Summary

* Thesis
  + Demodocus’ song of divine adultery is not a digression form or thematic contrast to the main events of the *Odyssey*. Instead it “anticipates the deadly serious situation confronting Odysseus on his return to Ithaca in the world of irresponsible and hilarious divine comedy.” And that it provides hints for the “method of defeating the suitors and the reason for and justification of their fate.”
* Pebble 1: Suitors as μοιχεια
  + This word is often translated as ‘adultery’ but “takes in a variety of different kinds of unauthorized sexual behavior which can be punished with impunity” by the head of the household.
  + Story of Hephaestus “encourages the audiences to regard the suitors as μοιχοι, despite the possibility for the interpretation of their pursuit of Penelope as a morally permissible action.
    - This is because Penelope does mention in Book 18 that Odysseus said “When our son’s beard had grown, you must get married to any man you choose, and leave your house.”
* Pebble 2: Compensation for Cuckoldry
  + Hephaestus accepts monetary compensation for Aphrodite’s infidelity, making him a laughingstock as well as the ensnared lovers.
    - This embarrassment “enhances the triumph of Odysses, the mortal hero who rejects the compensation and attendant ridicule, and insists on punishing the μοιχοι with death
* Part 1: Suitors or μοιχοι
  + They are introduced with the epithet “haughty”
  + Athena complains of their arrogance and the poet provides examples of their violations of xenia
  + She also is the first to advocate for their slaughter
  + Conclusion? They are guilty of a crime, and thus μοιχοι
* Part 2: Secondary narratives
  + Alden asserts that the song is “one of a whole series of narratives subsidiary to the main plot which rehears its concerns with the awful possibility of μοιχεια in the absence of the husband, and the need to punish such μοιχεια when it occurs.”
    - First is the Theme of Orestes’ vengeance on Aegisthius, who committed μοιχεια with Clytemnestra while Agamemnon was out at war
    - The second is the story of Ares, Aphrodite, and Hephaestus
    - The third is the song which tells of the wooden horse being taken into Troy, which is the conclusion to a 10-year long war started by μοιχεια of Paris
  + These subsidiary narratives “encourage the audience to take a prejorative view of the suitors”, which leads us to
* Part 3: But what about when Odysseus told Penelope to remarry?
  + Well we only hear this from Penelope, but she says this while tricking the suitors, so there is the possibility she is lying and it’s part of her trick.
  + Even if it is true, however, Alden makes the point that we are only told this as a reader in book 18, after 17 books of pressure to view the suitors as μοιχοι.
  + This also does not excuse their violation of xenia.
* Part 4: Μοιχεια revisited
  + Μοιχεια not as flat out adultery, but as “illicit sex with a woman under the control/protection of another man” makes it easier to justify the slaying of the suitors, and the idea that it is achieved by “persuasion rather than force” which “corrupts the soul” can be seen as justification for slaying of the suitors and housemaids
* Part 5: Compensation
  + Hephaestus accepts monetary compensation and becomes part of the joke, setting a bad example for Odysseus
  + See entire conclusion paragraph of Paper for end