriage (the representative of one paralysing institution – the Church – directs Doran towards another paralysing institution – marriage).

More telling, perhaps, is the representation of how the teaching of the Catholic Church is internalized and works as a paralysing influence within Dubliners themselves. Again Doran is a case in point, and Eveline. This influence is not restricted to the faithful alone. Duffy of 'A Painful Case', we are told, had neither 'church nor creed', yet he too is paralysed by the Catholic ideology that surrounds and permeates him. His treatment of Mrs Sinico was impeccable in Catholic terms: had he been a Catholic, his confessor would have approved what he did, would indeed have told him to do it. In both 'A Painful Case' and 'The Boarding House' an inversion is performed in which what the characters perceive as sin the text perceives as innocent *and vice versa*, and a similar inversion is performed in 'Eveline' (see 'The Boarding House' question 1 and 'A Painful Case' question 5).

That the Church is itself paralysed and paralyses its members is evident in 'The Boarding House', where Doran's confession, together with his anxiety to retain his job (as in 'Grace' the Church and business are linked), conspire to make him the passive prey of Mrs Mooney ('sitting helplessly on the side of the bed'). Julia Morkan in 'The Dead' has suffered because of the Church's oppression of women: the Pope's edict forbidding women to sing in the church choirs has curtailed Julia's life as a singer (p. 275) and perhaps pushed her one step closer to the imminent death that Gabriel foresees at the end of the story (p. 307) and that is confirmed in *Ulysses*.

c. Whereas the attack on the Catholic Church is very prominent in *Dubliners*, the attack on British rule takes place, for the most part, in the background or under the surface (there are some exceptions to this, of which 'Ivy Day' is the most obvious). Yet British rule of Ireland is constantly referred to in the street names, the monuments, the allusions to Belfast, and small details of British and/or Protestant presence and power in Dublin. The list below offers one detail from each of the stories in order of their appearance:

'The Sisters' – Father Flynn lives on Great Britain Street (see the last paragraph of the answer to question 4).

'An Encounter' – The discussion of Wild West stories and Roman history at the beginning is a veiled reference to British imperialism (see question 1).

'Araby' – The young woman and two young men at the bazaar have English accents.

'Eveline' – A man from Belfast bought the field on which Eveline used to play as a child.

'After the Race' – It is the Englishman, Routh, who wins the card game.

'Two Gallants' – The Kildare Street club, outside which Lenehan hears the harpist playing, was an exclusive Protestant Anglo-Irish club.

'The Boarding House' – 'George's Church' is opposite the boarding house. Saint George is the patron saint of England.

'A Little Cloud' – Ignatius Gallaher wears an orange tie. (Orange is the colour of the Irish Protestant political party that supports union with Britain, because English rule in Ireland was established by William of Orange).

'Counterparts' – Weathers, who beats Farrington at arm-wresting, is an Englishman.

'Clay' – Maria works in a Protestant institution for fallen women.

'A Painful Case' – the *Mail*, the newspaper Duffy reads, is a right-wing pro-English paper.

'Ivy Day in the Committee Room' – The popping of the corks shows symbolically and literally what Ireland has been reduced to under British rule (see question 5).

'A Mother' – even though the concerts are organized by an Irish cultural society, the soprano is English.

'Grace' – We are told that Crofton is an Orangeman.

'The Dead' – the horse in the story Gabriel tells (pp. 290-1) goes round and round the statue of King William III, the English King who conquered Catholic Ireland in 1690.

This is only a small selection of the details that allude to British rule in Ireland, but it serves to demonstrate their pervasiveness. There are of course more explicit references, such as Gabriel's conversation with Miss Ivors, Doyle's conversation with the Englishman in 'After the Race', the discussion of King Edward's visit to Ireland in 'Ivy Day in the Committee Room'. The allusions to Parnell and the collapse of the Nationalist cause after his death are the other side of the same issue: Parnell fought for independence from Britain. All these things together pose British rule of Ireland as an underlying cause of the moral paralysis that is the central focus of the book.

A good recent study of Joyce from a historical viewpoint is James Fairhall, *James Joyce and the question of history* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

Language

a. A more explicit and literal paraphrase of Pound's idea would be something like the following: the precision, musicality and lucidity of the French prose of Flaubert or Maupassant, for example, makes most English prose seem muffled and woolly by comparison, but Joyce is an exception.

Examples will depend on how students read Pound's meaning. Is he talking about sound alone or about both sound and sense? If sound alone, he might be referring to sentences like that at the beginning of 'The Sisters' involving the words 'gnomon' and 'simony' or the last sentence of 'The Dead'. In both cases the prose is highly poetic and can be analysed in terms of alliteration, assonance and rhythm, terms we usually reserve for the analysis of poetry. If Pound intends both sound and sense, the following sentence from 'The Sisters' is a good example:

> She stopped, as if she were communing with the past and then said shrewdly:
>
> – Mind you, I noticed there was something queer coming over him latterly.

Here, the choice of the word 'shrewdly' is brilliant. It is an ugly-sounding word with an ugly meaning, especially in this context where it becomes the turning-point of the conversation and the story. The word shocks the reader, because everything earlier in the conversation is more or less the stock jargon of mourning and sympathy, the clichés people repeat to each other in this situation. The conversation up to this point is not at all 'shrewd'. We therefore read more attentively what follows, and what follows constitutes both a betrayal of her brother by Eliza and a revelation to the boy and the reader about the priest. That Joyce can accomplish this shift with a single well-chosen word is precisely the kind of sharpness and clarity to which Pound is referring.

b. (i) The repetition of 'little' in 'Little' Chandler's name places comic emphasis on the process of characterizing Chandler as 'a little man' (this would be absent if the sentence had begun '– I don't drink much as a rule', for example), and the joke reaches the point of absurdity with the addition of 'modestly' ('modest' means both 'without vanity' and 'without excess', so that while the first definition is intended on the literal level, the second definition repeats yet again the idea of smallness).

(ii) The repetition of the words 'very' and 'long' gives a childish quality to the language, both because they are simple words and because this kind of repetition is characteristic of fairy stories. The fact that Maria looks like a witch (and the story is set on Halloween) is reinforced by the simple repetitive fairy tale language in which she is described. But since this is not a fairy story, the narrative tone emerges as ironic. The irony is directed at several things: the childishness of adult interaction; Maria's innocence; and the combination of superstition and religion in Dublin Catholic culture among the working and lower-middle classes.

(iii) Eveline's panic is expressed in this metaphor of seas tumbling about her heart. This achieves the right note of dangerous instability: panic destabilizes the mind just as the seas of the metaphor destabilize the heart (the seat of the emotions). But the seas are not simply a metaphor: 'If she went, tomorrow she would be on the sea with Frank' (who is a sailor). The seas, then, resonate not only on a metaphorical but also on the literal level of the story.

(iv) This sentence has been the subject of an enormous amount of critical comment. Here it is sufficient to note the alliteration of '*s*oul *s*wooned *s*lowly' and '*f*aintly *f*alling', the assonance of 's*ou*l', 'sl*ow*ly', and 'sn*ow*', and the repetition but in reverse order (a figure of speech called 'chiasmus') of 'faintly falling'. All these effects taken together create a drowsy sonorous quality that imitates the experience it is describing (i.e., it is imitative form) so that the reader partakes in Gabriel's swooning sensation.

Of particular interest to students of Joyce's use of language are the following recent publications: Derek Attridge, *Peculiar language: literature as difference from the Renaissance to James Joyce* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988); Robert H. Bell, *Jocoserious Joyce* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991); Sheldon Brivic, *The veil of signs: Joyce, Lacan and Perception* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991); and Anthony Burgess, *Joysprick: an introduction to the language of James Joyce* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1973).

Structure

a. There are of course many ways in which the structure can be described and discussed. I have used Joyce's own description from the quotation above.

The three stories of childhood are a gentle introduction to *Dubliners* in that their central characters, who are also their narrators, are sympathetic: the reader can feel a certain security in liking and identifying with the child-narrator, say, of 'The Sisters'. On the other hand, all three, individually and as a group, present what was for the time a deeply disturbing view of childhood, centring on the sexuality of the child and the oppressed state in which he lives.

The stories of adolescence are at first confusing. Eveline is nineteen years old, but the main characters of the other three stories in this section are twenty-six (Doyle of 'After the Race'), thirty-one (Lenehan) and thirty-four or -five (Doran of 'The Boarding House') – not, then, literally adolescents. What is adolescent about them is their way of living: all three are still in the period between childhood and parenthood, which seems to be what Joyce means by 'adolescence'. Doyle and Lenehan are also adolescent in their mode of thinking. Many male characters in *Dubliners* seem to grow old before they grow up, and Lenehan is one of these. Doran, on the other hand, is 'a serious young man', but his seriousness is that of middle age, of his true years, and he is only 'young' in that he has not yet entered the adult life of sexual relationship and fatherhood.

The stories of maturity – 'A Little Cloud', 'Counterparts', 'Clay' and 'A Painful Case' – are unremittingly bleak, the first two in their pictures of marriage, parenthood and steady employment, and the last two in their portrayals of single life.

'Ivy Day', 'A Mother', and 'Grace', as stories of public life, present a social fabric that is rotten with distrust and betrayal. The camaraderie of the Committee Room in 'Ivy Day' thinly veils the intrigue, distrust and self-interest of the political world. The recitation of the poem produces a moment of genuine camaraderie, a fleeting feeling of solidarity on the basis of nationality and a sense of shared loss.

'The Dead', though also in large part a story of public life, is a case apart both in the form and the manner of presentation. It covers a wider canvas, it presents its variety of subjects in a more mixed and sympathetic way, and towards the end it moves beyond both public and private life to the consideration of death.

b. The significant absence has had a long and distinguished history in Western literature. Figures such as Antigone's brother, Hamlet's father, or God, though absent, are rich sources of action and motivation for the characters who are present.

In both 'Ivy Day' and 'The Dead', the absent figure is perceived by the present characters as heroic, larger than life. Compared to him, the living see themselves as weak, vacillating, worthless creatures. He represents another time or place, a world in which greatness and personal or political ideals were possible, as opposed to the shabby, incoherent, modern world in which the present characters exist rather than live. In this respect, both stories, and *Dubliners* as a whole, resemble the fictions of William Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor in the American South. They are fictions set in a fallen world that looks back with a hopeless yearning to the golden age before the fall. In *Dubliners*, the fall is represented by the death of Parnell (in Faulkner and O'Connor, by the defeat of the South in the American Civil War).

Parnell and Michael Furey are both surrounded by Christ-imagery at the close of their stories. Recent critics, keeping Joyce's own atheism in mind, have seen this as a sign that the epiphany of the characters is not supposed to be one with the reader's epiphany. According to these critics, at the moment in which true self-knowledge is available to them, the characters choose to fall back on self-pity, romanticism and Christianity. The moment that should be transformative is therefore merely cathartic, and life goes on as it did before. This is a very interesting idea, mainly because our reluctance to accept it is in large part due to our own tendency, as readers, to fall back on exactly the same things. The moment at which a work of literature might potentially transform the reader is similarly undermined by the reader's preference for an emotional catharsis, a thoroughly enjoyable weep at the end of 'Ivy Day' or 'The Dead', expressing a desire to feel rather than to think.

c. If we try to think of *Dubliners* as a work of abstract as opposed to representational art, we might think of the light imagery. Most of the settings are remarkable for their lack of light, their dimness, gloom or dying light. Then occasionally a source of light is described, light breaks in. 'Daybreak, gentlemen!' is the moment of the entry of light and epiphany at the end of 'After the Race'. And that, I would argue, is the only straightforward epiphany in *Dubliners*, that is to say, 'After the Race' is the only story to produce a single unified revelation for protagonist and reader together (the reader, being sober, realizes what is happening before Doyle does, but even so the realization is the same). Sometimes the light imagery belies the supposed epiphany: the revelations of 'The Sisters' take place beside an empty fireplace; the boy-narrator of 'Araby' comes to his realization 'gazing up into the darkness'; Little Chandler 'stood back out of the lamplight' to experience his epiphany; the epiphany of 'Counterparts' is the reader's, not Farrington's, and it happens indirectly because the fire went out; Duffy's epiphany takes place in darkness; and Gabriel refuses to have a

light in the hotel room at the end of 'The Dead'. One could conclude from this that Joyce is not using light imagery in the conventional way (that is, with light as the positive and darkness as the negative value), or one could conclude that the epiphanies of *Dubliners* are unified by their complexity, that often the character's revelation is not intended to be one with the reader's. For discussion of the epiphanies of individual stories see 'Araby' questions 2 and 4, 'After the Race' 5, 'A Little Cloud' 5, 'Counterparts' 4, 'Clay' 5, 'A Painful Case' 4, 'The Dead' 4b, 6 and 7a and General Questions, 'Structure' b.

Gender and sexuality

a. The overall impression left by the volume is that sex (like friendship, hospitality and politics) is a battleground with its victors and vanquished, its treacheries and manoeuvres. In Farrington's marriage, the wife wins when he is sober but loses when he is drunk. Lily in 'The Dead' has lost an early battle and retreated to her own lines. The Michael Furey story might be Gretta's way of defeating her husband. Among the vanquished are Doran, Mrs Sinico, Lily, Eveline's mother and Gabriel.

The issue of the position of women is treated in large part through the representation of 'sisters' (see 'The Sisters' question 1), and their oppression is blamed largely on the Catholic Church. The Pope's edict to prevent women from singing in church choirs, from which Aunt Julia has suffered in 'The Dead', is a historical detail that is used symbolically in the text. Throughout *Dubliners* singing has been linked to emotion, passion, expression of one's innermost being, and the Pope's edict is seen not only as an exclusion of women but as a silencing of them and a denial of their point of view. Similarly, in 'Araby', Mangan's sister is prevented from going to Araby by a retreat at her convent, and, given the sensual associations of that 'magical name', 'going to Araby' represents the whole process of adolescent entry into sexual life and passionate experience.

We meet all kinds of women in *Dubliners*: old and young, passive and active, ignorant and educated, likeable and odious. Many of them are stronger than the men with whom they share their stories (Mrs Mooney, Annie of 'A Little Cloud', Mrs Kearney, Mrs Kernan, Molly Ivors, and possibly Gretta). The representation of masculinity, however, is more uniform. Even though on the surface the male characters might seem as various as the female, they share a condition of undermined masculinity that is made fully explicit in 'Counterparts' but also haunts such characters as Evelyn's father, Lenehan, Doran, almost everyone in 'Ivy Day', Kernan, Freddy Malins and Gabriel. In these representations of masculinity, it is repeatedly suggested that Ireland's want of independent nationhood is the root cause of the failure of Irishmen to reach a full and fruitful manhood.

b. Joyce started writing *Dubliners* for George Russell's Dublin periodical *The Irish Homestead*. Russell advised Joyce to write nothing that would shock the readers. It is possible that Joyce took this as a challenge to write about the most disturbing subjects but in a veiled manner. If so, the challenge lay in disguising the material, and this is achieved in various ways: sometimes a disturbing subject is discussed in the margins of a story ostensibly about a more traditional and acceptable subject (as with child abuse in 'Eveline'); sometimes it is lodged in the less obvious of two meanings of single words or phrases (as with the references to prostitution in 'Eveline'); sometimes it is left in the gaps, the areas open to the reader's interpretation (as in old Cotter's unfinished sentences in 'The Sisters' or the unspecified action of the man in 'An Encounter' that was discussed in the answer to question 3). Thus, whereas child abuse might not seem, on the surface, to be a main concern of the book (a reader might recall only the instance of the end of 'Counterparts'), if we look closely, we see it in 'The Sisters', 'An Encounter', 'Eveline' and 'A Little Cloud' as well. Similarly, prostitution is hinted at in 'Eveline' (see question 3), 'Two Gallants' (see 4 and 5) and 'The Boarding House' (see 4); homosexuality in 'The Sisters' and 'An Encounter' (see 3 and 4, respectively); sadism in 'An Encounter' and 'A Painful Case' (see 2 and 5, respectively); and masturbation in 'An Encounter' (see 12).

Edwardian publishers and printers, however, were very much alive to things below the surface, and the delay in the publishing of *Dubliners* was in large part due to fear of prosecution for obscenity (although nobody objected to 'An Encounter' for a long time, much to Joyce's own surprise).

Here are some suggestions for further reading on gender and sexuality in Joyce: Suzette Henke, *James Joyce and the politics of desire* (London: Routledge, 1990); Richard Brown, *James Joyce and sexuality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); and Christine Froula, *Joyce and Woolf: gender theory and the literary text* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Reflexivity and intertextuality

a. These opening words might be a reference to *Inferno* 3,9, the famous last line of the inscription over the gate of hell, which is familiar to English speakers who have never read Dante in its translated form 'Abandon all hope ye who enter here'. Like T.S. Eliot's poem 'The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock', with its epigram from the *Inferno*, the reference invites the reader to experience the reading of the text as a descent into hell, to play Dante the Pilgrim to the author's Virgil. The hell in both cases is the modern world, Eliot's London, Joyce's Dublin. Although I find the idea of a network of Dantean reference in *Dubliners*

both interesting and convincing, Reynolds's evidence for the most part seems to me an example of what Rabinowitz is describing ironically in the epigraph to this section. It is not sufficient to find a phrase, much less a single word, that is also used in the other text (and this is complicated in the case of another text in a different language) to justify it as a significant intertextual connection. The mere presence of the word 'simony' in 'The Sisters', for example, is not sufficient to link it to the *Inferno*. However, the overall structure of *Dubliners* does seem to borrow something from Dante. There is in the sequence of stories a sense of slow descent, and the final image of a frozen landscape might well be an echo of the ninth circle of the *Inferno*. I have noted the correspondences that do seem convincing in the answers to 'The Sisters' question 4, 'Ivy Day' 2 (the last sentence) and 'The Dead' 4b and in the footnotes. Gabriel's use of the word 'spacious' (p. 286) is illuminated by the Dante connection. I refer those interested to Mary T. Reynolds, *Joyce and Dante: the shaping imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

b. The quotation functions on two levels: as voiced by the boy-narrator it is simply an expression of the boy's fascination with the old priest's disease and death; but if the 'I' here is read as referring to the author himself, we can see it as a reflexive statement, one about the text's own construction. In this second reading, the implied author admits a certain unhealthiness in his interest in the subject (a subject he will develop relentlessly throughout *Dubliners*), a certain perversity in his fascination. This fascination with 'paralysis' and all it comes to signify in the book is on one level a fascination with death itself, his own death, and so at the beginning of the book we find the boy of 'The Sisters' leaning towards death just as Gabriel leans towards it at the end of the final story.

The description of the man's monologue in 'An Encounter' is reflexive in a similarly disturbing way. The paragraphs that describe the monologue imitate its style, repeating words and phrases in the same hypnotic way that the man is said to have done. This would be a simple case of imitative form, were the reader not aware that that particular narrative technique of repetition is used elsewhere in *Dubliners* (see 'An Encounter' question 2). As it is, and taken together with the reflexive implications of the quotation above, the implied author seems to shadow himself forth in these examples as a dangerous force, perverse, unhealthy, not to be trusted. This is not uncommon in really great literature: Shakespeare did it, so did Dickens. And Dante, in the *Inferno*, seems to being doing the same thing at the end of Canto 30.

Narrative technique

a. There are first-person narratives ('The Sisters' and 'Araby'): in both cases the narrator is a young boy and the narrative could be characterized as naïve. 'Eveline' is for the most part a third-person narrative restricted to a single character's viewpoint, and some might describe 'A Painful Case' that way too because the only character to whose thoughts we have access is Duffy, but the narrator is so acerbic in his presentation of Duffy that the narrative voice constitutes a viewpoint very different from that of Duffy himself. I would therefore include 'A Painful Case' among the stories narrated by an omniscient narrator: 'Two Gallants', 'The Boarding House', 'A Little Cloud', 'Clay', 'A Painful Case', 'A Mother' and 'The Dead'. Within this last category is a variety of uses of omniscient narration. 'The Boarding House' combines omniscient narration with narrative from the points of view of each of the main characters. In 'A Little Cloud' the omniscient narrator views events from Chandler's point of view, but his way of viewing is very different from Chandler's (see 'A Little Cloud' question 2). In 'Two Gallants', 'Clay', 'A Painful Case' and 'A Mother', the narrative mode is almost uninterrupted irony. 'The Dead', written later and with all the earlier stories in mind, constitutes a case on its own. Although there is a fair amount of irony in the narration of 'The Dead', I would not characterize it as ironic in the same way as the four stories cited above. Perhaps the supreme irony of the piece is that a party, a festive occasion, an exhibition of Irish hospitality, is narrated from a point of view that sees the whole merry affair through a lens of death. The irony, then, is not primarily aimed at individual characters, as was the case in earlier stories, but at life itself. The characters, drinking, dancing, joking, eating, are not aware that they are dying, nor do they see themselves as the living dead. But the reader, in the grip of the narrator, is forced by many little details (not least the title) to see the characters in these ways. The sense in which the epiphany can be seen as a single revelation shared by reader and character is that Gabriel is brought to see himself as the reader and narrator have seen him and his companions throughout the story and that this way of seeing himself is presented as no longer menacing and grotesque but as poetic and rather seductive (for more divided readings of the epiphany see questions 2 and 7a).

b. Answers will depend on how students interpret the phrase 'scrupulous meanness'. The most likely reading is that he wrote it with a careful minimalism, stripping the stories down to their bare essentials, eliminating unnecessary explanation, background, editorial comment, description or figures of speech. The choice of 'scrupulous' might even indicate that he sees this minimalism as a matter of honour and moral obligation. This reading would lead us to expect a prose like Hemingway's, and to search for examples of sentences without embellishment, such as the last sentence of 'Two Gallants', the first sentence of 'The Boarding House', the last sentence of 'A Painful Case' etc.

However, one could read ‘meanness’ as a lack of generosity in things other than literary embellishment – in the delineation of character, for example. The rest of the sentence could be seen as supporting both readings: ‘to alter in the presentment’ might be the literary minimalism discussed above, but ‘to deform’ could support a reading of ‘scrupulous meanness’ as a refusal to encourage or create sympathy for the characters. Thus the rather sinister description of Maria in ‘Clay’ (‘Maria was a very, very small person indeed but she had a very long nose and a very long chin’) encourages ridicule or repulsion rather than sympathy. Similarly, in ‘The Boarding House’, Doran’s thought about Polly – ‘She was a little vulgar; sometimes she said *I seen* and *If I had’ve known*.’ – tends to undermine the reader’s sympathy for him by exposing his narrow-mindedness and snobbery. There are very few sympathetic adult characters in *Dubliners*. We sympathize with Eveline, and the narrator does not undermine our sympathy, but she is rendered as paralysed to the point of no longer seeming human. Mrs Sinico of ‘A Painful Case’ is not ‘deformed’ because the narrator is too busy lavishing his ‘scrupulous meanness’ on Duffy. Gabriel of ‘The Dead’ is perhaps the most sympathetic character in the sense that he is a fully-human agent with strengths and weaknesses with which the reader can identify, but he does not escape the ridicule and disparagement of his narrator until the end of the story, and some critics see even in the ending a disparagement of Gabriel.

Another possible meaning of ‘scrupulous meanness’ is Joyce’s refusal to dramatize. Like Jane Austen (and it is rare that one can make a valid comparison between the two) he prefers to keep action off stage. In ‘The Boarding House’, for example, the crucial scenes (between Polly and her mother, between Doran and Mrs Mooney) are not dramatized. This method of narrating the story is extremely understated: the potential for drama, let alone melodrama, is studiously ignored.

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