

**The “Garbled History” of the first –edition *Ulysses***  
**Edward L. Bishop**  
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“Joyce was fond of garbled history: and so am I” -- Sylvia Beach

In the spring of 1921 a shattered James Joyce slumped in a chair in Sylvia Beach’s bookshop and told her his last chance to have *Ulysses* published had evaporated. Then, spontaneously, Beach offered to produce Joyce’s gigantic work. He was “delighted”, she was proud, and the history of modernism was forever changed. The story is familiar. Indeed the stories surrounding the publication of the 1922 edition have become part of the folklore of *Ulysses*, passed on without question. Yet in sifting through the documents in the collections at Princeton University, the University of Buffalo, and the University of Texas at Austin, a different, more complex picture begins to emerge of the publishing and distribution of *Ulysses*.<sup>1</sup> Sylvia Beach in her memoirs, and Noel Fitch in her biography of Beach, presented the narrative of a selfless publisher bringing avant garde literature to a select but appreciative public. Lawrence Rainey has recently challenged that construction, attributing to publisher and readers alike a desire for cash rather than art. But in fact the archives radically destabilize any neat conceptions of the *Ulysses* publishing history. They raise issues about the disjunction between the targeted reader and the actual buyer of *Ulysses*, dissolving the binary of aesthete vs collector and forcing us to consider other categories – managers and mechanics, reviewers and ‘medical men’, colonels and flagellants, for a start. The documents return us to the reluctance of Bloomsbury (and the active hostility of Clive Bell), and they pose new questions about

the book's circulation in a specifically queer context. More generally, the archives point to the need to examine the publishing of *Ulysses* in the context of other ventures, such as the limited editions of T. E. Lawrence and D.H. Lawrence. Finally, and most specifically, the archives call into question the authority of Sylvia Beach's own memoirs.<sup>2</sup>

### **memoir as history / history of the memoir**

The problem begins at the source: Sylvia Beach's memoir, *Shakespeare & Company*. She began it in a time of crisis, in 1937 after Adrienne Monnier, her lover for over fifteen years, had left her for the young graduate student Gisèle Freund.<sup>3</sup> Beach retired to a mountain cabin with her Remington and began work. Publishers wanted the memoir – according to Fitch, Clifton Fadiman of Simon & Schuster even chased her on board ship to try to close a deal – but Beach would not let go of the work.<sup>4</sup> Ten years later she corresponded with Richard Wright who intervened on her behalf with Harpers, but nothing came of it. In 1949 she published "Ulysses à Paris," in *Mercure de France*, but in 1950 when she tried to sell "The Ulysses Subscribers" she was turned down by both the *Saturday Review of Literature* and *Atlantic Monthly*. At last in the summer of 1950 she signed a contract with Harcourt Brace and received an advance of \$1,000. She was launched.

The work went slowly. Eugene Reynal, her editor and friend at Harcourt encouraged her, but in January of 1955 he left the firm. Then in June of that year Adrienne Monnier, with whom Sylvia had remained close, committed suicide after a long illness. Three weeks later Beach wrote cancelling the contract and arranging the return of

the \$1,000. Harcourt refused to accept her decision and in 1956 found her a new editor, Margaret Marshall, who coaxed, and praised, and goaded as gently as she could:

I confess I'm getting a little nerrrvous, as Joyce might have said. The time is getting short, Sylvia dear, and the book must come out this fall. We just can't let the customers down, now that their interest is all stirred up by Ulysses in Paris! So I hope I'll get a nice big sheaf of manuscript soon." (20 Feb. 1957)

A year later, January 1958, she was still coaxing:

"I like the new manuscript, as I knew I would. . . . I was fascinated by your account of your family and your childhood. . . . And the description of the Antheil concert is just wonderful.

My only reservation is that you have left some gaps that I think should be filled in. . . . I want to know – and I'm sure every other reader will, too – about your education. . . ." (Princeton, box 170, folder 6)

The gaps remind us that Beach was creating a selective memoir. The structure, more portrait gallery than narrative, allowed her to control her material; she recognized that she was producing, to use her term, a "de-alcoholized" memoir. In the early drafts she wrote bitterly of Joyce, but she as she worked she wrote through her anger. Though Joyce was alive when she began to write in 1937, and his betrayal over the American edition still fresh, by 1957 he had been dead for sixteen years.<sup>5</sup> Further, though many of her old friends from that era were dead, Lucia Joyce was still alive, and writing frequently from her mental institution in England. The file contains letters written in a round childish hand, in blue pencil, in which she politely asks Beach for information about her father, who Lucia thinks is still alive in 1958.<sup>6</sup> These circumstances are all part of the context

of composition. Apart from anything else, it would be difficult to write a score-settling portrait of a long-dead associate if you were receiving affectionate and trusting letters from his mentally-ill daughter. Also, by this time Joyce had achieved semi-mythic status. His books were being taught on major university campuses in America, he had twice been on the cover of *TIME* magazine; like it or not, Beach now found herself defined by her association with Joyce and *Ulysses*. She could not avoid that relationship, but she could shape it. Finally, behind all of this is the chronology: Beach, born in 1887, was now over 70. In 1958 she is no longer writing a history, she is writing a eulogy.

When at last the memoir was finished, in the fall of **1959**, 22 years after it was begun, she wrote to Margaret Marshall, "As for inaccuracies in my book, it would be so dull if it were accurate. Let scholars root around among the dates: their fellowships are for that purpose. Joyce was fond of garbled history: and so am I: cheerio" (7 May **1957**).

**[clarify dates]**

### **The Offer s/he couldn't refuse**

Beach's account of her offer to publish *Ulysses* has become part of the mythology surrounding the book. Yet the drafts of her memoir present at least seven different versions of the story, versions in which Beach incrementally improves upon the event until she has executed a complete *volte face*, transforming herself from Patient Griselda to Joan of Arc.

The first version makes it clear that the idea came from Joyce:

Joyce discussed the situation with me. Feeling as I did, that *Ulysses* was the most important and the most beautiful English work of my time, ~~when he suggested~~

~~that I publish the complete book~~ I accepted with enthusiasm Joyce's suggestion that I publish his book. I felt that my little bookshop was immensely honored.

And Beach is dubious:

Now I had never imagined Shakespeare and Co would be publishers of anything. . . . What I took in daily was barely sufficient to cover birdseeds – and if my good sister Holly had not kept up her old habit of helping me out every month from her hardearned salary, and there had not been the cheques from my kind cousins in Overbrook . . . I could never have kept the business afloat. (Princeton, box 168, folder 2; strike-through in typescript)

This obviously was not a spur of the moment request; Joyce has kept Beach abreast of the persecution, the closing down of the venues. It is he who discusses the situation with Beach; it is she who accepts the suggestion. Moreover, her initial thought its that she is hopelessly undercapitalized. It is hard to believe that Joyce was not thinking of Shakespeare & Co. as a fall-back position: Harriet Weaver had already considered producing the book in France, so the idea of publishing in Paris in fact pre-dates Shakespeare & Co.

In the next version, Joyce again gives her the whole sad history of his troubles but adds another element – guilt:

He kept me informed of the progress of the persecution of Ulysses . . . . By this time the Little Review itself was suppressed and the editresses, Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap were 'hailed off to court and our thumb prints taken' as they described it. When Joyce told me this final episode I was ashamed.

Worse,

Miss Harriet Weaver who had published "A Portrait of the Artist" and a fragment or two of "Ulysses" in her review "The Egoist" had by this time turned it into a publishing house in order to bring out Joyce's books. But she soon perceived that the publication of Ulysses would mean trouble and end in disaster.

Anderson and Weaver have done their all for him – what about her?

In talking with Joyce I saw he would be glad to have me publish the book. I said 'what's going to become of it?' – he said 'I think you'll have to publish it'. I jumped at the chance, of course. But, as usual, I consulted Adrienne about a venture that I saw looming up rather huge. Her advise [sic] was 'do it'.

(Princeton, box 168, folder 3)

Beach has been placed in a situation where she has to ask the question, but her discomfort is palpable.

The third version makes her look even less enthusiastic: the birdseed appears again, and the reference to Holly's money has an edge:

Joyce said to me: 'I'm afraid you'll have to do it, Miss Beach'. I was quite willing to accept the honor, though I felt it was going to be rather a huge venture, and consulted Adrienne. . . . I had never thought of Shakespeare and Co publishing anything. . . . it was kept off the rocks with difficulty. What came in was barely enough to buy birdseed, let alone pay the upkeep of the establishment. My sister Holly, who was getting used to breaking off chunks of her salary for the rest of the family helped me out generously every month. . . . (Princeton, box 168, folder 3)

Here we no longer have the set-up question from Beach to Joyce; he simply says, "you'll have to do it." In Beach's response, to be "quite willing" is a long way from "jumped at the chance" or even "accepted with enthusiasm."

But Beach the memoirist obviously seems not to have liked the characters these versions were creating: an entirely self-serving author and a craven bookseller, shamed into doing reluctantly what Margaret Anderson and Harriet Weaver did eagerly. So in a fourth version she rewrites it. Miss Weaver, instead of being cast as the stalwart who has done unasked what Beach has to be prompted to do, becomes a fastidious figure shrinking from the task:

. . . . One might as well expect the angel on Strasbourg Cathedral[,] a very good likeness of Miss Weaver[,] to go wallowing around in the mud.

So there was nothing left to do but for me to bring out "Ulysses" in France. Immediately I offered to do so, and Joyce accepted – what else could he have done? (Princeton, box 168, folder 6)

Far from feeling pressured, Sylvia takes charge. She makes Joyce an offer he cannot refuse.

In the fifth version the fact that Beach has neither money nor experience just makes it all more piquante, and Adrienne cheers her on:

When Joyce came to tell me the sad news of "The Little Review" he was in utter despair. I asked him if he would let me have the honor of publishing "Ulysses" in France. He accepted at once . . . .

[Adrienne] . . . said by all means go ahead. (Vas-y!)

So now, without a penny nor any previous experience in publishing I was undertaking to bring out this great book "Ulysses". And moreover, I didn't doubt that I would succeed in doing so. (Princeton, box 168, folder 6)

Joyce now is without a plan, in "utter despair."

In the first published version of the event, written in French for the *Mercure de France* in 1949, Beach leaves Weaver out, and Joyce too:

l'éditeur Huebsch refusait de publier le volume . . . . De cela, il ne pouvait être question. Ulysses était donc abandonné à la fois par L'Angleterre et l'Amérique. Restait la France. . . et moi.

Je m'offris sans hésiter à faire l'édition et Joyce accepta sans hésiter ma proposition. (Princeton, box 170, folder 1)

Personalities are replaced by nations: England had failed, America had failed, and it rested now with France and Sylvia Beach. The offer itself is made and accepted with neat Gallic parallelism.

By the time she came to publish her memoir in English, her role and Joyce's had been defined, but she decided to deepen the pathos:

Joyce came to announce the news. It was a heavy blow for him, and I felt, too, that his pride was hurt. In a tone of complete discouragement, he said, "My book will never come out now."

All hope of publication in the English-speaking countries, at least for a long time to come, was gone. And here in my little bookshop sat James Joyce, sighing deeply.



It occurred to me that something might be done, and I asked: "Would you let Shakespeare and Company have the honor of bringing out your *Ulysses*?"

He accepted my offer immediately and joyfully. I thought it rash of him to entrust his great *Ulysses* to such a funny little publisher. But he seemed delighted, and so was I. We parted, both of us, I think, very much moved.

*(Shakespeare & Company 47)*

The blow is "heavy," the discouragement "complete," the bookstore "little," and the sighs "deep." Beach does not hesitate in the slightest. The birdseed and the sister breaking off chunks of her paycheque are quietly removed. We have come a long way from the commanding Joyce and the timorous but resentful Beach of the earlier drafts.

This is the version that enters the Joyce canon. Ellmann improved it for his biography, making it even more spontaneous than Beach had done:

[Joyce] went round to Shakespeare and Company to tell Sylvia Beach of this new unhappy development, 'My book will never come out now.' A thought struck her. 'Would you let Shakespeare and Company have the honor of bringing out your *Ulysses*?' she asked. Joyce was as startled to hear this proposal as she was to make it; he warned her mournfully that no one would buy the book, but at the same time he unhesitatingly accepted. (504)

Here the idea flashes out with no premeditation on either side, but they both embrace it and the deal is sealed.<sup>7</sup>

Uncertainty about the precise nature of The Offer has existed from the outset: we have Joyce's own famous flip-flop in the letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver of 10 April 1921: "The next day I arranged for a Paris publication to replace the American one – or rather I

accepted a proposal made to me by *Shakespeare and Co.*" (L I, 162). And more recently, commentators have expressed doubt about Beach's published version. In 1991 Jean-Michel Rabaté observed, "Darantiere thus became a logical choice for Sylvia Beach when she needed a printer for the bold idea, suggested by Joyce, to print *Ulysses*"; and in 1989 Brenda Maddox quoted Beach's published version of the event, and then corrected it: "In reality, it was Joyce who took the initiative and suggested the idea."<sup>8</sup> Even Noel Fitch back in 1983 had suggested it is "difficult to believe . . . Joyce . . . had not thought of this possibility," and quoted, "I accepted with enthusiasm Joyce's suggestion . . ." from one of the drafts of Beach's memoirs – but she gave pride of place to Beach's published account on the previous page, quoting it in full (77, 78).

And the story lives on: Morris Beja repeats it in 1992, though he qualifies it with, "According to [Beach's] biography . . ."; Jeri Johnson uses it without qualification in her 1993 introduction to the Oxford World's Classics edition of *Ulysses*; and in 1994 Senator David Norris and Carl Flint write in the widely-available *Joyce For Beginners*, "In April 1921, she proposed publishing *Ulysses* in France, and Joyce agreed at once"; and Margot Norris' recent *Companion to James Joyce's "Ulysses"* quotes Beach's memoir.<sup>9</sup> It is not enough to say that the story persists because writers always go back to Ellmann for biographical and publishing history details (though that is surely part of it); we seem to have a need for this pivotal moment in Modernism to be played out in this way. Yet we will never have a definitive version of what transpired in the bookstore that day; the drafts reveal Beach sculpting the event for posterity.

## Subscribers

In establishing the readership of the first-edition of *Ulysses* the issue of archival information is particularly vexed. Beach recorded virtually every aspect of the publication, but between the notebooks, correspondence, and shipping log there are transcription errors and contradictions, only some of which can be resolved, making any attempt to establish the publishing history necessarily provisional.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, certain assumptions can be dispelled. Noel Fitch states, "The bulk of the orders came from Great Britain, and the list includes Winston Churchill and almost every leading English person of letters" (87). Reading down the first page of the Sallet notebook at the University of Texas certain names do leap out: Alec Waugh, Dora Marsden, W. B. Yeats by E. Pound, but few others do. George Bernard Shaw famously refused to subscribe, and the Bloomsbury Group are noticeably absent. The Woolfs, having declined Harriet Shaw Weaver's request to print the book, did not subscribe and ordered their copy a month after publication in a cool typewritten note from the Hogarth Press.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, early on in the subscription-gathering process, Clive Bell published an article in the *New Republic*— "Plus de Jazz" — that railed against ragtime. He admits some artists did draw inspiration from jazz: Stravinsky, T. S. Eliot, ("Whose agonizing labor seems to have been eased somewhat by the comfortable ministrations of a black and grinning muse") and,

In prose I think Mr. Joyce will serve as a perhaps not very good example: I choose him because he is probably better known to readers than any other writer who affects similar methods. In his later publications Mr. Joyce does deliberately go to work to break up the traditional sentence, throwing overboard sequence, syntax, and, indeed, most of those conventions which men habitually employ for

the exchange of precise ideas. Effectually and with a will he rags the literary instrument: unluckily, this will has at its service talents which are only moderate.

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Joyce made light of the article to McAlmon in a letter of 6 November 1921: "Clive Bell wrote an article, I hear, something about modern literature and me. He says that unfortunately I have such mediocre talents as not to justify detailed criticism. What form of suicide do you think I should choose?" (*Letters I*, 176). Nonetheless, Joyce must have regarded the article as a deliberate response to the subscription circulars. Virginia Woolf wrote to Roger Fry on 17 October 1921, noting that T. S. Eliot says *Ulysses* is "the greatest work of the age – Lytton says he doesn't mean to read it. Clive says – well, Clive says that Mary Hutchinson has a dressmaker who would make me look like other people" (*Letters II*, 485). When she did struggle through the book in the summer and fall of 1922 she compared it unfavorably to Proust – and jokes that she will sell off Joyce at a small profit. She moans to Roger Fry on 3 October 1922, "My great adventure is really Proust. . . . Far otherwise is it with *Ulysses*; to which I bind myself like a martyr to a stake, and have thank God, now finished – My martyrdom is over. I hope to sell it for £4.10. She does not sound like she thinks she will find a buyer.<sup>13</sup>

While on the one hand Fitch argues that the literati were flocking to subscribe to *Ulysses*, she gives the impression that the bookstores stayed away in droves: "The Paris bookshops did not subscribe and would come begging too late for the first edition. Brentano's ordered only one copy of the first edition, but . . . dozens . . . of later editions" (105). According to the Subscriber's Address Book at Princeton Brentano's did indeed take one copy in March of 1922, but there were three Brentano's stores in Paris

and they took a total of eight. More to the point, of the sixty-eight bookstores or agencies that ordered the first edition, twelve were in Paris.<sup>14</sup>

As for Ireland, Fitch states, "The largest bookstore order was for eleven copies from the Irish Book Shop, which reordered in two years. That was hardly enough for every Dublin 'male person . . . between the ages of 15 and 20' who Shaw had suggested be rounded up and forced 'to read all that foul mouthed, foul minded derision and obscenity'" (105). While Fitch does not actually say that only eleven copies went through Dublin bookshops in two years, that is the implication of her remarks. Yet Fred Hanna, at 29 Nassau St. took six; Hodges, Figgis at 20 Nassau St. took three; Combridge at 18 Grafton St. took four; The Irish Book Shop in Dawson St. wound up taking thirteen, and William Mullan & Son in Belfast took three. Thus not only were individuals from Ireland ordering *Ulysses*, but immediately after publication it was on sale simultaneously at four bookstores in the core of Dublin, and was also being sold in Belfast. It perhaps fits better with the notion that Joyce was ignored and reviled in his own country to have only eleven copies going there, but that in fact was not the case.

### **Readers or Speculators?**

So the first-edition *Ulysses* was not merely a coterie publication, going to select subscribers – "a few folk in somewhat precious *cénacles*," as one early reviewer would put it.<sup>15</sup> In fact, in "Consuming Investments: Joyce's *Ulysses*," Lawrence Rainey argues that this was not an edition for the literati at all: it was "a deluxe edition . . . directed partly to a small corpus of well-to-do collectors but principally to the dealers and speculators who sold to collectors." The effect of this, Rainey argues, was profound:

The reason to buy a book published by Weaver was to read it; the reason for buying the edition proposed by Beach was quite different – to be able to sell it again, perhaps at a significant profit if it went well. Here was the final and consummate paradox . . . . the effect of modernism was not so much to encourage reading as to render it superfluous. What modernism required was not readers but patron-investors. (541-2)

That last statement is a false binary: modernism needed readers, reader-investors, patrons, promoters, and more. Rainey knows this, but his aim is in part to provoke debate and focus attention on the commercial impulse in modernism. Yet where his article on *The Waste Land*,<sup>16</sup> which laid bare the wheeling and dealing that netted T. S. Eliot the equivalent of \$45,000 - \$55,000 for a poem that had not yet been read, is persuasive, his attempt to extend the argument to the first edition of *Ulysses*, and from there to modernism in general, fails. Leon Edel came back with a sharp response on the question of pricing in the pages of the *Times Literary Supplement*.<sup>17</sup> However, there are other questions raised by Rainey's use of archival material, questions which, because the materials are extensive, widely dispersed, and often uncatalogued, are not immediately obvious. Yet the more one works with the archives the more they undermine Rainey's claims, reinforcing instead the conviction that, however much she might have hoped the deluxe series would help underwrite the cost of production, the edition was conceived as a readers' edition.

First, as to Beach's motives. Rainey quotes her letters to her mother and her sister Holly in which she speaks of *Ulysses* generating "thousands of dollars of publicity," and making her "famous" (538, 543), but not only is the emphasis on "fame" rather than

money, Beach's mother provided the finances to found the bookshop and Holly was providing regular infusions of cash to keep it afloat. We know from the drafts that Beach had grave concerns *Ulysses* would sink her business completely. These letters are not just to family – they are to her financial backers, and in them we see Beach trying to ally her own misgivings as well as forestall theirs.

Rainey provides a useful analysis of the concept of private editions, in the U.S. and in Europe, but his statement that Adrienne Monnier had published "several deluxe editions" (539) leads one to expect something much grander than the little grey pamphlets in the Darantiere archive at Texas. In 1920 Monnier had published a series of short works which included Paul Claudel's *Introduction a quelques oeuvres*; Francis Thompson's *Une Antienne De La Terre* trans. Auguste Morel; Paul Valéry's *Album de Vers Anciens 1890 – 1900*; and Valery Larbaud's *Samuel Butler*. Each has the same grey paper cover with a blue woodcut of Monnier's shop, and the address underneath. Each was issued in editions of 1,025 or 1,050, divided into three series: 25 or 50 copies lettered or numbered and not for sale; 50 numbered on *vélin pur fil*; and 950 numbered on a good but lesser paper such as *verge d'arches*. This three-tiered system is the model for the production of *Ulysses*. These are obviously intended for friends and customers, not the "small corpus of well-to-do collectors" and dealers who held copies "until the edition was exhausted and its value on the collectors' market had doubled or tripled" (539), which Rainey argues forms the market for deluxe editions. Beach saw herself appealing to much the same audience as Monnier.

The collections in the HRC at Texas also include a fabulous limited edition of Homer's *Odyssey*, translated by Victor Bérard, whose *Les Phéniciens et L'Odyssee* Joyce

had used. Produced in four volumes over four years at the beginning of the 1930’s for “La Compagnie Des Bibliophiles de L’Automobile Club de France,” its subscribers sound like the guest list for one of Proust’s parties: the Comte Emmanuel De La Rochefoucauld, Le Vicomte De La Rochefoucauld, Le Prince De Robech, Le Vicomte De Rohan, Baron Robert de Rothschild and Philippe Rothschild, André and Émile Dubonnet, etc. etc. Hand-printed on vellum in a specially-designed typeface, with hand-colored illustrations, it is gorgeous to the touch and to the eye. With its text in full caps, however, it would have been a chore to read. Yet that obviously was not the point; it was an object of exclusive beauty and distinction, provided to enhance the cultural capital of an audience with prestige and wealth, and to make money for all involved in the production – including the patron-investors. It emphatically defines what Joyce’s *Ulysses* was not.

“Speculation is like somebody who swallows down big mouthfuls without chewing, and who vomits almost immediately,” wrote Monnier in 1938 in her *Gazette des Amis des Livres*. She was not against making money from books, she was after all in the trade, but, she says,

Let me be clearly understood, I am speaking here of speculation and not of business in general. I do not call someone a speculator who possesses a just appreciation of the value of things and who knows how to fix their price. I call someone a speculator who does not love to begin with, someone who sees only the possible material profit, who exploits the creator and the amateur at one and the same time, who buys with expediency and who sells with expediency.<sup>18</sup>



Shortly after publication of *Ulysses* both Joyce and Beach were concerned about speculation; there seemed to be a general sense that individual copies were going for fabulous sums. Each had heard of someone who knew someone who saw a copy somewhere . . . but looking at *American Book Prices Current*, and *Book Prices Current*, which cover the major auction houses in London and America, one discovers John Quinn's signed copy selling (in the exhaustive sale of his book, art, and manuscript collection) going for \$130 in January of 1924; another first edition selling in April for \$45; another in November for \$31; and another in a closed case for \$52.50. Two decades later, on December 28, 1941, *Ulysses* no. 619 sold at Sotheby's for 3 pounds 5 shillings; other copies in 1941 went for 2 pounds, 2 shillings, and \$22.50. These statistics must be used very cautiously – prices vary enormously according to condition and association – but if there were speculators acquiring *Ulysses* to hold until the edition was exhausted we would expect to see these copies appearing in the auction records.<sup>19</sup>

It is true, as Rainey says, that over half the copies of the first edition were sold through commercial outlets. But William Jackson of London, who put in the largest order, was an export agent, not a bookseller. Rainey makes the distinction between dealers and export agents, but then conflates it in the reference to "dealers and speculators" who held copies. There is no evidence that Jackson, who ordered one hundred copies, was interested in holding them back; he was buying them to distribute immediately to bookstores, mostly in the U.S. Further, and this is important, Jackson never got his full order. The Subscription Address book records the orders – and as Rainey notes it is very exciting to watch Jackson's orders climb from eight copies in the early summer of 1921, to twenty, then thirty-five in the fall, then seventy in the new year,

and then finally, one day before the book is published, to one hundred copies – but those are *orders*, not books distributed. Initially Beach did not send any books out until she had the money in hand, and these numbers are much less exciting. By 21 February Jackson has received only eight; two weeks later he is grumbling, "I will promise you a cheque . . . on the completion of my order. I think I is only fair that I should receive the 100 copies before payment is made" (Princeton, box 132). He never did pay for, nor receive, one hundred copies.<sup>20</sup>

Also, Rainey speaks of the way the deluxe edition "evolved under Beach's direction" (548). The problem was that Beach's direction was often the line of least resistance, whether it was accepting Joyce's offer/directive to publish *Ulysses*, or accepting a bookstore's refusal to pay their bills. In both personal and business dealings she disliked confrontation, hated saying no.<sup>21</sup> The correspondence between Beach and the Washington Square Bookshop provides a good example of her business dealings. The shop initially orders five copies (in June of 1921), then increases the order to twenty-five copies. They're eager. On the 18 February 1922, over two weeks after the first copies have appeared, E. H. Arens telegraphs anxiously, "MAILING DRAFT TODAY SHIP JOYCE IMMEDIATELY FOUR PACKAGES."

The 16 of March finds him still waiting for copies, cordial but crisp:

We sent you half payment on February 27 and cabled you on that day. We are anxiously awaiting for word from you as to your arrangements, etc. for shipping and are expecting some books daily.

Arens gets his books, but Beach does not get her money. He sends her a draft for slightly more than half the payment (1620 of 3000 francs), and after he has *Ulysses* in hand he

forgets about her. A year later she notes in her address book, "May 14, 1923 sent to Mr. Arens bill for balance" (Princeton, Box 63) . Still he does not pay. Finally, on 23 September 1926, she writes this gentle admonishment:

My father has kindly consented to call on you and bring the greetings of Shakespeare and Company.

There has been no response to statements I have sent you from time to time, but I know how easily busy people like us neglect to notice letters, or even bills.

If you can give my father the one hundred and eighteen dollars still due on ULYSSES, I shall thank you very much. Bookshops like mine feel the pinch growing out of the collapsing franc. I went to a great deal of trouble, risk and expense to get your copies to you, Via Canada, and heard that you had finally received them all safely, so I feel that I am justified in asking you for the balance due on them.

I hope business is going well with you. (Buffalo, Beach letters, box 6)  
Reduced to the expedient of having her father the Reverend Beach go to the store, Beach still explains (as if any bookstore owner would not understand) why the money is important to her, notes that she has heard the books arrived intact, and provides excuses for Arens taking over four years to pay his bill. In addition, she absorbed the cost of shipping, a substantial amount here: twenty-five copies of *Ulysses* would weigh over seventy-five pounds. What the whole production lacked was direction.

This was not cocoa futures; nobody cornered the pre-publication market and nobody was trying to. If it were *speculators* who were buying the book we might expect

the signed 350 fr editions to sell out first. These were the ones that were frankly intended for collectors (again, very different from "speculators"), that with their finer quality paper, comparative rarity (only 10% of the edition), and Joyce's signature, would increase in value the most, and the most quickly. Next would be the 250 fr series, unsigned but on better paper than the rest of the edition, and again comparatively rare – only 150. The rest of the edition, 750 copies at 150 fr – on cheaper paper and unsigned – would take longer to increase in value. But in fact the 150 fr series sold out by mid-March of 1922, and we find Joyce ending a letter to McAlmon on the 17 March 1922 with, "Are there any 250 or 350 fr candidates down there?", as if they were literally beating the bushes for buyers. By the summer of 1922 Beach agreed to allow Weaver to offer a 20% discount (instead of the 10–15% discount Weaver had been offering), in order to move the 350 fr series.

What is striking about the correspondence in the Beach archive (and there are hundreds of letters) is the fact that there is only one that speaks of the book in terms of an investment. Rainey claims that when the 150 fr copies had been sold, "Beach was advising buyers that they would have to purchase the more expensive issues. Many, quite simply, could not afford them" (547-8), and he cites the letter of one R. C. Armilt. Yet the letter does not at all support the notion that many could not afford the book. An admirer of *Portrait*, Armilt bemoans the fact that *Ulysses* is published privately, then states, "I am not a rich man. If your book *Ulysses* *can* be bought I will buy it. If it is not to be procured by money, am I to be denied the joy of reading one more work which is not for this time alone?" (Princeton, box 133). The point is that here is a reader who has followed Joyce's career and who, in spite of the fact that he is not a rich man, is

determined to acquire Joyce's next book. The issue is not price, but availability – he is afraid he will not be able to secure a copy at all (and this, not the cost, is a common theme in the letters). In any case, on March 18, 1922 Beach recorded his cheque for 150 francs in the Saillet notebook.<sup>22</sup>

Readers were determined to have the book in spite of the cost. One student, Alvin Bruck, writes dramatically to Joyce himself of his "unquenchable literary thirst," of how he has been "on a feverish hunt for stray copies of your magnificent *Ulysses* ever since it set out on a second Homeric wandering. . . ." (Princeton, box 132). Nat Wollf thanks Beach for his three wonderful days in "Shakespearian Co." and pleads, "Please, Oh, Please, save a copy for me. I am more than anxious to have one. I realize that this may be a little difficult for you as perhaps most of the copies have already been bespoke for [sic], but if by hook or crook you can secure me a copy of the 'Big and Strange Volume' I shall be more than grateful" (Princeton, box 133). A Dr. Lucke asks less emotionally for one of the 150 fr copies, but adds emphatically, "In case the above-mentioned edition should be sold out, please let me know at once, so that I can dig up some more money for one of the more expensive editions, for I am determined to have one of them" – to have, in other words, any copy of *Ulysses*.<sup>23</sup> And there are more sober letters from men in the manufacturing trades.<sup>24</sup>

In a draft of her memoirs Beach tells of hearing how "from time to time [a copy] escaped into the black market where it fetched a fancy price," but she insists the buyers,

were mostly Joyce-lovers who had saved up their pennies for what was a necessity to them and who would have sold the shirt off their back before they

would have parted with *Ulysses*. I knew a group of artists who clubbed together to get it. They were very thin when it came out as they had stayed in bed for sometimes a week so as not to get up an appetite and thus saved a lot on their food. A good many left Bankers found they could do without almost everything except *Ulysses*. (Princeton, box 121, folder 4)

This is an excellent story (though weakened somewhat by the fact that elsewhere in the drafts it is *one* starving artist), but it is clear from the correspondence with people like Nat Wolff that many young people were devoted to her, the shop, and what they saw as avant-garde literary works.

The one letter in the Princeton archive which does speak directly about collecting comes from Frank Rosengren, a Chicago bookseller who deals in autographs and first editions, who writes on 3 November of 1922 (that is, several months after the first edition had sold out) asking about an autograph: "I sold a copy of the First Edition of ULYSSES to a very wealthy customer of mine. He is very anxious to secure an autograph of Mr. Joyce or better still an autograph portrait. It would please me immensely to have a copy of the latter also, for the copy of ULYSSES I have in my private library" (Princeton, box 133). The letter, printed on canary yellow stationary with brown letterhead, is filed right next to the one from Armilt (misfiled under his initial 'R' rather than under 'A'), and to a reader who comes upon it after working through the correspondence from A to R, it stands out not because of its striking stationary but because it is the only letter that speaks of Joyce as an investment commodity. What the evidence points to is less provocative but ultimately more interesting than Rainey's thesis. The people who bought *Ulysses* bought it to read.

### Colonels, Flagellants, and 'Medical Men'

But what exactly did these prospective readers think they were getting? Most commentators follow Sylvia Beach in noting that after Sisley Huddleston's review in the March 5, 1922 *Observer* a wave of orders rolled in, and Rainey states, "Huddleston firmly expressed his admiration for the book, declaring it a work of genius. Joyce's style(s) he praised without reserve . . ." (547). Yet if we look back at Huddleston's review, it is a very curious piece of work. He begins by acknowledging that the work *seems* great:

No book has ever been more eagerly and curiously awaited by the strange little inner circle of book-lovers and littérateurs than James' Joyce's *Ulysses*. . . . with all my courage I will repeat what a few folk in somewhat precious *cénacles* have been saying – that Mr. James Joyce is a man of genius. . . . Personally I may consider him misguided; personally I might find much to write about the folly of a fixed idea. . . . (Deming 213-214)

Huddleston is at pains to establish that *he* is not of these "strange little inner circles," these "precious *cénacles*," devoting two full paragraphs to distancing himself from this production. He is just the messenger; he bears no responsibility. The first issue he takes up is the obvious one:

Obscenity? Yes. This is undoubtedly an obscene book; but that says Mr. Joyce, is not his fault. If the thoughts of men and women are such as may be properly described as obscene then how can you show what life is unless you put in the obscenity? This may not be your view or mine . . . . (Deming 214)

"Obscenity" is first note Huddleston strikes, and he interpellates the reader as plain folks, just like him, not to be fooled by Joyce's specious rationalization. Finally in the penultimate paragraph begins to talk about the work, praises the language – "a spot of colour which sets the page aglow" – and then in the last paragraph he addresses the technique of rendering "thoughts [which] pass in higgledy-piggledy procession through one's mind – one's subconscious mind, I suppose it is called in present-day jargon. Psycho-analysis is, I believe, very strong about this" (Deming 215). He praises Joyce, but with considerable reserve.

Virginia Woolf observed that most readers of reviews just look at the opening and then skip to the end. If they did so with Huddleston the impression they will get is of a book full of "beastliness" and "sex":

Gross animality and subtle spirituality intermingle. Blasphemy and poetry, poetry and priggishness, jostle each other. But, on the whole, one becomes tired of beastliness always breaking in. There is one chapter devoted to the reverie of a woman, and her *monologue intérieur* is, I imagine – and am bound in all honesty to say – the vilest, according to ordinary standards, in all literature. And yet its very obscenity is somehow beautiful and wrings the soul to pity. Is that not high art? I cannot, however, believe that sex plays such a preponderant part in life as Mr. Joyce represents. . . .

What could be better? "Sex" and "high art" both. One hundred and thirty-six readers immediately dashed off orders – but not, I would argue, for "the spot of colour which sets the *page* aglow."



Some of these orders are more curious than others. Mr. D. Webster, an Antiquarian Bookseller from Leeds wrote the next day (6 March 1922), "I understand you publish James Joyce. Ulysses. I want a copy for a Medical Customer." Four days later, again from Leeds, Henry Walker, "New & Old Bookseller, Stationer and Bookbinder" orders a copy, and when he sends the bank draft he notes in a postscript, "This copy is for a Medical Man & he would like it at the earliest possible moment & the earliest number." If his customer sounds anxious, Kenneth Dickinson, a medical student at Newcastle upon Tyne, is even more so. He writes the day of Huddleston's review:

I am a Senior Medical Student, and understand that "Ulysses" is an important contribution to the literature of Psychology, and the study of the individual.

I append my prior qualifications, as proof of my bona fides.

Why would he send his *bona fides*?? The answer seems obvious, and a 1927 letter from one Norman L. Madson in Los Angeles spells it out: "I have been informed, not officially, however, that the book "ULYSSES" by James Joyce can be delivered in the United States by mail, provided it is ordered by a physician and plainly marked as intended for a doctor's use. . . ." It is clear that these readers thought they were buying not great literature but great pornography – or maybe both. The readership of *Ulysses* does not fit into discrete, or single, categories. The 'Medical Man' dealing with Henry Walker is eager both to get the book early and to get an early signed copy, suggesting he is both a lubricious reader and a knowledgeable collector (he did well – Beach sent him no. 11).

Some readers were disarmingly candid: "Having seen your firm mentioned in the Sporting Times perhaps you will be able to notify me if you have any books in stock

dealing on Flagellation or Corporal Punishment in any form," writes R. Burns from the Transvaal in South Africa. He has seen the review of *Ulysses* but the only book he mentions by name is "Stays and Gloves," and he requires "a list of any such books together with price of same and the best method of forwarding the purchase price. Thanking you in anticipation." Burns is writing on 9 April 1923, in response to a later article in the *Sporting Times* (Buffalo, box 1). Sylvia Beach writes in a draft of her memoirs that,

The Pink 'Un's attack had attracted the attention I'm afraid, of a certain number of retired Colonels who wrote asking me to send a copy to their 'Club'. I weep for some of them who were in time to secure their copy and who must have bitterly disapproved in the Pink 'Un's choice – never again could it be depended on for a tip. (Princeton, box 121, folder 4)

The Colonels did write, but it seems to have been in response to the second article in the *Sporting Times* (known as the Pink 'Un because of the color of its pages) more than the first. Capt. P.C. W. Tatton-Tatton in Draperstown, Northern Ireland writes in March 1923.<sup>25</sup> Two other military men, Captain F. O. S. John of the Royal Military College, Camberley, Surrey and Captain H. Cotton Minchin, of Small Arms School, Kent, both write on 5 March 1922 asking about *Ulysses*. However, it is clear from the dates that they are responding not to the first Pink 'Un review, but, like the Medical Men from the north country, to Huddleston's piece in the *Observer*.

The most famous Colonel (and, I suppose, flagellant) to subscribe had already done so in advance, from the Colonial Office, Downing Street, London.<sup>26</sup>

### **the private printings of T. E. and D. H. Lawrence**

The physical book, the desired body of the text itself, can reveal (or more properly, provide teasing clues to) the multivalent responses of readers. T. E. Lawrence's copy at Texas gestures toward a whole network of readers, and provokes questions about the book as fetish. Was T. E. Lawrence a literary reader? a collector? a pornographer? All are plausible, but the evidence suggests that it is none of the above, that Lawrence bought his copies as a printer and bibliophile. Vyvyan Richards, who kept Lawrence's library for him for a number of years, notes, "there was only one, Joyce's *Ulysses*, which he bought partly for a possible first-edition value when he met it in Paris – backing his fancy for fun, before that book became notable."<sup>27</sup> In fact Lawrence bought two copies, one of which (no. 52) he retained in its original paper covers, unread, untouched, in pristine condition. The other (no. 36, at Texas) he had bound in full burgundy leather by one of his favourite binders, C. & C. McLeish, with the pages trimmed and the front and back covers bound in at the end.

This was a reading copy, and it was heavily read: more than one hundred and fifty pages have marginal notes, and it was read casually: many of the pages have greasy smudges on them. There is a shard of biscuit in Ithaca, just as Stephen takes leave of Bloom, opposite line "What echoes of that sound were by both and each heard?" on p. 656 and "Had he ever been a spectator of those phenomena?" on p. 657, as if the reader were participating in the communion. These marks suggest a complete lack of reverence for the physical book. Penelope is the only episode without marginal notes, but it has obviously been around the block. While stationed in the Drigh Road RAF base at Karachi, where all the RAF aircraft engine in India were sent for overhaul, Lawrence

worked in the office of the Engine Repair Section. There he lent books to the "book-hungry men (hungry for more than the fiction library can give them)." "We are rough, and dirty handed, so that some of the volumes are nearly read to death. You can tell the pet ones, by their shabbiness," he wrote to George Bernard Shaw's wife, Charlotte on 8 December 1927. Even without other volumes from Lawrence's Karachi library to compare with, his *Ulysses* certainly qualifies as "shabby," and its condition suggests multiple readers, readers who read the entire book. A few months later he returns to this theme:

Everybody reads rubbish when he is tired, and isolated in camp; it would be an insult to give a good book only the dregs of our attention. So magazines and shockers are read: but my little library of queer books is almost as much used as the thousand-volume fiction library which the H.Q. maintains. It's because I tell 'em about books, and make them see them, as they reflect us. (8 March 1928).<sup>28</sup>

It would be fascinating to discover what these airmen, on a dreary base seven miles outside Karachi, some of them obviously reading at meal time during work, thought of Joyce; the crumbs and stains leave us only the trail of these anonymous readers, yet they trouble any easy assumptions about audience.

In any case the marginalia were not by T. E. Lawrence. Written by his friend W. M. M. Hurley, they are mainly factual notes to do with Dublin – nothing to do with classical allusions, literary technique, or exegesis – and they may have been *for* Lawrence, who has trouble getting through the book. Though he had written to Sidney Cockerell in December of 1925, that "to bring [his own *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*] out after *Ulysses* is an insult to modern letters"; and he wrote on 5 May of 1927 to the

*Spectator* offering to review "biography, criticism, novels of the 20<sup>th</sup> century sort of Forster's, Joyce's, D. H. Lawrence's, etc."<sup>29</sup> only two weeks later, on May 19, he is moaning to Eric Kennington, "Arnold Bennett . . . said the perfect word about *Ulysses*, when he swore that Joyce had made novel-reading a form of penal servitude." A month later he is no more enthusiastic: "It is even worse to read than I had hoped. Months: and such dull stuff. Joyce is a genius, but an unlucky one. His writing has the architectural merit of Balham. It goes on for ever, and needn't ever vary in spirit"<sup>30</sup>

But in 1921 there had been a pressing reason for T. E. Lawrence to be interested in *Ulysses*: since 1919 he had been working on his own epic, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. He would begin printing a draft in January of 1922, and producing the fine press copies in 1926.<sup>31</sup> He had always dreamed of printing on a handpress in a great medieval hall, and he had a collection of hand-press books, from Kelmscott to Ashendene, which he spread out in his room at Oxford to compare typefaces when deciding on the type for his own book. *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* was far too large to hand-set, so he opted for monotype. Nevertheless, he not only deplored "rivers" (the vertical white spaces that run down ill-set pages), but hated long spaces at the end of paragraphs (which cracked the page across), and large blanks at the end of chapters, so he rewrote to force his paragraphs to end in the second half of the line and to make his chapters close near the bottom right-hand corner of the page. Like Joyce he wrote and re-wrote on the proofs (sometimes fourteen times), but to enhance the *mise en page* rather than to enhance the text.<sup>32</sup> Given all of this, it is likely that Lawrence ordered the fine edition of *Ulysses* not as a speculator, nor even primarily as a rare book collector (and probably not as a pornographer – since he does not appear to have read it until five years after buying it),

but as a print aficionado obsessively concerned with the production values of his own forthcoming book.

In terms of the connection between modernism and capitalism, and the making of readers into investors, T. E. Lawrence's book is an example of how complicated such relations could become: only 128 copies of the limited 1926 edition were supplied to subscribers; the price was £30 per copy – but the actual cost was £96 per copy, and Lawrence gave a number of free copies to those who had been with him in the Arab Revolt. To make up the shortfall he went to Robin Buxton, a former commander of the Imperial Camel Corps, and persuaded him to finance the work. As collateral, Lawrence gave the bank the rights to publish an abridgement of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*; this became *Revolt in the Desert*, published by Cape in 1927, a book actually called into being by the fiscal dynamics of cultural field. The arrangement benefited the subscribers' edition of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* as well; as Lawrence said in a note to subscribers explaining the delay in publication (having badgered Sylvia Beach he had now to placate his own subscribers), "The publisher's advance on expected royalties has been put to the Seven Pillars account, and will make it a considerably better production" (note to subscribers under "Miscellaneous," T. E. Lawrence papers, HRC).

Lawrence wanted to produce beautiful books, but he did not want them to become objects of speculation. In the limited edition of *Seven Pillars* he employed several different designers and binders, and he arranged the portraits at the end differently, so that no two copies were alike, "to guard," Vyvyan Richards thinks, "against the first-edition cult" (19). Predictably, as Thompson points out (50) the irregularities made the book even more rare, and a year after publication it was no longer a work to be read;

Lawrence wrote from Karachi in dismay, "Most of the owners I hear from are insuring it, or sending it to their bank or strong rooms. In fact it is going to vanish from the face of England, and the rare copies that do come into the market will go to the States, where my fancy pride of 20000 dollars for the Doran edition artificially keeps up [?] the price of possessing a copy" (to D. G. Hogarth, 7 July 1927; Garnett, 527). Even though it was an *objet d'art* he wanted it read.

To turn briefly to the other Lawrence of modernism, D. H. Lawrence (who was not a subscriber – he had seen *Ulysses* for first time in the United States in November 1922) his production of his own expensive editions provides a useful point of comparison with Joyce and Beach. John Worthen notes that Lawrence signed his name at least 2790 times between 1926 and 1929 in limited editions of his work. Further, with *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, he and Pino Orioli, his Italian publisher, put the book on the market at £2, almost five times the usual selling price of a novel, and then when they had sold enough to cover publishing costs they cheerfully doubled the price to £4. So D. H. Lawrence and Orioli were exploiting the rising stock of Lawrence's literary production in a way that Joyce and Beach never did.

When the pirates moved in, Lawrence countered them with his own cheap edition brought out in Paris – and he approached Sylvia Beach, hoping she would publish it. In *Shakespeare & Company* Beach tells of Richard Aldington, Aldous Huxley, and then Lawrence himself coming to appeal to her. Beach refused, claiming a lack of capital and a desire to avoid becoming known as a publisher of erotica (93).<sup>33</sup> Ironically, the next year, when Dominic Perri of Rhode Island ordered ten copies of the second edition of *Ulysses* and she could only supply six, she suggested he take other books instead of a

refund: "I enclose a prospectus of Contact and also The Three Mountain Press in case some of their books might interest you. I also have Frank Harris' Autobiography "My Life & Loves" vol. 1, (Frs. 225) but it is just about as difficult to get through as ULYSSES . . . ." <sup>34</sup> By this time Beach had had to acknowledge that *Ulysses* was circulating in both an avant-garde literary market and a market for erotica.

### **a queer book?**

The book was also circulating within a defined gay community. In an early draft of the memoirs Beach writes:

Naturally the publisher of 'Ulysses' was supposed to lead a full life, sexually speaking. Frank Harris took this for granted when he picked me out an amateur in the art, eager to listen to all the stories he could remember on the subject.

Everyone 'knew' that Mr Joyce was my lover, and homosexuals had no difficulty in reconciling that with the 'fact' that I was also one of them. [margin –

Particularly as my strictly tailored costume, adopted for convenience in a business life seemed quite indicative of inverted tendencies (sic).] (Princeton, box 168, folder 1)

I do not propose to enter into a discussion of Joyce's or Bloom's sexuality.<sup>35</sup> However, the perspective of print-culture history raises intriguing questions. In the passage above Beach makes it clear that an aura of sexual ambivalence surrounded her, and not just her personally but her as a publisher of *Ulysses*. And *Ulysses* had established her as not just a publisher but a purveyor of "queer" books:



An Irish priest asked me if I had anything 'spicy' and in fact I seemed to have a reputation of a purveyor of quite special literature – all on account of 'Ulysses'. There was an English lady who when she had exhausted the supply of all the queer books in the place: Djuna Barnes' 'Lady's Almanach' [sic], 'The Well of Loneliness', Bessie Bruer's 'Memoires of Love', Compton Mackenzie's 'Extraordinary Women' and everything else I could think of, came up to my desk and hissed: 'Have you anything more about THOSE UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE?'<sup>36</sup>

Further, the shop itself had established itself as a site of queer culture:

A friend had presented me with some photos of Wilde to hang in my shop, and I had one of Wilde and Douglas, their boots in the foreground and larger than their faces, which hung behind a large old clock and could be perceived when the two enormous black ballshaped weights sank low enough towards the end of the week to disclose the two gentlemen to the public gaze. Many were the couples who stood with their arms around each other before this shrine. Lesbians flocked to contemplate my person and to mark their unmistakable sympathy for me and my bookshop.

In the special *JJQ* issue on Joyce and Homosexuality Jean-Michel Rabaté argues that Wilde's death in Paris in 1900 not only marks the end of the *fin de siècle*, it "heralds a new period in which young Irish aesthetes attempt to 'grow . . . out of Wilde and paradoxes' (18.04.06) – as Buck Mulligan says – thus betraying that he is still bound up in Wilde's sophistic and enthymematic network."<sup>37</sup> As the draft of Beach's memoirs suggests, *Ulysses* was bound up in a Wildean network; and when in the same issue of

*JJQ* Colleen Lamos asks, "What is a sign of homosexuality? . . . Who knows about homosexuality, and who can read it in *Ulysses*, including its characters, its possible readers, and its author?" (338), we can extend the question to the actual signs in the window of Shakespeare and Company.

The "network" was wider than the store. A charged climate of reception for *Ulysses* had already been created generally by the publication of Proust's scandalous *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, but perhaps more particularly by Joyce's gay printer, Maurice Darantiere.<sup>38</sup> In a note in the 1991 *Joyce Studies Annual* Jean-Michel Rabaté observes that Darantiere's

trips to Paris served as a means of bypassing the censorship of a provincial town which had difficulty accepting the flamboyant lifestyle and obvious homosexuality of an ostensibly married man. Paris also offered opportunities to indulge in a taste for the low life of the Parisian artistic demimonde, where he enjoyed playing the procurer for high-society friends.<sup>39</sup>

Did he procure any subscriptions for *Ulysses* while he was at it? We do not know, but he must have talked about the book that was causing so many problems for him.<sup>40</sup> Also, of course, *Ulysses* had first been published by a lesbian couple. Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap had been living together in Greenwich Village for five years and had become notorious through the prosecution of the *Little Review* in 1921.<sup>41</sup> Did a gay readership overlap with an avant-garde readership (or indeed a corporate readership – in *My Thirty Years' War* Anderson speaks of working the skyscrapers of Wall Street, top to bottom) for the *Little Review*? As readers we have multiple personalities, and any single reader will fall into several categories (except, perhaps, the gentleman from the Transvaal).

Nevertheless, the first periodical publishers, the book publisher/distributor, and the printer of *Ulysses* moved within a gay network, and it would be surprising if this were not a factor in generating subscriptions. If in one sense our picture of the readership is like the overlapping colored circles in a sociology text, then one of the circles must be gay readers.

### Joyce

So the subscribers wanted a book to read, for whatever reason. What about Joyce? In his frantic April 1922 letter to Nora when she was in Galway ("My darling, my love, my queen . . . I would go anywhere in the world if I could be sure that I could be alone with your dear self . . . . Either this must occur or we must part forever, though it will break my heart . . .") Joyce links *Ulysses* and love: "O my dearest, if you would only turn to me even now and read that terrible book which has now broken the heart in my breast and take me to yourself alone to do with me what you will!" (III 63). And in the letter to his Aunt Josephine of 23 October 1922 in which he addresses the issue of marketability, it is clear he is still thinking of the book as something worth collecting, not speculating in. Further, what he comes back to, as he does elsewhere in his letters is the issue of readership. It is this that rouses him to his snide comparison of his book to a pound of chops:

The market price of the book now in London is £40 and copies signed are worth more. I mention this because Alice told me you had lent it (or given?) and people in Dublin have a way of not returning books. In a few years copies of the first edition will probably be worth £100 each, so book experts say, and hence my

remark. This of course has nothing to do with the contents of the book which it seems you have not read. . . . There is a difference between a present of a pound of chops and a present of a book like *Ulysses*. You can acknowledge receipt of the present of a pound of chops by simply nodding gratefully, supposing, that is, that you have your mouth full of as much of the chops as it will conveniently hold, but you cannot do so with a large book on account of the difficulty of fitting it into the mouth. (I 190)

Further, in the 17 March 1922 letter to McAlmon we find Joyce pondering the placement of McAlmon's review: "What about *Broom*? . . . I suppose the *Gargoyle* is useless. As regards *Dial* Pound, Eliot, and Colum are all doing or have done articles in it so I fancy they are full up. A new number of *The Tyro* is out but a review to be of service to me should appear shortly. . . ." (L III, 60). The "service" Joyce is talking about is that of generating *readers* not "patron-investors."

What is fascinating about the material in the archives is that they do not suggest a homogeneous group of readers, or a common motive for reading, nor even the degree of similarity we would expect in the kinds of bookstores that carried *Ulysses*. In addition the archives reveal a voice of Sylvia Beach very different from her somewhat stiff memoir. In one passage she speaks of learning slang:

My friend, Capt. Rolland Hickman, whom I met at Miss Watson's Foyer had got me as far as 'Pucker up, Chick, I'm coming in on a beam' when alas! he had to return to the front. (Princeton, box 168, folder 3)

We too need to return to the front. Not to trench warfare but, to shift the metaphor, to the trenches of the archaeological sites where, putting aside our preconceptions, we can further open up the exciting, still-garbled, history of *Ulysses*.

**Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> The Sylvia Beach collection at the Princeton University Library (hereafter referred to as Princeton) contains most of the order forms for *Ulysses* and a mass of correspondence from subscribers, as well as three address books (the U.K., the U.S., and France and the continent) for subscribers, the shipping log, and bank records for the first edition; the collection also contains the unpublished drafts of Beach's 1959 memoir, *Shakespeare & Company*. The Sylvia Beach Papers in the Poetry Collection, Capen Library, State University of New York at Buffalo (hereafter Buffalo) contains some order forms and hundreds more uncatalogued letters from subscribers, as well as correspondence from Darantiere to Beach. The Maurice Sallet Papers of the Carlton Lake Collection at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at Austin, Texas (hereafter HRC) contains the "Calepin de vente," a small notebook which lists the subscribers to the edition, in the order in which they paid, and then the recipients of the edition. The HRC also contains an extensive collection of works printed by Maurice Darantiere.

The archivists in these collections have been extraordinary. At Princeton Peggy Sherry and Mura Craiutu were gracious and helpful. At Buffalo Robert J. Bertholf provided access to materials we would never have discovered on our own, and Luca Crispi generously took time from his own work to share of his exceptional knowledge of the archive. At Texas, Rachel Howarth, Cathy Henderson, Rick Oram, and John Kirkpatrick of the HRC, and Michael Winship of the Department of English, provided invaluable help in negotiating the collections. Also at Texas, Rick Watson, Phillip Herring, and Tom Staley made excellent suggestions for this essay. My work is deeply indebted to my research partner Laura Barnes (of Glenn Horowitz Booksellers, New York City), whose aid in the archives and discussions over coffee have been indispensable. The essay is part of a longer study in which her work, particularly the establishing of a census for the first edition of *Ulysses*, will appear more prominently.

<sup>2</sup> Sylvia Beach, *Shakespeare & Company* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1959; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991); Noel Riley Fitch, *Sylvia Beach and the Lost Generation: A History of Literary Paris in the Twenties and Thirties* (NY: W. W. Norton, 1985); Lawrence Rainey, "Consuming

Investments: Joyce's *Ulysses*," *JJQ* 33.4 (Summer 1996): 531 – 567; reprinted without footnotes as "The Real Scandal of *Ulysses*," in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 31 January 1997, 11-13.

<sup>3</sup> Fitch, 367. On Freund's photographs of Joyce for *TIME* see Enda Duffy and Maurizia Boscagli's "Joyce's Face" in Kevin Dettmar and Stephen Watt, eds., *Marketing Modernisms: Self-Promotion, Canonization, and Rereading* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 133 - 159.

<sup>4</sup> Fitch 366 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Beach resented being "enJoycened" and did not want her bookstore remembered as a Joyce factory:

He had an all-invading way with him, but I resisted to the end anything that threatened to turn the place completely into a Joyce plant. His final attempt to totally en-Joycen me was at the moment when *Ulysses* was being pirated in the United States. He thought I should abandon my bookshop, probably transplant it to America in order to take up the fight for *Ulysses* in my country." (Princeton, box 167, folder 2)

She returns to the topic, emphasizing the fact that Shakespeare & Co. was her work of art:

Nobody but Joyce could have written *Ulysses*, but anybody could have published it. . . . Don't forget that my bookshop and Company was already in full swing when Joyce came along.

(Princeton, box 167, folder 2)

Note the imperative verb. She knows that resistance is futile: we have already forgotten.

<sup>6</sup> "I did not understand well about my father. Giorgio wrote to me when I was in Brittany saying he had an ulcer and I think he died but I am not certain about this. I would like to know for sure if it is not too much trouble for you." ( to Sylvia Beach, 28 May 1958; Princeton, box 117, folder 4; see also folder 7).



<sup>7</sup> Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce*, revised edition (New York: Oxford UP, 1982). Also see the *Letters of James Joyce*, vol. III (New York: Viking, 1966): on the first page of his introduction Ellmann writes that Beach “timidly offered” to publish *Ulysses* (3), and later in a footnote he states that she “courageously proposed that [Joyce] allow her to publish the book” (40).

<sup>8</sup> See "'Thank Maurice': A Note About Maurice Darantiere," *JSA* 1991, 247; and *Nora: a biography of Nora Joyce* (London: Minerva, 1989), 246.

<sup>9</sup> *James Joyce: A Literary Life* (London: Macmillan, 1992), 85; James Joyce, *Ulysses* (London: Oxford University Press, 1993), xlii; *Joyce For Beginners* (Cambridge: Icon Books, 1994), 141; Margot Norris, ed. *A Companion to James Joyce's "Ulysses"* (Boston and New York: Bedford Books, 1998) p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Darnton warns against taking even police reports “as hard nuggets of irreducible reality, which [the historian] has only to mine out of the archives, sift and piece together in order to create a solid reconstruction of the past. The reports are constructions of their own . . . .” *The Great Cat Massacre and other episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 157.

<sup>11</sup> “7/ 3/ 22 / We shall be obliged if you will send us a copy of *Ulysses* by James Joyce, 150 fr.; we suggest that you set off the amount against the account which is owing to us. We presume that you will allow us the usual discount. /Yours faithfully / The Hogarth Press” (Beach Papers, box 132). Their copy, rebound in yellow boards, is at the HRC, and according to the bookseller’s catalogue entry came uncut. In a 1922 Christmas letter to Gerald Brenan she says, “I have only read him, partly, once” (*Letters of Virginia Woolf*, 5 vols., ed. Anne Olivier Bell (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977

-1984) II, 598; it would have been useful to see how much of the volume had been cut.

<sup>12</sup> “Plus De Jazz,” in *The New Republic*, 28 (21 September 1921), 94, 95. Bell goes on, “Contempt for accepted ideas of what prose and verse should be and what they should be about, nervous dislike of traditional valuations, of scholarship, culture and intellectualism, above all an emphatic protest against the notion that one idea or emotion can be more important or significant than another, are I take it, amongst the leading tenets of this school, whose grand object it is to present, as surprisingly as possible, the chaos of any mind at any given moment” (95). Except for her sketches, Virginia Woolf had not yet started her own experiments in rendering what she would call “the flight of the mind”; she was at work on *Jacob’s Room*, in which she resolutely declines to enter Jacob’s consciousness.

<sup>13</sup> *Letters of Virginia Woolf* II, 566. The diary and letters chart Woolf’s conflicted response to *Ulysses*, and one of the most interesting strands in the narrative is the mediation of T. S. Eliot in her response. Though even in her last entry she says “the pages reeled with indecency,” she notes, “One day Katherine Mansfield came, & I had it out. She began to read, ridiculing: then suddenly said, But theres some thing in this. . . . Then I remember Tom in Ottoline’s room at Garsington saying – it was published then – how could anyone write again after achieving the immense prodigy of the last chapter? He was for the first time in my knowledge, rapt, enthusiastic. I bought the blue paper book & read it here one summer I think with spasms of wonder, of discovery, & then again with long lapses of intense boredom” (*Letters Of Virginia Woolf* V, 353).

<sup>14</sup> Brentano’s Export, Librairie Champion, Flammarion & Vaillant, Galignani Library, Librairie Gallimard, La Maison du Livre Français, W. H. Smith & Son, Librairie Stechert, Librairie Terquem, Librairie Tarride, F. Bonneau Librairie, and the Agence Générale de Librairie which took 41 copies.

<sup>15</sup> Sisley Huddleston, "Ulysses," *Observer*, 5 March 1922, 4; rpt Robert H. Deming, ed. *James Joyce, The Critical Heritage*, 2 vols. (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1970), 213-216. What becomes evident from the correspondence is that the bookstores contacting Beach were as diverse as the individual subscribers. One expects orders from the Washington Square Book Shop, but inquiries came from Jack Sacks, Bookseller, on 116st in Harlem; from the Temple Bar Tea Rooms in San Francisco, Gammel's Bookstore in Austin, Texas, 3,000 miles north of Austin in Calgary, Alberta, the Alexander Cigar and News Stand, which like Gammel's sounds more likely to cater to cowpunchers than collectors (Buffalo, Beach letters, box 6; Princeton, box 61, folder 8). These are bookstores that are not, like Shakespeare & Co. in Paris, or The Sunwise Turn in New York, or even Mitchell's Bookstore in Buenos Aires, literary centers. They are off the beaten cultural track, dealing with a clientele we have not so far even imagined.

<sup>16</sup> Lawrence Rainey, "The Price of Modernism: Reconsidering the Publication of *The Waste Land*," *Critical Quarterly* 31 (Winter 1989): 21-47.

<sup>17</sup> Edel contended that Beach "charged 350 francs for copies printed on handmade Holland paper. The franc, however, was only worth four cents then, and the price to Americans was not \$30, as Rainey claims, but \$14," "Letters to the Editor," in the *Times Literary Supplement*, April 11, 1997. But according to *Banking and Monetary Statistics 1914- 1921* published by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, in February 1922 350 fr was trading at \$30.56. As Laura Barnes points out, in Beach's own cheque-book she computes the franc at 12.7 to the dollar in August 1922, so the 350 fr copies were costing Americans \$27.55. By January 1923 she is converting the dollar at 16.25 francs so a 350 fr copy cost \$21.25.

<sup>18</sup> *The Very Rich Hours of Adrienne Monnier*, trans. with intro. by Richard McDougall (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), 141-2.

<sup>19</sup> I am indebted here to Rick Watson, editor of *JSA*, and to Laura Barnes, for information about the book market.

<sup>20</sup> Jackson paid 10,400 francs; this would not cover even 100 copies of the 150fr series (for which he paid 120 francs per copy) but beyond the fourteen copies listed in the Saillet notebook, exactly which series he received is speculative. Part of the problem with Rainey's – or anyone's – calculations is that we can only account for 800 of the 1,000 copies in the edition. Rainey, necessarily, shifts to gross sales rather than numbers of copies; however, because we do not know the exact amount of the discount Beach was offering bookstores (and this was not consistent), and we often do not know whether a given order was all 150 fr copies or included 250 fr and 350 fr copies.

<sup>21</sup> Her gift was for compromise: when Adrienne Monnier moved Gisèle Freund into their home while Beach was on holiday, Beach moved to the apartment over her store, but continued to take her evening meal with Monnier and Freund (Fitch 367).

<sup>22</sup> “‘There was a woman who wanted a copy, but she hadn't money enough on hand to buy it,’ Miss Beach explained. ‘Finally, the lower-priced copies were sold out and there were left only a few at 250 francs. So she asked me to put one aside and made a deposit of 50 francs. A few days later she came in to say that she needed the use of the 50 francs for a while, but she begged me to keep the book for her, and I did. Several weeks later she paid for it and took it away. Some weeks passed and she was back again. She was sailing for America and hadn't money enough to purchase her passage. So she suggested that I take back the book and keep it until she could send the money over by a friend to

reclaim it. I am still keeping it, but I don't know what she is going to do.” in Marjorie Reid, “Shopkeeper of Shakespeare and Company,” *New York Times*, 3 Dec. 1922, p.7.

This is copy 204, inscribed to Beach's mother as a birthday gift on December 5, 1923.

<sup>23</sup> In the event he received copy no. 451, now in the HRC; it is inscribed to Yva Fernandez 9 March 1922, the sister of Emile Fernandez, “with whom [Lucia] was briefly in love” (Ellmann, *James Joyce*, p. 612).

<sup>24</sup> E. D. Rodda, “Waterworks Engineer & Manager / Borough of Southampton”

reserves his before publication on 3 January 1922 , and says he'll call for it.

J. F. Craddock, “Manufacturer of Every Description of Sealing, Parcelling, Bottling and Engravers' Wax / Suitable For All Climates / Contractor to H.M. & Colonial Governments” (according to his letterhead), writes from Birmingham on 8 March 1922.

H. C. Pyne, managing director of Oil Supply Corporation, an international company with offices in Whitehall in London and the Rue de Lisbonne in Paris, writes on his massive letterhead on 6 March 1922 in response to the *Observer* review, ordering a copy.

William Lindsey, a Bostonian, writes from Mills Equipment Co., London.

R. L. Erickson, of “J.W. Robinson & Co. / Dry Goods / Seventh Street and Grand Avenue, Los Angeles” writes on July 19, 1921, asking for information on prices and discounts for *Ulysses*. He does not get a copy.

Neither does J. G. Fisher, “sole proprietor” of “KINGFISHER (24881) LEEDS / Manufacturers of Grease & Oil Lubricators of All Types” (photographs of grease nipples, verso) who writes on 3 April 1922, also prompted by the *Observer* review.

Yet the interest of these writers suggests the diversity of the potential audience for *Ulysses* (Princeton, boxes 132 and 133).

<sup>25</sup> The book also attracted military men in the field: Col G. H. Summers writes from “Berbera, B. Somaliland via Aden”; and Capt. H. A. Shadforth from “Headquarters, Egyptian Army, Khartoum, Sudan” (Buffalo, Beach letters, box 6).

<sup>26</sup> T. E. Lawrence’s letters to Beach are at Buffalo, Beach letters, box 3.

In a draft of her memoir Beach writes, “One of the first subscribers to *Ulysses* was T. E. Lawrence. I got letters from him also, asking when it was ever coming out, but I had no time to reply. There were too many other letters asking the same question. I knew nothing about Lawrence then, military questions not being my line. He must have been in Paris at about that time, and perhaps was even in my library, but if I had that honor it was unawares. I would like to have seen him. I think in his way he was as great as Joyce” (Princeton, box 168, folder 7).

<sup>27</sup> *T. E. Lawrence, Book Designer* (Wakefield, West Yorkshire: Simon Lawrence, 1985), 20.

<sup>28</sup> Jeremy Wilson, *Lawrence: the authorized biography of T. E. Lawrence* (New York: Atheneum, 1990), 767, 805. Wilson includes a photograph of Lawrence lying on his cot in Karachi reading *Ulysses*.

<sup>29</sup> quoted in Wilson, *Lawrence*, 797.

<sup>30</sup> *The Letters of T. E. Lawrence*, ed. David Garnett (London: Jonathan Cape, 1938), pp.

488, 517, 523-4. The initials T.E.S. on the flyleaf of the no. 38 in the HRC collection further suggest a late reading: on 30 August 1927 T. E. Lawrence legally changed his name to Thomas Edward Shaw.

<sup>31</sup> The 1922 version was the huge working draft that Lawrence had set at the presses of the *Oxford Times*. He made only eight copies, sending the chapters in for typesetting in random order and retaining the most sensational material until the end; see *T. E. Notes* 7.1 (Spring 1996). In this paragraph I am drawing on Vyvyan Richards 10-15.

<sup>32</sup> The techniques of composition (and self-presentation) could not be more opposite: where Joyce told Budgeon he spent all morning getting the words of a sentence right, Lawrence claimed that he wrote 1,000 words an hour. Of the introduction, written in an airplane between Paris and Egypt, he says, “Its rhythm is unlike the rest. I liken it to the munch, munch, munch of the synchronised Rolls-Royce engines”; see V. M. Thompson, *Not a Suitable Hobby for an Airman!: T.E. Lawrence as Publisher* (Long Hanborough, Oxford: Orchard Books, 1986), 5, 7.

<sup>33</sup> The contradictions and ironies are, as John Worthen says, manifold: this book about an aristocrat having an affair with a gamekeeper “was sold in a form that only an aristocrat could have afforded,” and there is the further irony that the man who wanted to make sex beautiful, and who produced a physically beautiful book, “opened the market to the production of what – in the pornographer’s hands – quickly became a smudgily produced and brown-paper covered object of desire . . . . And in response to that, the smudgy pirates had to be countered with a cheap edition of the novel produced in the centre of the pornographic book market”; “D. H. Lawrence and the ‘Expensive Edition Business’” in *Modernist Writers and the Marketplace* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 121-122. See also Joyce Wexler, “Selling Sex as Art,” in *Marketing Modernisms*, 91 – 108.

<sup>34</sup> 1 Dec. 1923; HRC.

<sup>35</sup> As I write, spirited debate of these issues is taking place on the Joyce listserv. In a draft of her memoirs *Beach*, speaking about the blue of the covers, asks, “What would his sailor friends from whom he picked up modern Greek in Trieste have said if Ulysses had come out in the wrong blue?” (Princeton, box 121, folder 4); now if we see “sailor” and “picked up” in the same line it is difficult not to speculate. Jennifer Levine speaks of the “remarkable difficulty” in establishing that the number 16 tattooed on the sailor in Eumaeus stands for homosexuality, or of confirming the rumour, based on a letter now lost and assumed to be suppressed, that Joyce had been seduced by Gogarty and by a sailor in Trieste; see “James Joyce, Tattoo Artist: Tracing the Outlines of Homosocial Desire,” *JJQ* 31.3 (Spring 1994): 277 – 299.

<sup>36</sup> Compare *Shakespeare & Company*, 115.

<sup>37</sup> “On Joycean and Wildean Sodomy,” *JJQ* 31.3 (Spring 1994): 163.

<sup>38</sup> On Proust and the climate of reception see Christy Burns, “An Erotics of the Word: Female ‘Assaucyeties’ in *FW*,” *JJQ* 31.3 (Spring 1994): 328; and Elisabeth Ladenson, “A Talk Consisting Solely of the Word ‘No’” *Joyce Meets Proust*, ” *JJQ* 31.3 (Spring 1994): 149.

<sup>39</sup> *JSA*, 247. Beach offers this sketch of Darantiere in a draft of the memoirs:

On Sunday morning, he received you at home, arrayed in a handsome dressing gown, seated among his collection of rare pottery and books, darning his socks, which the young man who was his assistant in the printing house occupied himself with the menus for lunch. Every piece of furniture was a valuable antique, including the chair on which Darantiere sat to darn his socks. Presently the darning would be laid aside, and we would all go out in the charming streets of Dijon to visit the pastry shop where Darantiere, great connoisseur of cakes, made a



careful choice of what he could absolutely recommend as authentic (Princeton, box 121, folder 4).

It is a portrait of the printer as aesthete: the wife and children are nowhere in sight in this domestic scene.

<sup>40</sup> See Hugh Kenner, "'The Most Beautiful Book,'" *ELH* 48.3: 594–605 : The French do not use 'w' and Darantiere had to buy more for the captions in *Aeolus*; in *Circe* he did not have enough italic font for the stage directions; and even with the regular font *Ulysses* was so large that the compositors had to print earlier pages to free up type to set the later ones. As Kenner says, Darantiere's firm specialized in small deluxe editions. However, like his father, who in the 1880's gained a reputation for his production of Huysman's novels, Maurice Darantiere did work for commercial publishers as well (Rabaté, "Thank Maurice" 246).

<sup>41</sup> Jayne Marek, following Holly Ann Baggett's "Aloof from Natural Laws: Margaret C. Anderson and the 'Little Review,' 1914–1929" (diss., U. of Delaware, 1992), argues that in fact "the trial over the publication of *Ulysses* had more to do with authoritarian distaste for the editors' lesbianism than with the book's 'immorality'"; see *Women Editing Modernism: "Little" Magazines & Literary History* (Lexington: U. of Kentucky Press, 1995), 72, 88–90. On the lesbian community surrounding the *Little Review* see Bonnie Kime Scott's "The Young Girl, Jane Heap, and Trials of Gender in *Ulysses*," in *Joycean Cultures*, ed. Vincent Cheng, Kimberley J. Devlin, and Margot Norris (Newark: University of Delaware Press, forthcoming).