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The Cat's Meow: *Ulysses*, Animals, and the Veterinary Gaze

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In the *Birth of the Clinic*, Michel Foucault highlights a new way of apprehending human bodies, of measuring, knowing, treating, and simultaneously constituting them.¹ Tracing the development of medical perception as it emerged in the eighteenth century, Foucault illuminates the “medical gaze,” the “opening up of the concrete individual, for the first time in Western history, to the language of rationality, that major event in the relationship of man to himself and of language to things” (xiv). Foucault exposes the authoritative and supposedly empirical gaze of Enlightenment science as a form of perception shaped by historically specific constellations of knowledge and power. He demonstrates how culture, ideology, and history powerfully produce the gaze that imagines, constitutes, and controls human bodies in a clinical setting.

During the nineteenth century, a similar revolution in perception took place with respect to the bodies of animals. They were exposed to the language of rationality too and were apprehended through a new lens that, borrowing from Foucault, I call the “veterinary gaze.” Veterinary science became professionalized, and veterinarians were given new authority as scientists. As Susan D. Jones notes in *Valuing Animals*, “[t]he veterinary sciences and veterinary medicine sought to apply a scientific intellectual framework to understanding the bodies, behaviors, abilities, and commercial uses of animals. . . . The agricultural colleges, the federal government’s meat inspection service, the horse-racing industry, pet owners—all depended on veterinarians to teach, judge, and medicate.”² For animals, as for humans, this rationalizing, sometimes even vivisectioning,³ scientific gaze was a technology of knowledge, power, and control. Jones argues, “By studying the ‘very nature’ of domestic animals’ bodies and behaviors, veterinary scientists have claimed a position of primacy in judging how these animals should be used and valued” (2).

This revolution in how animals were perceived was not solely motivated by disinterested scientific concern or by an ethical interest in the welfare of animals as such but was deeply shaped by politics and culture. Veterinary medicine in Britain had always been enmeshed in nationalist and economic matters. The Veterinary College of London,

the first of its kind in England, was founded in 1791. It grew out of a meeting of the Odiham Agricultural Society of Hampshire in 1785, from a motion that argued for improvements to the existing farriery culture by studying animals scientifically:

Farriery, as commonly practiced, is conducted without principle of science and greatly to the injury to the noblest and most useful of animals. That the improvement of Farriery established on a study of the Anatomy, diseases and cure of cattle particularly Horses, Cows and Sheep, will be an essential benefit to Agriculture and will greatly improve some of the most important branches of national commerce, such as Wool and Leather.⁴

The complicity of veterinary science with the economic use of animals and national self-interest is clear in this motion. Just as the medical gaze instrumentally constitutes and controls human bodies, so does the veterinary gaze instrumentally constitute and control animal bodies. Our knowledge about animal bodies is inseparable from how we use these bodies, whether for agricultural, sporting, economic, nationalistic, or even, in the case of companion animals, affective ends.⁵

Like Foucault's medical gaze, the veterinary gaze is also inseparable from language and discourse, only perhaps more so, since this gaze founds itself precisely in the distinction between speaking and not speaking. We speak, and animals do not.⁶ While human subjects may strategically challenge or contest the discursive power of the medical gaze, animals do not speak back to the veterinary gaze at all. It accustoms humans to speak for animals without being spoken back to. Nevertheless, veterinarians studied the vocal cords of animals with keen interest. In feline anatomy, for example, a distinction was made between "false" and "true" vocal cords; the former are used for purring while the latter kind "causes the voice" (see Figure 1).⁷ This gaze has profound consequences for the ways in which we imagine our place in the world in relation to other forms of life. This ability to maintain existing relationships between the human and animal also helps us to reproduce this world ideologically.

In this essay, I interpret *Ulysses* in relation to the veterinary gaze in two ways. First, I identify Bloom as the locus of this discourse in the narrative, set during an intense period of veterinary medicine's professionalization. Bloom has absorbed and been shaped by resulting changes in the perception of animals, and there are many instances in the text in which he reflects this cultural shift by looking at animals through veterinary eyes. From Bloom's encounter with his cat to the treatment of foot-and-mouth disease, the Ascot race, and beyond, *Ulysses* reflects the roles of veterinary discourse and its effect on

human representations of animals.

Second, I argue that Joyce's representational techniques seek to deconstruct the authority of this discourse by challenging the barriers it maintains between humans and animals. Joyce's intervention, however, is necessarily a modest one. This is because the extraordinary language acts by which *Ulysses* redefines the representation of humans and animals simultaneously reinforce the precise linguistic basis that maintains the barrier. This problem leaves *Ulysses*—like any text that would scrutinize human and animal relationships—at an impasse when it attempts to expose the veterinary gaze through audacious acts of language. Language, after all, stands as the very barrier upon which a long philosophical and scientific tradition asserts the difference between human and animals, putting each in its place.⁸ It is thus difficult, or perhaps impossible, to write about animals without, at the same time, reasserting the traditional division and coming to the same impasse between humans and animals.

This conclusion may sadden us, since it suggests that we are paradoxically isolated or penned off from animals by the very pen that we would need to overcome that isolation.⁹ The final component of my argument, however, is that *Ulysses* effects a productive sadness which, to some extent, redraws the divide between humans and animals, but the mode by which this works has much more to do with silence than language. Specifically, the sadness stereotypically associated with animals because of their lack of speech can be connected to Bloom's mourning for his silent son Rudy. Rudy's association with animals is reinforced by the tangled interconnections of pediatric and veterinary medicine in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries that condition ways of looking at speechless animals and children. Rudy, in other words, is the novel's most mourned animal.

While Joyce reaches the linguistic impasse that representations of animals must, he responds by creatively redistributing the sadness or melancholy traditionally attributed to animals in such a way that these emotions are instead shared between animals and humans. This spilling over of the sadness of the animals into the human allows *Ulysses* to forge extralinguistic connections between humans and animals. Thus, my thesis about animals in *Ulysses* will not only concern unsuccessful strategies of linguistic subversion but will also reveal meaningful modes of extralinguistic emotional redistribution.

Practicing Literary Criticism on the Factory Farm

Before addressing *Ulysses*, let us consider ways in which the veterinary gaze may shape literary criticism itself, for none of us is beyond its ideological effects. Is it possible to speak of an ethics of

using animals, of transporting and mobilizing them in literary critical arguments? Does the "Joyce Industry" resemble a factory farm, converting animals into figures as slaughterhouses process animals into food? After all, we commonly claim that animals sustain the themes of the novel or support the figural life of the characters. For instance, in "Horses Versus Cattle in *Ulysses*," Friedhelm Rathjen argues, "Exactly this—copulation without population—is what the horse-power man Boylan is exercising with Molly, but hospitable Bloom is the true owner of the horn—the horn of the bull and the horn of fertility."¹⁰ In such an argument, Boylan and Bloom are endowed with the characteristics of horses or cattle in a way that might help us to better understand one's unarticulated "victory" over the other, just as Throwaway upsets Sceptre in the Ascot race. But while this may help to elucidate matters of theme and human character in *Ulysses*, it also reenacts the instrumental forms of animal consumption so common as to be invisible.¹¹

Critics consume animals with startling consistency in the support of projects that would otherwise seem incommensurable with or even opposed to each other. For instance, Bernard Benstock considers animals in the first episode as a motif and as a force of formal unity: "Animal imagery gives the 'Telemachus' chapter its organic unity and paves the way for the augmentation of one of the major motifs of *Ulysses*."¹² In a reading strongly opposed to the organic unity that Benstock asserts, Vincent Cheng argues, "I would like to posit Joyce's use of images of horses and Horseness as a site that both inscribes and problematizes the binary and dialogic opposition between knowable essences and indeterminate subjectivities."¹³ Cheng reads animal imagery as an area that destabilizes meaning in *Ulysses*, rather than unifying it. Thus, the tendency to use animals instrumentally in the form of images is unexpectedly prior to the literary critical cleavages that we imagine separate formalism from various forms of post-structuralism. It is not simply that animal imagery in *Ulysses* produces antithetical critical interpretations, as many contested tropes in *Ulysses* do. Rather, the literary critical endeavor seems always to begin only after actual animals have already been processed into consumable tropes.

Such modes of reading displace animals in the very process of extracting some use from them, processing them into images. In this sense, literary criticism is in danger of recasting as scholarship the massive but largely invisible processing and consumption of animals that our culture practices. What would happen if, instead, we placed animals at the center of our exegesis of the novel? In order to do this, we would have to do what Bloom does with his cat—to "[w]onder what I look like to her" (*U* 4.28-29).¹⁴

Bloom and the Veterinary Gaze

Ulysses is an epic of living with animals. In one moment, "Mr Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls," and in the next he lays out "[m]ilk for the pussens" (*U* 4.01-02, 24). Later, Bloom offers the cat the "bloodsmeared" wrapping paper of his breakfast kidney (*U* 4.277). Animals are constantly here and there, central and peripheral. Few novels represent more richly the extent to which modern life consists of relationships between people and animals, a life both comprised of and contingent upon these relationships. In *Ulysses*, animals are food and pets, livestock and gulls on the quay; they lie dead on the beach, and they draw funeral carriages; they win races; they pose public-health concerns (foot-and-mouth disease); and they are something into which men can be transformed (Circe's swine). They are closely associated with fertility, gestation, birth, and babies ("Oxen of the Sun"), and they even bear witness for Bloom when his character is on trial: the gulls to whom he fed Banbury cake at lunchtime offer evidence later—"Kaw kave kankury kake" (*U* 15.686). The novel seems to know that animals have something to observe about us.

Ulysses consistently attempts to represent animals in ways that resist or destabilize the opposition between humans and animals. For example, Gerty MacDowell draws a firm line between these categories when she thinks of "grandpapa Giltrap's lovely dog Garryowen that almost talked it was so human" (*U* 13.232-33). The line between animal and human, as Gerty realizes, is drawn between talking and not talking. But from the previous episode, we recall Garryowen's "doggerel," which is best "spoken somewhat slowly and indistinctly in a tone suggestive of suppressed rancour" (*U* 12.738-39). Thus, by the time Gerty thinks about Garryowen "almost talking" and "so human," the reader has already heard Garryowen recite poetry. By itself, this binary division would be unremarkable and virtually invisible, as commonplace as some of her other ideas, but the preceding doggerel makes the virtually invisible not only visible but less inevitable as well. Gerty draws a simple line, but the sequence of the novel has already erased it.

Because *Ulysses* uses language, the very marker of opposition, in order to destabilize the opposition, it also confronts the limits of representing animals. Animal-studies critics have identified a number of important forms and generic conventions that have characterized the representation of animals. Teresa Mangum calls special atten-

tion to the representation of animals in children's literature, imperial adventure fiction, and science fiction, arguing, "[i]n each of these forms of art and literature, the human genre tames the animal with an anthropomorphic whip."¹⁵ In children's genres in particular, animals have often been made to speak. Thus we might think of Joyce's technique in "Nausicaa" as intervening in the representation of animals by confronting two genres with one another—talking dog, women's journal—so that they deconstruct each other. Representational possibilities such as these explain why Mangum argues that "animal alterity also bites back" to challenge "imprisoning, anthropocentric expectations" (157), because something of the radical otherness of animals may also find representation.

Ulysses, then, is a day-long look at how its characters see animals, though, as Bloom knows, to see them can also be to see oneself: "Wonder what I look like to her," he thinks as we see him in that first significant encounter in the novel (*U* 4.28-29). Joyce's decision to introduce his major character through an interspecies encounter is a stroke of narrative economy. Before we witness Bloom in a human encounter, we have already learned through the ways in which he gazes at his cat that he is compassionate, empathetic, full of folk nonsense and scientific proclivities, capable of misreading behavior, and inclined toward at least mild masochism. Above all, we realize that "Leo"-pold possesses the proverbially feline trait reputed to have killed the cat: curiosity.

Indeed, Bloom is the novel's locus of the veterinary gaze, refracted through all that is at once ordinary and peculiar about him. In "Cyclops," his veterinary interests are explicitly parodied. Joe tells the Citizen about Bloom's interruption of a conversation about foot-and-mouth disease, with "Bloom coming out with his sheepdip for the scab and a hoose drench for coughing calves and the guaranteed remedy for timber tongue" (*U* 12.833-35). Joe accuses Bloom, however, of basing his veterinary knowledge on very limited experience: "Because he was up one time in a knacker's yard" (*U* 12.835). Indeed, Bloom is parodied for having quite unusual, even singular, veterinary knowledge: "Mister Knowall. Teach your grandmother how to milk ducks" (*U* 12.838). His sympathy for the suffering of animals is parodied as well: "Humane methods. Because the poor animals suffer and experts say and the best known remedy that doesn't cause pain to the animal and on the sore spot administer gently. Gob, he'd have a soft hand under a hen" (*U* 12.843-45).

Ulysses is an epic of living with animals, but it is also an epic of *not* living with or seeing them, of the modern city's intensifying effacement of their presence. Bloom, in many ways a utopian thinker, sometimes applies his imagination to the problem of animals in the city. When animals crossing the road for slaughter detain the funeral

carriage, he muses, "I can't make out why the corporation doesn't run a tramline from the parkgate to the quays. . . . All those animals could be taken in trucks down to the boats" (*U* 6.400-02). Because it would make slaughter less visible, his tramline for animals complements his plan for "municipal funeral trams" (*U* 6.406) to transport the dead, since both animals bred for food and death must increasingly be hidden and forgotten in the modern city.¹⁶ Yet *Ulysses* remembers slaughter and suffering through Bloom himself, as when he contemplates reasons for vegetarianism in "Lestrygonians":

Pain to the animal too. Pluck and draw fowl. Wretched brutes there at the cattlemarket waiting for the poleaxe to split their skulls open. Moo. Poor trembling calves. Meh. Staggering bob. Bubble and squeak. Butchers' buckets wobbly lights. Give us that brisket off the hook. Plup. Rawhead and bloody bones. Flayed glasseyed sheep hung from their haunches, sheepsnouts bloodypapered snivelling nosejam on sawdust. (*U* 8.722-27)

Ulysses demonstrates a typical contradiction of the veterinary gaze: on the same day, Bloom can sympathetically believe that the meat industries cause great suffering yet also believe that it should be hidden through technological innovations such as his imagined tramline.

By looking closely at Bloom's interaction with his cat, we can distinguish between various strata and components of his veterinary gaze.¹⁷ His ways of looking at his black cat are conditioned by the opening of animal bodies to a supposedly empirical gaze as well as by the assumption that animal bodies can be properly diagnosed through pure reason: "Mr Bloom watched curiously, kindly the lithe black form. Clean to see: the gloss of her sleek hide, the white button under the butt of her tail, the green flashing eyes" (*U* 4.21-23). The cat appears healthy. Apparently Bloom is adept at hearing her, for the narrative distinguishes quite clinically between feline utterances: "Mkgnao!," "Mrkgnao!," "Mrkgnao!," and "Gurrhr!" (*U* 4.16, 25, 32, 38).¹⁸ Consistent with the veterinary gaze, however, the supposedly empirical slips quickly into the territory of culture and ideology: "Wonder is it true if you clip them they can't mouse after. Why? They shine in the dark, perhaps, the tips. Or kind of feelers in the dark, perhaps" (*U* 4.40-42). The ideological element here consists of Bloom's rationalized projection upon anatomy (whiskers) and a usefulness of the cat to the human household (mousing). Similarly, Bloom makes rational assumptions about the form and functions of the cat's anatomy, based upon what he considers common sense: "Why are their tongues so rough? To lap better, all porous holes" (*U* 4.47-48).

Bloom, though, also sees his cat in ways that are highly influenced by his personality, and these concerns are folded into his gaze. Critics

have noted how his thoughts about the cat shift subtly into thoughts about Molly, facilitated by the attribution of feline qualities to human females but also by his masochistic fantasy of being punished.¹⁹ Thus, “[s]he understands all she wants to. Vindictive too. Cruel. Her nature. Curious mice never squeal. Seem to like it” (*U* 4.27-28). Bloom misinterprets the cat’s desires because he projects his feelings onto her. Feeling a postprandial “loosening of his bowels” (*U* 4.460), he contemplates the outhouse, and when he observes the cat sitting at the door, he takes it as a signal that he and the cat have the same idea in mind: “The cat, having cleaned all her fur, returned to the meat-stained paper, nosed at it and stalked to the door. She looked back at him, mewling. Wants to go out” (*U* 4.455-57). When Bloom opens the door, however, instead of going out, the cat bounds upstairs to “curl up in a ball” on Molly’s bed (*U* 4.469). Ironically, the cat intended to fulfill another of Bloom’s desires, to “[b]e near [Molly’s] ample bed-warmed flesh. Yes, yes” (*U* 4.238-39). Bloom will have to wait until the end of a long day to return to bed with Molly, and before that time both the cat and Blazes Boylan get the invitation that Bloom does not. Through the feline encounter, *Ulysses* demonstrates both Bloom’s veterinary gaze and the ideology that belies its empiricism.

Joyce’s decision to introduce Bloom and the cat together is also a stroke of thematic economy because the interspecies encounter foregrounds language and speechlessness. In the first scene of “Calypso,” language is highlighted by the speechlessness of the cat as Bloom contemplates and interacts with her. When he “[w]onder[s] what I look like to her,” his speculation initiates a fissure in the narrative that will run through its remainder. The novel bifurcates into a double narrative: a *Ulysses* that can be seen through human eyes, and a kind of shadow-*Ulysses* that gazes at the characters and events through the eyes of the animal other. The gaze of the cat doubles or repeats *Ulysses* with a difference, and from now on we can speak of two perspectives in this novel about language: one that uses language as an ever more refined tool for perceiving the world, animals included, and one that does not use language but stares silently back as an absolute other across the impasse of language. Let us turn then to this silent gaze in relation to Rudy and sadness.

***Ulysses* and the Redistribution of Sadness**

It is traditional to project sadness upon the speechless animal. Walter Benjamin discusses the postlapsarian ““deep sadness of nature”” and its connection with language: “Because she is mute, nature mourns. Yet the inversion of this proposition leads even further into the essence of nature; the sadness of nature makes her

mute."²⁰ Time and again, sadness reappears in our discourse about animals. Alice A. Kuzniar notes in *Melancholia's Dog* that our encounters with animals are often tinged with melancholy: "melancholia means that, however close we are to the canine pet, that closeness can never be enough and we are always conscious of the obliqueness and imperfection that govern our communion with it and, hence, of a fundamental muteness."²¹ It is on the emotional register of sadness that Joyce most interestingly innovates within animal discourse in his own attempt to come closer to the animal. He does so by opening the discourse of the sad animal so that it incorporates the human child as well. By making the sadness of animals something in which humans participate, and by redistributing the emotion, Joyce traverses the barrier between animals and humans in a way that acts of sheer linguistic daring cannot.

Ulysses builds a pattern of sadness that associates animals with children, imaginatively tying them to one another using suffering as the knot. Bloom makes this connection several times, as in "Hades" when he notices a bird in a tree: "A bird sat tamely perched on a poplar branch. Like stuffed. . . . Dead animal even sadder. Silly-Milly burying the little dead bird in the kitchen matchbox, a daisychain and bits of broken chainies on the grave" (*U* 6.949-53). Children and animals are associated again when Bloom judges adultery to be "less reprehensible than theft, highway robbery, cruelty to children and animals" (*U* 17.2182-83).

There are other ways in which we might think of children and animals as complexly connected. In fact, the veterinary gaze that Bloom reproduces might have operated in his life in ways he could hardly suspect in the case of his son Rudy. Veterinary medicine was central to the nascence of pediatric medicine in the early twentieth century, when Rudy was born and died. The developing field of pediatric medicine was considerably challenged, after all, by the fact that its patients could not speak. Speechless children were looked upon in the clinical setting just as animals were under the gaze of the veterinarian. According to the medical historian Jonathan Gillis, the growing importance at this time of physical examinations for establishing a patient history grew out of pediatric necessity, which itself was "reinforced by analogy to veterinary practice."²² For example, the physician James Frederic Goodhart of London's Evelina Hospital for Sick Children writes: "Yet there is not so very much difference between the student who has to investigate the diseases of children, and one who has to deal with those of the lower animals. In both cases the diagnosis will chiefly rest upon the doctor's personal observation and examination; in both it is intelligible speech that is wanted."²³ Because children lack speech, physical examination displaced patient history through the analogy to veterinary practice, and even in adult

practice patient history became simply another set of signs subject to the medical examination of the physician. When we appreciate this historical connection between pediatrics and veterinary medicine, the speechlessness of the little-mourned Rudy suddenly falls in the middle of the novel's discourse about animals, language, and sadness.

In a book in which even a cap and a fan can speak and in which a dog can write and recite poetry, Rudy Bloom is singularly speechless. Like the way in which Bloom gazes at his cat, he imagines Rudy as a corporeal surface requiring interpretation onto which he then projects religious and pseudo-scientific knowledge, as well as his persistent guilt about Rudy's death:

A dwarf's face, mauve and wrinkled like little Rudy's was. Dwarf's body, weak as putty, in a whitelined deal box. Burial friendly society pays. Penny a week for a sod of turf. Our. Little. Beggar. Baby. Meant nothing. Mistake of nature. If it's healthy it's from the mother. If not from the man. Better luck next time. (U 6.326-30)

Bloom tries to trace the path of Rudy's pathology, first to an inexplicable error of nature and then back to some fault in himself, drawing upon what Don Gifford and Robert J. Seidman gloss as "the ancient Jewish belief that the health of a child is a reflection on the virility of the male."²⁴ Bloom concedes that the signs of Rudy's imminent death were there from the first, but only the experienced gaze of the midwife could read them: "She knew from the first poor little Rudy wouldn't live" (U 4.418-19). If "Rudolph," as Gifford and Seidman note, is a name that stems from Old German "fame" (*hrothi*) and "wolf" (*vulf*), then we might imagine Rudy as the most important animal in *Ulysses* (79).

When Bloom imagines Rudy appearing in "Circe," it is as a speechless body that requires close inspection:

Against the dark wall a figure appears slowly, a fairy boy of eleven, a changeling, kidnapped, dressed in an Eton suit with glass shoes and a little bronze helmet, holding a book in his hand. He reads from right to left inaudibly, smiling, kissing the page. . . . [He] gazes, unseeing, into Bloom's eyes and goes on reading, kissing, smiling. He has a delicate mauve face. On his suit he has diamond and ruby buttons. In his free left hand he holds a slim ivory cane with a violet bowknot. A white lambkin peeps out of his waistcoat pocket. (U 15.4956-67)

The best way of understanding this moment is as a diagnostic or clinical scene. Rudy appears to Bloom and to readers as a body that must be interpreted.²⁵ All that we can know from this consultation with Rudy comes from external features. In this sense, the scene poses challenges akin to those of the pediatric diagnosis. But Rudy is not an infant any longer. At eleven years, a child can at least speak his

or her symptoms and give a case history. Because of Rudy's relative maturity, the scene more closely resembles a veterinary encounter. Bloom's gaze is thus that of the veterinarian; Rudy's is that of an animal, who "gazes, unseeing." Part 2 of *Ulysses* thus begins with Bloom's encounter with a lithe black cat and ends with his vision of a famous mauve wolf with the lambkin in its pocket. These two veterinary ends are fastened together by the white button under the cat's tail and the ruby button on Rudy's suit.

The only word uttered during this encounter is Rudy's name, which Bloom applies to the unrecognizable, speechless figure of his dead son. If it is a paradise to see one's son returned from the dead, then the scene replays Eden, where the naming of animals begins. In some ways, then, the scene is a happy one. Rudy smiles and seems healthy, though he does not appear to see Bloom. But if it is also a sad scene, then naming is again an appropriate speech act. Derrida writes, "[N]aming involves announcing a death to come in the surviving of a ghost, the longevity of a name that survives whoever carries that name. Whoever receives a name feels mortal or dying, precisely because the name seeks to save him, to call him and thus assure his survival" (20). We confer names on children and on animals. It is an Edenic act because we bring each into being through the name, but it is sad because it guarantees that the name will outlive its bearer. In a sense, all we can do for animals is name them, making them mortal and capable of being mourned. This is what Bloom has done for Rudy, who exists as an eleven-year-old in "Circe" only because he has a name with which to haunt the living.

Molly's soliloquy draws sadness, Rudy, and animals together when she considers the question of grieving for her son: "I was in mourning that's 11 years ago now yes hed be 11 though what was the good in going into mourning for what was neither one thing nor the other the first cry was enough for me I heard the deathwatch too ticking in the wall of course he insisted hed go into mourning for the cat" (*U* 18.1306-10). Molly seems skeptical about grieving "for what was neither one thing nor the other," presumably meaning that Rudy, though a living being, could barely be considered enough of a person that one could mourn him. This gets to the heart of how *Ulysses* redistributes the sadness associated with animals in order to share it with humans. Molly's idea that grief for Rudy would be like mourning an animal becomes clear when she remembers that Bloom "insisted hed go into mourning for the cat." As we understand by now, Bloom is a cat person while Molly seems wary of felines, perhaps to some extent because she identifies with them: "shes as bad as a woman always licking and lecking" and "staring like that when she sits at the top of the stairs so long and listening as I wait always" (*U* 18.935-36, 937-38). In fact, Molly seems to prefer dogs. She even conceived

Rudy after she became aroused watching “two dogs up in her behind in the middle of the naked street” (*U* 18.1446-47). How unusual that copulating dogs should finally result here in a cat.

This equation of Rudy with a cat makes explicit the chain of association that *Ulysses* builds between children and animals. How can one mourn the loss of a speechless little being? Drawing from Sigmund Freud’s theories of mourning and melancholia,²⁶ Kuzniar argues that the melancholia of pet owners derives from their inability to mourn a loss they are ashamed or otherwise unable to acknowledge (7-8). *Ulysses* could not be *Ulysses* if in the previous eleven years the Blooms had acknowledged and fully mourned their loss of what was neither one thing nor the other. What questions cut closer to the emotional center of *Ulysses* than these: is Rudy human or animal, and how has this dilemma affected mourning and marriage in 7 Eccles Street? *Ulysses* is an infinitely complex response to the irreducible problem of how to mourn a being that was given a name but never spoke. As we have seen, language acts may finally only reinforce the barrier between humans and animals because they affirm a linguistic power that serves to constitute the very barrier *Ulysses* attempts to topple. Therefore, perhaps no procedure is more powerful than the way the novel uses the silent intersections between pediatrics and veterinary medicine in order to redistribute the stereotypical sadness of animals among both human and animal, now a little less “one thing nor the other.” *Ulysses* reclaims the sadness of the animals for representation and redistributes it so that it is affectively shared by humans and animals, substantially challenging the divide between the two.

NOTES

I would like to thank Vike Martina Plock for adopting this feral piece and Roddy the cat for gazing silently at me as I wrote it.

¹ Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Vintage Books, 1994). Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

² Susan D. Jones, *Valuing Animals: Veterinarians and Their Patients in Modern America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2003), p. 6. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

³ Although vivisection is peripheral to this essay, it should be noted that Joyce engaged the controversial practice of vivisection several times in his work. In his early essay, “The Study of Languages,” he argues against “heartless science” by invoking the vivisectionist, Dr. Benjulia of Wilkie Collins’s novel *Heart and Science: A Story of the Present Time* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1883): “Let it not be our case to stand like him, crushed and broken, aloof from sympathy at the door of his laboratory, while the maimed animals flee away terrified between his legs, into the darkness” (*CW* 28). In *Stephen Hero*, Stephen argues, “The modern spirit is vivisective,” claiming that the

ancient method investigated phenomena with the distorting “lantern of tradition,” whereas the “modern method examines territory by the light of day” (SH 186). Finally, in *Ulysses*, Mrs. Bellingham suggests two cruel punishments for Bloom: “Geld him. Vivisect him” (U 15.1105).

⁴ See Robert H. Dunlop and David J. Williams, *Veterinary Medicine: An Illustrated History* (St. Louis: Mosby, 1996), p. 344.

⁵ “It is all too evident,” Jacques Derrida writes, “that in the course of the last two centuries . . . traditional forms of treatment of the animal have been turned upside down by the joint developments of zoological, ethological, biological, and genetic forms of *knowledge*, which remain inseparable from *techniques* of intervention into their object”—see Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, trans. David Willis (New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 2008), p. 25. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

⁶ Animal-studies scholars such as Harriet Ritvo and Kathleen Kete have demonstrated and interpreted the voluminous range of discourses about animals generated during the nineteenth century, yet, as Ritvo observes, in *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1987), p. 5, within this defining discourse the animals themselves “never talk back.” See also Kete, *The Beast in the Boudoir: Petkeeping in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1994).

⁷ Jacob Ellsworth Reighard and Herbert Spencer Jennings, *Anatomy of the Cat* (New York: Henry Holt, 1901), pp. 246, 249.

⁸ Derrida writes, “*Animal* is a word that men have given themselves the right to give. . . . All the philosophers we will investigate . . . say the same thing: the animal is deprived of language. Or, more precisely, of response, of a response that could be precisely and rigorously distinguished from a reaction; of the right and power to ‘respond,’ and hence of so many other things that would be proper to man” (p. 32).

⁹ Shall we say that Joyce wages a “penisolate war” (FW 3.06)?

¹⁰ Friedhelm Rathjen, “Horses Versus Cattle in *Ulysses*,” *Joyce Studies Annual*, 12 (2001), 174.

¹¹ One could argue that *Ulysses* itself encourages metaphorical readings that, say, identify Bloom with Throwaway. This would then be another way of understanding how the veterinary gaze is both manifested in texts and reproduced by critics.

¹² Bernard Benstock, “Telemachus,” *James Joyce’s “Ulysses”: Critical Essays*, ed. Clive Hart and David Hayman (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1974), p. 10.

¹³ Vincent Cheng, “White Horse, Dark Horse: Joyce’s Allhorse of Another Color,” *Joyce Studies Annual*, 2 (1991), 101.

¹⁴ I cannot resist observing how similarly Bloom and Derrida encounter their cats in the morning. The first gaze that Derrida meets in the morning is that of his cat. The cat gazes at him, and Derrida interprets her desires to be fed or to have a door opened. The cat asks to come into the bathroom with him, and there Derrida feels ashamed as he stands naked: “The animal looks at us, and we are naked before it. Thinking perhaps begins there” (p. 29).

¹⁵ Teresa Mangum, “Narrative Dominion or The Animals Write Back? Animal Genres in Literature and the Arts,” *A Cultural History of Animals in the Age of Empire*, ed. Kete (Oxford: Berg, 2007), p. 157. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

¹⁶ Derrida writes, "No one can deny seriously any more, or for very long, that men do all they can in order to dissimulate this cruelty [toward animals] or to hide it from themselves in order to organize on a global scale the forgetting or misunderstanding of this violence [against animals], which some would compare to the worst cases of genocide" (pp. 25-26). I like Derrida's cautious use of this image: "One should neither abuse the figure of genocide nor too quickly consider it explained away" (p. 26).

¹⁷ Cheryl Herr gives an elegant reading of Bloom's perception of his cat, arguing "[e]ven when *Ulysses* deals with animals, natural behavior is subsumed by cultural vision"—see Herr, "Art and Life, Nature and Culture, *Ulysses*," *Joyce's "Ulysses": The Larger Perspective*, ed. Robert D. Newman and Weldon Thornton (Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press, 1987), pp. 27-28.

¹⁸ Hugh Kenner, in "*Ulysses*," rev. ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1987), pp. 67, 66, takes these precise transcriptions of the cat's sounds as evidence of a virtuosic Arranger who exists beyond the "colourless primary narrator": "Who transcribed the voice of Bloom's cat with such precision? Certainly not Bloom, who utters a commonplace 'Miaos.'" This particular example, however, is not persuasive evidence for Kenner's Arranger. Although Bloom cannot or does not imitate the exact sounds of his cat, this does not mean that he does not observe and listen to her keenly. Indeed, his close attention to and curiosity about the cat suggest that he would be *very* likely to register the subtle variations of her voice.

¹⁹ See, for instance, Kenner's observation that, upon rereading *Ulysses*, "we may think we glimpse Molly *femme fatale*, behind 'she' [the cat], and Bloom's masochism in the unsquealing mouse" (p. 45). Similarly William York Tindall, in *A Reader's Guide to James Joyce* (1959; Syracuse: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1995), p. 153, suggests that the exchange "hints his masochism."

²⁰ Walter Benjamin, "On Language as Such and on the Language of Man," *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1996), 1:72, 73.

²¹ Alice A. Kuzniar, in *Melancholia's Dog* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 11, continues, "But the ideal of crossing that barrier motivates the writers and artists [treated in this book]: they attempt to come closer to the animal, all while melancholically despairing at not being able to do so. Most important, their art reflects on this impasse." Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

²² Jonathan Gillis, "The History of the Patient History since 1850," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 80 (Fall 2006), 509n.

²³ James Frederic Goodhart, *A Guide to the Diseases of Children* (London: Churchill, 1885), p. 2, and quoted in Gillis (p. 509n).

²⁴ Don Gifford, with Robert J. Seidman, "*Ulysses*" *Annotated: Notes for James Joyce's "Ulysses"* rev. ed. (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1988), p. 111. Further references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

²⁵ Given the unconscious environment of the episode, Rudy is perhaps projected by Bloom as well.

²⁶ Sigmund Freud, *Mourning and Melancholia*, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey et al. (London: Hogarth Press, 1914-1916), 14:239-60.

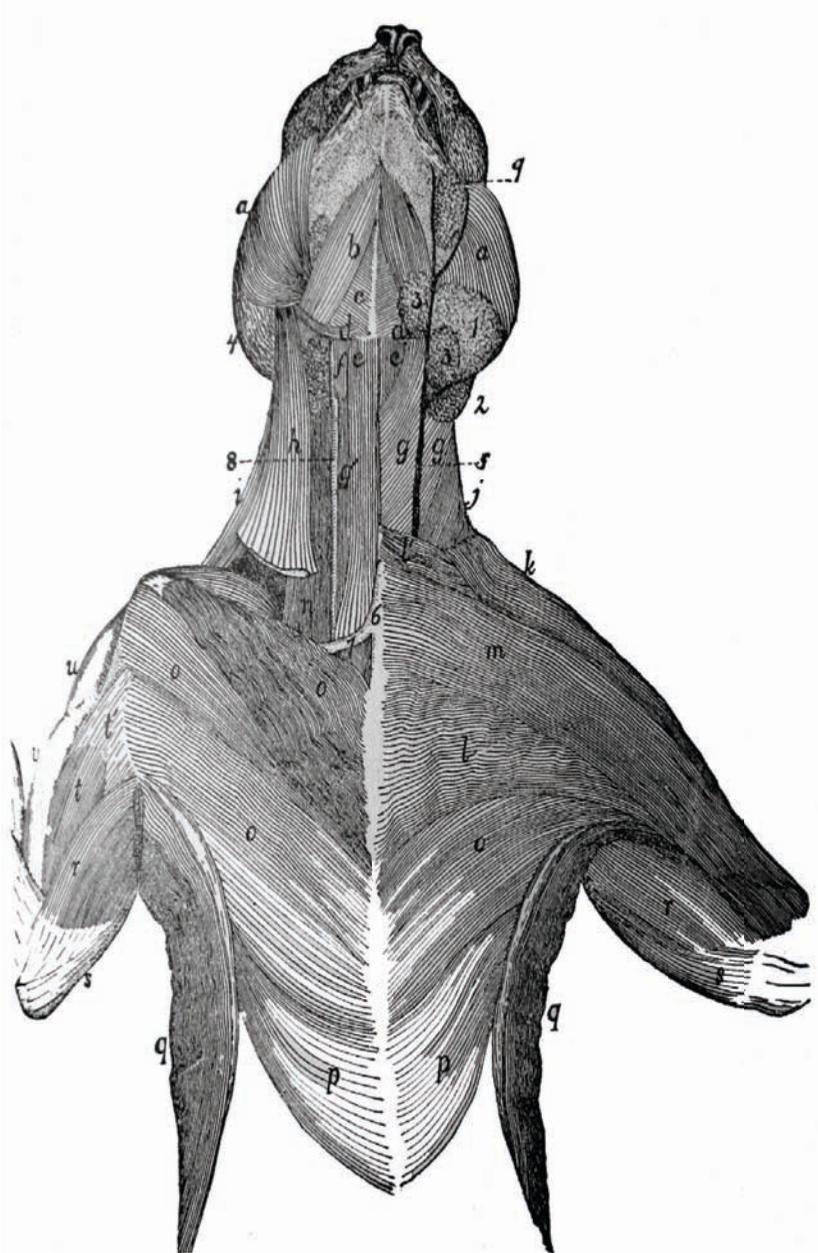


Figure 1. Louise Burrigge Jennings, illus., "Muscles on the Ventral Surface of the Thorax, Neck, and Head," Jacob Reighard and H. S. Jennings, *Anatomy of the Cat* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1901), p. 109.