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One of the most significant cultural events of 1922 took place some time late in the year outside the Winter Garden in New York. There, Gilbert Seldes, managing editor of The Dial and frequent contributor to Vanity Fair, among other magazines and journals, announced his new writing project to a somewhat incredulous audience of two.[1] Though his first audience was skeptical, the project, published in 1924 as The Seven Lively Arts, was a success, so much so that it is remembered even today as "the first sustained examination and defense of American popular culture."[2] It seems fairly safe to say, in fact, that before The Seven Lively Arts, American popular culture received no such examination and defense because it was not even recognized as a possible field of criticism. Writing about the movies, vaudeville, popular music, musical comedy, newspaper columns, and the comics together in one place gave these ephemeral forms of art a collective weight that helped to counterbalance critical prejudice against them. When Seldes announced his new book project, that is to say, he was announcing the birth of "American popular culture" as a critical category, as a concept independent to some extent from its individual constituents.

His announcement is significant for another reason as well, for at that same moment Seldes was intimately involved in another publishing project, which was to have an influence far greater and seemingly very different in character from his own. This project was The Waste Land, which The Dial, after protracted negotiations, published in November.[3] Seldes had been heavily involved in those negotiations, in the course of which the editors of The Dial agreed to give Eliot their 1922 award for outstanding service to American letters, and he was certainly the very first critic to acclaim the poem as the quintessential example of literary modernism. Making use of his privileged position as editor, Seldes inserted into an unrelated article of his own in the very issue that contained The Waste Land the opinion that it was, along with Ulysses, a "complete expression of the spirit which will be 'modern' for the next generation."[4] Seldes was also one of the first to publish a formal review of the poem. His essay in the December 6 issue of The Nation appeared about the same time as Edmund Wilson's famous explanation in the December issue of The Dial and was more acceptable to Eliot himself.[5] It is safe to say, then, that Seldes' role in the nearly instantaneous canonization of The Waste Land is unique, since he was the only one involved in the extensive private negotiations that brought it to The Dial who also helped to shape public perception of it after publication.[6]

If it now seems somewhat remarkable that the same person who made American popular culture a legitimate object of criticism also played a central role in formulating the public definition

of literary modernism, and that he should have done these two things at exactly the same time, it is because antipathy to popular culture has become, over the years, an indispensable part of accepted definitions of modernism. At first, the line was drawn as a cordon sanitaire around the great works of aesthetic modernism by their critical advocates, disciples of Eliot like Clement Greenberg, whose famous essay, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" begins by insisting that though "the same civilization produces simultaneously two such different things as a poem by T. S. Eliot and a Tin Pan Alley song" there is in fact no essential connection between them.[7] As Greenberg became the ritualistic straw man of post-modernism, the distinction he had drawn became a "great divide," though it was now the previously canonized works of modernism that were on the far side. Conventional wisdom about modernism is now firmly founded on the idea, most persuasively formulated by Andreas Huyssen, that "modernism constituted itself through a conscious strategy of exclusion, an anxiety of contamination by its other: an increasingly consuming and engulfing mass culture."[8]

The one thing that Greenberg and contemporary critics might agree on is that someone like Gilbert Seldes, who wrote appreciatively about T. S. Eliot and Tin Pan Alley songs, should not have existed. Of course, the important fact is not simply that Seldes, like Eliot and Joyce for that matter, personally liked Tin Pan Alley songs and movies and comic strips, nor even that Seldes himself saw interesting and significant connections between these seemingly different varieties of cultural produc-

tion. Rather, his career demonstrates the larger social and cultural connections between popular culture and literary modernism at the moment when both emerged as distinct entities in the public consciousness. Modernism and popular culture are natural associates in Seldes' writing at least in part because they were commonly associated in the cultural controversies of the early 20s. Modernist experiment in the arts was commonly associated by its critics with those other experiments in music and film, and proponents of literary modernism frequently defined their art not by excluding popular forms but rather by embracing them. This is not to say, of course, that one cannot find in a politically conservative modernist such as Eliot numerous statements of antipathy toward modern popular culture and its mass audience. But surely the important issue for any cultural analysis of modernism is not what its proponents said about it but rather how it functioned in the social dynamic of its time. Gilbert Seldes and The Seven Lively Arts can offer a microcosmic view of the role played by literary modernism and popular culture in that dynamic.

II

The Seven Lively Arts began as Seldes' contribution to an inter-generational controversy that had been developing since the publication of Harold Stearns' America and the Young Intellectuals in 1921. Stearns' book made "the young intellectuals" at once a catch-word and an inviting target for

older intellectuals like Brander Matthews, who held forth in the New York Times Book Review on the "juvenile highbrows."[9] Though Stearns had meant to focus attention on America by advertising the discontent of its young intellectuals, he succeeded instead in making youthful discontent itself the subject of scrutiny.[10] In time, this youthful failing acquired a name, and that name was "modernism." As Joel Spingarn explained it in a manifesto entitled "The Younger Generation," modernism "is a disease of our own time, confined to a somewhat narrow and unorganized but very articulate group." It is "a disease of the intellectualist who strives to make up for his artistic emptiness by the purely intellectual creation of 'new forms,'" one which subjects both ideas and art to the sole test of "'modernity.'"[11]

Despite his title, Spingarn had no real quarrel with the younger generation, with several of whom he had close intellectual ties, nor was he, politically a liberal, particularly averse to change.[12] But his attack on modernism recapitulated the virulently reactionary attack of writers such as Lothrop Stoddard, whose 1922 volume, The Revolt Against Civilization: The Menace of the Under Man, included a diatribe against the "spirit of feverish, and essentially planless, unrest [that] has been bursting forth for the past two decades in every field of art and letters." For Stoddard the "'new' art" and the "'new' poetry" were simply "one more phase of the world-wide revolt against civilization by the unadaptable, inferior, and degenerate elements, seeking to smash the irksome framework of modern society, and revert to the congenial levels of chaotic

barbarism or savagery."[13] Stoddard illustrates how easily the attack on modernity as a value could turn into an attack on all change and any difference. Modernism in the arts could be associated with the revolt of a racial or ethnic underclass, as Royal Cortissoz did when he called modernism "Ellis Island Art," or with the demands of newly enfranchised women, as the New York Times did when it mocked the young intellectuals as "intellectual and artistic flappers."[14]

This last sally was in fact aimed directly, and by name, at Gilbert Seldes and The Dial. The tactic behind it, to demean the modern by impugning its manhood and to trivialize modernism in the arts by associating it with jazz and gin, is brutally clear, and it was effective enough to give the phrase a certain currency in the middle of 1922. Albert Jay Nock repeated it in The Freeman in a defense so drenched in crocodile tears it was more offensive than an outright attack. This prompted a bitter retort in the September issue of Vanity Fair from Paul Rosenfeld, who set out, armored in self-righteousness, to show that T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Sherwood Anderson, William Carlos Williams, and Georgia O'Keefe, among others, were not "intellectual and artistic flappers." The whole shallow and petulant exchange is still of interest because it shows how early modernism began, long before Clement Greenberg, to distance itself from the social changes of modernity and from the sort of popular culture implied by the term "flapper" in response to attacks on its legitimacy from established intellectual authorities. Rosenfeld in fact makes exactly the sort of case for modernism that critics

nowadays make against it: Eliot "steeps himself of will in the Elizabethans"; Pound is "the transmitter of old English, old French, old Chinese poems"; and modernism is distinguished from flapperism by a calculated slap at "the genus of Edna Ferber."[15]

Thus Rosenfeld manages witlessly to confirm the very prejudices he set out to attack, and in so doing helps to produce a version of modernism carefully separated from those new social forces that were so alarming to Lothrop Stoddard. But this was not the only version of modernism current in 1922, for the actual object of these attacks, the intellectual and artistic flapper himself, took a very different course. In these same months, Seldes was writing and publishing the first articles that would go into The Seven Lively Arts, and these carried on the war against the elders not by repudiating the imputed association with popular culture but rather by embracing it. In the same issue of Vanity Fair in which Rosenfeld trumpeted the debt of Eliot and Pound to Dante, Seldes wrote this on the antipathy of the genteel for slapstick: "For us to appreciate slap-stick may require a revolution in our way of looking at the arts; having taken thought on how we now look at the arts, I suggest that the revolution is not entirely undesirable."[16] Thus Seldes accepts the challenge that Rosenfeld ducks, gladly admitting the one incontrovertable social fact revealed by this whole exchange: the revolution modernism was to make in the arts and the one being made by American popular culture were inextricably associated.

The force of this association was most obvious, perhaps, in the case of popular music, dominated at this time by an up-tempo derivation of ragtime that most everyone called jazz. During the months in which Spingarn, Nock, and The Times were putting Seldes on public trial for flagrant flapperism, Vanity Fair carried two humorous pieces on the current trials of jazz. Both of these poked fun at a play that had opened on Broadway in January and which epitomized the anti-jazz crusade of the time: J. Hartley Manners' The National Anthem.[17] Manners' attack on jazz as "modern civilization's saturnalia" seemed patently ridiculous to the sophisticates at Vanity Fair, but, according to Bruce Bliven, it was convincing enough to the audiences that came in from the suburbs to help make jazz "a burning issue."[18] In October, New York City became the first of at least sixty communities to ban or regulate jazz in the course of the 20s.[19]

In the play itself, the chief danger of jazz seems to lie in the occasions it offers for drinking and sensuality. It answers in the affirmative the question posed by The Ladies' Home Journal late in 1921: "Does Jazz Put the Sin in Syncopation?"[20] It is only too inevitable, however, given the nature of the time, that this surrender of the mind and will to the lower passions would also have been presented in racial terms. Manners did this in his introduction to the play, which remarks in horror how "the sexes mingle in degrading embrace to tunes the Indian and the Negro would despise," as did Laurette Taylor, his wife and the star of The National Anthem, in various interviews.[21] The play thus echoes the argument of Stoddard's Revolt Against Civiliza-

tion, in which the revolt of the passions against the intellect, of the dark races against the white, are mere versions of a general upending of the traditional hierarchy of values. Thus the heavy irony of the title of Manners' play, which implies that jazz fanatics commit the ultimate irreverence of treason. This switch of allegiance from The Star Spangled Banner to a jazz tune could only take place, Manners claims in his introduction, in a time utterly severed from its own past, a time in which youth has prematurely supplanted experience and the only value is the new and up-to-date.[22]

Jazz was most threatening, in this analysis, as a species of modernism, and thus the controversies about it overlap with and echo the controversies surrounding the "young intellectuals." In fact, it became relatively common in the course of the 20s to compare modern literature and jazz in terms unfavorable to both. To quote one representative example from the New York Times: "Jazz is to real music exactly what most of the 'new poetry,' so-called, is to real poetry. Both are without the structure and form essential to music and poetry alike, and both are the products, not of innovators, but of incompetents."[23] Readers across America and Great Britain were made aware of something called "jazz literature," which, like "jazz music" is, according to the Times, "the product of an untrained mind."[24]

The most specific and the most negative such comparison was offered in 1922 by Clive Bell. In "Plus de Jazz," Bell advanced two interdependent and equally questionable assertions: that jazz was dead; and that its passing had spared a whole group of

promising young writers and artists, including Eliot, Joyce, and Woolf, over whom its influence had been alarmingly strong. Eliot, "about the best of our living poets," according to Bell, is "as much a product of the Jazz movement as so good an artist can be of any," and yet the influence of jazz has produced in his poetry "a ragtime literature which flouts traditional rhythms and sequences and grammar and logic." In prose, James Joyce, a far less significant writer in Bell's opinion, also "rags the literary instrument," "throwing overboard sequence, syntax, and, indeed, most of those conventions which men habitually employ for the exchange of precise ideas." Even Virginia Woolf, in her more recent work, had begun to flirt dangerously with techniques that Bell darkly and inexactly terms "syncopation."[25]

As the diatribe goes on, it becomes clear that the jazz that bothers Bell most is not the noun but the verb. As the band-leader Paul Whiteman explained in his far from definitive work on the subject: jazz has been "variously a verb and a noun."[26] As a verb, it was commonly explained at this time, jazz was nothing more than a manner or method of playing, a stylistic treatment that might be applied to any composition. In this, it follows the word rag, which can also be either noun or verb. To jazz is the same as to rag: in Whiteman's words, "one threw the rhythm out of joint making syncopation."[27] In fact, one of the most popular forms of this practice was "jazzing the classics," a phrase that the OED first finds in Carl Sandburg's Slabs of the Sunburnt West, published in 1922.

"Jazzing the classics," as sophomoric as it may sound, is exactly the aspect of literary modernism that Bell found most

objectionable. In his essay, he speaks quite feelingly against the "impudence which rags." He seems almost viscerally revolted by the "jeers and grimaces" of jazz mockery, by the idea that "Lycidas" and the Sistine Chapel might come under criticism from "the coloured gentleman who leads the band at the Savoy." As a practice of impudent parody, jazz threatens to upend a whole system of value, to demolish the basic principle "that one idea or emotion can be more important or significant than another." And this is the danger he finds in the new writers as well, especially in Eliot, whom he calls "irreverent" and "impudent" and whom he accuses of "playing the devil with the instrument of Shakespeare and Milton."[28]

What is most remarkable about this indictment is that it is not aimed at The Waste Land, which did have in it at least one reference to ragtime, because that poem was not finished at the time Bell wrote. In his attack on Eliot's literary impudence, Bell apparently has in mind the rather severe satirical exercises of Ara Vos Prec. It is not jazz as a subject, as a noun, that concerns him, but jazz as a verb, as an insubordinate activity that might be discerned in poems with no overt musical reference at all. Yet the formal similarities between modernist literary experiments and the improvisations of jazz alarm him because of the social significance he attaches to both. Like Stoddard and Manners, Bell sees jazz as an attack from below on the hierarchy of values that sustains the current social hierarchy. It is, in a sense, the notion of popular culture in and of itself that outrages him, insofar as it lends legitimacy to social practices

that had always kept a respectful distance from art. To protect art from such incursions, to keep Shakespeare and Milton segregated from "the coloured gentleman who leads the band at the Savoy," is his purpose in "Plus de Jazz," and in this effort he found modernist literature not an ally but a deadly enemy.

"Plus de Jazz" was greeted with predictable impudence by the younger American writers, not because they rejected the jazz comparison as far-fetched but rather because it seemed so natural as to be an innocuous commonplace. Harold Loeb's lofty sarcasm in the September issue of Broom is hardly surprising considering that the magazine would soon advertize "THE JAZZ BAND" as one of the models for the literature it hoped to print.[29] Once The Waste Land appeared in October, comparison of the new poem to jazz became almost ritualistic. In his influential review, Edmund Wilson noted how the language of The Waste Land turned "suddenly and shockingly into the jazz of the music-halls." John McClure called Eliot's poem "the agonized outcry of a sensitive romanticist drowning in a sea of jazz." And finally Burton Rascoe, writing in the New York Herald Tribune, called Eliot "poet laureate and elegist of the jazz age."[30]

Two longer and more thoughtful responses to Bell's attack showed, once again, how the early proponents of modernism would diverge in their defenses of the new art. John Peale Bishop, writing in the October 1924 issue of Vanity Fair, tended to agree with Bell about jazz, and thus he defended Eliot by raising him above it, arguing that in his work jazz had achieved "a tragic intensity."[31] But Seldes, who responded in the August 1923 issue

of The Dial, gave his article the title "Toujours Jazz" to show how basically he disagreed with Bell, not just about Eliot and not just about jazz but also about the implications of connecting them. Seldes' disagreement with Bell about the necessity of preserving art from contamination with the popular goes to the heart of The Seven Lively Arts: "I have used the word art throughout this book in connexion with jazz and jazzy things; if anyone imagines that the word is belittled thereby and can no longer be adequate to the dignity of Leonardo and Shakespeare, I am sorry."[32] Yet Seldes does have fell designs on the word "art," which he feels protects a good deal of second rate rubbish, and he values in jazz its capacity to "rag" these pretensions. Thus he spends a good deal of time in "Toujours Jazz" discriminating between pointless and useful musical parody, and he tries to assess the irony of Joyce and Eliot in the same terms.[33] When he praises Ulysses as a "gigantic travesty" and a "burlesque epic," he is singling out precisely those qualities that Bell found so distressing.

As Seldes remarked when The Seven Lively Arts was reprinted in 1957, it seems preposterous that the music discussed in "Toujours Jazz" could have been considered a danger to public order, especially since the "jazz" at issue was the gentrified version popularized by Paul Whiteman, George Gershwin, and Irving Berlin.[34] Yet even this music could seem threatening in context, as one example of the emergence of a new social force that Bell, Manners, Stoddard, and many others sensed would upend the world they knew. It had always been easy for the protectors of great

art to patronize popular culture because that culture was seen as essentially innocent and naive. What prompted such anguished reaction from the conservative critics of the time was the fact that the popular had become or was finally perceived to be self-conscious, ironic, knowing, and therefore potentially critical. Whereas art had always mined the popular for raw material, the popular was now turning to art, consuming Shakespeare as if his great works offered nothing more than an occasion for play. That "jazzing the classics" might become widespread implied, as Bell realizes, an impudence, a lack of respect, that would attack other hierarchies after it finished with the aesthetic. This possibility was apparent in more than just the music of 1922, and where it was apparent the controversies around it inevitably implicated literary modernism.

III

Another subject taken up by Seldes in The Seven Lively Arts is the organized campaign of moral disapproval that had followed two notorious movie scandals of 1922: Fatty Arbuckle's sensational trial for murder, and the still unexplained death of the director William Desmond Taylor. As Seldes put it, "It seemed for a moment, in 1922, that if a convicted murderer were set free by a jury, he or she went into the movies; but if a moving-picture actor was declared innocent, he was barred from the screen."[35] The Daily Mail claimed that in the course of 1922 65% of the theaters in the U.S. had closed their doors, and though

these figures seem exaggerated, every review of the film year agreed that there had been a dramatic slump in business.[36] And most reviewers explained the slump as a result of the outrage caused by the Arbuckle case and the attendant moral crusade against the movies in general.[37]

To head off this crusade, the movie industry called on Will Hays, Postmaster General in the Harding administration, whose irreproachable Republican dullness was to protect the studios from the menace of nation-wide film censorship. As President of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Hays was supposed to prove that the industry was perfectly capable of censoring itself, and so he travelled the country throughout 1922, attacking governmental censorship as unAmerican while sternly charging the movie industry to accept its educational and social responsibilities.[38]

The appointment of Hays, at the purposely spectacular salary of $150,000 a year, signified how seriously the movie industry took what critic Robert Sherwood called "the censorship menace."[39] Films had been censored in a desultory and decentralized way for some time in both England and America, but 1922 marked a definite increase in demands for nationwide, standardized, prior censorship of all films. In England, T. P. O'Connor, head of the British Board of Film Censors, reached agreement with the London County Council establishing a film rating system and wrote a set of guidelines, <u>The Principles of Film Censorship</u>, which was to make similar standards uniform all over the British Isles.[40] In the United States, O'Connor's com-

rade in arms, Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer, head of the most vigorous regional panel, the Pennsylvania State Board of Censors, published The Morals of the Movie, a rather remarkable conglomeration of moral exhortations, lurid case studies, and practical hints for turning noxious films into innocuous ones with a few deft incisions and some new title cards.[41]

Hays and his supporters in Hollywood succeeded in fighting off the censorship menace in its most rigorous form, but the crusade had a strong effect on the industry nonetheless. The Film Year Book, which was aimed primarily at distributors and theater owners, contained page after page of detailed censor board standards, from state boards like those in Maryland and Pennsylvania, both of which banned any discussion of birth control, to the provincial boards of Ontario and Quebec, which were quite sensitive to the display of foreign flags, to the British Board, which even sought to eliminate "salacious wit."[42] Books on the writing of successful "photoplays," of which there were quite a few in these years, began to include special chapters on anticipating the demands of the censor. William Lord Wright, for example, included in Photoplay Writing an extensive list of standard cinematic devices, most of them staples of the serials, that were now ruled out by "the requirements of censorship."[43]

It should go without saying that nudity and sexual relations were the most frequently and universally banned of all the standard cinematic devices, but birth control and even childbirth were also taboo, and Pennsylvania also banned discussions of eugenics or "race-suicide."[44] In England, the most extensive

controversy of the year was over the film version of Marie Stopes' contraception classic Married Love, which was finally allowed release as Married Life.[45] Objection to the depiction of crime was so great that in the United States a reenactment of the murder of Abel was cut from one film as "tending to corrupt morals," and in England the Jackie Coogan version of Oliver Twist was cut.[46]

Oberholtzer provides a full page of lurid titles to illustrate the kind of thing from which censors must guard the public: "The Sin Woman" (a title so provocative it is actually listed twice); "The Sex Lure"; "The Gutter Magdalene"; "Satan's Daughter"; "The Devil's Toy."[47] These make it sound as though sexual prurience and crime were the major targets of the censors, and perhaps they were, but it is also clear that anything tending to demean or even question authority came under special scrutiny. In England, O'Connor's standards prohibited "Scenes in which the king and officers in uniform are seen in an odious light." Attention to these standards, which extended to the wives of military and government officials, was especially vigilant in films with foreign settings.[48] The ever-popular story line which the BBFC summarized as "white men in a state of degradation amidst native surroundings" was specifically prohibited, as was anything else which, in the view of the Board, would "demoralize an audience."[49] In the United States, similar standards made it virtually impossible for the movies to portray the industrial unrest that was so widespread in the early 20s. According the Robert Sherwood, William S. Hart's The Whistle was "cut to pieces

in Pennsylvania because the hero was a laborer, and his boss a villain."[50]

The crusade against immorality, that is to say, was also a crusade against demoralization, which meant nothing more nor less than loss of faith in authority. The very closeness of the two terms illustrates how intimately morality and morale have always been associated, at least in the European mind, so that attempts to regulate the former have always been, at least in part, attempts to strengthen the latter. It is no accident that the most controversial film of the year should have had to do with birth control, for this subject focusses to white-hot convergence concerns about sexual license and concerns about social order in general. So did film in and of itself, quite independent of any subject matter, since it not only expanded but dramatically reordered a sensorium that had been in a relatively static state for centuries. Attempts to regulate film, like the simultaneous attempts to regulate jazz and even so much as the discussion of birth control, were attempts to keep this changing and expanding sensorium under control.

Such was the public atmosphere into which literary modernism was introduced and it is no surprise to find that some of the classic works of literary modernism were subject to the same sort of censorship that was attackng the movies. Issues of the Little Review containing chapters from Ulysses were impounded in 1921, and the editors were eventually forbidden to publish further excerpts from the novel, which was itself unavailable in the United States until 1934.[51] The first commercial edition of

Women in Love published in the United States, which appeared in 1922, was seized and unsuccessfully prosecuted by the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice.[52] Despite this failure, the Society concentrated its efforts on two New York publishers, Toby Seltzer, who had published Women in Love, and Horace Liveright, who were publicly associated with modernist literature. Liveright, who published The Waste Land in 1922, fought so many court cases in this period that he kept the law firm of Arthur Garfield Hays on permanent retainer. When Sumner and his society presented a proposed Clean Books Bill to the New York State legislature in 1923, Liveright led the opposition to a measure that would have permitted the suppression of virtually any work, no matter how innocuous or reputable. In this, he was virtually without support from older, more established firms, which apparently felt that all the trouble had been stirred up by a few rebels deliberately flouting the accepted standards of society.[53]

The connection between modernism and moral offence, in other words, seemed fairly direct. Even the most esoteric gestures of early modernism might have been implicated by contact with these controversies. When the first readers of The Waste Land encountered the epigraph from the Satyricon, they might have been abashed by its abstruse combination of Latin and Greek, or they might have imagined a more topical reference, for Liveright had just successfully defended his new edition of the Satyricon from prosecution for obscenity.[54]

Another work from Liveright's list of 1922, E. E. Cummings' The Enormous Room, shows in more detail how sharing the threat of

censorship brought literary experiment and popular culture together, at least in the minds of their early proponents. According to Charles Norman, The Enormous Room, a factual if fanciful account of Cummings' term in French prison during the First World War, was ready for sale by the end of April 1922, at which time John S. Sumner, Secretary of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, threatened to confiscate it. Liveright, even at that time in negotiations over the pubication of The Waste Land, agreed to a desperate last-minute expedient: since the Sumner group was most offended by Cummings' use of the word "shit," the publishers had all instances of it laboriously inked out of every copy by hand.[55] The whole episode, in which a respected and adventurous publisher is reduced to the level of a little boy scrubbing words off the bathroom wall, shows how trivial the struggle with censorship could become, and yet the calculated indecency of The Enormous Room was an important part of the intellectual controversy of this year.

Cummings had long been one of the strongest connections between the group that edited and published The Dial and what Seldes was to call "the seven lively arts." A Harvard classmate of Sibley Watson, who resurrected The Dial, Cummings began very early in the magazine's new existence to publish drawings of dancers, boxers, and comedians such as those who appeared at the Winter Garden.[56] One of these was reprinted in the vaudeville chapter of The Seven Lively Arts as was a rather precious abstraction of Charlie Chaplin. But the Winter Garden was more than just a shared interest between Cummings and Seldes, who were

close friends. It was, as Seldes suggested by announcing his new book there, the center of an aesthetic, one that linked modernism and popular culture in an alliance against the censor.

The Enormous Room was itself, as Cummings' friends noted at the time, an extended vaudeville turn, a work whose very structure was taken from burlesque.[57] There are essentially three character types in the book: the jailers, in which group Cummings would include the military authorities; the female prisoners, who are loud, boisterous, and sensually unashamed; and the male prisoners, who are almost to a man weak, small, and romantically ineffectual. The novel is populated, that is to say, by the female exhibitionists and baggy-pants comedians of burlesque, with whom Cummings and his compatriot make common cause against the jailers and warmongers of the outside world. Tenuously tied to reality as it is on one side, and inflated to fantasy as it is on the other, The Enormous Room is also an allegory of the alliance of artistic young men of the 20s with the comic, the indecent, and the impractical against the deathly conformity of the old order. Sumner's prosecution simply makes the allegory concrete.

The Seven Lively Arts is informed from the beginning by the same dichotomous struggle. The first chapter, which was published in Vanity Fair in September 1922, delineates the two sides, and, incidentally, takes sides in the current debate about film censorship, by blaming "the genteel" for a decline in "the purity of slapstick."[58] Seldes sees the movies and, by implication, the popular arts in general, at a great turning point,

about to be diverted forever by the forces of genteel disapproval from their true sources of strength. He notes the same danger in the chapter on vaudeville, also originally published in 1922, which singles out "effrontery" in its very title as the chief virtue of the art.[59] "Effrontery" and "impudence" were, at bottom, what the cultural war of 1922 was about: what disgusted Bell, what startled Manners, and what prompted Sumner to prosecution was the insubordination implicit in the "popular" itself.

And this is precisely the quality that Seldes was singling out for praise in the new works of literary modernism. Ulysses is, according to the review he published at the same time as his essay on slapstick, a "gigantic travesty" and a "burlesque epic."[60] Seldes links this burlesque epic back to the original satyr-play, but it is also clear that at a time when he was frequenting the Winter Garden, defending E. E. Cummings, and writing in praise of vaudeville, the term would have had direct reference to the popular art that linked sexual exhibitionism, obscenity, and comedy. Nor was he alone in making this link. Eliot's first published comment on Ulysses, which appeared in the September issue of The Dial, also called the novel a "burlesque."[61] The term is, of course, innocent and ancient enough, and yet The Dial had, through the writings of Seldes and the drawings of Cummings, made contemporary burlesque an integral part of its aesthetic. Of course, Eliot was to publish, in his next contribution to The Dial, after The Waste Land itself, a eulogy of Marie Lloyd and a lament for the music hall tradition that seemed to die with her.

"Burlesque" is such a key term at this distinct moment in the history of literary modernism because it links the obscene

and the critical and thus identifies what is most provoking to censorship in both the movies of the time and the literary works. In a sense, the term suggests a tradition, beginning with the satyr-play, in which the obscene is critical, in and of itself, the exposure for examination of what is supposed to remain tacit being one of the most dangerous things an artist can do.[62] Seldes identified this exposure as a defining characteristic of popular culture as such, since what made popular culture distinct as a category from the carnivals of the past was its unignorable presence on a national stage. As Bell so acutely sensed, it was not so much that jazz existed, such things had always existed, but that people who had traditionally cared only for Art were somehow expected to pay attention to this jungle noise. The importunity of it was the key, the very worst of it if, like Bell, one hated "impudence," the very best if, like Seldes, one admired "effrontery." In either case, literary modernism was linked to the popular in its affront to the cultural hierarchy of the past.

Seldes was perhaps emboldened by the fact that burlesque, both as a term and as a practice, had already been legitimized for art by the French avant-garde. Cocteau's Parade and Apollinaire's Les Mamelles de Tirésias had both been conceived, performed, and received as burlesques. But these performances simply celebrated an association that had long existed in both cubism and dada, two movements that Jeffrey Weiss has recently grouped together under the term "music hall modernism." In Weiss's analysis, modern art shares with the music hall, with the

popular itself in fact, a flair for publicity, "the relentless refusal, by definition, to self-efface."[63] This refusal to self-efface, this expansion beyond the traditional boundaries that were supposed to control and obscure the vulgar, this "effrontery" as Seldes calls it, is in a sense the very essence of modern popular culture, but it is also an essential characteristic of modernism in the arts.

The most important thing about this "effrontery" that is common to modernism and popular culture is the way it reorders the whole relationship between publicity and obscurity. For its creators, literary modernism may have been an esoteric calling, but for its publishers, interpreters, and proponents, it was a cause to be publicized and even a product to be promoted. Liveright was the first book publisher to engage a public relations consultant, who was none other than Edward Bernays, the founder of modern public relations. As Bernays recalled many years later, "Book publishing was dominated by stuffy old firms who treated the business as if it were the practice of a sacred rite. . . . Books were handled in the same way they had been published--for a select audience and not for a larger public. Book publishing was static in the content of its books and in its promotion when it should have been, of course, vibrant with ideas. But Liveright was to change all that." Among the works to which Bernays applied his techniques was Ezra Pound's Instigations, a quintessential work of modernist effrontery, which Liveright had fond hopes he could transform into a bestseller.[64] In fact, Liveright was known and to a great extent despised by

older publishing firms not just for his willingness to publish new work but also for his enthusiasm in seeking publicity for it. He and Bernays agreed, as Tom Dardis has recently put it, that "books might be marketed in the same way as any other product: by aggressive promotion in the press and a thorough backup operation of constant advertising."[65]

On the other hand, one of the things that made popular culture popular at this time was paradoxically a certain kind of obscurity. Jazz, it will be remembered, was considered an art of parody, irony, and double meanings. The whole art of jazzing serious music is to make the mockery both sly and obvious at the same time. In the same way, burlesque depends on the paradox of an inside joke that everyone will get, a double meaning that will both stage and defeat its own duplicity. The same paradox is at work in The Waste Land and Ulysses, both of which came equipped with their own keys, so that everyone could enjoy the thrill that comes with inside knowledge. Inaccessibility was at once modernism's most obvious and its most "popular" feature. Yet these facts will seem paradoxical only if we attempt to maintain the notion that the publicity of popular culture and the obscurity of modernist literature are necessary opposites, ignoring how freqently and how intricately the two were mixed.

It is both appropriate and revealing that the chief American proponent of "music hall modernism" should have been Gilbert Seldes, whose joint association with The Dial and Vanity Fair shows how closely linked were the intellectual journals of the time with magazines whose emphasis was on ephemeral fashion. One

look at a typical 1922 issue of Vanity Fair, where Pound, Joyce, Apollinaire, and Cocteau were publicized just as assiduously as the newest motorcars, hair styles and dress fashions, where Tristan Tzara held forth on the same page that announced "New Signs of Automotive Ingenuity," jeopardizes the notion of a "great divide." So does the career of Gilbert Seldes, synchronically, for in 1922 he seemed to bring together more completely than anyone else the popular and the avant-garde, and diachronically, for by 1937 the man who introduced The Waste Land to American readers had become the first director of programs at CBS TV.

Notes

[1] As Seldes recalled it for the 1957 edition of The Seven Lively Arts, he announced his plans to John Peale Bishop and Edmund Wilson "on a late winter evening in 1922 at the corner of 54th street and Broadway" some time after those two men, as editors at Vanity Fair had published the first of the articles that were to become chapters in the book. See Gilbert Seldes, The Seven Lively Arts (1924; rpt., New York: Sagamore, 1957), pp. 1-2), and Michael Kammen, The Lively Arts: Gilbert Seldes and the Transformation of Cultural Criticism in the United States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 85-86. Since the earliest of these essays, "Golla, Golla, the Comic Strip's Art!", was published in May, this meeting must have taken place in November or December, before Seldes' departure for Europe at the very end of the year. However, Bishop could not have been there at that time, because he was in Europe himself from the summer of 1922 until 1924. See Elizabeth Carroll Spindler, John Peale Bishop (Morganton: West Virginia Library, 1980).

[2] Charles J. Maland, Chaplin and American Culture: The Evolution of a Star Image (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 88.

[3] Kammen, pp. 59-61; Lawrence Rainey, "The Price of Modernism: Publishing The Waste Land," in T. S. Eliot: The Modernist in History, ed. Ronald Bush (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 91-133. It is worth noting that Seldes resolutely denied to the end of his life that the Dial award was a quid pro quo for the right to publish The Waste Land.

Kammen concludes that here Seldes' memory is in error (p. 59).

[4] Gilbert Seldes, "Nineties--Twenties--Thirties," The Dial 73 (November 1922): 577.

[5] Gilbert Seldes, "T. S. Eliot," The Nation, December 6, 1922, pp. 614-616. For Eliot's appreciative letter to Seldes, with unfavorably comments about Wilson's essay, see Kammen, p. 60.

[6] For an account of the part played by Bishop and Wilson in this canonization, see Ronald Bush, "T. S. Eliot and Modernism at the Present Time: A Provocation," in Bush, T. S. Eliot, pp. 191-194. Bishop and Wilson, as editors at Vanity Fair, were also potential competitors for the poem, as Rainey shows (p. 119), and they were also the two men to whom Seldes remembers having announced his intention to write The Seven Lively Arts.

[7] Clement Greenberg, Art and Culture: Selected Essays (Boston: Beacon, 1961), p. 3. Elsewhere in the same volume, Greenberg talks about his critical indebtedness to Eliot. Adorno makes the same point with the same examples when he insists that to equate jazz with Eliot, Joyce, or cubism is the beginning of barbarism. "Perennial Fashion--Jazz," Prisms, tr. Samuel and Shierry Weber (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981), p. 127.

[8] Andreas Huyssen, After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. vii, 54 and 57. Huyssen is a representative and influential example of an opinion that is, as Michael Murphy has recently suggested, nearly universal. See Michael Murphy, "'One Hundred Per Cent Bohemia': Pop Decadence and the Aestheticization of Commodity in the Rise of the Slicks," in Marketing Modernisms:

Self-Promotion, Canonization, Rereading, ed. Kevin J. H. Dettmar and Stephen Watt (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), p. 65.

[9] Brander Matthews, "America and the Juvenile Highbrows," New York Times Book Review, January 29, 1922, p. 8.

[10] See, for example, "The 'Young Intellectuals' Versus American Civilization," Current Opinion, March 1922, pp. 361-363, the very title of which indicates the direction the debate was taking.

[11] J. E. Spingarn, "The Younger Generation: A New Manifesto," The Freeman, June 7, 1922, pp. 296-298.

[12] Spingarn had in fact contributed an essay to Stearns' collection Civilization in the United States and was close to the editors of The Dial. See Kammen, pp. 62-63.

[13] Lothrop Stoddard [A.M., Ph.D. (Harv.)], The Revolt Against Civilization: The Menace of the Under Man (NY: Scribner's, 1923 [published May, 1922]), pp. 137-138. Stoddard's preface is dated March 30, 1922, about a week before Spingarn's manifesto appeared. The details of his attack make it clear what sort of "'new' poetry" he has in mind: "Almost as extravagant is the 'new' poetry. Structure, grammer [sic], metre, rhyme--all are defied. Rational meanings are carefully avoided, a senseless conglomeration of words being apparently sought after as an end in itself. Here, obviously, the revolt against form is well-nigh complete. The only step which seemingly now remains to be taken is to abolish language, and have 'poems without words.'" (p. 138)

[14] Royal Cortissoz, American Artists (New York: Scribner's, 1923), p. 18. For a paraphrase and a generally sympathetic

response to the New York Times editorial, see [Albert Jay Nock], "A Reviewer's Notebook," The Freeman, June 28, 1922, pp. 382-383. For another racial critique of the younger writers, see "Applying the Anthropological Test to Our Fiction," Current Opinion, May, 1922, pp. 664-666, an account of Gertrude Atherton's claims that the low quality of current American fiction is attributable to the general lack of purely Nordic novelists.

[15] Paul Rosenfeld, "The Younger Generation and its Critics," Vanity Fair 19 (September 1922): 53, 84, 106.

[16] Gilbert Seldes, The Seven Lively Arts (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1924), p. 24.

[17] Georges Braun, "Jazz," Vanity Fair 18 (May 1922): 65; Duncan M. Poole, "The Great Jazz Trial," Vanity Fair 18 (June 1922): 61-62. Braun mentions Manners by name; Poole alludes to him as "a celebrated playwright who has written a play . . . showing clearly that Jazz not only destroys the home but that its horrid example is corrupting the honest labouring man of the country."

[18] J. Hartley Manners, The National Anthem (New York: George H. Doran, 1922), p. xi; Neil Leonard, Jazz and the White Americans: The Acceptance of a New Art Form (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 39-40.

[19] Leonard, pp. 44-45.

[20] Morroe Berger, "Jazz: Resistance to the Diffusion of a Culture-Pattern," The Journal of Negro History 32 (1974): 464.

[21] "Jazz, the impulse for wildness that has undoubtedly come over many things besides the music of this country, is traceable to the negro influence." Quoted in Leonard, p. 38.

[22] "The old are pushed into the back-ground.

They have taken their places there without a murmur.

Tired, world-weary, they wait for the final release.

The Young rarely think of them. When they speak of them it is with some current, happy turn-of-phrase--'Dumb-bells.'" (Manners, p. xi).

[23] New York Times, October 8, 1924, p. 18. Quoted in Berger, pp. 467-468.

[24] Berger, p. 463. For a British example, see the passage from the Daily Mail, 1923, quoted as an extract in the OED under "jazz." See also Henry O. Osgood, So This Is Jazz (Boston: Little, Brown, 1926), pp. 245-246, and Sigmund Spaeth, "Jazz Is Not Music," Forum 80 (1928): 267-271.

[25] Clive Bell, "'Plus de Jazz,'" in Since Cézanne (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1922), pp. 214, 222-224. The essay originally appeared in the New Republic in September 1921.

[26] Paul Whiteman, Jazz (New York: J. H. Sears, 1926), p. 18.

[27] Whiteman, p. 117.

[28] Bell, pp. 218, 222-224.

[29] H.A.L., "The Mysticism of Money," Broom 3 (September 1922): 124; advertisement, Broom 4 (December 1922), np.

[30] Michael Grant, ed., T. S. Eliot: The Critical Heritage, v. 1 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), pp. 141, 170; Malcolm Cowley, Exile's Return (New York: Viking, 1951), p. 176.

[31] John Peale Bishop, "The Formal Translations of Jazz," Vanity Fair 23 (October 1924): 57, 90, 100

[32] Seldes, Seven Lively Arts, p. 107.

[33] Seldes, Seven Lively Arts, pp. 101-103, 106-107.

[34] Seldes, The Seven Lively Arts [1957 ed.], p. 83.

[35] Seldes, pp. 18-19.

[36] W. G. Faulkner, "The Kinema in 1922," David Williamson, ed., The Daily Mail Year Book for 1923 (London: Associated Newspapers Ltd., 1923), p. 48. See also Wid's Films and Film Folks, Inc., Film Year Book 1922-1923 (New York; Hollywood, 1922), p. 377, and Robert E. Sherwood, The Best Moving Pictures of 1922-23 (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1923), p. 38.

[37] For accounts of the debate over the morals of the movies, see "An Arraingment and Defense of the Movies," Current Opinion, March 1922, pp. 353-354, and "Moving-Picture Morals Attacked and Defended," Current Opinion, April 1922, pp. 505-506.

[38] Those polled by the Film Year Book agreed almost unanimously that the appointment of Hays was the single most singificant event in the movie industry in 1922 (p. 376). Hays himself provided an inspirational introduction for the Year Book, which representatively combines his two themes. See also The Memoirs of Will H. Hays (New York: Doubleday, 1955), pp. 328, 331, 353, and, for public reaction, "What Hays Can Do For the Movies," Literary Digest, January 28, 1922, pp. 12-13, "Public Demand for Risqué Movies," Literary Digest, July 15, 1922, pp. 33-34, and "The New $150,000 Boss of the Movies," Current Opinion, June 1922, pp. 759-761.

[39] Sherwood, pp. 134-147.

[40] James C. Robertson, The British Board of Film Censors: Film Censorship in Britain, 1896-1950 (London: Croom Helm, 1985), pp. 28, 31. O'Connor's book was written in 1922 and published at the beginning of 1923.

[41] Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer [Ph.D., Litt.D., For Six Years a Member of the Pennsylvania State Board of Censors], The Morals of the Movie (Philadelphia: Penn Publishing, 1922). For a supporting argument, see Donald Young, Motion Pictures: A Study in Social Legislation (Philadelphia: Westbrook, 1922).

[42] Film Year Book, pp. 339-342.

[43] William Lord Wright, Photoplay Writing (New York: Falk, 1922), pp. 106-107. See also Howard T. Dimick, Modern Photoplay Writing: Its Craftsmanship (Franklin, Ohio: James Knapp Reeve, 1922), especially Chapter XXVI, entitled "Censorship, The Growing Menace" (pp. 373-379). The Elinor Glyn System of Writing, also published in this year, and John Emerson and Anita Loos' How to Make It in the Movies, published in 1921, contain no such concessions, perhaps because these were comfortably established screenwriters, perhaps because they had become established by daring community standards.

[44] Film Year Book, p. 340.

[45] Rachel Low, The History of the British Film 1918-1929 (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1971), p. 62.

[46] Sherwood, p. 146; Low, p. 60.

[47] Oberholtzer, pp. 78-79.

[48] Film Year Book, p. 342; Low, pp. 63-64.

[49] Low, pp. 63-64; M. Jackson Wrigley, The Film: Its Use in Popular Education (London: Grafton, 1922), p. 81.

[50] Sherwood, p. 137.

[51] See Adam Parkes, Modernism and the Theater of Censorship (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). Parkes notes that the Little Review had first been prosecuted, for a story by Wyndham

Lewis, under the same law that governed contraception and abortion (p. 66).

[52] D. H. Lawrence, Women in Love, ed. David Farmer, Lindeth Vasey, and John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987)), p. li; Edward De Grazia, Girls Lean Back Everywhere (New York: Random House, 1992), p. 72. Parkes also discusses Lawrence's difficulties with the censors.

[53] Tom Dardis, Firebrand: The Life of Horace Liveright (New York: Random House, 1995), pp. 156-170.

[54] Dardis, pp. 158-161.

[55] Charles Norman, E. E. Cummings: The Magic-Maker (NY: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1964), p. 93.

[56] Kammen, p. 27.

[57] See John Dos Passos, "Off the Shoals," The Dial 73 (1922): 97-102 (rpt. Critical Essays on E. E. Cummings, ed. Guy Rotella [Boston: G. K. Hall, 1984], pp. 33-37).

[58] Seldes, Seven Lively Arts, p. 4.

[59] Seldes, Seven Lively Arts, p. 249.

[60] Gilbert Seldes, "Ulysses," The Nation, August 30, 1933, p. 211.

[61] T. S. Eliot, "London Letter," The Dial 73 (September 1922): 329. The letter is datelined August, 1922, so it seems rather unlikely that Eliot would have seen Seldes' review. The two were in communication at the time, but the nature of their published correspondence, at any rate, does not suggest that Seldes would have shared a draft or typescript with Eliot.

[62] For a history of burlesque in America, see Robert C. Allen, Horrible Prettiness: Burlesque and American Culture

(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991). The most famous raid on the Winter Garden occurred in 1925 and was led by John Sumner, who had carried out a campaign against burlesque throughout the 20s. Though partial nudity and suggestive dancing were perhaps the most outrageous aspects of burlesque in Sumner's view, the official complaint in this case was against obscene humor (p. 251). Allen's book ends with a thoughtful analysis of the "messy dialectics" involved in burlesque, especially where women are concerned.

[63] Jeffrey Weiss, The Popular Culture of Modern Art: Picasso, Duchamp, and Avant-Gardism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 65.

[64] Biography of an Idea: Memoirs of Public Relations Counsel Edward L. Bernays (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965), pp. 277-278.

[65] Dardis, p. 120.

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