

The Beatles' Magical Mystery Tour Movie:

A Guide to the Magic and Mystery

by

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The Beatles were one of the most creative musical groups in the history of Rock and Roll. During the period that the Beatles played together as a band they made five films in addition to their voluminous output of original music.

“A Hard Day’s Night” (1964) is a frivolous story constructed to showcase popular early songs by the Beatles. The title of the film and theme song derives from a phrase used by Ringo: “It’s been a hard day’s night,” a good description of a musician’s gigs and bizarre work schedule.

The Beatles followed this first film effort with “Help!” (1965), another video shot to showcase songs, this time within an elaborate spoof about a mystical ring that somehow gets stuck on Ringo’s finger.

“Yellow Submarine” (1968) is a much more complex work in the form of a feature length cartoon designed to showcase the Sergeant Pepper Lonely Hearts Club Band album and the hippy phase they had entered. The story line is simple, but contains complex psychedelic mind-shifting multiple levels of content with the metaphor of a yellow submarine (Planet Earth?) that voyages through the subconscious mind to explore the nature of Lonely Hearts and why they feel “blue”. In such a world there is NO love or understanding. The apples from the Tree of Life simply bonk people into a petrified state of unconsciousness. The Beatles reveal a quality of unconditional love that brings everything alive in the moment of NOW. Music is the secret key that can unlock this energy from deep in human awareness to come alive in the moment of NOW. When you hear good music, you KNOW you are alive and everybody present shares it with you ALL TOGETHER NOW in the vibrant moment.

In 1970 they released their final effort in collaborative film-making: “Let It Be”. This is a sequence of studio sessions that shows the Beatles finally simply doing what they always did the best – making music together – although the film also ironically serves as a requiem for the Beatles as a band, and you can feel the tensions that are pulling them apart. Especially poignant is John with Yoko now as his ever-present

shadow, and the plaintive voice of the highly under-presented George, “OK, just tell me what to play and I’ll play it, or I won’t play at all.” Today only Paul and Ringo survive to enjoy life beyond 64.

Each of these four movies was accessible to the mindset of the general audience and well received, even though “Yellow Submarine” was done in a very avant garde psychedelic style. The one film with its corresponding album that confused and even irritated both Beatle fans and the media was “The Magical Mystery Tour” (1967).

Typical headlines from the press at the time the movie first aired were, “So We Boobed, Says Beatle Paul” (Don Short, Daily Mirror, 28 Dec., 1967), “Magic Leaves Beatles with Mighty Flop” (James Thomas, Daily Express, 11 Dec., 1967), “Even Beethoven Wasn’t Great All the Time” (Robin Turner, Daily Express, 28 Dec., 1967), and “Beatles’ Mystery Tour Baffles Viewers” (Kenelm Jenour, Daily Mirror, 27 Dec., 1967).

One reason for the relatively poor public response was that the film was first shown in a black and white version for some unknown reason. The missing color rendered some of the important effects in the film virtually invisible. Critics have also suggested several factors that contributed to the failure of the movie to achieve popularity when the Beatles were never known to fail in any endeavor. These include a loss of marketing guidance due to the untimely death of manager Brian Epstein, poor timing of the EP recording release and the television movie’s airing slot, excessive surrealism, the home-movie style of the production, and the apparent lack of any coherent story plot. Don Short quotes Beatle Paul as admitting that the film is “a series of disconnected, unconnected events.”

I suspect that almost all of these supposed flaws were intentional on the part of the Beatles. To most people the movie came across as a hodgepodge of experimental vignettes without an apparent story, other than the obvious but banal notion of a bus on a tour of the English countryside. The bumbling magicians in a background world supposedly injecting magic and mystery into the tour definitely look amateurish. Some episodes are mildly funny, and some are sentimental, but mostly they resemble first efforts at making an experimental home movie by a group of amateurs. This seems odd, because the Beatles already had two previous movies under their belts (“Hard Day’s Night,” and “Help!”).

As usual with productions by the Beatles, both the music and the lyrics of the Magical Mystery Tour are strikingly original, but the point of the suite of songs, the contents of the lyrics, and the relationships of the songs to the movie as a whole are obscure at best, and the Beatles never made a serious attempt to explain to the public what they were doing in the film. I believe the Beatles carefully planned the whole production and had very specific ideas about the content and the sequence of the episodes that make up the Tour. In this article I will contribute my take on the movie for the consideration of Beatle fans who enjoy delving into the more esoteric aspects of Beatlealia.

“The Magical Mystery Tour” is definitely one of the most esoteric of their many artistic efforts, especially since it emerged from the intense period when the Beatles became involved with Transcendental Meditation and the whole hippy psychedelic scene. This movie marks the beginning of their transmutation in the media from culture heroes to counter-culture heroes.

At first glance the movie’s action seems to tell the banal and somewhat satiric history of a random group of British city dwellers who, on a certain Sunday, decide independent of each other to join a guided bus tour to see the sights of interest in the countryside surrounding their city. Presumably the city is supposed to be Liverpool, home of the Beatles, although the filming actually took place in various locations around England, including Kent, Cornwall, London, and even some shots in Nice, France.

Although the sights visited by the Tour are quite unexciting in themselves, the Magic of the Tour causes a surrealistic transformation to occur during each episode. Many of these surrealistic sequences are excursions of subjective mental states of various passengers into the objective scenery of the Tour. Such a gambit is mildly amusing, but hardly worthy of the grand appellation “Magical Mystery Tour” bestowed on this little adventure concocted by the Beatles.

The key to gaining a deeper understanding of the Tour is to realize that the Tour is organized around a multi-layered stream-of-consciousness anthropomorphic poetic metaphor that is deliberately modeled after the technique used by James Joyce in his famous novel, *Ulysses*. Liverpool (which is only a ferry ride across the Irish Sea from Dublin) and the whole of England become for the Beatles analogous to the Dublin and Ireland imagined by Joyce as a giant collective human being. Each episode of the Tour is a visit to an important aspect of the giant’s physiology and

psychology. During the Tour a group of ordinary English folk (infiltrated by the zany Beatles) explore the body and mind of this giant and discover that they **are** the giant, both individually and collectively. The giant is Purusha of the Vedas, Adam Qadmon of the Qabbalah, Finn MacCool of Finnegans Wake, and Ulysses of the Homeric epic and in the guise of Leopold Bloom's Dublin of June 16, 1904.

Each episode in the Tour presents a set of archetypal symbols that portray the physical organs and psychological functions of the giant. The Beatles also add their own brand of fantasy and satire by exaggerating each archetypal quality so that we see that the giant is at once thoroughly insane, extremely "sinful", an incompetent wizard, and still a very lovable human being, and an amazing projection of wisdom in the guise of an ordinary person.

Of particular interest in the Tour is the magical value of the Transcendental Awareness that filters through each layer, from the surreal to the real. Ultimately every aspect finds balance, wholeness, and harmony in the Grand Finale that embraces all time, space, and modalities of consciousness. This movie bears the same classical message that comes to us from Homer, Joyce, Maharishi, Jesus Christ, and – yes – John Lennon: "All You Need is Love".

In the Outline Guide to the Tour that follows I list each episode in sequence and provide appropriate information about it organized into several categories.

- (a) Name of the Episode
- (b) The Dominant Emotion
- (c) The Dominant Physical Organ(s)
- (d) Key Symbols and Archetypes, including a "deadly sin" and a corresponding Tarot Trump
- (e) Title of the Song(s) Associated with the Episode
- (f) Key Phrase(s) from the Lyrics
- (g) Distorted Value of the Emotion that is Parodied
- (h) The Corresponding Episode and Character(s) from Homer's **Odyssey**.
- (i) The Corresponding Episode and Character(s) from Joyce's **Ulysses**.

The connections to Homer and Joyce that I suggest do not necessarily follow the interpretations given by scholars. However, the physical and psychological correspondences are pretty clear once we know they are there. Another helpful aid to understanding the movie is Joseph Campbell's **Hero With a Thousand Faces**.

The Episodes

1. (a) **Richard Starkey Buys Tickets, Boards the Tour Bus with Aunt Jessie.**
 - (b) Normal Waking State Consciousness and Superficial Values
 - (c) Gross physical body
 - (d) Ticket Seller (Paul in disguise issuing the Call to Adventure), Courier and Hostess (Herald and Guardian of the Gateway to Adventure), Bus (Magical Steed or Tarot Trump The Sun [Higher Self]).
 - (e) “The Magical Mystery Tour” (Starring Ringo, with Paul lead vocal, John and George backup vocals)
 - (f) “The Trip of a Lifetime”, “The Magical Mystery Tour is waiting/hoping/dying to take you away”, “We’ve got everything you need.”
 - (g) Richard Starkey (Ringo Starr) and his Aunt Jessie Robins incessantly bicker even though they are on a holiday tour. Courier Jolly Jimmy Johnson (Derek Royle) exaggerates the tour guide’s commercial solicitude. Hostess Miss Wendy Winters (Mandy Weet) is smiling and sexy. A slightly dotty passenger, Buster Bloodvessel (Ivor Cutler), imagines he is the real tour guide courier on the trip. The bus is filled with ordinary citizens on holiday, including Beatles John, Paul, and George.
 - (h) Ulysses (Starkey) sets out to return home from Troy. The passengers on the bus generally represent the crew of Ulysses’ boat(s).
 - (i) Bloom is Joyce’s version of Ulysses transformed into a wandering Irish Jew. He sets out in the morning of June 16, 1904 to carry out his errands and tasks in Dublin. Dublin is the vehicle, and the Irish people of Dublin, including Bloom’s acquaintances, are Bloom’s companion voyagers on the trip of a lifetime.

2. (a) **The Ride into the Countryside** (Viewing Scenery, Taking Photos)
 - (b) Day-dreaming; vision, watching as the dream of reality flows by.
 - (c) Eyes
 - (d) The Fool is the “Zero” Tarot Trump. The Hill is isolation in the self. This episode celebrates contemplation, dancing, imagination, poetry, head in the clouds, the naive youth of a lovely young starlet and an amateur photographer. The “sin” of this episode is foolish ignorance.
 - (e) “The Fool on the Hill” (Artist: Paul)
 - (f) “The man with the foolish grin is keeping perfectly still,
But nobody wants to know him. . . .
The man of a thousand voices talking perfectly loud,

But nobody ever hears him

But the fool on the hill

Sees the sun going down,

And the eyes in his head,

See the world spinning around.”

- (g) This episode parodies naivete and foolishness as well as wisdom that is not heeded. Paul alludes to gurus such as Maharishi who want to bring about world peace by showing people how to meditate. Unfortunately, most of the world’s foolish people pay no attention to such sages and consider them to be fools with their heads in the clouds. Paul is also such a cloud-walking fool, so he understands what Maharishi suggests, and he takes it seriously, but this makes him foolish in the eyes of others. The midget (George Claydon) suddenly decides to take a photo of the pretty starlet (Maggie Wright) with his goggle-eyed camera. The segment also focuses a lot on Paul’s very attractive eyes.
- (h) In Greek mythology Zeus is the divine Fool on the Hill of Mount Olympus. Tiresias is a blind prophet who clearly recognizes the troubles of the world. Ulysses meets Tiresias during his adventure in the underworld of Hades, and the blind seer warns him to beware the wrath of Poseidon (turbulence in the Ocean of Awareness) and to respect the Cattle of the Sun (common people and servants of the Higher Self). Then he shows Ulysses how to get home to Ithaca and how to communicate with the souls trapped in Hades. Thus, he who is blind and dead can still see clearly the future. The one-eyed giant Cyclops Polyphemus traps Ulysses and his men in his cave and wants to eat them, but Ulysses blinds the only eye of the Cyclops and then escapes with his men by a ruse. However, he later suffers from Poseidon for injuring Polyphemus. The Beatles create a funny caricature of the giant Polyphemus by turning him into a charming midget with a big camera eye that will collapse the multidimensional Tour into two dimensional images. The Beatles have no bias against the midget’s apparent “deformity”.
- (i) The Citizen in Joyce’s **Ulysses** is an Irish Polyphemus. He has two eyes, but lacks depth of perception as if he sees the world with only one eye. That eye is filled with spiteful prejudice and ignorance. Bloom tries compassion and reason, but fails to shift the Citizen’s ignorant viewpoint.
3. (a) **Passing between the Recruiter and the Drill Sergeant**
- (b) Pride and Indoctrination
- (c) Mouth and Lungs
- (d) The “sin” of this episode is pride. This includes pride of flag (national pride), pride of whip and uniform (military pride), the macho pride of a matador, and the

false pride that only has a stuffed cow to fight instead of a live bull. The Tarot Trump for this episode is the Chariot of the Warrior.

- (e) The music includes bugle calls. Sergeant Spinetti's unintelligible stream of military jargon and commands is followed by bullfighting music. (Artist: actor Victor Spinetti, who shouts his "song" in drill sergeant gibberish.)
- (f) "Why?" is Starkey's answer to the drill sergeant's harangue and the only intelligible word in the episode. This one little word calls into question the whole motivation for wars and militarism.
- (g) Empty assertions of authority based on arrogant pride and deceptive agendas of indoctrination are ignored by sensible people. Victor Spinetti once played an obnoxious drill sergeant in the play, "Oh! What a Wonderful War." John and the other Beatles saw this and drafted him to appear in all the Beatles movies. In the Tour Spinetti satirizes militarism by playing the character from "Wonderful War". This episode expresses the Fab Four's message of opposition to military conflict in general and specifically toward the Vietnam War, which was entering its peak intensity at the time the film was made. In the Recruiting Center episode of the Mystery Tour we see a weird parody of the self-destructive dilemma militarists pose between prideful love of country and prideful love of life. The episode is a verbal tempest full of sound and fury but signifying nothing.
- (h) Aeolus holds a bag with all the winds that make for violent tempests. He entrusts this to Ulysses to keep so he may have a safe journey home. Unfortunately, fatigue gets the best of Ulysses, and he dozes just before they reach home. His curious crew take advantage of their leader's lapse of attention to open the bag and see what is in it. This lets loose a horrific tempest that blows them all away from their goal. Charybdis (the drill sergeant, Spinetti) has a giant whirlpool mouth (Spin Eddy) that tries to swallow all that pass by. Scylla (Silly Paul in uniform) sits at his desk pretending to be ready to pluck into the ranks of cannon fodder any who pass by too close.
- (i) In Joyce's **Ulysses** the monsters Scylla and Charybdis represent the dilemmas of scholasticism versus mysticism, youth versus maturity, and indoctrination versus free thinking. We see the cave of Aeolus at the Evening Telegraph newspaper office. The Aeolus chapter of the novel is divided into sections marked with newspaper-like headlines and the style explores all forms of rhetoric that are used to persuade and indoctrinate through the spoken and written word. The newspaper prints daily news articles and advertisements to indoctrinate the people. Bloom as a seasoned ad canvasser is shrewd at understanding how to use the winds of the mind and public opinion to navigate the sometimes tempestuous seas of life. Chief Editor Miles Crawford and the newsmen at the offices of the Evening Telegraph

carry on a lively discussion of the indoctrinated ideas of history and politics from their viewpoint as media experts and are joined by Stephen Dedalus, a young scholar, who delivers a pompous polemical document by Mr. Deasey for publication in the newspaper. During the discussion Stephen self-defeatingly presents to the newsmen his “Parable of the Plums” that rejects both Irish and Jewish dreams of freedom. Bloom shows up and tries, but fails, to complete an advertising contract for the “House of Keyes”. Afterward Stephen and his schoolmates have a lively discussion of academic issues in the National Library, while Bloom also goes there to obtain material for his client’s ad.

4. (a) **The Marathon**

- (b) Competition, Assertion of Ego
- (c) Muscles, arms and legs
- (d) The “sin” presented in this episode is Envy. The competition includes wrestling, tug of war, bag racing, and a marathon race. There is considerable “cheating” by using technology. The cheating begins with a group of priests and then escalates until Starkey commandeers the bus itself and is joined by the other Beatles to win the top prize. The Tarot Trump is the Devil embodied by the priests. Once the priests follow the Devil, almost everyone else follows suit, with the Beatles pushing the idea to its limit so as to win the contest.
- (e) The competition is accompanied by trumpet and calliope music, band music, and culminates with a victory march, award ceremony, and group photo.
- (f) There is no special singing, but wild cheers are given for the winners
- (g) A group of priests are the first to cheat in the marathon race. Then, when they lose, they are poor losers and express extreme envy and vindictiveness toward Starkey and the fellow Beatles who are the winners. The priests shake their fists threateningly at them as if to suggest they will have vengeance later. This suggests the concern church leaders have had toward the tremendous influence the Beatles and their music has had on society. The success of the Beatles competes with the Church’s desire to control the attention of the public and convince them that the Church is always the winner.
- (h) Ulysses participates in a pentathlon competition called the Phaiacian Games while visiting with King Alcinous.
- (i) There is no clear parallel to the pentathlon or marathon in Joyce’s **Ulysses**. The closest approach to such an event may be the spontaneous singing competition that occurs in the Concert Room saloon at the Ormond Hotel around 4:00 p.m., the time when Bloom is about to be cuckolded by Blazes Boylan. Simon Dedalus, Father Cowley (a priest), and big Ben Dollard take turns playing the piano and singing,

each outdoing the other by displaying his own special talent at singing or playing. Scholars usually correlate this episode to the Sirens, which is also correct. However, in Joyce's novel the siren barmaids do NOT sing, and Bloom/Ulysses does NOT plug his ears to avoid hearing them. In fact he enjoys the music, although his mind is somewhat distracted by his concern about Boylan's imminent meeting with his wife. The talented men playfully compete with their musical skills in a way that suggests the egotistical male athletic competitions of the Greeks. As Joyce shows, the Irish men are more into competition through singing, drinking, and sophisticated banter than through gross physical athletics. Throughout the novel each man tries to outdo his companions with clever jokes and learned witticisms. In the nonverbal competition for bedroom privileges with Molly, Bloom knows at this point that he has lost out to jaunty, jingling Blazes Boylan. Boylan is "managing" Molly's singing career for her by injecting his special talents into her.

5. (a) **The View to the Right**

- (b) Transcending the ordinary world (view to the left), the tourists begin to shift into the fields of subtle awareness. The tour guide assists by directing their attention.
- (c) The viewpoint of the film shifts from the moving bus through a sequential scan of strange tinted landscapes until it reaches a secret place, far off in the subconscious mind.
- (d) The images of this episode include Magic Flight, magicians, pointed wizard caps that suggest the path of transcending, and the magician's wand that suggests directed control of creative intelligence. The strangely colored alien landscape footage apparently derives from unused film shot for Stanley Kubrick's "2001: a Space Odyssey" that the Beatles somehow acquired. This hidden clue suggests the connection of the Tour to the Odyssey (story of Ulysses/Odysseus). The Tarot Trump for this episode of course is the Magician. The "sin" of this episode is the thorough incompetence of those in powerful positions and the possessors of secret information. They have no idea what they are doing or any awareness of the ultimate effects it may have.
- (e) "Flying" (instrumental piece) (Artist: Beatles)
- (f) "La la la la la la" (repetition of meaningless sound like a mantra used during meditation.) "Beyond the blue horizon, far above the clouds, in a land that no one knows, live four or five magicians who spend their days casting wonderful spells. Come with me now into that secret place where the eyes of man have never set foot."
- (g) Bungling amateur wizards who dress up in costumes and imagine themselves to be

professionals run the world from behind the scenes. This suggests that the whole world is a gigantic cosmic joke. The “fifth” magician is Mal Evans, who was road manager of the Beatles. He does not seem to know where the bus is. Only Paul, the fool with his head in the clouds and a nose like the Scarecrow of Oz (because he hasn’t got a brain), knows.

- (h) This episode suggests the lofty world of Mount Olympus from which Zeus and the other totally incompetent Greek gods observe human events below, periodically tweaking them this way or that according to their illogical whims of the moment.
- (i) The possible correlation to Mount Olympus and the gods in Joyce’s novel is the Greek philosophy, Catholic religion and Jewish traditions that form an underlying cultural background to the story. Joyce’s satire reveals them all to be rich in tradition but devoid of any real content.

6. (a) **The Roman(tic) Ruins**

- (b) Love springs forth magically from contact with the transcendental spiritual values of life.
- (c) Heart and blood vessels represent the deeper view on the left once the Magic sets in.
- (d) Love is not a “sin”, even if it appears impractical, ridiculous, and sentimental. The episode contains a dreamlike sequence of the “lovers” Buster and Jessie strolling on the beach and kissing while gulls fly by. Buster draws a heart around Jessie in the ephemeral sands of time. Overgrown Roman ruins suggest a timeless archetype going back to classical times and beyond. The Tarot Trump is The Lovers.
- (e) “All My Loving” (instrumental reprise)
- (f) “I love you”
- (g) The Beatles parody sentimentality with the awkward fantasy of fat Aunt Jessie and stiff Buster Bloodvessel embracing on the beach. Both constantly live fantasies in which they imagine how things ought to be. Unfortunately for their fantasy, things are not so in reality. One must learn to love reality just as it is, not as a sentimental fantasy or else the fantasies will pop like empty bubbles and leave a sense of stress and sadness.
- (h) Ulysses swims ashore to a beach in Phaiacia after being shipwrecked. There he meets the beautiful princess Nausicaa and forms a budding romantic relationship with her. She brings Ulysses to her father’s court. There he visits, rests and recuperates, before continuing on his journey. The romantic feeling on the beach is no more than a passing fantasy for Ulysses.
- (i) Bloom walks on the beach of Sandymount Strand and sees Gerty MacDowell, a young girl who is lame but has romantic ambitions. Bloom surreptitiously masturbates while watching her display her legs during a fireworks display.

Bloom's relation to Gerty is also no more than a passing fantasy that fades when the fireworks fade.

7. (a) **The Decommissioned RAF West Malling WWII Airfield.**
- (b) Intellect, logical “sequences” of thought.
- (c) Brain
- (d) The “sin” of this episode is anger. The camera takes a gun barrel view of the world (narrow tunnel vision). We see bombers, the eggman (bearer of ideas), eggs (bombs and ideas), policemen (law enforcers), eggheads all linked up in logical sequences, the walrus (the intellectual hypocrisy of the “The Walrus and the Carpenter”), war prisoners, Nazi-style propaganda, and the use of shaming morality codes; “man you been a naughty boy, you let your face grow long” (grew a beard), you been a naughty girl, you let your knickers down” (had premarital or extramarital sex). The Tarot Trump for this episode is Death, although the egg motif suggests rebirth after death.
- (e) “I am the Walrus” (Artist: John)
- (f) “I am the eggman”, “I’m crying”, sings John. “I am concerned for you to enjoy yourselves within the limits of British decency,” says Buster Bloodvessel with a strong German accent, when the tour group reboards the bus. “Don’t get historical!” This last expression is a typical Joycian pun.
- (g) A child’s view of intellectual hypocrisy is given by Nichole. She compares the fantasy version of John in the song to the “real” John in the bus – “it’s just a balloon. . . . No, you’re not a walrus.”
- (h) Ulysses descends into Hades and sees the ghosts of the historical past, many of whom were his comrades in arms who died during the Trojan War. This resembles the way John gets into a reverie triggered by the visit to the old WWII airfield. He fantasizes about the bombing raids and other horrors of war and how intelligent logical scientists get into gun barrel vision and use their intelligence to develop weapons of mass destruction or psychological and political methods to control and repress people.
- (i) In Joyce’s novel Hades is represented by the funeral that Bloom attends in the morning. At this event there is a lot of dwelling on the past, the theme of death, and the transitoriness of life.
8. (a) **The Restaurant Dream** (Jessie Dreams of Lunch-time since real world lunch is a bit delayed)
- (b) Hunger and food fantasies.
- (c) Stomach and digestive system
- (d) The “sin” of this episode is gluttony. Themes include fatness, food, the spiritual

food of the Eucharist, endless napkins, and endless piles of pasta served with a large shovel by John posing as a fantasy waiter.

- (e) Dream music and “Song of the Volga Boatman”
- (f) “Yo heave ho, one more time”. “I can’t breathe,” “I’m crying”, says Jessie.
- (g) In this parody of gluttony Jessie becomes the Walrus and Buster Bloodvessel becomes the Carpenter transformed into a fantasy of Jesus offering spiritual gluttony through the Eucharist in which you can symbolically eat God’s body and drink his blood. The cow reappears, apparently as the “Kamaduk” cow that fulfills all desires, and thus offers the ultimate in gluttony.
- (h) Ulysses and his ships reach the land of the Lestrygoneans. King Antiphates is a giant cannibal king who eats the first party of the crew to reach shore. Ulysses and the rest of his men then escape and continue their journey.
- (i) Bloom gets hungry, but is sickened by most of the eateries he considers patronizing. Finally he stops for a light lunch at Davy Byrne’s Pub. Although he eats a sparing meal of cheese (from the Kamaduk), this episode contains a lot of pretense and suppressed emotion that often surfaces in the lives of people as overeating. With Bloom, however, the suppressed emotions turn into little fetishes, such as handling a potato and a bar of soap in his pocket.

9. (a) **The Revival Tent**

- (b) Faith, Prayer, Superstition, Religion and Mysticism
- (c) Hands and knees, squatting
- (d) The “sin” of this episode is spiritual sloth. The tent, show business, white screen background with projected images, organ music, incense, trance, voodoo master, Indian chanting, devotees, meditation, prayer, secret garden, and magic cello all set the atmosphere. The Tarot Trumps are the High Priest with his rituals and the High Priestess with her secrets.
- (e) “Blue Jay Way” and a reprise of the Magical Mystery theme. (Artist: George)
The song title apparently refers to a particular street.
- (f) “Please don’t be long” (prayer for a savior to come) puns with “Don’t belong” (Cults are for misfits.)
- (g) The tourists crawl into the sacred space and discover that it suddenly expands into a large meeting hall. The guide introduces a hypnotic trance show featuring George in a saffron robe sitting cross-legged, and chanting the “don’t be long” mantra in the manner of a zombified devotee. The atmosphere is thick with incense or fog. George became involved in the Hare Krishna movement and here seems to parody such cults. Ironically, crushing of the tent by the bus at the end of the episode, and NOT the begging prayer, apparently leads to recontact with the transcendental

magicians – although the truth is left ambiguous. This episode parodies Revivalist tent shows and other mystical and religious faith approaches to life. George was considered to be the mystical Beetle.

- (h) Ulysses encounters a land of Lotus Eaters who spend their lives in a drug-induced daze. His men eat the sacred flowers and fall into a drugged trance until Ulysses manages to get them back to the ship and away from the trance-inducing influence. This episode represents how religious faith becomes the opiate of the people and spawns many weird cults and beliefs that a savior will come along and somehow rescue the world from its own resisted reality. It also suggests that the Beatles parody their own experimentation with hallucinogenic drugs during the hippy era.
- (i) In Joyce's novel Bloom goes to take a public bath and soaks for a while in the tub. He relaxes and fantasizes about exotic drugs, perfumes, and chemicals.

10. (a) **The Ride Back to Liverpool**

- (b) Camaraderie
- (c) Liver
- (d) As night falls the passengers begin a singalong with beer drinking and accordion music as they ride back to town on the bus. The people sway and sing together a medley of songs begun by Starkey. The "sin" of greed in this episode is barely noticeable and really more like a joke in lines such as "every ball you throw will make me rich" and "sure, they steal your heart away". The Tarot Trump is the Moon.
- (e) A singalong medley, led by Ringo, includes such old-time popular tunes as:
 - "I've Got a Lovely Bunch of Coconuts"
 - "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling"
 - "Folderee, Foldera"
 - "The Can-Can Song"
- (f) "Hoi've got a lo-ve-ly bunch o' coconuts.
There they are a-standin' in a row.
Big ones, small ones, some as big as yer 'ead! . . .
Hoi've got a lo-ve-ly bunch o' coconuts.
Hevery ball yer throw will make me rich."

*"When Irish eyes are smiling,
Sure, 'tis like the morn in Spring.
In the lilt of Irish laughter
You can hear the angels sing.
When Irish hearts are happy,*

*All the world seems bright and gay.
And when Irish eyes are smiling,
Sure, they steal your heart away.”*

- (g) Moodmaking and intoxication
- (h) The singing and potations on the bus remind of the potations, storytelling, and minstrel singing at the luxurious court of Alcinous.
- (i) During the Nighttown sequence there is an extended scene in Bella Cohen’s brothel in the red-light district. Stephen Dedalus, his friend Lynch, and Bloom are all rather drunk by this time. Although they are in and near a brothel, there is no actual sexual behavior, but rather a series of drunken fantasies during which various individuals (Stephen Dedalus, Cissy Caffrey, Leopold Bloom, Molly Bloom, a voice from the gallery, Zoe the whore, Mananaan Maclir, Virag, Henry Flower [Bloom’s alias], Artifoni, Ben Dollard, the Cardinal, Blazes Boylan [making orgasmic noises], Lynch, Shakespeare, Edward the Seventh, the Citizen, the Croppy Boy, Gummy Granny, Father Malachi O’Flynn, Adonai, and Corny Kelleher), as well as various objects (bells, gongs, lemon soap, a cuckoo clock, bed quoits, kisses, a gramophone, the eight beatitudes, a gasjet, a doorhandle, yews, a waterfall, a nannygoat, a dummymummy, a button, a black rooster chicken, a pianola, bracelets, a barking retriever, a horse, and a jingling cab harness), along with various groups of individuals (Tom and Sam, a pair of watchmen, babes and sucklings, orphans, the daughters of Erin with a choir of six hundred voices singing the Alleluia chorus, a group of circumcised Jews chanting the Shema, a pair of sluts, a crowd, some privates, another choir, massed bands blaring God Save the King, all the damned, and all the blessed) chant, sing, or play music. In general almost everyone and everything participates in a confused and drunken singfest that brings everything and everyone together like a giant potpourri soup.

11. (a) **Raymond Revue Bar, London**

- (b) Sexual Fantasies
- (c) Genitals
- (d) The “sin” of this episode is lust. Images in this episode include a Striptease (Jan Carson as Temptress), a Scarf (veil, serpent), pink fur (pubic hair), milk (semen), a drinking straw (penis), a saxophone (“sexophone”), and an electric guitar (orgasm symbol). John, George, Buster, and the midget watch the “for men only” show and fantasize. The Tarot Trump is Temperance.
- (e) “Death Cab for Cutie” (Artist: Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band, Vivian Stanshall lead singer and composer.)
- (f) That night Cutie called a cab, uh huh huh
(baby don’t do it)

She left her East Side room so drab uh huh huh
(baby don't do it)
She went out on the town
Knowin' it would make her lover frown
(Death-cab for Cutie)
(Death-cab for Cutie)
Someone's gonna make you pay your fare
The cab was racin' through the night, mm mm mm
(baby don't do it)
His eyes in the mirror, keepin' Cutie in sight, uh huh huh
(baby don't do it)
When he saw Cutie, it gave him a thrill
Don't you know, baby curves can kill
(Death-cab for Cutie)
(Death-cab for Cutie)
Someone's gonna make you pay your fare
Cutie, don't you play with fate
Don't leave your lover alone
If you go out on this date
His heart will turn to stone

Bad girl, Cutie, what have you done, uh huh huh
(baby don't do it)
Slippin' slidin' down-a Highway 31, mm mm mm
(baby don't do it)
The traffic lights changed from green to red
They tried to stop but they both wound up dead
(Death-cab for Cutie)
(Death-cab for Cutie)
Someone's gonna make you pay your fare

- (g) This episode is a parody of lust, temptation, voyeurism, indulgence, Elvis Presley, and censorship.
- (h) Ulysses spends seven years as the lover of the nymph, Calypso. Presumably she “compels” him to stay, but more likely she is a very sexy lady who appreciates the sexual prowess of Ulysses and exercises her considerable talents to keep him with her. Eventually Ulysses tires of this illusion and longs to finish his journey home to Penelope, his true and faithful wife, who has waited for him all these years during which he murdered people in Troy, had a long

seven-year affair with Calypso, a shorter liaison of one year with Circe, and flirted with Nausicaa and her beautiful ladies in waiting. The witch Circe turns the crew of Ulysses into hogs, but Ulysses himself is protected from falling under the witch's control by a magical herb, and thus enjoys his stay fully. Thus, Ulysses is somewhat of a hypocrite for expecting his wife to remain faithful at home during his faithless wanderings.

- (i) In Joyce's novel Bloom begins his peregrinations of Dublin when he goes out to buy some kidney to cook for his breakfast. He hears his wife stir in the bed upstairs and begins fantasizing about women. The reality is that Bloom stays sort of faithful (at least on June 16 and only if we excuse his many fantasies and risky behaviors) while his wife, Molly has an affair with her concert tour organizer, Blazes Boylan. Bloom knows this, but is helpless to intervene, because he must go out and do his advertising work, and Boylan has private meetings arranged with Molly, ostensibly to arrange her concert tour. This situation in both Homer's epic and Joyce's novel of course reflects on the lifestyle of the Beatles, who had wives, but also spent a lot of time on the road doing concerts. They were mobbed wherever they went by sexy girls eager to jump into bed with them, and no doubt surrendered numerous times to such temptations during various stages of their careers. Thus the parody reflects on their own lives as well as those of any man who is married but travels a lot on business.

12. (a) **The Grand Ballroom Finale** (in a soundstage set up in the hangar at the West Malling Airfield)
- (b) Integration of Part and Whole, Absolute and Relative, Surreal and Real, Supernatural and Natural.
- (c) All parts of the cosmos are unified in accord with the eternal laws of Mother Nature for all time and throughout all space.
- (d) From the top of a Grand Staircase we see the Descent of our four Avatar heroes as if from Heaven, followed by the entire cast engaged in formal dancing wearing ballroom gowns, or marching about in parade uniforms, with salutations bestowed from all to all. The Tarot Trumps for this final episode are the Empress and the World [also often called "The Universe"].
- (e) "Your Mother Should Know" (Paul and the other Beatles with full cast and chorus)
- (f) "Let's all get up and dance to a song that was a hit before your Mother was born, Though she was born a long, long time ago – Your Mother should know."
- (g) The Grand Finale celebrates the Cosmos with formalism, ceremony, full participation,

and a sense of completion. Ironically, the real world venue for this event is a hangar at the WWII airfield that was memorialized in the “historical” Walrus song. “Mother” is the Goddess of Love, the all-embracing, all-accepting quality of Pure Awareness that nurtures the World and all phenomena in the Universe, including all beings and all possibilities, even the horrors of war and destruction. In ancient Egypt this Great Goddess was Hathor, Mut, the Cosmic Mother, Wife, and Daughter of Ra, the Sun of the Higher Self. Notice that the song they sing was a hit BEFORE the Cosmic Mother was born. This means that this song of all-embracing, unconditional love goes back to the Pure Awareness that exists before the birth of the notion to give birth to the universe. This is the Transcendental Source of All Thought, All Creation, and All Possibilities.

- (h) Ulysses returns home to Ithaca, meets his now fully grown son Telemachus, and reunites with his wife. After all these years she recognizes her husband because he knows the secret of their connubial bed. This bed is not a piece of furniture. It is built right into the Tree of Life and thus is permanent and stable. This bed is the ground state of Transcendental Awareness. Ulysses and Penelope are like the Yang and Yin energies, the primordial Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden from which all the diversity of life springs.
- (i) Bloom returns home to his apartment on Eccles Street (Ecclesiastes) and makes cocoa for his newly “adopted” spiritual son, the young and brilliant, but confused, and bemused scholar, Stephen Dedalus. After cocoa Stephen leaves. Then Bloom retires to join Molly who seems to be sleeping on the great bed that she brought with her to Dublin from the Rock of Gibraltar. Bloom falls asleep beside her in fetal position, but Molly silently witnesses all that occurs and drifts in a dreamlike stream of consciousness across her past, present, and future in a fantastic meandering monologue that ends with her total affirmation of love for her wandering Bloom/Ulysses, and through him for all of creation: “and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.”