

*ENGENDERED TROPE IN JOYCE'S DUBLINERS* by Earl G. Ingersoll. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996. xv + 193 pages. \$29.95.

*Engendered Trope in Joyce's Dubliners* is, in a significant way, a "return to Lacan," states Earl Ingersoll in the "Preface" to his book on Joyce's stories. There have been numerous Lacanian approaches to Joyce in the last decade, from Sheldon Brivic's *The Veil of Signs: Joyce, Lacan, and Perception*, through the "Joyce Between Genders: Lacanian Readings" issue of the *James Joyce Quarterly* (29 [1991]), to Garry Leonard's *Reading Dubliners Again: A Lacanian Perspective*. Ingersoll does not really position himself in any particular relationship to these studies beyond acknowledging Brivic's work on Lacan and stating that his own reading of *Dubliners* departs from Leonard's. It will be left to individual readers to decide whether a "return to Lacan" was, indeed, needed.

Ingersoll's goal is to explore "the more linguistically oriented Lacan and the value of Roman Jakobson's legacy for Lacanian psychoanalysis, especially Lacanian conclusions concerning the central tropes of metaphor and metonymy." Ingersoll's readers, in addition to having a working familiarity with Lacanian thought, will also have to appreciate the readings of Lacan by Jane Gallop, Naomi Shor, and, most importantly, Luce Irigaray, since it is her reading of Lacan that informs Ingersoll's thesis about metaphoric/metonymic configurations in Joyce's stories. Ingersoll incorporates Irigaray's thesis that Lacan privileges metaphor (mobility, empowerment, and thus, masculinity) over metonymy (confinement, vulnerability, and thus, femininity) as he plots Joyce into this equation, pointing to the metaphoric/metonymic gender constructions in *Dubliners*. In these terms, the patriarchal and masculine site, Dublin, contains not only vulnerable women like Eveline, but also such (womanly?) men as James Duffly, Bob Doran or Little Chandler, who "embrace the confinement of their narrow rooms." Although, as Ingersoll asserts, men in *Dubliners* are portrayed as venturers-out more frequently than are women, women, too, "seek to become 'travelers' of a kind," even if no woman is seen to succeed. This bit of contradiction is misleading for, in the six chapters that follow his "Preface," Ingersoll engages in a series of thorough readings that confirm this assertion, as they yield a variety of complex conclusions about gendered (and ungendered) behaviors he finds in *Dubliners*.

Whereas Chapter One provides the context for reading Joyce in terms of the earlier, "linguistically oriented" Lacan, Chapters Two through Six are devoted strictly to Joyce's stories. Ingersoll's grouping of the stories is quite interesting. Since the central interest of his study is the relationship between gender and trope, Ingersoll identifies roughly "masculine" and "feminine" behaviors as he describes sites where these gendered behaviors are played out:

the “house” in Chapters Two and Three (with largely feminine influences, literally and figuratively imprisoning adolescent boys and women) and the “public house,” or masculine domain, in Chapter Four. A reversal of these gendered roles is considered in Chapter Five, in which “home-bound men” are juxtaposed to “traveling women.” In Chapter Six special consideration is given to “The Dead,” a choice justified by the story’s length and complexity. And whereas Ingersoll’s analysis of “The Dead” is insightful enough in pulling together of scholarship and integrating it with his own reading, it is also in this last chapter in which one sees a most glaring absence of Lacanian apparatus, with only what seems to be a gratuitous mention of Lacan, Irigaray, and Gallop on the penultimate page of the book.

Overall, however, *Engendered Trope in Joyce’s Dubliners* offers a set of well-thought-through readings, grounded in solid research, with particularly illuminating insights into the gendered economies of places encoded in Joyce’s stories—certainly a great addition to the classroom as a most helpful teaching tool.

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