DICTIONARY JOYCE: A LEXICOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF JAMES JOYCE AND THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY

by

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Abstract

The similarities between James Joyce’s *Ulysses* and the *Oxford English Dictionary* are numerous and striking: both texts aim to encapsulate the meaning of nearly everything in the English-speaking world. Both are epic in scope to an unprecedented degree. Both make countless references to other works, and explicitly absorb much of the preceding literature. Both aim to set new creative and intellectual standards. Of course politically, the works are vastly different. Due to the pervasive opinions of the time, to which language scholars were not immune, the *OED*’s scope was limited to what was considered reputable literary language. While the *OED* aimed to document the (morally acceptable) established lexis, Joyce aimed to challenge and redefine it; he broke with tradition in frequently using loan words, as well as radically re-defining many of the standard words he used. He also invented entirely new ones. Moreover, he used English words to describe taboo subject matter, which is why the text was effectively banned from most of the English-speaking world until the mid-1930s. Joyce’s liberalism with language and subject matter excluded him from the *OED* for several decades. Despite their differences, Chapter One of this thesis aims to suggest that the writing of *Ulysses* was in many ways inspired and assisted by the *OED*. Equally of interest as Joyce’s use of the *OED* and other dictionaries in his writing process is the *OED*’s representation of Joyce. While the first edition of the *OED* (1928) does not cite James Joyce, nor, to our knowledge, does its 1933 supplement, *OED2* (1989) adds over 1,800 Joyce citations. Whereas *OED3* (2000-) currently features 2,408 Joyce citations, many of those from *OED2* have been removed for reasons that are unclear. Joyce is an example of the changeable place of modernist literature in the *OED*. While Chapter One looks at Joyce and his creative process in connection with the *OED*, the central focus of Chapter Two is the *OED*’s
treatment of Joyce (and/or lack thereof) over the course of three editions and more than a century.
Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Natasha Rose Chenier.
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Introduction

“And words. They are not in my dictionary.” – *Ulysses*, 15.3279

Both the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* and James Joyce’s writing career were in their infancy in the early twentieth century. The *OED* was being published in short fascicles under the official name of *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles (NED)* between 1884 and the first edition’s completion in 1928, when *Oxford English Dictionary* became its official title. Joyce wrote his fiction, with the exception of *Finnegans Wake*, in the interim. The parallel is important because Joyce was an avid reader of dictionaries. In *Joyce and Shakespeare* William Schutte evidences the degree to which Joyce’s prose was shaped by definitions from Skeat’s *Etymological Dictionary*, to which Joyce explicitly refers in *Stephen Hero*. However little scholarly attention has been paid to Joyce in connection with the *OED*. That the connection warrants a study of its own is most evident when considering *Ulysses*.¹

The similarities between *Ulysses* and the *OED* are numerous and striking: both texts aim to encapsulate the meaning of nearly everything in the English-speaking world. Both are epic in scope to an unprecedented degree (whereas *Ulysses* is doubtless the Irish epic of the twentieth century, Hugh Kenner aptly writes that the *OED* is “the English epic of the nineteenth century” (Kenner, 49)). Both make countless references to other works, and explicitly absorb much of the preceding literature. Both aim to set new creative and intellectual standards. Of course politically, the works are vastly different. Due to the pervasive opinions of the time, to which language scholars were not immune, the *OED*’s scope was limited to what was considered

¹ Since *Ulysses* is Joyce’s most cited work in the *OED*, and is the text in which, as I argue in Chapter One, Joyce comments on *OED* culture, it is the text on which this thesis will primarily focus.
reputable literary language. While the *OED* aimed to document the (morally acceptable) established lexis, Joyce aimed to challenge and redefine it; he broke with tradition in frequently using loan words, as well as radically re-defining many of the standard words he used. He also invented entirely new ones. Moreover, he used English words to describe taboo subject matter. While the *OED* was (and still is) perceived as the gatekeeper of respectable English, Joyce used English in *Ulysses* to write about extramarital sex, adulterous public masturbation, and analingus, which is why the text was effectively banned from most of the English-speaking world until the mid-1930s. Joyce’s liberalism with language and subject matter excluded him from the *OED* for several decades. Ironically, almost a century later, he is the most commonly referenced modernist writer in *OED3*, as can be seen in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: OED3’s 12 most cited modernist authors, arranged from least to most quoted**

![Bar chart showing the number of OED3 quotations per writer](http://ow.ly/zmEIC)

Moreover, 71% of Joyce’s *OED3* citations come from *Ulysses*, as can be seen in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Joyce’s presence in *OED3*, arranged from least to most quoted source**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Number of James Joyce citations in <em>OED3</em>, per source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dubliners</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>FW</em></td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Portrait</em></td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ulysses</em></td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Despite their differences, this paper aims to suggest that the writing of *Ulysses* was in many ways inspired by and, as Chapter One will argue, assisted by, the *OED*.

Equally of interest as Joyce’s use of the *OED* and other dictionaries in his writing process is the *OED’s* representation of Joyce, a subject that has also received insufficient academic attention. To date, the *OED* consists of three editions and two supplements. The first complete edition (hereafter referred to as *OED1*) was released in 1928, under the editorship of J. A. H. Murray. Shortly thereafter, in 1933, a supplement to the first edition was published, edited by Dr. C. T. Onions and Sir William Craigie. The aim of the first supplement was to provide improvements upon, as well as additions to, *OED1*. In 1954 it was decided that another supplement should be written, which would record new words and meanings that had arisen since the publication of the 1933 supplement (Brewer, 144). R. W. Burchfield was chosen as its
editor, and the second supplement was published in four volumes between 1972 and 1986. In 1989, what was marketed as the second complete edition of the *OED* (*OED2*) was released, which combined Burchfield's supplement with the earlier, unrevised Dictionary (ibid, 11). In 1993 the start of a third edition was announced, which aimed to completely revise and rewrite all former *OED* material under the chief editorship of Joyce scholar John Simpson. The *OED3* project is ongoing, and accessible online only (<www.oed.com>).

While the first edition of the *OED* (1928) does not cite James Joyce,² nor, to our knowledge, does its 1933 supplement (Personal correspondence with John Simpson: 03/19/14), *OED2* (1989) adds over 1,800 Joyce citations. Whereas *OED3* (2000-) currently features 2,408 Joyce citations,³ many of those from *OED2* have been removed for reasons that are unclear. Joyce is an example of the changeable place of modernist literature in the *OED*. While Chapter One looks at Joyce and his creative process in connection with the *OED*, the central focus of Chapter Two is the *OED*’s treatment of Joyce (and/or lack thereof) over the course of three editions and more than a century.

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² A fact I confirmed in my own research. *OED* lexicographers generously provided me with a list of every *OED1* definition including the name “Joyce.” I read each definition to ensure that they were not referencing James Joyce.

Chapter 1  Joyce on the *O(N)ED*

Joyce consulted the *OED* while writing both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. Vincent Deane writes of two known instances: “The first […] is to be found on page 24 of the early *Ulysses* notebook, VIII.A.5: *OED*-derived material was identified by Phillip Herring. […] [Joyce] did not transfer any of this material directly to his text, but rather used it as a model for two passages in ‘Aeolus’” (Deane, 392). Deane continues with reference to Joyce’s notes for *Finnegans Wake*, “The second series of notes is much more extensive. […] [Danis] Rose and [John] O’Hanlon show that the notes recorded on pages 82-3 of notebook VI.B.30 were compiled from entries in the Dictionary” (ibid). That Joyce, with his preference for writing that is both hyper-referential and highly critical of colonialism, would reference the Dictionary in his work, comes as no surprise; it was one of the utmost symbols of British national pride during his career. Indeed, the Oxford University Press (OUP) proudly referred to it as “an Imperial Asset” (Brewer, 4), and upon its completion eagerly presented a copy to King George V, who “seldom failed to point out the Oxford Dictionary to guests” (ibid, 1). And the Dictionary’s reputation long preceded its 1928 completion. In *Treasure-House of the Language* Charlotte Brewer writes, “By 1898 [the *New English Dictionary*] had only got up to the letter H, but the *Academy* spoke of it as ‘the Dictionary’” (ibid, 3). She continues,

In 1916 […] [Oxford University Press] published a pamphlet extolling the Dictionary’s virtues […]. The *Saturday Review* praised it as a ‘wonderful storehouse of our native language’ which advanced the cause of English-speaking culture as well as philological investigation, and the *Asiatic Review* thought the
Joyce on the O(N)ED

same: ‘A work of such magnificent proportions… should be the most coveted possession of all public libraries [...]’ (ibid, 3-4)

Indeed, public libraries are where Joyce would have had access to the extremely expensive Dictionary while he was writing *Ulysses*, between 1914 and 1921 in Trieste, Zurich, and Paris. It was a time when the *NED* was being hailed across Europe as a testament to the success and sophistication of the British Empire.

Of course the *NED* was not the only dictionary that interested Joyce. Thanks to Thomas Connolly’s *The Personal Library of James Joyce*, we know that he owned several dictionaries. On his bookshelf sat Captain Francis Grose’s *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1785), Laas D’Aguen’s *Dictionnaire Français-Grec modern* (1886), Rev. Patrick S. Dineen’s *A Smaller Irish-English Dictionary for the Use of Schools* (1923), Oliver Leroy’s *A Dictionary of French Slang* (1935), and Edmund d’Albe’s *An English-Irish Dictionary and Phrase Book with Synonyms, Idioms, and the Genders and Declensions of Nouns* (n. d.), among other language and grammar guides. We also know that Walter Skeat’s *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* (1882/84/98) was of great importance to him.

In his article “Joyce and Skeat” Stephen Whittaker writes, “His students know that James Joyce as a young man sometimes read and as an artist sometimes exploited Walter W. Skeat’s *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*” (Whittaker, 177). Indeed, in *Stephen Hero* Joyce writes that Stephen “read Skeat’s *Etymological Dictionary by the hour*” (*SH* 26). In *Joyce and Shakespeare* William Schutte argues that Joyce systematically wove references to Skeat’s definitions into his fiction. In the “Circe” episode of *Ulysses*, Stephen’s thinking about his

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4 For more information on Joyce’s use of Skeat’s dictionary, and its various editions, see Whittaker’s article mentioned below.
mother’s death, “Cancer did it, not I” (U 15.4187) is followed shortly thereafter by “A green crab with malignant red eyes stick[ing] deep its grinning claws in Stephen’s heart” (U 15.4220-1). As Skeat’s definition of cancer reads, “CANCER, a crab, a corroding tumour. (L.) The tumour was named from the notion of ‘eating’ into the flesh” (Skeat, 91), Schutte writes that “Stephen’s mind retains what Skeat says of cancer” (Schutte, 114); Stephen imagines his mother’s cancer as a malignant crab eating into his flesh.

Yet while Schutte persuasively draws a connection between Stephen Dedalus’ thoughts on cancer and a crab, and Skeat’s definition of cancer, the NED’s definition is similar to Skeat’s; indeed, any etymological dictionary would show the connection between cancer and a crab. For example, whereas Skeat’s definition of cancer reads, “CANCER, a crab, a corroding tumour. (L.) The tumour was named from the notion of ‘eating’ into the flesh,” the NED’s definition is “[L. cancer (cancrum) crab, also the malignant tumour so called. […] the tumour, according to Galen, was so called from the swollen veins surrounding the part affected bearing a resemblance to a crab’s limbs.” And under the verb cancer the NED reads, “To eat into as a cancer; to eat (its way) slowly and incessantly like a cancer” (NED vol. II, 62). The NED’s definition of cancer could have just as easily led to Joyce’s linking cancer with a flesh-eating crab in “Circe.” While we learn in Stephen Hero that Stephen read Skeat’s dictionary (a detail that Joyce, interestingly, removed from the manuscript, and so was not included in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man), he likely also read the NED. The second volume of the NED, which contains the letter C, was published in 1893, and so was available to Joyce when he was writing Ulysses. As the cancer example demonstrates, determining which dictionary Joyce used for creative inspiration in certain instances is a matter of speculation.
One instance in which Joyce references the NED directly in *Ulysses* involves the word *plump* (the seventh volume of the *NED* contained the letter ‘P,’ and was published in 1909, also before Joyce wrote *Ulysses*). Under the headword *plumply* in the *NED*, a word not found in Skeat’s dictionary, it is written: “1895 *Harper’s Weekly* Feb. 337/2 One of those plumply mellow quadrigenerious bodies” (*NED*, 1022). In the “Ithaca” episode of *Ulysses* Joyce writes of Bloom’s interaction with his sleeping wife’s behind, “He kissed the plump mellow yellow smell melons of her rump, on each plump melonous hemisphere, in their mellow yellow furrow, with obscure prolonged provocative melonsmellonous osculation” (*U* 17.2241-3). The latter quote echoes the former; in “Ithaca,” “plumply mellow” creatively evolves into “plump mellow yellow smell melons,” followed by “plump melonous hemisphere,” “mellow yellow furrow,” and finally “melonsmellonous osculation.” Whereas the cancer-crab link is quite common, and easily attributable to various dictionary definitions, if not automatic associations in Joyce’s own mind, the connection between the words *plump* and *mellow* is entirely uncommon. Their being side by side in the *NED* definition of *plumply* as well as Joyce’s above passage more strongly suggests a link. Furthermore, another headword on the same page as *plumply* in the *NED*, also not included in Skeat’s dictionary, is *plum-tree*, which Joyce uses in the advertisement for *Plumtree’s Potted Meat* (*U* 5.145).

As well as having been inspired by its definitions, Roy Gottfried points out that Joyce was influenced by the *NED*’s representation of word sounds. In *Joyce’s Iritis and the Irritated Text* he writes,

> It is interesting to see what the editors of the *Oxford English Dictionary* have to say about the intriguing problem of reproducing sound into sign (the statement is reprinted from the introduction to the earlier *New English Dictionary*, which
Joyce would have seen): “But the living word is sound cognizable by the ear, and must therefore be itself symbolized in order to reach the understanding through the eye. (Gottfried, 141)

Gottfried goes on to explain that, while Joyce’s interest was not in transcribing sounds according to a consistent set of rules and symbols, he did regularly present “the constellation of more letters that most resemble the usual single ones encountered in unencumbered reading, but used disruptively to unusual effect so that the sign disrupts the sight” (ibid). We see this as Bloom walks past the open windows of Saint Joseph’s National School, and either imagines or overhears children reciting the alphabet, the sound of which is presented as follows: “Ahbeesee defeeger kelomen opeeecue rustyouvee doubleyou” (U 4.137-8). The letters are presented as sounds, although the letters H, I, J, X, Y and Z are for some reason unaccounted for. Metempsychosis is a word that is also presented visually in the text, as Bloom hears Molly pronouncing it: met him pike hoses (U 8.112-3). In this instance the word is broken down into syllabic sounds, which are also words in themselves. When Molly first asks Bloom for the meaning of the word, Bloom’s response is, “Met him what?” (U 4.336). Later he thinks, “Met him pike hoses she called it till I told her about the transmigration” (U 8.112-3). Lacking an understanding of the word meaning, Molly, according to Bloom (unfortunately we are not granted access to Molly’s own thoughts on the word/s), understands it as four separate words and

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5 As I explore in my forthcoming Joyce Studies Annual article, “Leopold Bloomed in the Fountain of Salmacis,” in Ulysses Joyce both challenges and reaffirms the ancient idea of a woman-water alignment, according to which women are akin to watery predators (for instance mythological sirens and naiads), and men their land-inhabiting prey. The word series met him pike hoses follows from this idea. “Met him” suggests Molly met a man. A “pike” is a predatory fish known for its large teeth, and “hoses” conjure up the image of both water hoses (phalluses), and pantyhose. The pike encountering a phallus connects with ideas surrounding castration anxiety, which are central in myths involving the woman-water alignment. The pike in connection with pantyhose links to the ancient vagina dentata myth, according to which women’s vaginas contain teeth.
sounds. *Met him pike hoses* is consequently a word series that circulates through Bloom’s thoughts throughout the day. Whereas the Dictionary presents word sounds by means of visual signs, Joyce presents words sounds phonetically in his prose, but also in the form of different, smaller words, which, pronounced alongside one another, sound like other, bigger words. This innovation on Joyce’s part was likely inspired by word sounds as presented in the Dictionary.

Joyce was certainly not the only modernist writer who turned to the Dictionary for creative inspiration; it was also an invaluable resource for T.S. Eliot and W.H. Auden, among others. In his biography of Auden, Humphrey Carpenter writes,

> In his conversation as in his poetry, he used a vocabulary drawn from scientific, psychological and philosophical terminology, and from his discoveries among pages of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Words like ‘glabrous’, ‘sordes’, ‘callipygous’, ‘peptonised’ (which all appeared in his poetry during this period) delighted him but disconcerted his listeners. (Carpenter, 66)

Brewer writes, “[Auden’s] poems (particularly the later ones) are peppered with abstruse vocabulary, and the only way a reader can understand what he is saying is to turn to a dictionary for elucidation, sometimes a dialect dictionary but often *OED*” (Brewer, 192). The *OED* was an invaluable part of Auden’s writing process, and like Auden’s, Joyce’s work grew increasingly complex with time, and so the role of dictionaries became increasingly important in the process. This was not lost on Connolly, who writes that “[Joyce’s] various dictionaries and other vocabulary aids, seem to have been acquired as his own creative work became more complex” (Connolly, 5). Certainly dictionaries aided Joyce in achieving the complexity for which he is now known.
One of the great ironies is that, while Joyce used what would become the OED as a creative tool, Ulysses quite explicitly reflects his disdain for Oxford culture, out of which the OED bloomed. In the opening pages of Ulysses we meet Haines, a Gaelic-speaking Oxford man (U 1.53) who, while visiting Ireland, decides to gather local wisdom and turns of phrase for a book. When asked whether Stephen Dedalus will see any of the profits if he contributes as requested, Haines laughs ambiguously, “I don’t know, I’m sure” (U 1.493). In the present context, Haines may be seen as symbolizing the OED; their shared aim is to collect, to take, to profit from speakers and writers of English, even those such as the Irish, whose English usage is the result of a violent colonial past (and present). In order to fully understand the implications of Haines’ character, we must first understand the history of the conflict between the Irish and English, and the symbolic importance of the Oxford English Dictionary to the British.

The Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland, which began in 1169, marked the beginning of the centuries-long direct occupation of Ireland by the English, and later British (Hollis, xiv). Whereas Irish, or Gaelic, had, prior to that time, been the country’s most commonly spoken language, the English rule of Ireland led to the systematic stamping out of Gaelic. In the 1500s, at Henry VIII’s behest, English usage in Ireland became standard (Hogan, 31). As the English presence in Ireland decreased, the Irish presence greatly declined due to both famines and emigration. The 1739-40 famine resulted in the deaths of nearly 300,000 Irish (Hollis, 97), and the Great Famine of 1845-52, according to the census of 1851, killed roughly one million (ibid, 98). Hollis writes,

[…] high evictions and heavy poor taxes acted in conjunction with famine to stimulate emigration. One hundred thousand left in 1846, double the 1844 numbers. Two hundred thousand departed in 1847, and annual emigration
between 1849 and 1852 averaged 200,000. Another 1 million emigrated between 1852 and 1861. Most counties lost more than 15 percent of their population from the combination of famine and emigration between 1841 and 1851. (ibid, 98-9)

Between the centuries-long efforts of English and British colonizers to eliminate Irish, the devastating impact of two famines, and the ensuing emigration of hundreds of thousands of Irish, Gaelic was spoken by only 15% of Ireland’s population by the end of British rule (Price, 10). As Hickey articulates, the attitude of the Irish towards the English language has since become complicated:

On the one hand [English] is undoubtedly the native language of the vast majority of the population. On the other hand […] [t]o accord English equal status with Irish in the consciousness of the people would be somehow to openly acknowledge the language of the former colonisers. (Hickey, 22)

This ambivalence is felt in *Ulysses*, which is why, as is written in *Semicolonial Joyce*,

[…] Joyce’s writings can be called ‘semicolonial’: in their dealings with questions of nationalism and imperialism they evince a complex and ambivalent set of attitudes, not reducible to a simple anticolonialism but very far from expressing approval of the colonial organizations and methods under which Ireland had suffered during a long history of oppression, and continued to suffer during his lifetime. (Attridge, 3)

Joyce’s characters in *Ulysses* are engaged in an awkward dance with English chauvinists and Irish nationalists, neither of whom are presented in a flattering light.

The 1870s saw the start of the Home Rule Era in Ireland. Along with the push for self-governance came the Gaelic revival in the 1880s, which was marked by a resurging interest in
Irish culture. Within the Gaelic revival were two main groups: those who wished to express themselves in English, and those who sought to revive the Gaelic tongue. William Butler Yeats led the former group, which is a group that Joyce was apparently able to tolerate; he wrote to his brother in 1906, “If the Irish programme did not insist on the Irish language I suppose I could call myself a nationalist. As it is, I am content to recognise myself an exile: and, prophetically, a repudiated one” (Ellmann, Letters, 125). Joyce based his profession (as a writer and also English teacher) on his mastery of the English language, and he had no interest in rejecting his mother tongue because of political ideals and pre-colonial fantasies. But while he rejected the idea of reviving Gaelic, he did not treat the English language with reverence, as NED lexicographers did. He did not consider the established English lexis an authority. Rather, he radically reinvented the language for his own creative purposes, using colonial language to weave together an inclusive and compassionate discourse. This was a political move; Joyce blended and thus critiqued language.

As the Gaelic revival gained momentum in 1870s Ireland, support grew for the New English Dictionary in Britain. The project was scientific, in that it aimed to accurately map out the development of the English language from its very beginnings, but was couched in Anglo-Christian traditions at Oxford. Indeed it was Archbishop Richard Trench, whose intent was to do “God’s work with the English language and nation” (Willinsky, 3), who put forth the call for a new English dictionary in 1857. Willinsky writes of Trench,

   His well-publicized beliefs in the ability of the English language to serve as a sure moral guide, if approached through philology, may well have inspired not only the membership of the [Philological] Society but that far larger group of readers who were to collect citations for this project with such dedication. (ibid, 15)
English was not only a language for Trench, but a way of life, and a set of moral and religious values. These values are what led to the creation of the *New English Dictionary*. Evidently, given the British Empire’s long history of eliminating non-English languages in its colonies, the *OED* can be seen as an extension of British imperialism. Colonial wars are language wars, and so the *New English Dictionary* was a symbol of the political, intellectual, and economic dominance of the English over the rest of the world, including Ireland, in the early twentieth-century.

In the context of this history, the offensiveness of Haines’ request to Stephen becomes apparent. He, a privileged Englishman, wishes to document the speech of his acquaintances for a book, acquaintances who were colonized by his people, and whose English usage results form that violence, which was then still ongoing. To make matters worse, Haines enjoys showing off his Gaelic. When an Irish woman comes to deliver milk in “Telemachus,” he speaks to her in Gaelic, to which she responds, bewildered, “Is it French you are talking, sir?” (*U* 1.425). In reaction, “Haines spoke to her again a longer speech, confidently” (*U* 1.426). Haines, so certain that the working class milk woman speaks Irish, continues to speak it to her despite her obvious failure to understand, which is why Buck grumbles, “He’s English, […] and he thinks we ought to speak Irish in Ireland” (*U* 1.431-2). Haines, a descendent from those who did everything in their power to eliminate Gaelic, wants to showcase his proficient Gaelic, and to collect the English words and expressions used by the Irish around him, whom he does not intend to pay for their contributions. For him Ireland is a romantic fantasy rather than a real place with a brutally violent history, which fuels his insensitive behaviour.

Like the English settlers and *NED* lexicographers, Haines feels entitled to the space, time, and language of the Irish, as Stephen thinks to himself in “Nestor” while being talked at by English schoolmaster Mr Deasy, “May I trespass on your valuable space” (*U* 2.324). The
comment from Stephen that inspires Haines to start documenting Irish expressions to begin with speaks to the very plight of the colonized Irish: “It is a symbol of Irish art. The cracked lookingglass of a servant” (U 1.146), about which Haines later tells Stephen, “That one about the cracked lookingglass of a servant being a symbol of Irish art is deuced good” (U 1.483-4). The image of the cracked lookingglass of a servant symbolizes both the poverty of the Irish, as the mirror is cracked and presumably unable to be replaced, and their violently enforced status as servants to the English, politically, economically, and of course, linguistically. Indeed in “Telemachus” Stephen speaks to Haines about his status as a “servant” (U 1.638) to “The imperial British state” (U 1.643).

The cracked mirror also represents the fragmented self-image that results from the process of being colonized, what W.E.B. Du Bois coins as “double-consciousness” (Du Bois, 8) in *The Souls of Black Folk*. About the plight of black people in the United States he writes,

[…] this American world, a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, […] only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness,— an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body […]. (ibid, 8)

According to Du Bois’ theory of double-consciousness, minorities perceive themselves primarily through the lens of dominant culture. Blacks perceive themselves as whites do. The Irish perceive themselves as the English do. As a result, minorities’ self-image becomes fragmented,
as is represented by the cracked mirror in Stephen’s metaphor. To have an intact sense of self is a privilege, and a privilege felt mostly by privileged classes, such as that to which Haines belongs.

Haines’ ability to travel in order to collect is, in itself, a mark of his British privilege. Buck Mulligan says to Stephen “God, isn’t he dreadful? […] these bloody English! Bursting with money and indigestion. Because he comes from Oxford” (U 1.51-4), and later, “He’s stinking with money […] His old fellow made his tin by selling jalap to Zulus or some bloody swindle or other” (U 155-7). Mulligan implies that Haines’ wealth comes from his father’s work as a British colonizer, selling “jalap,” a cathartic drug, to Zulus, an ethnic group in South Africa. Just as Haines’ father relished the wealth enabled by British colonies, Haines profits from the company of Stephen and Buck, with whom he spends several nights without contributing financially in any way; he insists that others pay on his behalf. When the woman arrives with milk Haines says, “We had better pay her, Mulligan, hadn’t we?” (U 1.440), and then, with a smile, “Pay up and look pleasant” (U 1.449). This is ironic when contrasted with Mr Deasy’s later stating that “Money is power, the pride of the English is that they paid their way” (U 2.251-2). According to “Telemachus” and “Nestor,” money is indeed power, but power, like language, always taken at the expense of others. This is perhaps why, in “Nestor,” Stephen says to Mr Deasy, “I fear those big words, […] which make us so unhappy” (U 2.264). Words make languages, and languages make armies. Languages wage wars and cost lives. They also cost unspeakable sums of money.

There is a connection between speaking and spending in Ulysses. Stephen Dedalus spends little and speaks little. Buck’s asking, “Will you come [to Athens] if I can get the aunt to fork out twenty quid?” (U 1.43) implies that Stephen cannot afford to travel. Indeed in “Nestor” we learn that he owes money (and various things) to several people:

Stephen has little money, and, accordingly, few words for the world. In all of Ulysses he utters but a handful of lines. While Stephen speaks and spends little, Buck Mulligan talks incessantly and finds pleasure in spending money. He jokes with Stephen and chides him about his deceased mother, seldom listening to his friend yet constantly talking at him and requesting money. And just as Buck Mulligan is a big speaker and spender, so too is Mr Deasy. As he evidences in his interaction with Stephen in “Nestor,” he feels at liberty to share his thoughts, not only in conversation, but in print, as he insists that Stephen help him to get an article published in the local paper. He also enjoys boasting about his money, telling Stephen, “You don’t yet know what money is. Money is power. […] what does Shakespeare say? Put but money in thy purse” (U 2.236-9). In Ulysses, speaking freely is an act rooted in economic and cultural privilege. That there is a direct connection between socio-economic status and “free speech” is best demonstrated by Leopold Bloom in “Cyclops.”

Whereas Mr Deasy’s cultural privilege enables him to speak and spend freely, Bloom is deeply thoughtful about what he says and what he spends, as well as what he says he spends (in his budget presented in “Ithaca,” his expenses from his visit to the brothel in “Circe” are suspiciously omitted). When Molly asks him to define metempsychosis, he answers her, but slowly, and with careful consideration. When she first asks him, he answers, “It’s Greek. It’s from the Greek. That means the transmigration of souls” (U 4.341). She asks him to explain the word in laymen’s terms, and so he does:
Some people believe […] that we go on living in another body after death, that we lived before. They call it reincarnation. That we all lived before on the earth thousands of years ago or some other planet. They say we have forgotten it. Some say they remember their past lives. (U 4.362-5)

And without further questions from his wife, as though his answer were not complete and thorough enough, he continues, “Metempsychosis […] is what the Greeks called it. They used to believe you could be changed into an animal or a tree, for instance. What they called nymphs, for example” (U 4.375-7). Bloom’s response to Molly’s question is the result of reflection and thoroughness to the point of redundancy. He is mindful of what he says just as he is mindful of what he spends, compiling a budget at the end of the day that includes everything from money spent on tram fare to that leant to Stephen (U 17.1455). While Mr Deasy is at liberty to spend money without such vigilant attention as that demonstrated by Bloom’s budget, he is also able to speak his mind without fear of consequence. Bloom, on the other hand, is a target of animosity when he shares his beliefs, that his nationality is Irish, in response to which the citizen “cleared the spit out of his gullet and, gob, he spat a Red bank oyster out of him right in the corner” (U 12.1432-3). While the OED, a product of British national pride, bound together words of both British, and to a more limited degree, Irish, provenance, animosity between the British and Irish ran high in the early twentieth-century, as did anti-Semitism on both fronts. Bloom’s stating that he “belong[s] to a race […] that is hated and persecuted” (U 12.1467) establishes him as the opponent of those who surround him. In “Cyclops” a group of boisterous Irish chauvinists, the central figure being the citizen, meet in Barney Kiernan’s Pub and pontificate about everything from Patty Dignam’s unjust death to Irish politics. As the unnamed narrator reports,
So then the citizen begins talking about the Irish language and the corporation meeting and all to that and the shoneens that can’t speak their own language and old Joe chipping in because he stuck someone for a quid [...] and talking about the Gaelic league and the antitreating league and drink, the curse of Ireland. [...] Gob, he’d let you pour all manner of drink down his throat till the Lord would call him before you’d ever see the froth of his pint. (U 12.679-86)

The unending stream of alcohol consumed by the men is matched by the unending stream of words and opinions coming out of their mouths. When Bloom joins the discussion, he does not buy any “liquid refreshment” (U 12.759), and he speaks minimally to the men.

The parallel between speaking and spending in Ulysses points to the direct link between money, power, and language. The British Empire, in all its wealth, was able to wage wars, impose English on non-English speaking nations, and be the proud home of the Dictionary, which cost £300,000 to produce, an enormous sum in turn-of-the-century Europe (Brewer, 3). When completed, it cost no less than £2,000 in today’s money, depending on the binding one chose (ibid, 4). In Joyce’s Dublin, it is similarly those who can afford to indulge in excessive amounts of alcohol, or to “pay their own way,” who feel at liberty to pontificate about their politics, and impose them on others.

Bloom’s anti-nationalist ideals surface in “Cyclops,” where he heroically declares that “Force, hatred, history, all that. That’s not life for men and women, insult and hatred. And everybody knows it’s the very opposite of that that is really life. […] Love […]” (U 12.1481-3). Here, Bloom appears to be Joyce’s anticolonial modern hero, speaking to racist men about the virtues of universal love and acceptance. But Bloom’s psyche is more complex than this passage lets on. In “Ithaca” we learn of his “concurrent and consecutive ambitions” (U 17.1497), which
involve living among the English gentry. Bloom’s elaborate fantasy involves owning a “thatched bungalow shaped 2 story dwellinghouse of southerly aspect, […] consisting of 1 drawingroom with baywindow (2 lancets), thermometer affixed, 1 sittingroom, 4 bedrooms, 2 servants’ rooms” (U 17.1504-20), and, inside it, a “[…] fumed oak sectional bookcase containing the Encyclopedia Britannica and New Century Dictionary […] (U 17.1523-4). Here, Joyce explicitly aligns British reference works with colonialism itself. Indeed, reference works are sites of national shared memory, and so they become fundamental pieces of cultural identity. As the Century Dictionary was the definitive British dictionary in 1904, whereas the NED was then far from completion, Bloom’s longing to own the Century Dictionary rather than the NED is logical. Had Ulysses taken place in the 1930s, Bloom’s fantasy bookshelf would have surely contained the £2,000 NED.

Bloom’s colonial fantasy connects with Du Bois’ theory of double-consciousness. On the one hand, as we see in “Cyclops,” Bloom wants to be accepted for who he is by English colonialists and Irish nationalists alike. On the other, he longs to join the ranks of the English gentry, to know that privilege, to experience what it is like to be a part of dominant culture. He wants to escape his double-consciousness, and instead to be as self-assured as Haines and Mr Deasy. His penname in his adulterous correspondence with Martha Clifford, “Henry Flower” (U 5.62), points to this fact. On October 30th 1922 James Joyce wrote bookstore owner (and his then-publisher) Silvia Beach, inquiring with reference to his son, “Did Giorgio ask to order for me a copy of the Oxford Dictionary?” (Banta, 16). As Deane notes, “at this time he could have only been referring to the Concise Oxford Dictionary […]” (Deane, 380), which was edited by English schoolmaster, lexicographer, and commentator on English usage Henry Watson Fowler, who also jointly wrote The King’s English with his brother Francis George Fowler. The King’s
Joyce on the *O(/N)ED*

*English*, published in 1906 (Brewer, 76), was Henry Fowler’s first influential work, and Joyce was referencing him in his choice of Bloom’s penname, which simply reorganizes the letters in *Fowler* so it reads *Flower*. Given Joyce’s knowledge of Fowler’s dictionary, and his aim of creating a puzzle of references, it makes sense that he would build a reference to a famous English lexicographer into his work. Moreover, given Bloom’s English fantasy, it is a fitting reference. And if “Henry Flower” is not in fact a reference to Henry Fowler, Bloom’s pseudonym is nevertheless traditionally English, as the name “Henry” links back to a long line of English kings, Henry the VIII of course being among them, himself largely responsible for the dominance of English in Ireland.

In *Ulysses* Joyce tips his hat to the *OED* by referencing it in his prose, both directly and indirectly, and relying on it, as well as countless other dictionaries, to aid him in achieving the complexity for which he is notorious. Yet he also expresses disdain for the Dictionary, as well as Oxford culture in general. Just as Leopold Bloom both longs to be accepted as he is, yet also wishes to be a member of the English gentry, Joyce evidences his own ambivalence towards high British culture in *Ulysses*. It is both an aid to his creativity, and a source of colonial and cultural violence that he resents. Nevertheless, he is currently the most prominently featured modernist writer in *OED3*. 
Chapter 2  The O(/N)ED on Joyce

Joyce loved words, as can be seen when his largely autobiographical character, Stephen Dedalus of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, sings “Dingdong! The castle bell! / Farewell, my mother! / Bury me in the old churchyard,” and laments,

How beautiful and sad that was! How beautiful the words were where they said Bury me in the old churchyard! A tremor passed over his body. How sad and how beautiful! He wanted to cry quietly but not for himself: for the words, so beautiful and sad, like music. (*Portrait*, 20-1)

Stephen’s fondness for words mirrors that of Joyce, who valued all words equally. Into *Ulysses* he wove derogatory terms (eg. *cunt* (*U* 4.227), *whore* (*U* 9.1091), *slut* (*U* 12.1801)), slang terms (eg. *breeks* (*U* 1.113, slang for trousers), *dibs* (*U* 11.1077, slang for money), *bluebags* (*U* 15.813, slang for police constables)) (Gifford, 15, 308, 464), loan words (eg. Italian *aria di sortita* (*U* 3.100), French *les jeux sont faits* (*U* 15.2162), Gaelic *alanna* (*U*, 15.4586)), and nonce formations (words of his own invention) (eg. *dewsilky* (*U* 1.403), *gorescarred* (*U* 2.12), *abstrusiosities* (*U* 3.320)). He treated words with such creative care and consideration that Joyceans remain puzzled with regards to what many of them mean. Unfortunately for pre-1970s readers, no help was to be found in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, as Joyce’s work was yet to be included.

While Joyce was a published author whose fiction was embraced by both William Butler Yeats and Ezra Pound in the 1910s (Ellmann, *JJ*, 349), and admired by the wider literary community in the 1920s, he gets no mention in *OED1* or its 1933 supplement. As Gabler explains of Joyce’s early twentieth-century status in “Cultural versus Editorial Canonising,”
What was […] long lacking for Joyce, was a general public recognition and acclaim. Friends discerned his writing skill, indeed his art, and admired it, but such private and, as it were, coterie recognition was no help against the blight of censorship which prevented Joyce’s writing from reaching the general public – largely prevented it from doing so, as it turned out, for by and large almost two decades. (Gabler, 11)

Joyce was not widely enough read prior to 1928/33 to warrant his inclusion in OED1, the central focus of which, as Charlotte Brewer explains in Treasure-House of the Language, was “great writers” (Brewer, 106). Joyce was not considered a “great” writer (in the traditional sense) at that time, despite the high praise he had received, in part because his readership was so limited. His readership was so limited because of censorship laws that were firmly in place at the start of his writing career, and which, as Katherine Mullin argues in James Joyce, Sexuality and Social Purity, he intentionally and provocatively challenged (Mullin, 3). Thus, as Mullin aptly writes, “Joyce’s publication history is a history of censorship” (Mullin, 1), hence the grueling nine years it took for Dubliners to get published in its entirety (Ellmann, JJ, 219 & 353). The serialization and publication of both Dubliners and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man was hindered by printers’ refusals to work with “objectionable” material (Mullin, 2), which included phrases and descriptions such as, in the case of Dubliners, “‘a man with two establishments to keep up,’” “‘having a girl,’” and “a woman’s changing the position of her legs often, and brushing against a man’s chair” (Ellmann, JJ, 220). These censorial struggles were only the start for Joyce, who would go on to see Ulysses banned in the United States in 1921, and thereafter in most of the English-speaking world, until the mid-1930s. Since England’s ban on Ulysses was only lifted in
1936 (Casado, 97), the reasons for Joyce’s small readership prior to that time, and consequent lacking recognition, are clear.

While censorship laws in the early twentieth-century impeded the dissemination of literary works, OED1 had, as OED3 continues to have, its own censorial practices. Brewer writes that the OED inherited conservative moral tenets from its predecessor, Samuel Johnson’s *A Dictionary of the History of English* (1755). She explains that

Johnson’s ‘chief intent’, as stated in his ‘Plan of a Dictionary’ (1747), was to ‘preserve the purity and ascertain the meaning of our English idiom’ by registering the language of writers from the golden age of Elizabeth to the near-present (he hoped to avoid quoting writers who were still alive). (Brewer, 106)

Brewer contends that because of the fact that exclusively “quoting ‘great writers’ as examples of how language had been or should be used often amounted to reading and quoting great thoughts, or ideas, or moments in literature,” the OED, like Johnson’s dictionary, became not only a book of words, but “a book of ideas, a commonplace book, a book which reflected the predominant literary or political or social context of the time” (ibid).

Moreover, just as Johnson refused to quote Hobbes in his dictionary due to his being, in Johnson’s opinion, “morally beyond the pale, and therefore unsuitable to supply examples of language usage” (ibid, 107), OED1’s preference for citing “great” Victorian writers affirms the fact that it inherited Johnson’s prescriptivism (ibid, 108). Since OED1 exclusively cited sources deemed morally acceptable for inclusion, it is likely that, even if the government’s laws had not been so stringent when Joyce was writing, and his literature had been more widely read and referenced in the early 1900s, OED1 would still have chosen to exclude him, as his writing failed to remain within the bounds of normative values. Indeed in the present context Joyce’s love
letters to Nora remain shocking, as does the attention he pays in his fiction to incestuous fantasies as well as every possible bodily function and sexual act from shitting (U 4.506-9) to shit-licking (U 18.1531-2).

It is understandable, then, that *Ulysses* was frowned upon by many in the 1920s and 30s. On August 16th 1922 Virginia Woolf wrote in her diary,

> I have read 200 pages [of *Ulysses*] so far—not a third; and have been amused, stimulated, charmed, interested, by the first 2 or 3 chapters—to the end of the cemetery scene; and then puzzled, bored, irritated and disillusioned by a queasy undergraduate scratching at his pimples. [...] An illiterate, underbred book it seems to me [...]. (Woolf, 47)

In *Psychic Messages from Oscar Wilde* (1924) Hester Travers Smith, claiming to channel deceased Wilde’s thoughts, writes with reference to *Ulysses*,

> Yes, I have smeared my fingers with that vast work [...] I feel that if this work has caught a portion of the public, who may take it for the truth, that I, even I, [...] who have tasted the fullness of life and its meed of bitterness, should cry aloud: “Shame upon Joyce, shame on his work, shame on his lying soul.”

Smith goes on to describe *Ulysses* as a “great bulk of filth” and “heated vomit,” and describes Joyce as a “monster who cannot contain the monstrosities of his own brain” (Smith, 38-40).

Given that Joyce’s fiction had a tendency to incite such reactions in its time, and that the first edition of *OED1* was dedicated to none other than His Majesty King George the Fifth (*OED2*, vii), the omission of Joyce from the Dictionary seems the obvious choice. Ironically, *Ulysses* has since become the text that has earned Joyce the most fame, and is by far his most generously cited source in both *OED2* and 3 (see figures 2 & 3).
Joyce’s admittance into the canon, and consequently the *OED*, was a process that took decades, and in which Joyce actively and directly participated. Of his reception in Trieste, where he lived for a decade and wrote prolifically, Eric Bulson writes,

Joyce’s reception in Trieste was based on a series on calculated moves to orchestrate the interpretation and discussion of his life and work. He had left Trieste in 1915 and again in 1920, only to have him pressing his friends for personal favours, newspaper notices, celebratory reviews, translations, and, in the end, recognition as the Irish author who had adopted Trieste as his second country. (Bulson, 311-12)

Joyce’s self-promoting efforts contributed towards both the fame and notoriety he saw in his lifetime. In the 1920s and 30s he was revered as a great writer by many, including Morris Ernst and Alexander Lindey, who famously argued for *Ulysses* in 1933 before Judge John Woolsey in *United States v. One Book Called Ulysses*, and, in doing so, referenced the work as a “modern classic” that had “stood the test of time” (Groden, 82). By the 1930s, Joyce had a substantial and international group of admirers. In *Ulysses in Focus* Michael Groden writes, “The February 1921 New York court decision that declared *Ulysses* obscene while Joyce was still writing it led to its publication in France as a collector’s item, a cult object” (ibid, 81). The same was true in the United States, although distribution of the text was reliant on the black market. As *The New York Times* reported in 1941, prior to Judge Woolsey’s ruling “the book had been smuggled in [to the U.S.] and sold at high prices by ‘bookleggers’ and a violent critical battle had raged around it.”

The controversy surrounding Joyce’s work contributed to its allure. Moreover, in the 1930s

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Harvard acquired the proofs for *Ulysses* (ibid), which certainly did not hurt its reputation. But what is now known as the ‘Joyce industry’ was still in its infancy, and Joyce wanted *Ulysses* to reach a wider audience. He called upon critics he knew to write about the work, hoping that increased amounts of writing around it would encourage its dissemination.

Despite his work’s hard-earned acclaim at the end of his life, Joyce remained a contentious figure in the public eye. His obituary in *The New York Times* (January 13, 1941), titled “James Joyce Dies; Wrote ‘Ulysses,’” ambivalently reads:

**Hailed and Belittled by Critics**

The status of James Joyce as a writer never could be determined in his lifetime. In the opinion of some critics, notably Edmund Wilson, he deserves to rank with the great innovators of literature as one whose influence upon other writers of his time was incalculable. On the other hand, […] there was Professor Irving Babbitt of Harvard who dismissed his most widely read novel, “Ulysses,” as one which only could have been written “in an advanced stage of psychic disintegration.”

Evidently in 1941 Joyce’s literary status remained uncertain to the world. That same year, Harvard professor Harry Levin published *James Joyce: A Critical Introduction*, the first book about Joyce’s work that was written by someone beyond Joyce’s personal network (Groden, 82).

Given the conflicting opinions of former Harvard professors Irving Babbitt and Harry Levin, the latter of whose book marked a step towards academically affirming the importance of Joyce’s work, it is clear that, even within the university from which the Joyce industry gained its momentum in the 1930s and 40s, disagreements about Joyce’s merit were still taking place.

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7 Ibid.
Over the course of the following two decades Joyce scholarship soared, reaching its peak in the early 60s, shortly after the 1959 publication of the first edition of Richard Ellmann’s biography, *James Joyce*. The 60s were also when hundreds of volunteers were meticulously combing through books and marking down citations to be added to what would become the 1972-86 *OED* supplement, in which Joyce is the third most cited source, after George Bernard Shaw and Rudyard Kipling (Willinksy, 215). With reference to *OED2* John Simpson writes, “The editorial policy at the time was more inclusive of modern ‘classic’ authors than it was in my time and is now. I think I wouldn’t have included so much Joyce. But either way can be argued” (Personal correspondence: 03/19/14). Ironically *OED1*’s emphasis was so heavily on “classic” authors that Joyce, not yet “classic,” was excluded. *OED2*’s emphasis remained the same, yet due to the cultural shifts that had occurred, the results were the very opposite, with Joyce citations towering over those of other modernist authors such as Faulkner, Eliot, and Pound. **Joyce’s inclusion in Burchfield’s supplement/OED2 relates to both his (then) new status as classic author, and the fact that when *OED2* was in the making, its editorial and censorial policies were changing rapidly, at Burchfield’s behest. Brewer writes, “In his account of his editorial policy in the introduction to volume 1 of the Supplement, Burchfield singled out words related to sex and excretory functions as one of the areas he had specifically extended the *OED*’s remit to include” (Brewer, 203). Certainly citing *Ulysses* so generously without any mention of

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8 For a timeline that displays the literary and academic activity surrounding Joyce in Europe (with the exception of Britain) between 1916 and 2004, see *The Reception of James Joyce in Europe*, xx-xlv.
9 Clearest evidence of this is available thanks to Ngram. [http://ow.ly/x71ul](http://ow.ly/x71ul)
10 Joyce’s work propelled some of the cultural shifts that led to his incorporation into the canon and inclusion in *OED2*. For more on this see Mullin.
sex or excrement would be challenging, as the entire novel functions, in part, as a human body, with almost every episode assigned an organ in the Linati schema. It would be equally challenging to incorporate Joyce into a dictionary while omitting “four-letter words,” which OED2 also did not do thanks to Burchfield. Brewer writes that “the 1933 supplement had been taken to task […] for its omission of four-letter words and various other slang terms, in accordance with ‘Victorian’ values […]. Here Burchfield confidently and boldly introduced change” (ibid). Evidently so, as Joyce is cited three times in OED2 under the verb “fuck” (four times in OED3, under the verb and noun). In her introduction Brewer writes that OED2 added little that was new when compared with OED1 (ibid, 11), however the sheer quantity of Joyce quotes that appear suggest otherwise, as do the editorial and ideological shifts that accompanied them. One is left wondering whether Burchfield’s decision to incorporate Joyce influenced his decision also to incorporate words previously deemed derogatory, whether four-lettered or otherwise. The choices seem inextricably linked.

While grateful for the statistics provided by John Willinsky in Empire of Words and Andreas Fischer in “Milly Bloom: fairhaired, greenvested, slimsandalled,” I collected my own OED2 sample for analysis. After receiving a list of the 1,993 headwords under which the name “Joyce” is cited from OED lexicographers, I took a 25% sample by manually extracting every fourth word, which produced a cross-section of 499 words. Of those, 44 (9%) were referencing other people by the name of “Joyce,” whether writers or fictional characters. 69% of the James Joyce citations were from Ulysses, which closely aligns with Fischer’s findings. The distribution of the sources of the James Joyce citations in OED2, according to my own counting, can be seen in Figure 3.
Figure 3: Joyce’s presence in OED2, arranged from least to most quoted source

Based on 25% sample.

What is most striking about the information in Figure 3 is not the prominent place that Ulysses holds. As Joyce’s most famous text, and one that occupies such a central place in the landscape of twentieth century literature, it is no wonder that it is cited so generously in a dictionary of literary English. What is surprising is the comparatively miniscule number of Finnegans Wake citations (51), which comprise only 11% of the sample. When looking at its representation of Joyce, it appears that the OED is not as focused on “great writers” as what are considered “great works.” The disproportionately small number of Finnegans Wake citations in the OED can more dramatically be seen in the distribution of Joyce’s nonce formations currently listed in OED3, as shown in Figure 4.
Given that *Finnegans Wake* is Joyce’s most recent work, is comparable in length to *Ulysses*, and is more lexically innovative than *Ulysses*, it is clear that its treatment by the *OED* is insufficient. That *Finnegans Wake* is cited less frequently than Joyce’s letters as a source of nonce words, as seen above, is particularly baffling. John Simpson writes that, in the process of building Joyce into the *OED*, “*Finnegans Wake* was more or less avoided, as interpretation was often too ambiguous or uncertain to be useful for a ‘general’ historical dictionary” (Personal correspondence: 03/19/14). This is certainly understandable with a text that reads, for example, “Sir Tristram, violer d’amores, fr’over the short sea, had passencore rearrived from North Armorica on this side, the scraggy isthmus of Europe Minor to wielderfight his penisolate war” (*FW*, 3), and which, also on the very first of roughly six hundred pages, features the word “bababadalgharaghtakamminarronkonnbronntonnerronntuonnthunntrovarrhounawnskawntoo-
ooheroordenenthurnuk” (ibid). In such a text, how can lexicographers choose which words to include, or even define, as part of the English language? Moreover, how would they go about defining them? *Finnegans Wake* puts a challenge to lexicographers so great that the text has been largely excluded from dictionaries, including the *OED*.

Equally worthy of note as the minimal number of *Finnegans Wake* citations in *OED2* is the unusual criteria according to which those citations were selected. In *Hardy’s Literary Language and Victorian Philology* Dennis Taylor points out that *OED2* cites *Finnegans Wake* on a very different principle from that used for other writers. Where the *OED* reader normally seeks out words “used in a peculiar way”, “used significantly” […] the *OED* reader of *Finnegans Wake* seeks out ordinary words that are the exception in a sea of peculiarities. (Taylor, 141)

The Wakean citations in the *OED* are relatively normal when compared with the established English lexis, and the rest of the text itself. They include *grandmamma* “To make grim grandma grunt and grin again,” *house* “It was after the show at Wednesbury that one tall man..returning late..from the second house..had a barkiss revolver placed to his face,” and *place* “A few good old souls, who, as they were juiced after taking their pledge over at the uncle’s place, were evidently under the spell of liquor.” The *OED*’s approach to a text as experimental as the *Wake* makes sense. If words serve little or no purpose to English speakers outside the context of *Finnegans Wake*, the natural decision would be to exclude them from a dictionary, and instead focus on those quotes that are more likely to be understood by the non-Joycean public. Yet while Taylor suggests that this strategy is unique to the *OED*’s treatment of *Finnegans Wake*, it appears equally true of its treatment of *Ulysses*. 
*Ulysses* is a notoriously intricate and dense text. The “Proteus” episode begins with Stephen Dedalus walking along the shore of Sandymount Strand and thinking to himself in a stream-of-consciousness style,

> Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes. Signatures of all things I am here to read, seaspawn and seawrack, the nearing tide, that rusty boot. Snotgreen, bluesilver, rust: coloured signs. Limits of the diaphane. But he adds: in bodies. Then he was aware of them bodies before of them coloured (*U* 3.1-5).

The meaning of each of these sentences, and consequently the passage as a whole, is difficult to discern. Whereas a conventional sentence involves a subject, a verb, and a noun, usually in that order (eg. “James Joyce (subject) loved (verb) words (noun")”), Joyce’s sentences often defy this structure. “Snotgreen, bluesilver, rust: coloured signs” is not so much a sentence as a collection of adjectives and nouns placed together in a row.\(^{11}\) The reasons for the colon’s presence after the word “rust” are unclear. A colon normally precedes a list or explanation, but “coloured signs” is not a list, nor does it clearly explain anything. Perhaps Stephen is looking upon rusty snotgreen and bluesilver signs on the beach, or rusty signs alongside the snotgreen and bluesilver sea. The latter is likelier, as, in “Telemachus,” Buck Mulligan comments on “The snotgreen sea” (*U* 1.78), which is the quotation currently found in the *OED* next to *snotgreen*. That the *OED* chose to cite “Telemachus” rather than “Proteus” in the instance of the word *snotgreen* is likely due to

\(^{11}\) The phrase appears more like poetry than prose, and Imagist poetry at that. It brings to mind Pound’s “In a Station of the Metro” (1913), which famously reads, “The apparition of these faces in the crowd; petals on a wet, black bough.” Pound’s poem is a collection of nouns: apparition, faces, crowd, petals, black bough. As with Joyce’s above sentence, there is no clearly defined subject or verb. Rather, the focus is on the spontaneous mingling of various colours, textures, and objects.
the fact that “The snotgreen sea” is a conventionally structured and therefore easily understandable passage, whereas “Snotgreen, bluesilver, rust: coloured signs” is not.

Both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* frequently thwart understanding, which poses a problem when trying to select citations for a dictionary, the aim of which is to promote understanding. The *OED*’s response to the dilemma is to choose relatively simple citations from both texts. Brewer notes Burchfield’s “fondness for inclusion of the *hapax legomena* and eccentric usages of literary writers,” and as an example she lists Joyce’s *impotentising* (Brewer, 186), one of his nonce formations found in *OED2*. But *impotentising* is a simple word; it merely takes the adjective “impotent” and transforms it into a verb. It is simple in comparison with some of Joyce’s other nonce formations, for instance *contransmagnificandfjewbangtantiality* (*U* 3.51), which does not appear in the *OED*, and the meaning of which is far more difficult to determine; its definition would involve as much speculation as it would lexicographical research (yet another problem that many Joycean words pose for lexicographers). While Brewer posits that Burchfield had a preference for “eccentric” words, the Joycean words included in *OED2* are relatively ordinary when compared with other Joycean nonce formations. By and large *OED2*’s focus, like *OED3*’s, rests on words and excerpts from *Ulysses* with clear meanings, for instance *all* “Proud possessor of damnall,” *cream* “Stripped at the washstand dabbing and creaming,” and *mail* “Look here Martin, John Wyse Nolan said, overtaking them at the Mail office.”

Brewer mentions *OED*’s preference for citing classic authors, but the preference is, more specifically, for citing quotes from great works that have self-contained and easily accessible meanings. It is a preference that necessarily impacts the representation of both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* in the *OED*. In citing simple quotations from otherwise complicated texts, the representation of the works is invariably skewed. Moreover, this approach contradicts a passage
in the preface of OED2 that boasts, “In 1891 a great English philologist wrote of the ‘debt’ which ‘English grammar will some day owe to the New English Dictionary’; and the debt has been mounting up ever since. There is no aspect of English linguistic history that the Dictionary has not illuminated” (OED2, vii). The OED’s treatment of Ulysses and Finnegans Wake undermines the latter claim; the texts contain linguistic experimentation too complex for inclusion in the Dictionary.

A pivotal event occurred in the Joyce world two years prior to the completion of the OED2 supplement, which has further complicated questions surrounding the representation of Joyce’s work, specifically Ulysses, in the OED. In 1984, at the Ninth International James Joyce Symposium in Frankfurt, Hans Walter Gabler handed to Joyce’s grandson, Stephen James Joyce, the first copy of his new edition of Ulysses, now the standard, which contains over 5,000 alterations when compared with earlier editions (Groden, 95). Joyce was cognizant of the first edition’s errors. Indeed, in it he wrote, over Silvia Beach’s initials, “The publisher asks the reader’s indulgence for typographical errors unavoidable in the exceptional circumstances” (ibid, 91). New editions of the text surfaced in 1934 and 1961, but they, too, contained significant flaws. Gabler compiled another edition from scratch, whose aim was to most closely replicate Joyce’s manuscripts. To do so, he combined both Anglo-American and German genetic editing styles (ibid, 92). Groden writes,

Gabler worked with two guiding principles. First, he accepted Joyce’s written words rather than those of the typist’s or printer’s transcriptions unless the evidence convinced him to do the opposite […]. Second, he followed what he called the “rule of the invariant context”: if Joyce later worked on the text surrounding the problematic words, Gabler accepted the typed and printed version
without the manuscript’s words, but if the context was untouched, he admitted the manuscript’s words into the text. (ibid, 93)

What resulted from Gabler’s approach were differences from previous editions that numbered in the thousands. As Richard Ellmann notes in the foreword to Gabler’s *Ulysses*, some examples of errors typical of those in prior editions are as follows: whereas earlier editions read, in “Nausicaa,” “Ask them a question they ask you another. Good idea if you’re in a cart,” they should have read, “Ask them a question and they ask you another. Good idea if you’re stuck.

Gain time. But then you’re in a cart” (*U* 13.863-5). While earlier editions read, in “Lestrygonians,” “Smells on all sides, bunched together. Each person too,” what Joyce actually wrote was, “Smells on all sides bunched together. Each street different smell. Each person too” (*U* 8.1121-2). Whereas in some instances, parts of Joyce’s manuscripts were overlooked by typists, in other instances, typographical errors Joyce intended were corrected. For example when Bella Cohen’s fan asks, in “Circe,” “Have you forgotten me?” and gets the following response in Joyce’s manuscript: “Nes. Yo” (*U* 15.2766), the earlier editions “corrected” the response to read, “Yes. No” (*U* xi). Thanks to Gabler the most current edition of *Ulysses* is far truer to Joyce’s manuscripts than the earlier editions were. One lingering problem, however, is that the *OED* cites the first edition.

That *OED2* cites the first edition of *Ulysses* is odd, since the 1934 edition had, by the 60s, long been published, and had corrected some of what Joyce himself had deemed to be flaws. Of course by the time the Gabler edition was published, the *OED2* supplement was nearing its completion, and many thousands of 4 x 6 cards had been filled with citations from the first edition of *Ulysses*. Moreover, Gabler’s edition was not immediately accepted as superior by academics. In the late 80s his work was under attack, primarily by John Kidd, in what are now
called the ‘Joyce Wars’ (Groden, 97). But by the time OED3 was in the making, the Gabler had become the standard. While one argument for OED3’s decision not to cite the Gabler is consistency (since OED2 cites the first edition), the fact that so many of OED2’s Joyce citations are being removed and new ones added, as we will soon see, means that those added could easily be extracted from the Gabler, as OED3 continues its revisions. The OED2 definitions would still be of use, the citations would merely have to be located in Gabler’s edition, and cited based on episode and line number, as is now the norm. The OED’s method of citing Ulysses by page number is archaic. Moreover, many of those quotations likely contain typographical flaws that have since been corrected.

Whereas James Joyce is cited 1,825 times in OED2, he is currently cited 2,408 times in OED3. In his above quote John Simpson writes that he would not have included as much Joyce in the dictionary as OED2 did. But the number of Joyce citations in the OED has increased by over 30% since Burchfield’s time, almost entirely under Simpson’s 1993-2013 editorship, as can be seen in Figure 5.
Evidently, the number of Joyce citations in the *OED* is growing. However what Figure 5 does not demonstrate is that many of the Joyce citations from *OED2* did not carry over to *OED3*. Of my 25% sample of *OED2* citations, 7% of them fail to appear in *OED3*. This means that, to date, almost 30% of *OED2* Joyce citations have been removed from *OED3*. As of December 2011 *OED3* had revised just over one third of their entries; given that, within the span of a 30% revision, almost 30% of *OED2*’s Joyce citations have been lost, a 100% revision will likely result in most of said citations disappearing. According to John Simpson these disappearances are largely due to the problem of Joyce’s first usages (words believed to have been invented by

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12 Interestingly, 94% of these removals were within in the M-R letter range.
Simpson points to Joyce’s hyper-referentiality as a central factor that complicates the process of citing him in a dictionary as an inventor of words and phrases. He writes that scholars are only now realizing the extent to which “Joyce’s creativity isn’t measured solely by neologisms, but by how his writing method involved collecting ephemeral documentation from all around him, and weaving it into Ulysses” (Personal correspondence: 03/19/14). In other words, while lexicographers thought that Joyce was the first to use certain words when he was originally being built into the OED, which earned him hundreds of citations, we are now learning otherwise. This explains why Ulysses has, to date, lost almost half of its original first usages in the OED. Simpson writes,

Looking solely at Ulysses, OED2 (1989) contained 1,368 quotations from the work, of which 414 were earliest quotations (for words, senses, etc.). After revision the total number of Ulysses quotations had increased to 1,685 – in line with the general increase in the number of quotations throughout the revised text. But of these original 414 first uses in OED2, 181 fell in entries that have been revised. And during revision 85 of these quotations were lost as first examples – as they were each replaced by new earlier first uses from other sources. That is significant: to date Ulysses has lost 47% of its original earliest references. (Personal correspondence: 03/19/14)

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14 Due to the limited scope of this project, the following paragraphs shall focus on Joyce’s nonce words, which are encompassed in Simpson’s discussion of “first usages.”

15 There is a discrepancy between Simpson’s number of Ulysses citations in OED2 (1,368) and Andreas Fischer’s (1,326). Since, as Fischer explains in his footnotes, the only way to distinguish James Joyce citations from other “Joyce” citations in the list available on the OED2 CD-ROM is manually, there is a margin of error to consider when anyone undertakes the task of counting.
With time, and further research, the number of Joyce’s first usages listed in OED gets smaller. But issues surrounding first usages do not explain the disappearances. Let us look at a few examples.

In OED2, under the headword alphabet is the term alphabet book, under which two quotations are listed, the first of which is from Ulysses, “One of the alphabet books you were going to write” (U 3.427). In OED3 the headword alphabet is also listed, and underneath it, alphabet book. Whereas in OED2 there are two citations, in OED3 there are five, but Joyce is not among them. Not only has the Ulysses quote been removed as first evidence of the term; it has been removed from the entry entirely. The reasons for this are unclear. In OED2 under the headword merrily is a Finnegans Wake quote, “On the top of the longcar, as merrily we rolled along, we think of him looking at us yet” (FW 615). It is one of many quotations provided to demonstrate literary use of the word, and is not first in a list of usages in this example. Nevertheless, in OED3 the quote has been removed. And whereas OED2 cites both Ulysses and Finnegans Wake under the headword plate (“Gave it to them on a hot plate, Myles Crawford said, the whole bloody history” (U 7.676-7), and “The classic Encourage Hackney Plate was captured by two noses in a stablecloth finish, ek and nek (FW 39)), OED3 has removed the latter and kept the former. The other removals (36 out of the 499 word sample) are similarly perplexing, especially given the fact that the Joyce citations in OED3 greatly outnumber those in OED2.16

16 As an aside, OED3 wrongly cites James Joyce under the headword text-writer; OED1 and 2 were citing Justice (J.) Joyce rather than James Joyce. The problem of flawed referencing dates back to OED1, as Brewer writes that the first edition of the dictionary had “hosts of wrong definitions, wrong datings, and wrong crossreferences. The problem is gigantic” (Brewer, 2).
Nevertheless it remains true that, as Simpson articulates, many words and terms formerly coined as Joyce’s first usages have proven to have been used prior by other writers. Thus, complications surrounding first usages have jeopardized Joyce’s presence as lexical innovator in the *OED*. But this is not for a lack of Joycean first usages. Joyce invented many of the words he wrote. In the “Proteus” episode of *Ulysses* alone, one of the shortest of the eighteen episodes in the book, there are eighty-nine apparent first occurrences of word forms. They include *Edenville* (*U* 3.39), Stephen Dedalus’ term for the Garden of Eden, *famileye* (*U* 3.204), probably meaning a family’s collective or shared perception, and *hismy* (*U* 3.487), likely a combination of “his” and “my.” Joyce’s nonce formations make the process of reading his work fascinating for some and frustrating for most. It also makes the inclusion of Joyce in a dictionary like the *OED* difficult. No such dictionary, not even the *OED* with its implicit claims for completeness, has the space, the time, or the means to include all of Joyce’s nonce formations, which, including *Finnegans Wake*, number in the tens, if not hundreds, of thousands. Thus, the decision to include some of Joyce’s nonce words in a dictionary necessarily involves the exclusion of most of them. This is of course true when citing any author in a dictionary, which requires the selection of a relatively small number of quotes out of entire corpora. But in the case of Joyce, the extraction process is particularly complicated due to the sheer number of words there are to choose from. Ironically, while almost half of the words listed among Joyce’s first usages *OED2* were in fact not his first usages, his fiction is full of words that, to this day, have yet to be used.

17 This figure is based on my own counting, and cross-referencing with the *OED* and Ngram. Web. 12 November 2014. <https://books.google.com/ngrams>
19 *Finnegans Wake*, comparable in length to *Ulysses*, is composed largely of nonce formations.
by other writers outside the realm of Joyce scholarship, words such as *bullockbefriending* (*U* 2.431), *bloodbeak* (*U* 3.301), and *peacocktwittering* (*U* 3.441).  

While we now know that *OED2*'s list of Joycean first usages was gravely flawed, in looking at the current list, we can see that it remains so. It is also strikingly small. Thanks to *OED3*'s being entirely online one can, in an instant, access a complete list of Joyce’s currently cited nonce formations—all ninety-seven of them. And one can, in an instant, marvel at the small and seemingly random selection from the many thousands of words Joyce invented. Of course the *OED* cannot be expected to list all nonce formations in the canon. Indeed, *OED3*'s preface defensively reads, “*Does the OED include every word in the language? No. The dictionary aims to include an enormous number of words and meanings, but some do not meet the selection criteria.*”  

While *OED3*'s preface encourages the notion that the few Joycean first usages listed in the dictionary were selected based on certain criteria, this does not appear to be the case.

Looking at those cited from *Ulysses*, accessibility and/or usability is not a shared feature of the words, which include *nemasperm* “A spermatozoon,” *ovoblastic* “Of or relating to an egg cell,” and *poppysmic* “Produced with smacking of the lips.” Neither usability is among the *OED*'s elusive criteria, nor is uptake, as the vast majority of Joyce’s nonce words from *Ulysses* that are listed in *OED3* have been used by a small handful of writers besides Joyce.  

While one might reasonably think that the nonce formations from *Ulysses* in the *OED* have been included with the intention of providing a representative cross-section of the text, this does not appear to

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20 According to the *OED* and Ngram.
22 According to the *OED*. 
be so. Some episodes such as “Scylla and Charybdis” and “Oxen of the Sun” get far more attention than others, such as “Lotus Eaters” and “Eumeaus,” as can be seen in Figure 6.

**Figure 6: Joyce’s nonce words from *Ulysses* listed in the OED3, divided by their episodes**

As shown in Figure 6, “Nestor,” “Calypso,” and Aeolus” go entirely without mention, despite the fact that they, too, contain nonce formations. With the exception of “Circe,” the discrepancies do not correspond with the varied lengths of the episodes. While the OED cannot be expected to include all first usages in the text, one is left wondering what the value is of including such a select, seemingly random and unevenly distributed few.

While it is strange that *OED3*’s list of Joycean “quotations providing first evidence of a word” is so small and unrepresentative, what is stranger still is that, despite this, it includes words that Joyce did not invent. When cross-referenced with the *Corpus of Historical American English*, the *Dictionary of American Regional English* and the *Time Magazine Corpus*, six of the
words prove to have been used previously by other, predominantly American, writers (bing “All of a sudden; in a flash; with a bang,” chiseller “A child or youngster; a youth,” conscriptive “Involving or having conscription,” dreck “Rubbish, trash, worthless debris,” thereward “Theretoward,” and thunk “Joc. variant of think”). In addition to the fact that the invention of these words is incorrectly attributed to Joyce, some of them are also wrongly categorized. Joyce was not the first known writer to use the word chiseller, as can be seen in the etymology that the OED itself provides. But, according to the OED, he is the first known writer to use it to mean “a child,” so it ought not appear in the list of Joycean “quotations providing first evidence of a word,” but rather in the list of Joyce’s words providing “first evidence of a particular meaning,” which is a category the OED also offers, under which there are currently four hundred and fifty-eight Joyce citations. The OED’s list of Joyce’s nonce formations also includes several non-English words that Joyce used in his fiction but certainly did not invent, such as the Italian mezzogiorno “The southern part of Italy, corresponding roughly to the former Kingdom of Naples, and consisting of the modern mainland regions of Abruzzi, Molise, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, and Calabria, and the islands of Sicily and Sardinia,” and the French musicophile “a music lover.” While Joyce was perhaps one of the first English canonical writers known to have used these terms, listing them among Joyce’s nonce formations is a perplexing move.

While Joyce’s use of loan words evidently proved difficult to adequately and appropriately categorize in the OED, another problem posed by Joyce for lexicographers is his frequent use of compound words that are also nonce formations. To get a sense of how heavily Joyce relies on compounds as a creative tool, one need only examine “Proteus,” in which almost
all of his nonce formations are compounds. Accordingly, of the ninety-seven Joycean nonce words remaining in *OED3*, over one third of them are compounds.  

Fischer writes,

> Compounding is easily the most versatile form of word formation [...]. Moreover, under the superficially simple pairing of two free morphemes, compounds hide a potential range of syntactic and semantic complexity, which the speakers of a language find surprisingly easy to decode. This makes them an ideal instrument for poets, who can pack a wealth of information into a nutshell. (Fischer, 175)

It is no wonder, then, that Joyce took such a liking to compounds. As a writer who wished to encapsulate an unprecedented amount of information in the span of one novel—about politics, technology, rhetoric, sex, marriage, parenthood, death, and everything in between—compound words enabled him to say more with less. Moreover, for a writer so interested in interconnectedness, for instance as the lower case first sentence of *Finnegans Wake*, “riverrun, past Eve and Adam’s, from swerve of shore to bend of bay, brings us by a commodious vicus of recirculation back to Howth Castle and Environs” (*FW* 3), is a continuation of the novel’s last sentence, “A way a lone a last a loved a long the” (*FW* 628), compounds aesthetically align with the vision; if one’s focus in their writing is connectors—between people, events, and ideas, compounds serve as a literal manifestation of that connectivity, which explains their ubiquity in Joyce’s fiction. The question that follows is how lexicographers ought to treat them.

Joyce’s compound words are not always particularly interesting or creative, as with, for instance, “watercloset” (*U* 4.52) and “moustachecup” (*U* 4.283), which merely combine words normally seen side by side. It would be logical, then, to exclude such compounds from a list of

23 These figures are based on my own counting.
nonce words in a dictionary, as they hardly diverge from the established lexis, and as there is a wide array of other, more innovative Joycean compounds to choose from. Yet *OED* includes “wellcreamed” and “wellscrubbed” in their list of Joyce’s neologisms, which are presented with accompanying quotations and without definitions, as none are needed. Their meanings can easily be deciphered by interpreting the combined words separately. Other more innovative compounds go without mention, such as *deathspew* (*U* 2.317), *allwoombing* (*U* 3.402), and *greengoldenly* (*U* 3.454). The *OED*’s process surrounding which of Joyce’s compound words to include and which to exclude is elusive. Evidently this is the case for both *OED2* and 3, as Fischer points to an example in which *OED2* quotes Joyce, “*Milly Bloom, fairhaired, greenvested, slimsandalled* […] *breaks from the arms of her lover*” (*U* 15.3167-8) to illustrate the compounds “slimsandalled” and “fairhaired,” noting that, despite its presence in the quotation, “greenvested” is left undefined. The example highlights the awkward position that dictionaries are in, which involves including a very limited selection of citations out of a vast number of possibilities, and which consequently necessitates their making such arbitrary choices. The line between what to include and what not to must of course be drawn somewhere, but where it is drawn seems to vary with every example.

A pivotal question with regards to the presence of Joyce’s neologisms in dictionaries is whether they will ever be of use to the general public. According to Allan Metcalf and what is approaching a century of evidence, probably not. In his book *Predicting New Words* Metcalf writes about what he calls “the FUDGE factors” (Metcalf, 149):

[…] there are five factors that seem to determine a word’s chances for success:
Frequency of use, Unobtrusiveness, Diversity of users and sources, Generation of additional forms and meanings, and Endurance of the thing or concept that the
word refers to. Of the five factors, Unobtrusiveness seems especially important.

(ibid, 167)

This does not bode well for most of Joyce’s neologisms, even the few that remain in the *OED*, which, according to Metcalf’s principles, are almost certain to become obsolete. While one might think that those of Joyce’s first usages in the *OED* stand a better chance at entering the domain of common usage, Metcalf writes,

[…] inclusion in a dictionary doesn’t guarantee success for a new word. Being chosen for a dictionary is like being called up to the major leagues of baseball: that’s where you belong if you’re good, but if you don’t perform well, you can soon be sent back to the minors. (ibid, 165)

Evidently being in a dictionary is not in itself a measure of a word’s popularity.

To revisit some of Joyce’s neologisms that we have seen thus far, within the framework of the FUDGE factors, let us look at *ovoblastic* “Of or relating to an egg cell,” and *poppysmic* “Produced with smacking of the lips,” which both appear in the *OED*, but neither of which are documented in the *Corpus of Historical American English*, the *Dictionary of American Regional English*, or the *Time Magazine Corpus* as having been used by any writer besides Joyce. In terms of frequency of use and diversity of users both words obviously fail the test. They also fail to be unobtrusive. About unobtrusiveness Metcalf writes, “In plain English, you don’t notice [the word]. A successful new word flies under the radar” (ibid, 155). *Ovoblastic* and *poppysmic* certainly do not. Moreover, both words fail to generate different meanings. The one way in which these neologisms do meet Metcalf’s conditions is “Endurance of the thing or concept that the word refers to.” Smacking lips and egg cells will exist for as long as humankind. However,
failing the other four FUDGE factors, the words will doubtless be remain within the confines of the minds of Joyce readers.

Ironically, while the vast majority of Joyce’s neologisms are not likely to enter the common discourse, the word *quark* (*FW* 383) has, but with an assigned meaning that is quite different than anything Joyce could have intended. The word originates from *Finnegans Wake*, in a passage that reads,

– *Three quarks for Muster Mark!*

*Sure he hasn’t got much of a bark*

*And sure any he has it’s all beside the mark.* (ibid)

The word’s current popularity lies within the scientific community, and is not because it meets Metcalf’s FUDGE factors, but because physicist Murray Gell-Mann happened upon it while in search of a way to spell the name for the particle he had just discovered. In his book *The Quark and the Jaguar* he writes,

In 1963, when I assigned the name “quark” to the fundamental constituents of the nucleon, I had the sound first, without the spelling, which could have been “kwerk”. Then, in one of my occasional perusals of *Finnegans Wake* […] I came across the word “quark” in the phrase “Three quarks for Muster Mark”. (Gell-Mann, 180)

Evidently words enter the lexis for a wide array of reasons, one of them being mere chance.
Conclusion

The *Oxford English Dictionary* must cite *Ulysses*. Widely regarded as one of the most important books of the twentieth century, it has been unavoidable since *OED2*, which was started in 1957. Yet it is also impossible to represent it appropriately in a historical dictionary of even vast dimensions. For one, the text is simply too large. It contains too many words, and too many first usages for summation. Moreover, due to the degree of Joyce’s linguistic innovation, and the fact of his work’s hyper-referentiality, adequately defining his nonce words (both what they are and what they mean) requires far more research than has been so far undertaken. If and when this happens, an online Joyce dictionary will be necessary; only such a dictionary would have enough space to sufficiently represent Joyce’s contribution to literature and language. The project would be different from the *OED*, whose preference for citing quotes that have self-contained and easily accessible meanings seriously limits its coverage of Joyce’s work. The proposed dictionary would need to cite the Gabler edition of *Ulysses* by episode and line number, as is now the norm, and to venture into definitions, or in many cases interpretations, that are more literary than lexicographical. As is, Joyce’s work as a whole is both underrepresented and misrepresented in the *OED*, which *Ulysses* anticipates when the nymph in “Circe” states, “And words. They are not in my dictionary” (*U* 15.3279). Dictionaries necessarily fail to contain all words, and so the lofty ambitions of *OED1* were impossible to achieve from the start. But the *OED*’s insufficient coverage of Joyce’s work reflects on Joyce as much as it does on the unattainability of its own aims. Joyce created texts and words so rich with meaning that they are impossible to define with certainty. In both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* he creates an uncolonizeable Ireland that leaves lexicographers, for the most part, lost at sea.
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<http://corpus.byu.edu/time/>
